

Photo by Ann Fulton

Lesley Choyce

(Between the Lines)

I am talking to you in a cafeteria
(We make love on platefuls of hamburgers, french fries, string beans)

I am sitting down to a cup of coffee in your room
(We make love in the spoonfuls of sugar, spilling cream)

I am at the laundromat while you wash our dirty sheets
(We make love in the damp tumbling heat of the relentless dryers)

I am calling you on the phone
(We make love stretched taut over wire and distance)

I am walking with you by the river at night
(We make love in the depths of the silt-laden polluted tide)

I am putting on an old record, resurrected from the dust
(We make love in the scratches, static and hiss)

I am performing a song which I wrote for you
(We make love between the strings in the sweet resonance of the wood)

I am saying I love you
(We make love in the vowels and consonants that swell up in our throat)

I am starting up the car to drive home
(We make love in the firing pistons, with the suck of air and gasoline)

I am writing a poem for you
(We make love in the empty spaces left after every line)

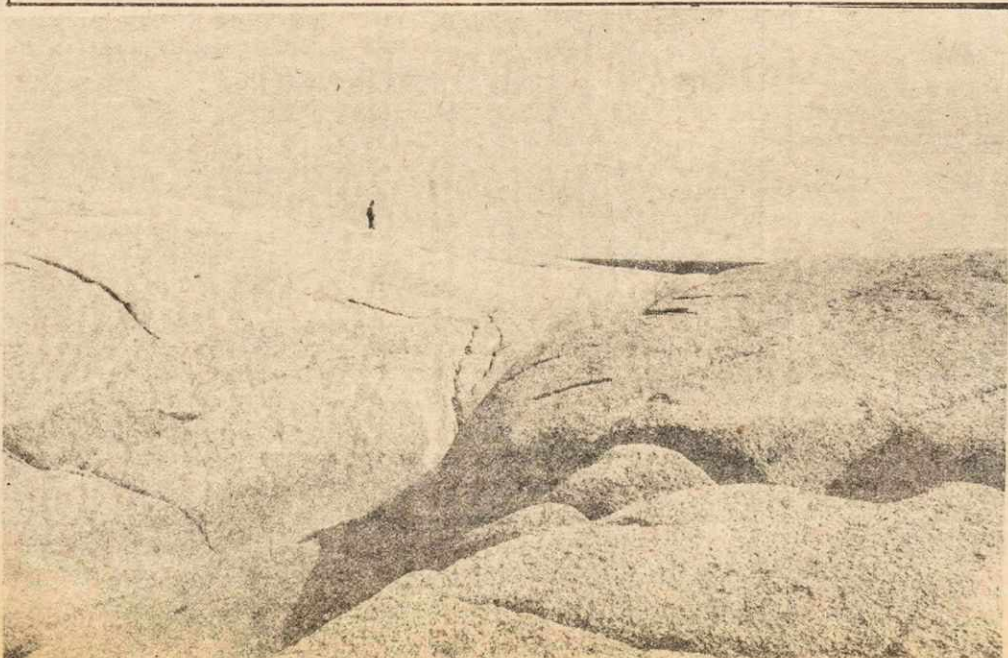


Photo by Hans Straub

Jim L. Power

The Brawl

Odd people live in odd places. The boarding house was dirty and smelled of urine. The dim and narrow hallway was carpeted with oilcloth that was worn, torn and turned upwards. Large holes dotted the gyproc walls. The toilet sometimes clogged with excrement; flocks of huge blue-bodied flies buzzed about excitedly. One old woman constantly threw dirty and tattered rags soaked with menstrual blood into the toilet.

I was heating some soup. Someone came up the stairs and walked to the end of the hall. Henry tapped and whispered, obviously afraid of being overheard. "Cheryl, hun, let me in." A rather indelicate profanity was hurled at him. She was a petite, pretty girl with a viper's sting. He remained, undaunted. He whispered in a pathetic voice, "Cheryl, let me in." "Go back to your whore, Henry." He tapped and pleaded for ten minutes and then left.

Twenty minutes later familiar steps sounded on the stairs. Tapping and whispering. "Get lost!" Henry stormed down the hall. A chorus of laughter resounded from Cheryl's room. Henry stopped at the top of the stairs, paused and returned. "Open the door, Cheryl," he said firmly and decisively. "Go fuck yourself!" "Please open the door." "No." He was begging. Everyone inside was laughing loudly. "Open the goddamned door, bitch!" "No." He lowered his voice, "Cheryl, c'mon, I gotta talk ta ya." "Your slut's calling you, Henry." There was silence for several minutes. Henry suddenly kicked the door with the sole of his foot. "Henry, fuck off, I just got a new lock." "Open up!" "No." Henry kicked the door with all his might and it flung open. The girls screamed, "You hit Cheryl." The heavy swinging door had apparently hit Cheryl in the face. Henry's friend was inside and they began fighting. Cheryl screamed and cursed. I opened the door and watched. Henry and his friend rolled around in the hall. Cheryl kept pulling Henry's hair and kicking him in the back. The screaming girls were only a few notes from shattering glass. Each time Henry's face was exposed Cheryl would punch it, not like a man, with the knuckles at the base of the fingers, but with the other side where the thumb curls in. Suddenly the two stopped and started laughing as if on cue. The girls stopped screaming. Cheryl started laughing. Her eye was bruised and turning black. They all went inside. An hour later everyone but Cheryl and Henry left. The echoes of the brawl were replaced by the rhythmic squeaking of springs.



The Lure of Peggy's Cove

Why do countless tourists endure the narrow, winding roads to Peggy's Cove? Why do locals burn the gold in their tanks to go there? There is an elemental fascination there, attracting foreigner and local alike.

The cove itself is quiet, tranquil and calm. One feels a sense of constancy, the peaceful living of life. We imagine a hermit sheltered in silent solitude. But go round the corner and a new world unfolds before you. The waves surge fury intense, pounding at the rocks like a prisoner at the walls imprisoning him. The rolling mountain sea bids you, dares you, to come within its reach. Do you understand the contrast? Peggy's Cove is a man. Any man can be quiet, tranquil and calm. It is one half of his nature. But each man has his little corner. Beyond this corner reigns wildness, frenzy and insanity. It is the other half of his nature. Peggy's Cove wonderfully illustrates the two aspects of Man's nature. This is the unconscious lure of Peggy's Cove.



Who Is My Brother?

Everyone has heard, said or thought the words, "I try to be a good man." One cannot "try" to be a good man. The word "try" implies a task or effort. The essence of goodness lies not so much in the performance of a certain deed as in the inexplicable pleasure Man derives from his own virtue. This feeling is God.

No man is a bastard outside the human family. Every man, from God's first Adam until Man's last atom, has been, is or will be a good man. This is the core of Christianity. To be a Christian one must be either blind or imperturbably optimistic.