9-1969

The Strayed Reveller, No. 4

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I was down there the other night just checking the action and then this guy taking horse (Main lining it ya no.) lays this needle up close to his ear and then gets all tight for a second cause his necks all big and red from needle holes. Then he just lies down real slow like Biggest ole grin you ever did see, then the cops came by and kicked him a coupla times and drifted on off. Pretty soon the meat wagon rattled down the alley and loaded him up and moved outa sight. Then this real big car with a bunch of red lights came screaming down the alley stopped real quick like and this big man started cussen cause there weren't no dead body around. and the big car left real fast.
Cool tombs beside the fractured light, moving river falling across the walls.

In a chamber chest the drumming heart swells and tells of scarlet gardens under the thumb.

Mixture of fire and ice, palate of shades that greet the eye from different fields, meet my breast in gentle harmony.

There, a phantom dagger dawn with holes and wandering shadows, keeps and holds within itself white poles high above the fire.
Knight in the Shiny Car

A very respect and in certain parts at certain times intellect He cruises and inhales dividing two by two seeing all knowing Little and caring less And in the morning he is Hand in Hand with Daybreak.
Suffer Victim....

With the greeting of the Yri tongue enter into the dual world of Deborah Blau—and escape with the 16 year old girl from the grey deception of the Now world to the terrible joy of golden Yr.

After an attempted suicide, Deborah is committed to a private hospital, and begins treatment under Dr. Clara Fried, for the initial diagnosis of "schizophrenia marked by a compulsive and masochistic component". Then begins the slow process of discovery and understanding by both Dr. Fried and Deborah. As Deborah unfolds the tangles in her mind she is thrust into a collision of worlds: the world of Yr which is occupied by gods such as Anterrebae, the falling god, Lactamaeon, the black god with icy blue eyes, Idat, the formless one, and the collect of gods who condemn and punish; and the Now world of shadows and deception. This other world in Yr provides Deborah with an escape from the reality of earth-time to a world where her self-imposed Nغانon, or self-poison, will not harm others. Before Dr. Fried, these two worlds were separated by the Midworld, which prepared Deborah for entrance into either world, but after a time, Deborah finds that this transition stage has faded away, and she goes crashing from world to world. She is a gently sloped volcano on the verge of eruption. Her calm exterior displays a surface quite different from the liquid heat inside.

Although Hannah Green carries the reader into Deborah Blau's personal unreality,
A great deal of the novel is social commentary. Through Deborah's experiences, one may see the state of isolation, anxiety and loneliness which exists in individuals who seek reality and personal truth in 20th century society. This frustration is either eventually lessened through acceptance of an uncomfortable Reality, or the individual is forced into an escape-mechanism world. This escape is the only survival for people who must either bridge or eradicate reality that they cannot withstand. Those who can face or have learned to face reality, (which is at best a vague term) "hand with the world" despite its lawlessness, wildness, and deceptiveness, while those who must escape are locked in Victorian-looking brick buildings and deemed "crazy" by "normal people" who, even after the doors are unlocked, retain the wall as a barrier against the crazy-ones' poison. It is only after much deception that one begins to understand the term reality, and the goodness in finding it. Deborah says:

What good is your reality, when justice fails and dishonesty is glossed over and the ones who keep faith suffer... What good is your reality then?

to which Dr. Fried replies:

Look here... I never promised you a rose garden. I never promised you perfect justice... and I never promised you peace or happiness. My help is so that you can be free to fight for all of these things. The only reality I offer is challenge, and being well is being free to accept it or not at whatever level you are capable. I never promise lies, and the rose-garden world of perfection is a lie...
Hannah Greene has done a fine job in not only telling the story of a schizophrenic young girl, but of a schizophrenic world.
YESTERDAY'S WARRIOR: March, 1969

Yesterday's warrior:
went down mourning streets
where muffled drums tapped metered steps,
a sterile sadness fogged THE TUBE
as Nuclear Ulysses lay horse-drawn away:

All along Penn avenue
His name kept it's resound
in the mouths of more than just a few:  
who waved their hope to the passing train,
sold his image on a printed sheet,
opened His Gate for His path to Eden--

who did everything for him/
but let him fade away.
A VALENTIME POME

Sally flew away
(only I knew why
her thighs rolled
in the laughing air)
crossbowed shortflowing
a playground of children
sleeping in the dampdark
(her dampdark
slapped by
Doctor Goodbye Worm---
jello bellground &
anxious musemind
not locked in delecte):
thighs stopped
when a one lump
mental maternity suitbump
saw a nightswing chained
in the laughing air.
The Affair of Armesh Khymley

Armesh Khymley lipped the tank
Add win to sea the even stray
The seed the loom and it are wrike
Thee spars to fush abit and gripe
So Armesh Khymley humped bank
Add did it am a lively gay

As Armesh were betokening
The matched a hansle wither-fern
whose vintegers of wavy freed
Was fassled with a gilden bleed
Add m a noose of linsome pring
Did Armesh moat combide to burn

Bud spool the wither-fern is stoiled
Add Armesh were a forst deplied
The crinched her windle hasted thyme
Upbrooling brundled for the drine
Than while the frockles witched and cogled
Foor Armesh Khymley souly dryed
The Finite Peg in the Infinite Whole

In absence of resistance
A flaw came to the symmetry
Of total emptiness
And by its animation
The peace of endless vacuum was destroyed

Something was somewhere

Embarrassed by existence
A fault is in the majesty
Of perfect nothingness
It seeks assimilation
By absolute and everlasting void
"In the clearing stands a boxer and a fighter by his train, and he carries the reminders of every glove that laid him down..." Paul Simon

Cut lips and dusty gyms.

As he climbed the dark flight of stairs, the line was in his mind—a five word summary of his life.

A man was sitting at the top of the stairs. A cigar box on his lap held the admission he collected from people who came to see the workout. He nodded to Cole and let him by.

When he was past the man, Cole stopped and looked around the gym. The ring, with folding chairs around two sides, was in the middle of the long room. Two heavy bags hung from the ceiling with light bags along the opposite wall. The walls were covered with fight posters, some yellowing with age. The smell was strong, the pungent odor of sweat and lineament and smoke.

He walked across the gym and through the swinging doors of the dressing room. The smell was stronger inside. He thought about it as he undressed. He had started coming to this gym just after his Army discharge. The smell had excited him then, ten years ago, when he'd just turned pro. But since then there had been so many sweaty hours, so many bruises, that the smell brought only memories of pain, of fatigue.

He looked at the clock. Another thirty minutes until he sparred with Tager, the champion.

He stood buck naked and looked at himself in the mirror. He looked as fit as ever. No fat. His legs were going, but no one could tell by looking. He walked closer to the mirror. His face showed it, though. He traced his fingers over the thick layers of scar tissue above his eyes and felt his flattened nose.
When he was young, he had been a brawler, wading in, always going for the knockout. If the crowd cheered and said he had guts, what else mattered? Those were the days when his reputation, his honor, counted more than a slit eyebrow.

He took his boxing shoes and sox out of his bag and layed them on the bench. Then he put his supporter on. He sat down and stared at the floor.

When he leaned back against the locker, he felt a twinge of pain in his ribs, and he straightened back up. He hadn't realized the beating yesterday had been that bad.

A fat Mexican stood in the doorway watching him. "Guts sore, Cole?" he asked with a laugh. Cole said nothing. He took a pair of purple trunks out of the bag and laid them on his lap.

"I mean to tell you," Gomez said, "the champ been putting it to you sparring partners."

Cole ran his fingers over the smooth, faded satin. A cluster of aching memories welled up in him, and he paid no attention to Gomez's words.

"Yessir," the Mexican chuckled and plopped down on the bench opposite Cole, "he can just beat a man to a pulp."

Cole traced his fingers over the dark bloodstains on the trunks. He had worn them four years ago, his big night in the ballpark against Clay.

"You about the only man's been able to stay with the champ over two or three weeks," Gomez said.

Clay had ripped a slit over Cole's right eye early in the third round. As his trainer tried to stop the bleeding, Cole had pleaded with the ringside doctor not to stop the fight. "I got pride," he'd said, "Don't let it end like this."

"That Tager is just a big black buzzsaw that chews up men," Gomez said.
Blinded in his right eye by the blood streaming into it, Cole had never seen the left hook which knocked him down. Glassy-eyed, he had risen to be knocked cold by a barrage of punches.

"I tell you something, Cole," Gomez said. "You taken some beatings from Tager this last week, but it's an honor for a sparring partner just to stay with that man."

Cole stood up. "What the hell is honor?" he said.

Gomez looked at him, baffled, uncertain what to make of the black man standing over him. He tried to laugh it off. "Aw, c'mon, Cole," he said. Ask me something easy."

"I'll tell you something, Gomez," Cole said. He felt himself seized by a wave of pent-up anger and frustration which he could not quite understand. "I'm tired of making that big dummy of yours look good every day. I'm sick of just standing there in front of him and letting him pound me."

Gomez stood up now, angry too. "You listen here, Cole," he said, "I don't give a damn what you like. We pay you to spar with Tager, and we expect you to fight the way we tell you. Now if you don't like it, get the hell out, and we'll pay that ten dollars a round to some other stiff."

Cole started to speak, but Gomez cut him off. "Look," he said, his voice softer now, "we don't want you to get hurt. But this guy the champ's fighting Wednesday's gonna come straight at the champ and fight in close. So naturally we want the sparrin' partners to fight like that. You a fighter. You can see our point."

Cole turned away from Gomez. For a moment he said nothing. Then: "Sure. Whatever you say."

"Gonna be a few writers here today to watch the champ," Gomez said, "so get in there and mix it."
When he didn't reply, Gomez left the dressingroom. Cole thought of the people eager to see Tager pummell Cole and the other sparring partners.

A few minutes later Tager and Ferrara walked in. Cole gave them a brief nod.

Tager, cocky and impeccable in black slacks and a burgundy sweater, stood with his hands on his hips. "Hello there, old Number Twenty," he said. He took a magazine out of his pocket and tossed to Cole. "Look at that new Ring," he said.

"They rank you twentieth in the world," Ferrara said. "Hell, you were in the top ten two years ago, weren't you?"

"I don't know," Cole said. He looked directly at Ferrara. "I don't keep a fan club around to inform me."

Ferrara's eyes narrowed. "Smart guy," he said.

Cole knew he'd blundered; replying would only bring more badgering.

"Me'n Ferrara wrote a little poem about you," Tager said.

"Let me read it," Ferrara said. He took a slip out of his pocket. "Old John Cole didn't have any soul. Not a bit of soul had he. He was gettin' slow, he was gettin' old, and the champ took him out in three."

Cole ignored them now. "Well, what'd you think of our poem?" Tager said.

"You know what you can do with it," Cole said.

"Listen," Tager said. "I know you don't like me, and I know why. You've hung around your big buddy Patterson so long that you don't like nobody but little meek humble farts."

"Well I ain't like that. So you can either like it or lump it."

Cole stood up and walked to the door. "I might lump it a few times," he said.

"I'm gonna tear you up in there, boy."
"Sure, big mouth," Cole said and left. As he loosened up before sparring, Cole lost the gut-knotting nervousness he'd felt in the dressing room. It was always that way; movement, any physical act stifled a wretching of the spirit.

He walked to the window and looked out. The December sky seemed darker than before. He watched the wind lift a scrap of paper out of the gutter and send it fluttering down the street. Cole closed his eyes. So much of his life he'd been like that scrap of paper--thrown about by a force he could neither see nor understand. But not today, he thought. Today, at least, he had a choice. He could take his chances and fight or he could... No, that was out of the question. He could never let himself do that.

He heard Tager beating a furious tattoo on one of the speed bags. Let him burn himself out. Cole took his rope and began to skip it in a smooth steady rhythm.

Gomez came with the gloves and headgear. He waited impatiently while Cole took the strips of gauze and bandaged his hands. Then Gomez slipped on the gloves and tied the laces.

"What size are these?" Cole asked.
"Twelves."
"We've been using sixteens."
"The champ wanted to use lighter gloves today." Gomez helped him put on the headgear and walked away.

Cole felt pricks of sweat coming out on his arms and face. He was dead calm now as he watched Tager bound up the steps to the ring and step through the ropes.

Cole walked to the ring and climbed the four steps. Gomez followed him, determined, it seemed, to keep playing the role of jester for Tager's court. In mid ring, Gomez held up his hands. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said.
"I don't see no ladies," someone said.
"And you ain't a gentlemen either," Gomez shot back. "Today, world's heavyweight champion Matt Tager spars three rounds, the first two with John Cole."

Gomez always stayed on the ring apron to shout instructions to Tager. When he was outside the ropes, he said, "Go to it."

Tager came straight toward Cole, holding his hands low. Instead of meeting him head-on, Cole circled to the left, flicking out two light jabs. Tager lunged at him with a wild left hook which missed.

The opening seconds of the round set the pattern. Cole, circling to the left to neutralize Tager's left hook, hitting Tager with numerous jabs, keeping the champion off balance. The crowd was quiet. Then, as he avoided being trapped on the ropes, Cole heard a voice below him: "That guy's making a monkey out of Tager."

Gomez was becoming frantic. He dared not tell Cole to stop moving. So he had to shout to Tager instead. "Take your time, Champ," he howled. "Work him toward the corner."

Halfway through the round, Tager started a wide left hook, and Cole came inside it with a whistling right hand. It landed a little too high, but still shook Tager up, knocking a spray of sweat out of his hair.

The crowd buzzed. Tager grabbed Cole and clinched. They both threw a few short punches to the body. Then it happened: Tager slipped in a murderous low right.

Cole's knees buckled under him. "Low blow," someone yelled, and others took up the cry. Cole pushed Gomez away. He wheeled and walked to the corner and put his hands on the turnbuckle. The pain sickened him. He stared down at the canvas, seeing nothing but a swarm of red circles.

Gomez slipped into the ring. He walked up behind Cole. "You'll be okay in a few
minutes." Cole said nothing. His whole body was bathed in sick sweat. As he forced himself to breathe deeply, he felt the ache, the desire to vomit lessening.

Gomez stood in the center of the ring. "Just an accident," he said. "He'll need a short rest. Then we'll finish the round."

Cole looked through the ropes at the steps in front of him. He touched his trunks, that fine purple satin he'd worn so long ago.

Gomez was beside him. "About ready to start?" he said.

Cole held out his hands. "Take the gloves off," he said.

"What for?"

"Just take them off."

The Mexican untied the laces and pulled off the gloves. "You goddamned--" he muttered. But before he could finish, Cole stepped through the ropes and, still weak, went slowly down the steps.

Tager rushed to the ropes. "Come back here, Cole," he shouted. "You ain't hurt."

Cole kept walking.

"You yellow bastard. You chicken!"

Cole's shoulders slumped. But then he straightened up and, keeping his eyes on the dressingroom door, watched it grow closer until he was inside and everything was left behind.

It was quiet in the dressingroom. He stripped slowly, concentrating on undressing to keep from thinking. But as he pulled off the damp jockey strap, he realized it was no use. He knew, as he stepped into the narrow shower stall, that there would be too many times--too many dark hours when he was alone--to hope that stifling thought now would avail anything.

He stood under the shower, already beginning to go over the round in his mind. As he dried himself, he heard muffled cheering from the gym. Gomez, he knew, must have replaced him with another sparring partner, and now Tager was ripping him apart.
He dressed hurriedly, forcing his legs into the khaki pants, the need to be out of the gym growing in him. He buttoned his fatigue jacket. He's go somewhere, he thought. A bar, a movie, it didn't matter. Someplace dark to lose himself for a while before he went home.

He crammed his trunks and boxing shoes into his bag. He looked around. He'd left nothing. "No," he said aloud, "I left something in the ring."

He went through the swinging doors. He knew there was no way to retrieve what he'd left. He glanced toward the ring and saw the sparring was over. Tager stood talking to a circle of admirers. When Cole looked back, Gomez was standing in his way.

"You ain't never working with the champ," he said. "Not after what you pulled today."

"Fine."

"You ain't getting any pay, either."

Cole stopped in front of the fat Mexican. "Just let me by," he said wearily.

Gomez stepped aside. "You through as a fighter," he said. "You've turned yellow. You showed it today."

Cole went down the stairs. "That boy'll tear you up Wednesday, old man," Gomez called after him.

He walked slowly going home, past the dim bars and two dollar hotels. Ought to be half drunk by now, he thought, instead of out in this cold wind. But he walked on. At the next corner he'd catch the bus that'd take him home.

He looked at his watch. The bus'd be another ten minutes. He went inside the small cafe on the corner where he sometimes waited. Except for the waiter Bubba and a large man at the end of the counter, the room was empty.

Cole looked at the bottles of beer in the glass cooler behind the counter. He hesitated.
"Hot tea like always?" Bubba said.
"Why not?"
The waiter went into the kitchen. Cole sat
dunking the tea bag up and down in the brown cup.
The big man moved down and sat on the stool be-
side him.
"Howdy," he said.
Cole nodded.
"You don't know me," he said. "My name's
Flagstaff."
Cole made no move to shake hands.
"Funny thing," the man said. "I come in
here to deliver this guy's beer and meet you."
"Yeah?" Cole waited for him to mention it,
but then he realized that Flagstaff hadn't even
been in the gym.
"My brother saw you fight Clay that time,"
Flagstaff said. "He thought you might take him
out. Before you got that cut."
"I reached him a few times," Cole said,
thinking my god, if only they could have stop-
ped the bleeding.
"He said you should've let them stop it, on
account of that bad cut."
Cole shrugged.
"I bet you'd do different now," Flagstaff
said.
"I might." Cole looked into the big man's
pale blue eyes. "What do you want from me,
Mister?" he asked.
"Why, nothing. I'd seen you fight a few
times and wanted to meet you."
"Didn't mean to be sharp," Cole said.
"Forget it," Flagstaff said. "You live
here in town?"
"North side." Cole thought of his half of
the duplex: quiet, dark, cold.
"You're not married, are you?"
"I live alone," Cole said, thinking: I
fight alone. Nobody went down with me those
times against Clay. Nobody shared that belt
in the balls with me today. And now there is
nothing left but go home to that quiet, dark room.

Bubba came back in. "I was wondering something, Cole," he said. "Mind as you and him are talking about prizefighting--how come they put this kid in with you? Even if he did win some kind of Olympic title last year, he ain't had but ten fights."

Cole's lips slowly formed a tired, bitter smile. "They think he'll take me out. They found out I've slowed up."

"Ya can outbox him," Bubba said anxiously. "He won't take you out."

"Maybe so," Cole said, surprised that anyone but himself cared.

"You'll make a fool out of him," Bubba said and went back in the kitchen.

Cole shook his head. "What happens if you lose?" Flagstaff said.

"Might go to Mexico," Cole said and as he thought of what was coming Wednesday night, his voice became void of hope or emotion. "Go down there, drift around. Try to stay out of jail."

He stood up. "I have to go," he said.

When he was opening the door, Flagstaff said to him: "You try to outbox that boy, but if he puts you down, you stay down. Nobody but a fool tries to be brave."

"Ain't any honor in taking a dive," Cole said.

"Can honor stitch up a cut?"

Cole went out. When he was at the corner, the cold wind whipping him, he looked back at the cafe, at Flagstaff sitting there, wise, inscrutable, tempting him to forget all the things that had once mattered, to keep going in the direction he'd taken when he walked out of the ring today.

And he thought again of his room. Some men needed a girl at the close of a day, but he needed something else--a quiet, dark room, a place free from Mexicans and waiters named Bubba and fat beer truck drivers, a fine, secret place
where he could sit in the gloom and remember how it used to be, when he was young and brave, when his legs were strong, when he charged out of his corner at the first bell, punching so fast his hands were two dark blurs.
The Moody Blues--In Search of the Lost Chord

Just by looking at the cover design, one can readily see that In Search of the Lost Chord is indeed a special album. In Search of the Lost Chord takes the Moody Blues, as well as the listener, on an expedition to reach the chord called 'OM' in the Hindu scriptures. 'OM' is the most powerful word of concentration which one can use during meditation, and means 'God', 'All', 'Being', 'The answer'. One is said to achieve the desired state of mind by intense concentration upon the meaning of 'OM'.

From the frenzied "Departure" on Side One to the peaceful "OM", the last song on the album, the Moody Blues' instrumentation and lyrical ability is quite impressive. In general, all that can be said about In Search of the Lost Chord is that the Moody Blues have come up with a thoroughly beautiful and thought provoking expedition into the many-faceted region known as 'consciousness'.
The child

The child bends
to pocket
each pretty pebble,
But, finally tiring
of his labours--
scatters--
With a savage kick
the hundreds yet
to search through.
Child people lost
Heave themselves up
By vines in the trees
To look far ahead;
And when they see
How to go,
They swing easily down
And run free.
Petal by petal
the child pulls the
kaleidoscopic beauty
of a rose to pieces.

And as he
minutely examines
each uniquely
veined part,

He has no glimmering
of why he fears
the wholeness
of the flower.

But some vague
nudging of instinct
causes him to need
to destroy it.
Black lightening

Black lightening
streaks the
clearness
of the
crystal fragile
fineness,

The grey
whisperings
becoming
armor against
piercings
by
light,

Or an
intolerable
smoky
pressure
to
strain against
until
the
whiteness of shatter.
The Strayed Reveller is alive and well in Nacogdoches. We hope it will stay that way. This marks the beginning of our second year of publication (and there were those who said we couldn't keep a monthly magazine going at S.F.A.). The quality of the material in our magazine depends entirely upon the contributions of students, faculty, and friends of S.F.A., and so far we have been pleased. As a matter of fact, the first story published in our magazine has been sold to a commercial magazine.

Those of us who put the magazine together do so in the belief that a university the size of S.F.A. needs and deserves a literary magazine for its students. We hope that you will be interested in our magazine and will help us by reading The Strayed Reveller, sending us your essays, poems, short stories, reviews of books or movies you have found interesting, or any art work you think we might be able to use. We are also in need of students to work as editors, typists, and staff members.

Temporarily, the office of The Strayed Reveller is in Room 409 Ferguson, the new Liberal Arts Building. Please come by with your contributions, your praise, or your complaints.

The Editors
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Cover of Strayed Reveller----Terry Whistler
Sat'd'y- 1 -Michael Owens
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Black Lightening-26- P. B.

Susan Radig------typist and more
Rodewald------censor, advisor, or less

David Lewis------last lost editor

the strayed reveller
The heart rejected the new body.