

Home is a highway—no hangups and nothing to get hung about

*'I can feel myself moving with the wind,
through the trees slowly, can see the sky
through the window yet am a part of it,
no hurry, no fear, timeless'*

Because the city begins to bug me I have to leave. Now I see you lonely girl lost in your indifference, an island in a crowd of strangers. Are you thinking in the sun, merely lost in meditation or are you frightened of me and of all men?

And I . . . am sitting on a bus riding down the road, in early winter in Eastern Canada. Her face has the fine features of a Grecian urn and she is alone, unmoving, looking through the window at the world. I respect the silence. She seems beyond overtures, beyond motions of the game; I say to hell with it.

So I'm sitting reading Hemingway and the bus starts to move. The girl across the aisle ceases to become or ever was a person to be seduced because she looks like she might be good in bed.

A calm pervades my mind, stillness . . . cool. Read slow, heart beat distant slow, here

lies the gentle harbour, rest. There is no hurry now.

The earth is beneath the motion, I can feel it, understand it, the friendly trusting ache in it, the life-giving soil, the asphalt sea. Finding the vacuum I begin to wonder where I am.

This is . . . very calm, no hangups, nothing to get bugged about . . . can feel myself moving with the wind, through the trees slowly now, can see the sky through the window yet am a part of it, no hurry, no fear, timeless.

The girl across the aisle is part of it, back in the depths of my mind I can feel her presence and know she is lost in this silent worship. I know she isn't leaving, she shares her silence. There is a trust here, a communion.

There is no need to talk . . . look at her, or move to pursue sex, eat or sleep . . . have left the mundane, am lost in this stream, transcend-

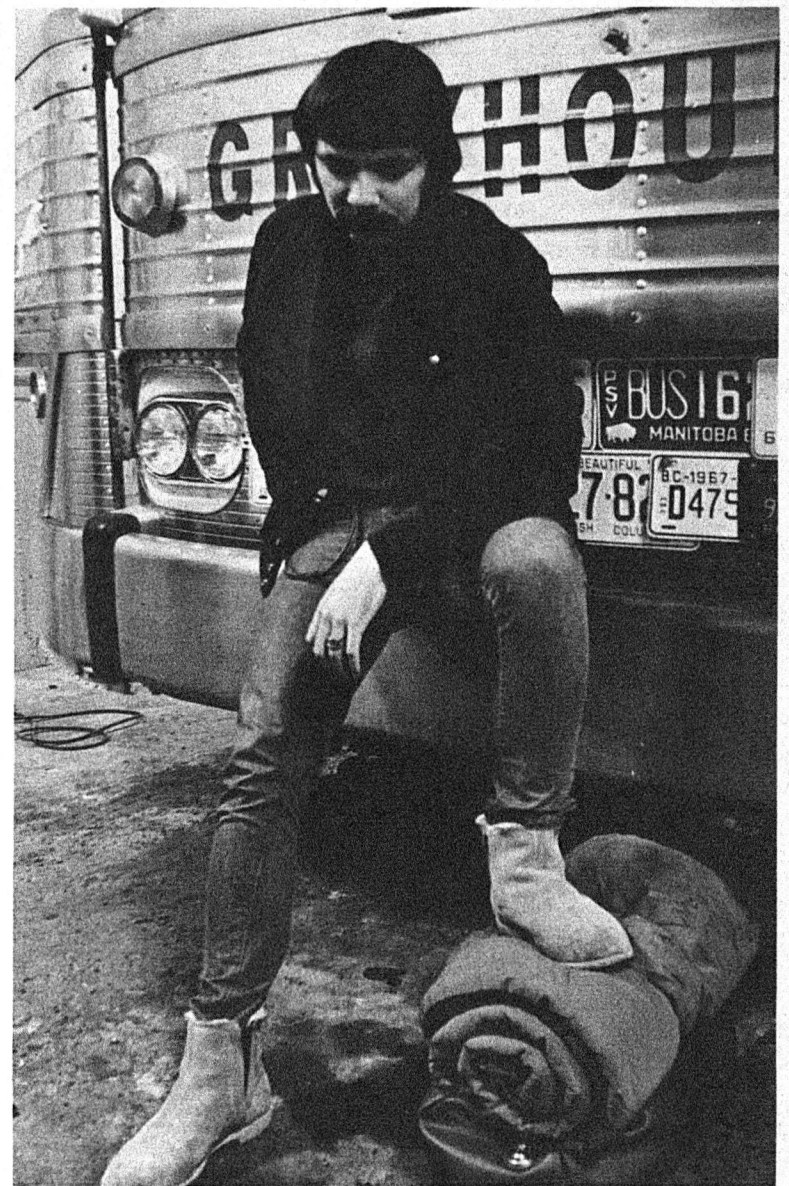
ed to nirvana. I have surrendered my individuality, the will to act, am very cool, have accepted this presence and am lost trusting in it.

No waves, no words now, not lonely is this cool.

Way back far below me begins a thread of thought, another voice talks to this very high me. Nice here. Yes very nice, cool . . . Can't stay here man. No, gotta eat, take care of the body, answer some drives, live this life . . . I can come back. Yes.

So I crawl back into my body, leaving just a thread to lead me back if I get time. I don't really know where I was or care. Maybe when the body's gone this . . . except that I'm not entirely sure this could last forever; I tell myself there is more, ecstasy, the passion of life, turning on to good music, feeling the seasons, a sweet woman, loving deeper.

So I come back to middle



A TRIP THAT LEADS TO GENTLE COMMUNICATION
... from the isolation of a vacuum

earth, reality, come down by going back forward and merely move my hand.

Cohen talked about ordinary ethereal music.

The girl across the aisle leans over, gives me a piece of gum and I say thanks. It seems I broke the spell. She smiles and I go back to reading Hemingway. Then I start to get shy little vibrations, tender little girl innocent signals, a shy gentle pulling at my fingers, gentle currents in my mind, subtle stroking eddies of the soul.

I look over but she seems attentive to the window. So I go back to Hemingway and can't concentrate because the contact is still there, I am still on her frequency. So when I felt her eyes upon me I turned and met her smile. Hello . . .

She answered, moved her coat. I went over and sat down.

She said she loved to wander, in a soft and English accent giving voice.

"I hitchhiked to Toronto and I got a ride with a trucker. Every time he stopped . . . By the time I got there I was so fed up that I thought I'd never hitchhike again, but I did," she laughed.

So we agreed that "People are afraid of each other". It didn't matter to me that I would never share her bed and there was no way, except to lose.

I didn't ask her name when the bus got to where it was going; she might have told me. We both had some place else to go. What's the use of trying to push the thing after you've been all the way to innocence.

I picked up my pack and she waited for her brother. Nobody tried to say goodbye. There are those who

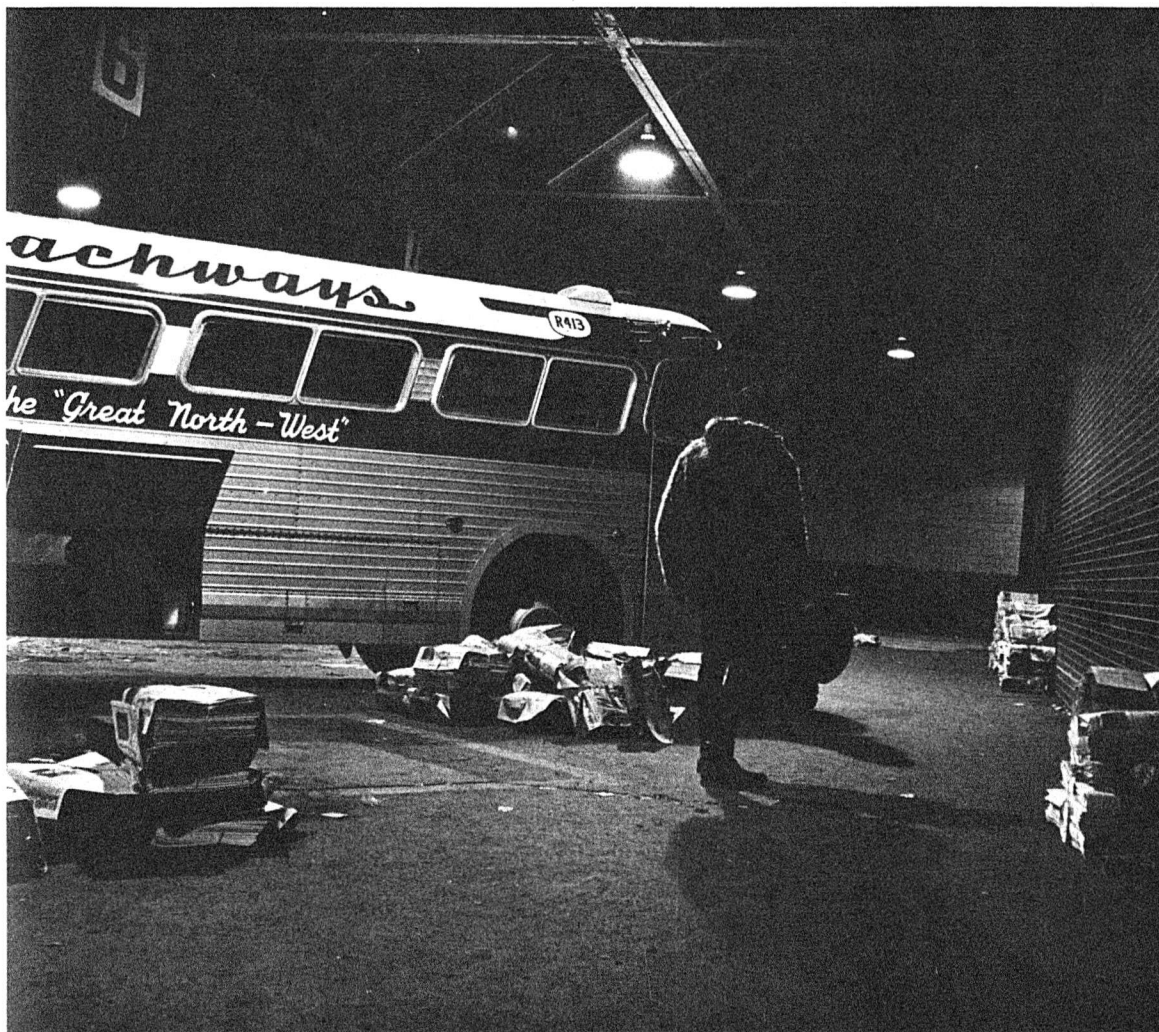
observations by
w. w. p. burns
photos by
b. s. p. bayer

would say she is a stranger but her thoughts are flowing gentle on my mind.

Leonard Cohen sings about Suzanne.

"You're sure that she can find you because she's touched her perfect body with her mind."

Now I'm going down the highway but somewhere there is a girl I talked to who understands it all and I can't help thinking I'm not alone.



FROM THE LONELINESS OF A CITY'S WINTER
... to the freedom of an asphalt sea.