

THE REFRIGERATOR #6

"THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG IN ROCHESTER, NEW YORK"



Lines From The Newest Dance

Then, what I say about the Ice Ages, however that

Got into the conversation, is that they persist

As a powerful

theory, an image that a textbook can refer to in a kind of courtship with schoolchildren.

In the living room, you pull the statuette off the Mantle and brandish it, dearly, like for demonstration,

Like concretely, while you're wishing all the guests

Would go home. It's the Ice Ages, surely, for a long

Moment! That's where they are, all remote epochs.

There isn't any way to get rid of them, or the sense

Of great confusion. I say, they are bigger now, more

Magnificent, sprawling, bigger now than ever and

Climactic in import. Your half-baked ideas are about

To influence history, in the making. I believe in them,

Really, and everything I hear of-like the railroads.

Go ahead, I say, defend the railroads, and denounce

The existence of so many parking lots in town.

Conversation is so quaint I don't trust people to

Even bother to get back to the topic, randomly that

They were talking about. I enjoy it when they detour,

Leave the chairs askew and say goodnight, still

Talking as they go out the door with their jackets

Carried along, not accustomed yet to the cold weather.

I'm not surprised the next day, during phone calls,

That all great subjects incidentally fall away.

Creation from nothing seems to require this

Erratic pattern of the partners in the newest dance.



Bathtubs I have Known and Loved, Part 1

It is an intrinsic part of a woman's life to bathe. Few

men know the pleasure of warm water and soft flowers.

They relax muscles and ease tension, filling the self. Showers are too busy, and for me they fade as fast as the water pours by. The baths I have taken remain distinct.

I visited Knoxville, TN. last summer and took two baths I'll never forget. It was July, sweltering, and the bathtub was a heavy claw footed porcelain. The walls were thick layers of white with red trim. Baby cockroaches crawled out of the faucet, a mild distraction. The Severed Heads played on the stereo and I was cooled and cleansed by Dr. Bronner's Eucalyptus soap. Giant tepid water in a strange city, alone. My host was at work. I lay down and let the minty soap water take me in, filling my ears and making me hollow. Later I walked around the house naked,

feeling the warmth of the sun and the breeze of the fan. And to be hollow was to be good, for everything could be taken in and made a part of me.

want.

Of course if I don't keep staring at the snow-covered cars, I'll lose the sense of mystery and won't have anything to write about anymore.

Inspiration isn't cheap in society, you know. And all those Arts Supports Grants out there--it's really chilling, actually, there are about five grants I could apply for right now and probably get them. It could mean I'd have to start having breakfast in the morning (I can see the chain reaction), to fortify myself, instead of wandering around in my bathrobe until any damn hour I please. Yea, maybe for the sake of the content of the poems . . . I don't wish them to be classified.

Maybe for the sake of the . . . snow covered cars! Nor do I want freedom, financially, particularly. What would I do with it? Buy a four track tape recorder and indulge in experimental radio broadcasting? I can see the whole chain reaction!

The truth is, when you are happy everything strikes you as supportive. I've got little societies waiting for me in several places in town, plus even if I just stay home . . . things happen. I've got all these notebooks to sort out, and at least three major pieces to finish. All the bottles in the stairwell probably total over twelve dollars. And tomorrow the kids have off from school, so I promised to take them to the video game store. What I mean is, there isn't really a moment that is right to fill out the applications, for all these wonderful supportive grants out there. So I guess I'll read about it in the newspaper, who's been lauded with the larger this time.

The practical thing to do is . . . count your pennies, and relate them to the month of February, like abstractly. Then sort out the unread mail, if there is any, and consider polishing the desk. When I arrive with a cup of coffee, I am incredibly lucid, these days. I think, this is shocking--to be alive!

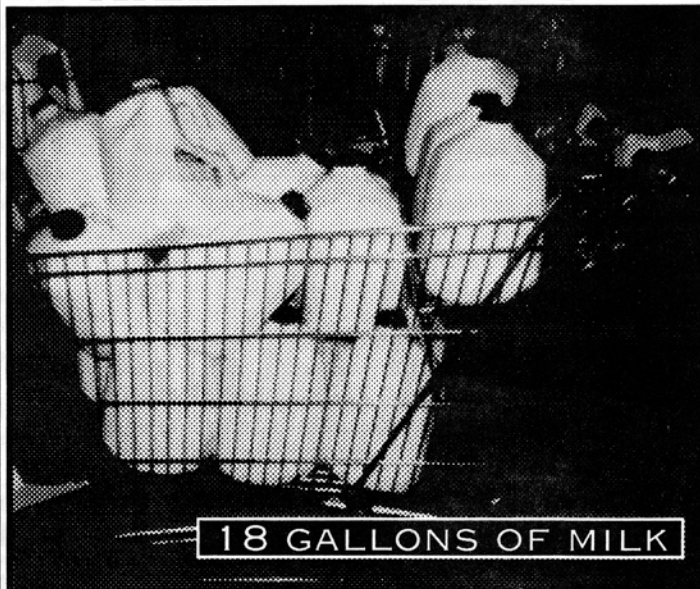


I never remember receiving Canadian quarters as change but I can't spend one without wondering if

some people drive to Canada with their paycheck, say, and trade it in for quarters that they put in circulation down here. I

mean the things are worth about 17 cents.

I WAS KILLIN' BEFORE KILLIN' WAS COOL



18 GALLONS OF MILK

We fill our car about once a week. It's expensive but it's supposed to get cheaper with the outcome of that nasty little disturbance in the gulf. "It always has been cheaper than milk" our friend said. The newer pumps almost go faster than my tank will accept the gas. I was trying to picture how much fuel I put in there and I got to thinking about buying 18 gallons of milk a week.

I was riding my bike down Atlantic Avenue when this guy stepped out of his pick-up truck. His knees seemed to buckle a bit under the weight of his own body. Without missing a beat though, he spread his legs and hiked up his pants while tucking his shirt in. It was a Desert Storm teshirt and his classic posturing seemed particularly proud. The flag on his shirt was swollen by his gut as he strutted into the Hideaway for the afternoon strip show. Yeah, Viet Nam, The Movie, Pt. II, and this time it came out right!

It would appear those yellow ribbons actually served to hold up a few of the trees in our neighborhood during the recent ice storm.

I have to say the military camouflage colors for The Gulf War were ugly. They looked ugly on TV as a backdrop for the Bob Hope Special. They look ugly on the shelf at Godiva's. Generals Schartzcoff and Powell won't take the freekin' things off. They look like they're walkin' around in their pajamas. The Viet Nam camo colors were much cooler.

America has been to the Hardware Store. We are surrounded by flags on our street. When it was my turn to take the flag down in grade school I learned a whole lot of rules about this thing that we carefully folded into little triangles. Like never let it touch the ground. Take the damn thing down before dark and when it becomes torn or frayed it should be disposed of in a dignified way by burning it. Yes, it is ok to burn the flag.

Remember that old sixties song, "War, what is it good for, Absolutely nothing"? What a load of shit that was. War is good for the economy, the defense industry, the price of gas. War is good for the media business. Most other cities are in withdrawal from the huge headlines. We were fortunate enough to have a natural catastrophe fill the gap, complete with uncensored photos and RG&E briefings for cryin' out loud. But most of all, war is good for our moral.

It's a pity about those 100,000 or so Iraqis we buried in the sand.



Snow Covered Cars

When I think of all these NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) grants I could apply for, it makes my head swim. The street, though, has been seized by a winter

wind, blowing snow in great quantities around, sort of like the dustclouds I could puff up if I blew on the surface of my desk. So, what relates to what? I mean, what applies to what, I mean, these things don't relate to one another: (1) the cozy alliance I might laughingly make with a future endowed with great financial support, and (2) the attention I must pay to the otherwise unnoticed skirmishes outside. Okay! I shut myself up in my office at night and I think, what a powerhouse I am! I can take life in any direction I



12 Little Pizzas

A friend told us he had to get going. We were drinking beer on a Saturday afternoon and talking. He said he had to make dinner for his kids and we asked him what he was making.

"You take one package of Thomas's English Muffins. Split them. Put one T. Ragu Pizza Quick Sauce on each muffin. Cover with green peppers and sauteed onions. Add four slices of pepperoni to each (that's about all that will fit). Grate Wegmans mozzarella cheese over the top and bake til golden brown. (12 to 15 minutes at 350°)."



The fundamental reiteration in the awareness that life is a mystery, which I continually cite in my own thinking and continually refer to in my writing, involves right with it the thrill that therefore a change of being is destined. We simply do not know the truth of existence, and it seems to be the thought of that invokes a promise that . . . we will.

Onions have some sort of amazing, restorative powers. I feel better when I eat them. Not just after I eat them but while I'm actually eating them.



Black And White Cat

This black and white cat we have is hilarious. He's always getting himself prepared for something, and then he doesn't know what it was. He's wide awake, but like for nothing. All day, all night if necessary, totally alert, and nothing phases him, he just stares ahead like he was waiting to exist. He's just standing on the table in the sunlight coming through the dining room windows, and looking at me, expecting nothing. Then he licks his paws for awhile, and gives it up like it were a doubtful enterprise. At his food dish, he might be eating--but so what, he might also walk over to his food dish, which he knows is always in the little hallway between the kitchen and the front room, across from the back stairwell where we store empty bottles, and--well, he might just walk over there and stare at the food dish, walk proudly away and meow at me. He doesn't even stop to see my reaction, but just goes and finds another place to stand, doing nothing. I say to him, "what is it, Buster?" But he's found a sheet of paper and lain down on it, he's going to try that for awhile.

This black and white cat is sort of without emotion, I think, but he seems to want to care deeply about something. I mean he can't care superficially, but is waiting to . . . care deeply. The light is completely captured in his eyes. You can't make him look at you, but he will look at you, if it occurs to him on his own time. He'll go to sleep on the book you are reading, and if you wake him up he'll wander away, without a word. Of course, he doesn't talk, but you think he could talk, he just doesn't feel like it. He wasn't really tired anyway, it was just an idea. Well, everything is ideas with this cat. He's staring at the wall for awhile, that's an idea. I say, this cat is hilarious--we all think so. But he's the kingpin in the house; when I watch the cat I see the rooms, I see the furniture and the rugs, the whole backdrop for his inconclusive wanderings. The cat makes the house totally vivid--like, if he's sitting under the lamp, it's like he's setting up for a photograph of it, himself and the lamp. He's a natural poser. From across the room, asleep on the couch, it's not just the cat, but the blue flowered couch that has leapt into view.

If I'm alone in the house with the black and white cat I end up lightly walking about sort of like he does, mysterious and silent, comfortable with the place, not giving it a whole lot of credence, but living there, meanwhile. And if sounds do occur, like the children are coming back from school, of course you're going to perk up, without wholly changing your routine. And when one of the children says, "hey, where's Buster?", you know what to tell them, because

you remember exactly where you saw him, and he's probably still there, if was three minutes ago or an hour. I think, that's it, the cat manages to inform me what he is doing all the time, even though he never directly communicates. He's got indirect communication down pat, and he is totally aware of all of us. I say, "Buster is upstairs sleeping on the yellow chair in the office", and that image is known, it is so plausible anyone in the family can accept it. Then, the cat is coming down the stairway, and we always think, "he wants something." He even cries out slightly as he walks, so we open the door to see if he wants to go outside; but that isn't it, he tells you when he wants to go outside, virtually walks you to the door if that's the case.

This time it's more a matter of not knowing what he wants. So my son, who is the cat's official owner, he's had him since he was a tiny black and white cat he could hold in his hand, my son tries to get him to join him on the couch, but the cat doesn't want that, he jumps down and walks halfway across the living room and stands there, midway from everywhere, staring into space.

I think, his cat is basically happy, like he's as happy as he's going to be, nothing displeases him radically. Maybe he's slow on affection, but it's there--potential feelings. I think he wonders why he exists--seriously. He would not describe him as an animal, actually, I mean he does have appetites and apparent needs, but he operates more on whim, or gives the appearance of that, which means he is essentially whimsical and can take or leave most situations--in the house at least. Legends are built up around him when he's outside, of course, sometimes we see him streaking across the street, and he gets in fights outside, and comes back to the house sore and injured, and races down the hallway to his food dish like after consolation.

It's hard to believe he takes all that seriously, though, when you see him sitting in the window, looking at the outdoors like to study its shapes, or waiting for the winter to be over. You can't even wonder what will happen to this cat, ultimately, for he seems to not exist in time, but just in moments, like he's hilariously indifferent to life, and yet he's alive, you get the impression he knows that. Sometimes I think he knows everything--but that's like an idea the cat gave me, it's like he suggests that in reverse, because he clearly knows very little, but acts like it might be possible to know everything, and if he were more emotional, well, he might resent it . . . not knowing everything.

But the way it is, well, he's a black and white cat, existing in this house of walls, flowered walls and interesting, or rather ambiguous objects, so . . . what can you do, but it accept graciously, and wait to see what the final outcome might be.



Dessert Wars

Not the sandy kind, the sugary kind. R-Town has seen an explosion in dessert technology in the past decade, providing those of us with sweet teeth with a multitude of gustatory choices. In fact, if you are a fan of one type of dessert, carrot cake for instance, you can eat various versions all over town. My personal preference for carrot cake would be Aladdin's on Monroe. For pastries, I'd look towards Cheesy Eddies on South Ave or The Oven Door Bakery in Bushnell's Basin. This overly cutesy countryish bakery in the la-la land has the most mouthwatering selection of french style pastries in the county. It is worth the ride out 490 on a Saturday morning. There are tables and serve yourself coffee in good china cups and friendly people in the kitchen to ask questions. I'm

thumbs down on the extremely fussy atmosphere of Creme de la Creme on Alexander though I do admire what their kitchen is trying to pull off, patisserie-wise. For overall cake excellence, Sweet Stuff at the Little takes the cake (I couldn't resist). Combined with a film, they can't be beat.



This is the winter of our discontent. Shakespeare said it and he could well have been describing the plight of the live music fan during the February and March dol-

drums. With the exception of the Horse Flies at Jazzberry's, a sold out show that highlighted the desire for live original music, there has been precious little opportunity to rock and dance lately. There are bands on the sidelines like Buffalo Road, Big and Pretty and The Bootlickers and the Living who for one reason or another are not playing out. It would be great if there was no cover on Monday at Jazzberry's. New bands might get to play to a bigger house and could take their pay in exposure and experience. It would also give more people a chance to enjoy the atmosphere without having to dig deep for a cover on a work night.



Next Issue: First-hand account of Transcendian Rocket launch that ended The War In The Gulf.



Dear Refrigerator,

Here is a rice and beans recipe (recepee? recepie? recipe?) yes, recipe to top yours. I'm sure yours is good but this is better. I call it.... Gobi's Frijoles Negros Cubanos, serves six

1 large green pepper, diced; 1/2 teaspoon oregano
2 cloves garlic, crushed; 3 T. vinegar; 3 T olive oil; 3 whole pimentos, minced or equivalent pre-minced; 2 cans black beans; Sazón Goya con azafrán (spice sold in spanish section); 3 cups HOT cooked rice.

Saute pepper & garlic in oil until you get tired of waiting. Add everything else except rice. Simmer until cooked through. Serve on Rice.

Gobi

Dear Gobi,

With the exception of the Sazón Goya con azafrán your recipe is the same as the Beans & Rice Cubano recipe on the Goya Black Beans can and a favorite of ours. Our secret weapon has been one chopped jalapeño pepper in the oil. Your secret weapon entitles you to rename the recipe.

Look For The Refrigerator at Pyramid, The Little Theater, Kinkos, Jazzberry's, Godivas, Writers & Books, Aladdins, Sweet Shop, The Bop Shop, Borders Books and Hungerford's. 1" square ads are \$10. Call 288-0880 for info. Submissions are welcome.

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