

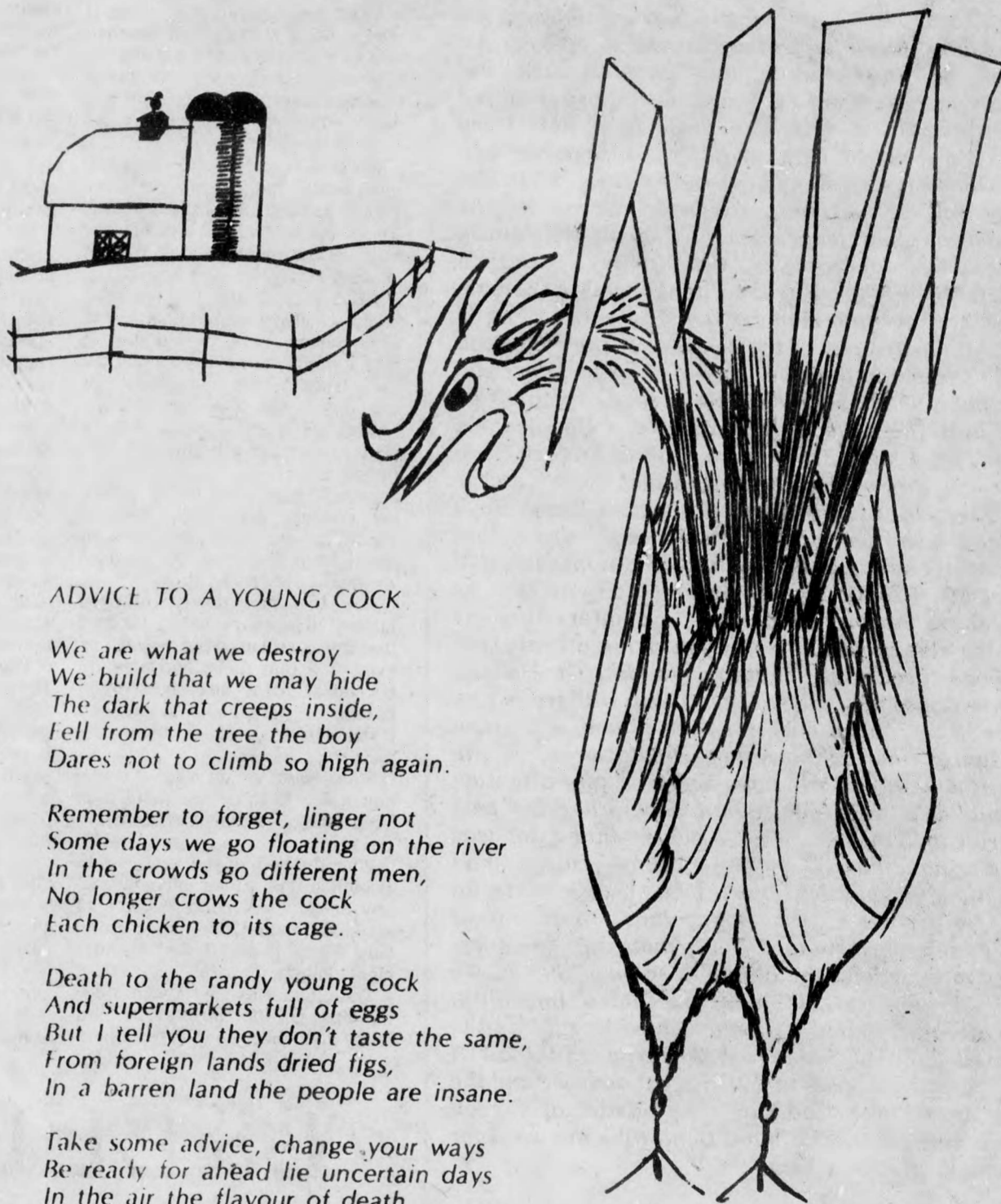
# poems by Le roy johnson

## ACADEMIC RITES

The rain god  
The sun god  
Fertility rites said the English Prof;  
Rain god, sun god, fertility rites  
Chanted the amazed class  
As they clutched hands and danced  
Around the oak tree singing symbolically  
Pocket full of posies, pocket full of posies...  
Led by the Prof in a religious baritone  
Beating furiously on an old skull-bone.

Human sacrifices to the gods' appeasement  
Were not unknown, he glared;  
The human sacrifices took copious notes  
And joyfully slit their throats.

The Prof standing in the gore  
Wiggled his toes gleefully,  
Blood is traditionally symbolic, of course,  
And calls for a poem, blood up to his knees,  
Blood is proportionally composed of distinct  
Definable chemical parts, however,  
That is not to say there is no beauty...  
Oh yes, blood is beauty  
Oh yes, blood is beauty;  
They sang as they all joined hands  
And joyfully danced in the gore of beauty.



## JOHN NEAT

When John Neat  
Found his brother  
in bed with his wife  
He went for his gun  
And shot his brother dead  
In a great rage.

At the trial we  
Were quite surprised  
To see that John  
Was wearing glasses  
Now at last  
And dressed in black.



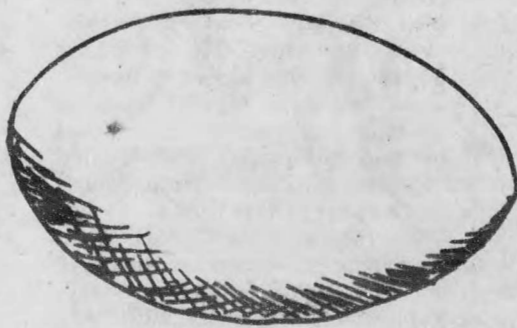
## ADVICE TO A YOUNG COCK

We are what we destroy  
We build that we may hide  
The dark that creeps inside,  
Fell from the tree the boy  
Dares not to climb so high again.

Remember to forget, linger not  
Some days we go floating on the river  
In the crowds go different men,  
No longer crows the cock  
Each chicken to its cage.

Death to the randy young cock  
And supermarkets full of eggs  
But I tell you they don't taste the same,  
From foreign lands dried figs,  
In a barren land the people are insane.

Take some advice, change your ways  
Be ready for ahead lie uncertain days  
In the air the flavour of death  
Be not certain that it is another's,  
Be careful and kind to your mothers  
Do not despise nor disdain your fathers  
Be strong, be bold, fear not pain  
In the end it shall not be all the same;  
Stock some food, buy candles  
For when the power goes out  
Only, you can light the night,  
Above all avoid all good advice  
Remember doubt breeds pestilence  
Avoid this too.



## OLD TOM

Old Tom follows a white cane  
With plodding feet and cap off center  
He offers pencils and razor blades  
To sounds of faceless feet.

Children halt their play and stare  
At a tilted grinning face  
Only to bolt colt like  
Before the tap... tap tap of his cane.

## LOVE IN A COLD ROOM

Sullen girl  
Shall we twirl about a sheet  
And make love  
Neat and subdued in winter white  
Or shall we  
Sprawl in disorder, love with passion  
Of careless summer.