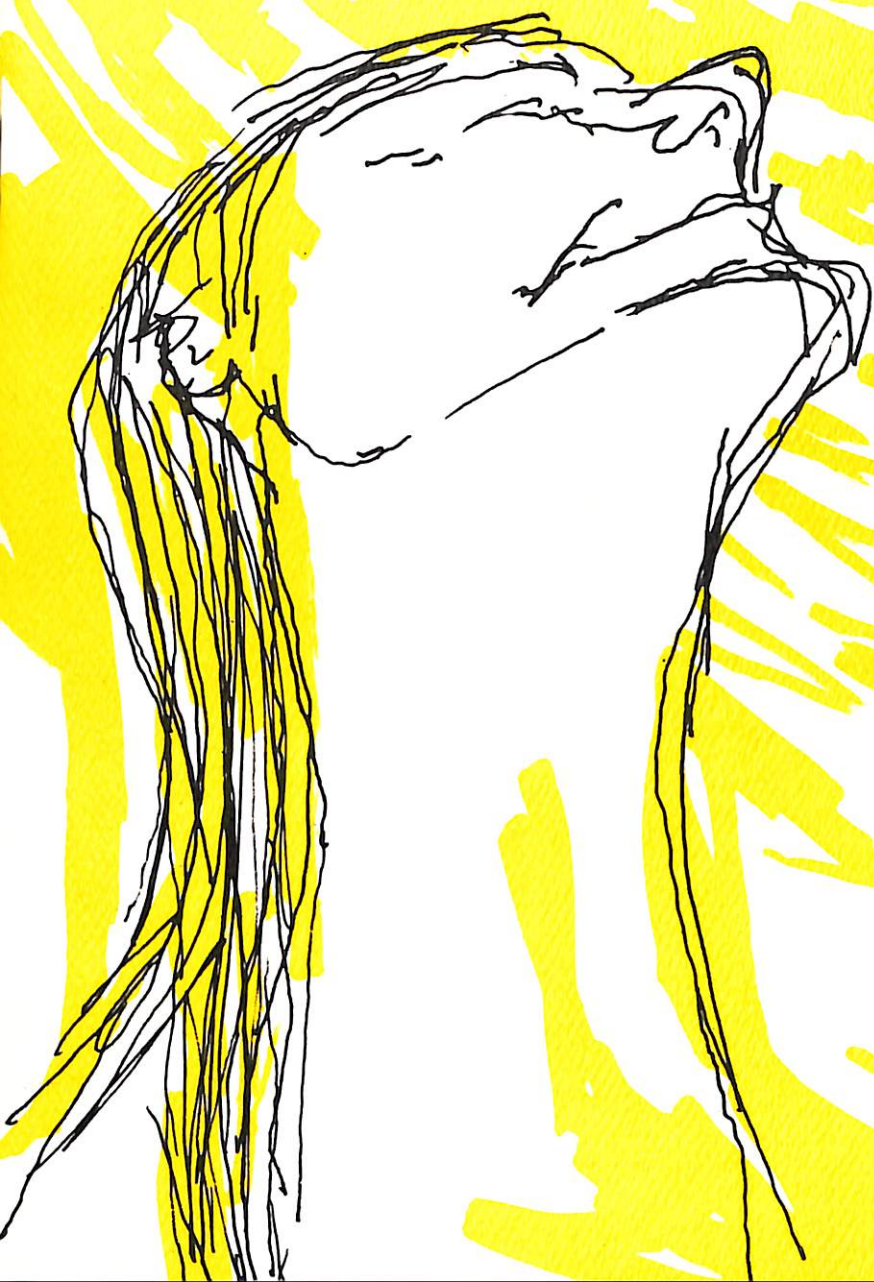


JAN - 63



For President Oxnam -

Compliments  
of Staff

et al



# COLUMNS JANUARY 1963

a literary periodical published by the students  
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ward landrigan

A withered poplar puts forth flowers.  
An older woman takes a husband.  
No blame. No praise.

*—from the I Ching, traditionally ascribed  
to the Hsia Dynasty 2205-1766 B.C.*

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# Three Cinquains

(In the manner of Adelaide Crapsey)

Silent.

The moon above  
bathes white the stillness of  
blackness and dew, the bat wings of  
the night.

Lightly

as a summer  
rain, the petals from a  
shaken stem, gently touch a night  
blue pond.

Yet still,

the soft night wind  
draws up the secrets of  
shadows and hidden dreams, and dare  
not speak.

*Stephen Spiegel*

# The Japanese House in the Wooded Island

(Jackson Park, Chicago)

Long faded from an early honor  
A strange preserve in a city opposed;  
Of wood within wood the eastern house  
Stood abused and unkempt but quietly reposed.

Being part of that thrusting city,  
I child, approached with fear of the stranger  
But felt the kindness of leaf thick trails  
That spoke, though quietly, "There is no danger."

Backwards in time to young delight,  
I see the sun-dappled roof's curving slope  
That resolves the curve of the approaching bridge,  
This island, this house, this bridge, this hope.

*Ferdy Buonanno*



## Ce fut l'année

Ce fut l'année où mon coeur a chanté  
et mon âme a rajeuni.

Avant ce temps, mon esprit avait vagabondé  
à travers le marais des ombres

Et mes sens avaient pris racine  
au sol humide de ma (cellule)

Et mes yeux suivaient la lune.

Par ma fenêtre j'ai vu la lune  
et j'ai attendu que son feu illumine mon visage  
Parcequ'il y avait un vide dans mon coeur  
et que je ne connaissais pas la raison de ma peine.

Un air bizarre a tortué mon âme grisee  
Et j'ai crié à haute voix—À quoi bon!?—  
Et le brouillard s'est fermé sur moi . . .

*Neil Greenberg*

That was the year my heart sang  
and my soul was renewed.

Before that time my soul wandered  
across the swamp of shadows

And my senses were rooted  
to the moist floor of my cell

And my eyes looked upon the moon.

Through my window I saw the moon  
and I waited for its light to cross my face  
Because there was an emptiness in my heart  
and I did not know the reason for my pain.

A strange melody tortured my intoxicated soul  
And I cried aloud—What's the use?—

And the mists closed over me . . .

*Trans: A. Forkel*



NUDE — *Pat Wolard*

## Evening, and on her cold smile

Evening,  
and on her cold smile I see  
the vision of the day  
I left her:  
The sun casting  
shadow upon the motionless birch  
and twisted leaves;  
the deepening twilight  
dusting us in grayness  
we walk  
strangers.  
Stare clumsily at city lights—empty rooms.  
And life is interrupted by the shadows of memories.  
And her face;  
a mocking smile  
rounded with painted Lips.

*Stephen Spiegel*

## The Sunday Afternoon Yardbox

A low dust-greased frame tossed by some railed tracks  
that clack iron paths to Cosmopolia.

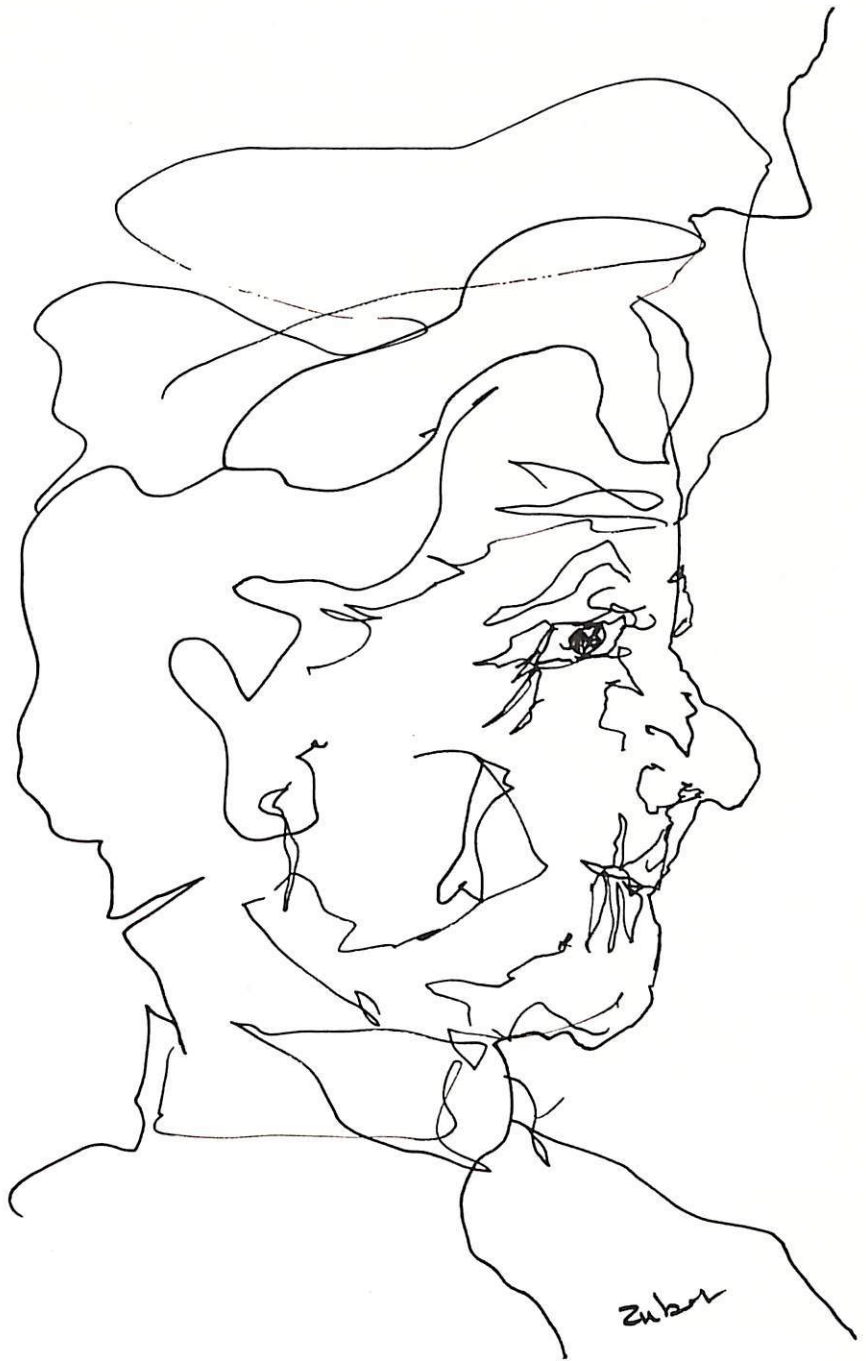
Husband, unknown to progenitored.  
Father in blithe around the mudded square  
shoves in his daily wheeled barrow to scare  
in joke the thin child, sinks in the mud path  
worn by wooded humans snarled in lathe.

Wife, kneading today the family's dead bread.  
Out to the box, mother crawls with washed things  
to hang under the sky from bleached hemp strings,  
kitchen lunch-cloth, last child's nursery  
set, first son's suit, peeled on the left knee.

Ash blacks the Cloth for the grave,  
last child's first, first child's last.

Husband shoving, children sinking, mother hanging.

*Ferdy Buonanno*



OLD LADY — Marilyn Zuber

## Kaddish\*

And standing by the wide bank as it laughs past me  
I see the new water-birth that bobs up life, and cries out.  
Here the agon began, and I paced the Mystery in a  
daylight-dream.

I was young Jacob and wrestled with the fluid darkness;  
my strength poured loud into the spiritless labyrinth,  
patterns of the dying river.

The seed of young life is strewn in the barren dust.  
No more, no more.

I lie on sawdust mingling with the earth.  
O, prayer for the dead,  
let the sorrow of your voice  
rekindle my soul  
with the whisper of a tear,  
with my nation's tears.

*Stephen Spiegel*

\* Kaddish is the Jewish prayer for the dead. When an orthodox Jew is buried he lies on a sprinkling of sawdust, in an unadorned pine box.

## The Child

he is  
you  
me  
and the pillow and sheet  
nine of sunshine and  
months and haze sleet  
you were  
the gift  
i your  
gift box  
his string  
pres your  
-ent child  
com i  
-plete bring

*Ann Forkel*



AFTER DIZZY GILLESPIE

WARD



## J's Frenzy

J walked into a red and white telephone booth. As he dialed a number he looked at the dirty windows in the door and the small yellow "don't forget that second call" sign. The number was busy. He dialed a second time and heard a pleasant voice saying "you are temporarily out of order, sir." And, in fact, when he tried to open the door—he couldn't.

\* \* \*

J steps up to a platform and begins his address to the students seated below.—Today the subject of my lecture will be some of the philosophical implications of the Gospel according to Nicholas which, as you must know, has been termed by local humorists, who are never-the-less aware of its importance, the Santa Claus Gospel and even the five-penny Gospel—

Some laughter. Every one of the students takes out a cigarette and slowly lights it.

—What I will discuss is the analysis of the sin of Lucifer—the sinful thought: *non serviam*, I will not serve. According to Nicholas the "God-Lucifer" situation is an archetype for the human situation, where man is Lucifer and God is man's image of man, and my friends, it follows from this—

The students rise, take knives, reach under their chairs for clubs. J smiles, waves to the onrushing crowd, sings a quick verse accompanying himself on a banjo and, while doing a soft shoe, escapes through a trap door in the platform.

\* \* \*

Jan's apartment is small, in a bad section of town. Jan and Joe in the kitchen making coffee, both are slightly disarranged and have their shoes off.

Jan: You think I'm a pick-up, don't you?

Joe: Sure—I did at first.

Jan: If my mother knew . . . she doesn't even know I smoke.  
Anne and I live here together.

Joe: Where's home?

Jan: Harrisville (laughs). It's a few miles from West Virginia. I came here to work three years ago, put two of my brothers into school; they didn't stay—you're in college?

Joe: Yes. I study—not that it matters (smiling). Where do you work?

Jan: At the State Unemployment and part time at a movie. I always wanted to be a nurse . . .

They're interrupted by a noise on the fire escape. Anne is returning home with another couple.

Anne: This damn manager called the police. He's coming up . . .

Jan, frightened, runs into the other room. Joe finds his shoes. Soon Ron and Mary come out and all the couples jam into the small kitchen. Joe walks out onto the fire escape. The manager is holding both sides of the fire escape, blocking the way.

Manager: Where are you going. The cops be here soon.

Joe: Why the hell you call the cops. If we were making too much noise all you had to do was call us and we would have gotten out. We wern't doing anything.

Manager: I didn't like what you were doing up there. I know what they are. Nobody leaving . . .

Joe looks around for a match. Finally the manager lights his cigarette and Joe slips past him. The manager starts to follow but loses him in the dark. Joe begins to run through a bewildering maze of fallen-in houses, stops, makes a decision, and walks calmly to the street and finds a taxi.

Joe: Livingstone and Parsons.

Driver: Kind of late isn't it? (after taking a damn good look).

Joe: I had to leave suddenly . . .

Driver: Too many street lights maybe?

Joe: No, no, I was in her apartment the manager called the cops, and I ran . . . so did he. Cops are the last thing I want to see—we weren't doing much should have stayed—picked her up—

Joe stops suddenly realizing what a confession he's making. A police car drives by fast with red lights flashing.

Driver: This'll cost you a little extra—won't it.

\* \* \*

Jan and Joe walk into a small hotel that looks as though it had been totally immersed in a brown wash. They wake the man at the desk who rising looks at the clock: 4:17.

Joe: Our car broke down on 23 just out of town. Do you have room?

Man: Sure.

The room is cheap; one bed, one window, one washstand, one Bible. Jan walks in; sits on the bed. Joe looks at the door.

Joe: Doesn't seem to lock.

Jan: Do you mind?

Joe: (laughing) I don't think anyone will rob us.

Jan: I didn't mean that.

Joe: Oh—No. You know I'm in love with you.

Jan: You don't even know what love is.

He turns out the light. A red neon sign flashes slowly on and off, on and off, through the window.

\* \* \*

Joe is by the window. Jan asleep. In the morning light the window displays a small town square. In this light everything is completely realistic.

Joe: (singing softly to the people below)

*oh my name is samuel ball, samuel ball, samuel ball*

*oh my name is samuel ball*

*and i hate you one and all*

*yes i hate you one and all*

*damn your eyes*

*damn your eyes*

Jan: What a sound to wake up to.

Joe stands in silence looking out the window, then walks over and sits down on the bed.

Joe: What did your parents think of me?

Jan: They liked you—thought you were quiet.

Joe: I was. I didn't know what to say.

Jan: What was the song?

Joe: Sam Hall. About a murderer who rebels at everything  
It ends with:

*up in heaven i do dwell, i do dwell, i do dwell  
up in heaven i do dwell  
and i hate the goddamned place  
for all the whores are down in hell  
and i hate you one and all  
damn your eyes*

Jan: That's what you think of me? Do you know when it first happened? My cousin—I was fourteen—I didn't know what he was doing—never told my mother and she never told me.

Joe: (softly) Look here (Goes to the window. Jan gets up and follows.) Look at those people. Look at that one. She's thinking: I have become my own pity. I am the sum of my sins. Don't be like that Jan.

Jan: (ironic) I won't, sir. (surprised) It's starting to snow.

Joe: Finally!

Fade out on snow.

\* \* \*

Jan and Joe on the town square. The morning light is much stronger now. Snow falling all around. They smile at each other, bow politely to a passing policeman, and laughing, disappear into a coffeeshop.

Close up and fade out on the morning sun reflected from a car windshield.

*harry cash*

loul with diffidence to me;  
make wide your eyes with wonder,  
ready your antelope legs to flee:  
i am a beast of plunder,  
crouched in a cave; my mind  
coated with spittle and mullings.  
in there i ferment sins of a kind  
to shake confessional pillars.

i am the leer that withers  
the apple, the vine, the rose;  
who prestessed your form  
with marrow and bone,  
and a thousand singing veins  
lubbing wondrous blood to your bloom.

*robert m. davidson*

Han-Shan says  
"At the wrong season you can't ford the creeks"  
He isn't kidding.

I don't know a damn thing about Cold Mountain  
But down here in the flats  
Even when the wind blows warm  
You just can't make it.

*harry cash*



NUDE — *Ward Landrigan*

## An introduction to cultural relativism

When I have become fluent in your flesh,  
and you run like midnight thru my mind

*i heard you calling from the cisterns  
of social-darwinism;*

when you have beheld the poet's beast,  
and I have nuzzled between your breasts like voodoo

*a brilliant analysis of our society  
and other primitive civilizations;*

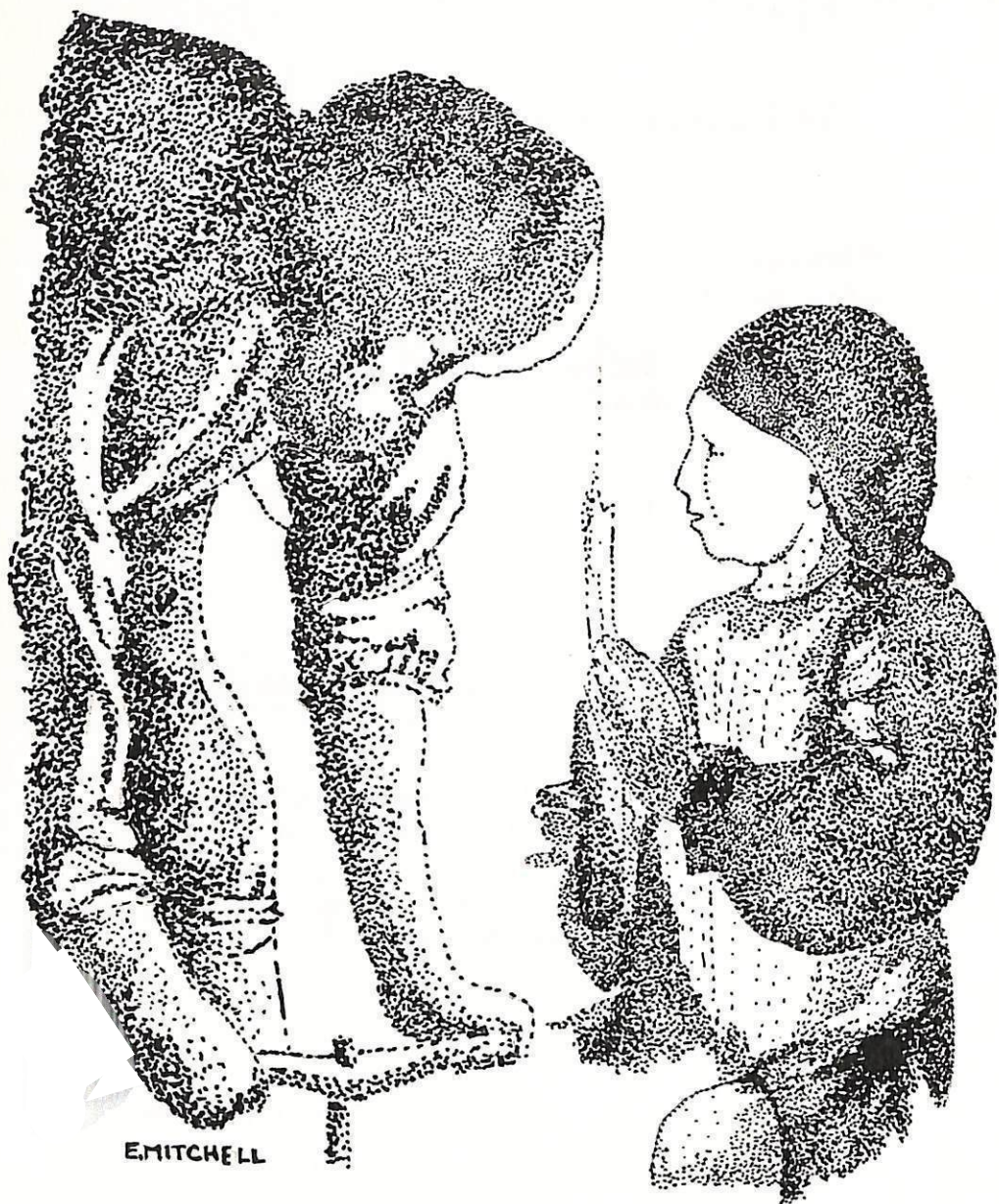
and we have sung and dipped ourselves in Pharaoh's pride  
and have stretched obliquely together in love

*the manipulation of wealth has been characteristic  
of degeneration from babylon downwards;*

I shall relax in this rebounding time and waste,  
and let the other fellows squirt the body politic

*conflict is the essence of existence  
also of your tongue and race.*

*william t. swaine*



SUGGESTED BY DE LA TOUR  
— Betty Mitchell



## Poem

The wild plums are falling; Did you know?  
On purple ground covered once with snow,  
And the tender springing green  
Upon which lovers walked alone  
And said small words blended by night wind  
To silver whispers as night is thinned  
To rainbow; and the plums are ripe.  
Come now before the growing tide  
Of summer rolls the hills to brown  
And leaves the tree dark, bare, alone.

*Mickey Jones*

## clutch

1.

while the fruit grows  
the slain god rots  
and rats run  
zigzags  
where our bones  
will grow again  
like trees.

2.

o thou khamsin  
we sleep the ocean of your breath  
our lips are the blue of your sea.

3.

shrapnel  
sprouted  
from his stomach  
like tinsel  
and the quacking guns  
went silent  
in the rain.

4.

the gentleman  
sloped  
over his piano  
like poppyweed in a ripe wind  
because he  
& the sound which he wished  
to create  
were one.

*william t. swaine*

## Plague

Those others—witch figures,  
gnarled by spring's languor,  
shredded by summer's burn, cover  
the hour of twilight; the breath of  
autumn air to spread gray wings  
upon the sky—release their pungent musk  
into the ashen breeze, carrying  
against the lighted wooden homes the  
beat and flap of airy whirlpools that eddy on  
the stagnant roofs, beating silent death into  
open windows.

*Stephen Spiegel*



NUDE — Elizabeth Korn

one ice-veined  
rainbow-prismed  
dew pearled  
trembling trinket  
tear,  
falling to trace  
i love you i love you  
and grace your  
face,  
is more of always value  
than all the taunts of  
men.

*robert m. davidson*

of all secrets  
most surely precious  
is your mouth  
whose of such fullness  
as is a world composed  
which cannot be swallowed  
though i drown all eve,  
whose every tremble  
is wonder beyond song.  
here you can speak no truth  
but, in dumbness, are.  
see no beauty  
but, in darkness, shape.  
thirst no eternal  
but, in loneliness, become.  
while each your lip  
buries me  
in the loam of our species.

*robert m. davidson*

## Noirâtre

Light lays the womb wide,  
Blasts across the hangman's noil,  
Nesty flesh burns cold,  
And splays the sleeper from his sulky sea.  
Light in the skull holds death  
And seedless, grooms  
The gallows of the night;  
Light lays the womb wide.

Night traps love's last,  
Lays the bone bare,  
Bloodless jowls cackle by the moon,  
And spumes the dreamer's tide.  
Night in the *cavum* lulls  
And fleshless, dooms  
The shadows to their sea;  
Night traps love's last.

*william t. swaine*

