

HUGH HOOD'S EDENIC GARDEN

Psychoanalysis Among the Flowerbeds

Patrick J. Mahony

with a reply by Hugh Hood

PSYCHOANALYTIC UNDERSTANDING, regrettably, is rarely brought to bear on contemporary Canadian writing. As a practicing literary critic and psychoanalyst I daily realize the harmony of my two disciplines, and I realize, too, that such interdisciplinarity can illuminate much modern fiction.

Any reader of Hugh Hood's *The Swing in the Garden* (1975) will begin his further critical appreciation of it by taking up Robert Lecker's indispensable essay, "A Spirit of Communion: *The Swing in the Garden*."¹ Lecker explores the novel's optimistic dimension through its four types of communion: the aesthetic, communal, transportative, and spiritual. First, as an aesthetic communion, the novel unites such opposites as the passing of ubiquitous time and the permanence of the swing in the garden, an emblem of security. In other words, art serves to unify the fragmentation within both time and space and yet transcends them. Innocence and experience, light and dark, spring and fall, the voice of the narrator shifting between the language of childhood, adolescence and adulthood — all these artistically fused components mimic the desire of Hood's central character, Matthew Goderich, "to see permanence coexist with change, one moving in the other." Second, in a communal sense, the novel strives to harmonize the holy and secular, and thereby sets up a parallel between the church and society as communal bodies. Third, pointing up the transportational theme, the train looms as the eminent symbol of national time and potential. The fourth kind of communion is spiritual intercourse, which is held to win out over the two divided worlds of romance: the upper idyllic childhood of happiness and security and the lower demonic world of experience, separation, pain, and fear. Lecker insightfully concludes that Matthew, seeking to return to the idyllic world,

exercises his memory, hoping as he does to recover through imaginative recreation a much more powerful version of a world which has been physically lost. Thus it can be said that the structure of *The Swing in the Garden* is essentially ironic, in that the voyage toward the end of the narrative actually describes a quest for its

beginning: the progression towards darkness is, for Matt, a movement into the light of self-discovery.

I would like to use Lecker's conclusion in order to orient the question of my central concern: What kind of personal relationships did the young Matthew have which determined the four kinds of communion marking the orientation of his adult life? Granted that developmental and maturational factors were involved and that there were ripening cognitive capabilities that influenced the older Matthew's choice and understanding of that tetradic communion, we must nevertheless not overlook earlier factors such as narcissistic hurt, emotional deprivation, sibling rivalry, supercargo strictures, and overdetermined ego ideals which shaped Matthew's integrating strategies in the face of frustration, fragmentation, and incoherences in his life's experience.

Let us now attend to the data and psychodynamics of Matthew's three-generational home setting, starting with his mother's side. The maternal grandmother, Madame Archambault, was an unbending arbitrary spirit, indeed the very incarnation of law. Of the four grandparents it was only she who would hazard a wounding word. Not much is said about Grandpa Archambault save that his favourite grandchild was Tony, and just about nothing at all is said about the paternal grandparents. By and large, the story we hear shows an alienation from the two sets of grandparents, especially the maternal ones. The normal leverage and freedom that a grandchild seeks from his grandparents as a relief to daily parental strictures seemingly did not obtain in Matthew's young life. We are not surprised to learn, therefore, that Matthew's cravings for admiration and love from his own parents were so much the stronger.

Matthew's mother, a displaced French-speaking Quebecer in Ontario, the first university woman in her family, was a convinced early feminist, avidly given to reading class-conscious novels even though they were second-class literature. To her children she presented the image of being firm, distant, eminently fair, and responsive to all their needs except the most fundamental one: their need for tenderness and expression of physical affection. Although Matthew felt that there was no other woman "more reasonable and less dogmatic than she," he was also subjected to her lack of empathy and loving introjection, manifested by her consistently using adult syntax with her small children. In light of such deprivation, he sought and became the pet of neighbourhood mothers. Though his mother never hit him, neither did she caress him; remonstrance was habitually of a highly controlled nature purged of affects, and so typical were the mother's critical words "silly" and "idle" that at times our hero would have preferred being spanked. Apart from the need for a more immediate discharge, Matthew's penchant for physical punishment was deeply motivated by a wish for libidinal contact with his mother; the forbidden incestuous libidinality of that wish would accordingly have been simultaneously satisfied and paid for by a punitive smack.

Hence a masochistic nucleus in Matthew's female relationships. Another point worth making concerns Matthew's ambivalence toward the earliest fusional, symbiotic relationship he had with his mother. He subsequently tried to detach himself from such a strong tie, and at the same time he ever mourned for its passing. Curiously it was he rather than younger Tony or the elder Amanda Louise that was sensitive to the flicker of their mother's eyelids and could detect a secret amusement behind them. We are not taken aback to discover the uneasiness and the tentativeness of Matthew's feeling about being the untold object of her affection; so on page 67 we read "It's possible that I was her favorite," and then over 100 pages later, "I was almost certain that I was her favorite."

Caught between his grandmother's tyranny of morality and his mother's tyranny of reason, Matthew suffered an accumulative trauma wrought by the absence of a sustained, tender solace which has its own exclusive claim to primacy in a well-rounded life; exclusively reasoned expression should be held to limits in social intercourse. Here we cannot forget the appropriate words of Edgar in the antepenultimate line of *King Lear*: "Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say." To repeat: Matthew's compensatory reaction drove him to seek affection from maternal substitutes in the neighbourhood and it was their dandying him which influenced his permanent penchant for female friendship, significantly meriting the divine epithet "thank God." Matthew's particular preferences for girl companions actually reflect the two sides of his own mother: he preferred those ignoring him or those who were distant princesses. Admittedly his subsequent role before women was submissive, bearing the traces of irrecoverable unfulfillment from his mother who had precipitated him prematurely out of childhood.

Upon reading the novel who can avoid the impression that Matthew was ushered too soon into adult life? We hear tones of complaint in his memory that his mother never babied him after he learned to read at four. But if his babyhood was not well received, we may assume that neither were his recurrent yearnings as a child to regress. Behind a too easy acquiescence to his father's decision to delay entrance into primary school for one year because of his relatively small stature, we sense the compensating gain of staying one more year close to the maternal hearth. It stands to reason — and more so to emotion — that at nine Matthew still wanted to be babied, though he avowedly concealed this strong wish. One gathers that the well-articulated discourse prescribed for everybody at home was enlisted in the service of fending off feelings, including sexual ones, which might have been focused on if the family members had listened more to their silence. Indeed we are told that "too great readiness of self-expression inhibits and finally dissipates delicacy of feelings" and that Mr. Goderich "often found his vocabulary inadequate to his feelings."

Next in order of our consideration is Matthew's father, whose obsessional character structure is pointed up by his intellectualization, scrupulousness, puni-

tive superego, doubt, suppressed feelings, a controlling guilt, and compulsive repetitiveness. If he was like his wife in his highly controlled criticism, he was unlike her in his repetitive expression. One of his favourite phrases was "Perhaps I have not made myself clear," a telltale statement highlighting not only his obsessional concern for clarity but also a hesitating doubt and scrupulous exactitude as signaled with the word "Perhaps." We often hear his hatred of wilful obscurity leading him into recurrent circumlocutions and efforts at clarification, a verbal characteristic which was one with his dislike of any ambiguity in social relationships. Here we immediately think of the repressed hostility typifying the obsessional who is given to control his deep-seated ambivalence by reaction formation as a defence — hence the overdetermined concern for unambiguity. A further insight into the father is provided us by the revelatory titles of the two books he authored as a philosopher. The first, *The Place of Conceptual Thought in Ethical Judgments*, Matthew well opined, reflected the "impossible task of throwing the net of logic over instinct and feeling." Neither are we astonished that an anal retentive character would devote his political book strictly to *Property and Value*. At this juncture, implicitly acknowledging a paternal identification, Matthew avers that while the book told him enormously about his father it disclosed "far far too much about himself."

Was the father a sufficient masculine model for his son? With the meagre information we are given I doubt it. But the most intriguing declaration we find about the father is his confession that no one enters the teaching profession without a very good reason which he is anxious to conceal. We know that an unfortunately inevitable part of a teacher's role forces him into the position of being judge, corrector, dominator. Did such a role channel Mr. Goderich's aggression which elsewhere gave rise to anxiety? He was a pacifist and would not have enlisted in wartime service even if he could have. His quixotic belief that hiring was a really Christian act whereas firing was inconceivable might have found a release of an affective damming up in the teaching profession where grading constantly involves sanctionary acts of approval or disapproval.

We might profitably pause to reflect on Matthew's domestic situation when his two parents are taken together as a dyadic unit. The Latin maxim *Summa iustitia est iniustitia* (extreme justice is injustice) well describes the Goderich household where reigned the parental lack of appropriate emotional response, of warm love, to their children. Between themselves the parents had three ideals, in order: the loving caress, hard thought and political commitment. Eliminated from the first ideal, Matthew got what comfort he could from "hard thought" (the polysemy of the adjective hardly escapes us). Excluding their children from the loving caress, the parents displaced, putting an excessive weight on justice, an interactional ideal rooted in the repressed hostility of a sadistic superego. A rare, direct return of the repressed took place when, without any consultation, or better yet,

without giving any mention, the parents withdrew nearly all of Matthew's bank account to pay for rent and food.

WHILE REDUCING PERSONAL FLEXIBILITY, an atmosphere of extreme justice promotes castration anxiety and conflicts in one's internal negotiation of further separation and individuation. Overall the novel describes the fate of certain middle class virtues relatable to justice but vividly scrubbed of any libidinal dye. Guided by entrepreneurial ambition rather than by passion, Matthew immediately forsook his infatuation with Letty when he could not succeed in selling a newspaper subscription to her mother. Yet even though extolling middle-class virtues such as steadiness, thrift, prudence and survival, Matthew the narrator fights against being classed (here we see the great developmental impact of separation and individuation on Matthew's life, starting from spatial perception and extending in a continuous line to ambitious strivings). Hence, in spite of having risen to the professional status of art historian, Matthew insists he is the same man as he always was, and more than that, recognizes no one as either superior or inferior. There is something true and false in such a statement: false in that it tends to de-differentiate, to deny differences and to discount for the moment the perilous flight into self-distinction marking Matthew's life from childhood to adulthood; true in that it represents the nostalgic wish for symbiosis, fusion, and the collapse of ego boundaries. So threatening are the fantasies of fragmentation that Matthew astoundingly declares: "Schizophrenia is illusory: you can't break a person." This denial encapsulates the conflicts of the narrator who struggled against his restraining line and, with the arrival of his mother, came near to tears because he could not embark on the passing caboose, "the most romantic image of my infant fantasy life." That yearning for departure strikingly contrasts with Matthew's earlier avowal about that first expulsion which, "psychiatry to the contrary, is nothing to what follows, successive expulsions outward toward larger, larger, less enclosed spaces."

Briefly, ego ideals and moral constraints shaped Matthew's sense of place on various levels. The swing returning to the same spot made the young Matthew very cranky, for it was a symbol of status quo as opposed to enviable progress; yet this attitude did not develop without some ambivalence, for he subsequently envied shiftless people to some extent, comparing their lot to his tiring constant movement toward progress. Furthermore, in compensation for his lack of security and preferential place in his family, the young Matthew always rooted for the winning side, not for the underdog. This reactive determinant was joined along with his acceptance of the family's ego ideal of optimism to a "savagely superstitious" character trait which, based on magical thinking as it is, listed among his arsenal of self-protective measures.

As we shift focus from Matthew's parents to his siblings, we are thrust evermore upon the exceptionality of his innocent world. Overall the novel is bathed in the tradition of such fictional series as those of the Rover Boys or Tom Swift, where innocence, adventure, excitement, invention, and travel set a major tempo. The nigh prelapsarian innocence of Matthew's youth prepares us for his later retrospective comment about those moments when "the sinless facade of middle-class society only conceals depths of the same innocence." However, if we accept the existence of a child's intensely passionate life in terms of rage, envy and sexual cravings, we are inclined to see large elements of denial and repression in Matthew's portrayal of innocence and his downplaying of persistently strong negative emotions. We hear nothing about incestuous fantasies of childhood sexual games between the protagonist, his four-year-old sister Amanda, and his three-year-younger brother Tony. Neither do we come upon any rageful reaction to the fact that Amanda was the maternal grandmother's favourite and that Tony was the maternal grandfather's favourite. It is of the highest significance that the latter's dying words — "How's little Tony?" — comprised the only set of last words recorded in the family history. Those words, repeated by Mr. Goderich who admired his father-in-law, bespeak, *inter alia*, Matthew's estrangement from the male grandparental and parental figures in his family.

From a perusal of *The Swing in the Garden* one could draw up an impressive list of the narrator's minimalizing or disclaiming emotionally threatening activity: Matthew's childhood companions were remarkably free from indecency; his youthful visits to the graves of relatives were free of morbidity and were natural, like breathing; the four-year-spate of family poverty, resulting from Mr. Goderich's resigning his university post, left but psychically "tiny marks"; Matthew at four years of age could not have had a erection; before the age of six he knew nothing "of the decencies and indecencies of action"; he was merely annoyed by the birth of a younger brother who would share the family fortune; Matthew was not really jealous of his grandfather's preference of Tony. Because of the purgation of sexuality from Matthew's world, I looked in vain for explicit evidence of the family romance,² which is a predominant feature in children's fantasies. The rich narrative potential of such fantasies is undeniable: the child imagines that his present parents are not his real ones and that his real parents are aristocratic or famous; then again, the child may feel that he is a bastard or that his siblings are. The multiple motivations in this interpersonal drama include incestuous strivings, revenge, defensive degradation of parents or siblings, a compensatory exaltation of oneself, and an attempt to recover an idealized past when the greatness of one's real parents went unquestioned.

We may turn next to consider the universal fantasy of the primal scene whereby the child is a visual or auditive witness of a seemingly aggressive sadistic father making love to the mother. Derivative traces of this fantasy are of decidedly impli-

cit nature in *The Swing in the Garden*. Thus we read in serial fashion about young Matthew fitting himself into the “cockpit” of the captivating swing, twisting himself inside the heavy velvet curtains as if they were ancient robes, or that he, Amanda, and Tony shared the bedroom which in late evening hours occasionally assumed the character of a “cockpit.” Closer to home, the three remembered examples of the erudite vocabulary Mrs. Goderich used with her son — “investigate,” “proboscis,” “superannuated” — strikingly testify to the oedipal overdetermination of Matthew’s verbal selection: he himself wanted to investigate with his proboscis-penis his mother, thereby establishing the superannuated condition of his father. The wishful intensity for a superannuated father may also be gauged by the young Matthew’s mispronunciation (the novel revealingly says “misconception”) of the brand-new and powerful Ford phaeton, which sounded like “pah-thigh-on” from the lips of the castrated son.

In my opinion two particular traumatic events marked Matthew’s childhood. The first occurred at the age of three when Matthew had to contend with a new brother; an alert critic’s eye halts on one of the first sentences which Matthew had memorized verbatim, i.e., the father’s prophetic pronouncement to his wife, “We’re going to have a boy.” When the time came for christening, Matthew was left home with his grandmother while the rest of the family went to church. Put to bed for a slumber, Matthew woke sometime later with a sudden start (why?), was frightened by the deathly stillness of the house (his own lethal rage over the birth), got up and slipping on Amanda’s skate, tore his back on the edge of a wastebasket. Upon being bandaged, he was returned to bed in the dark room where we can listen to an after-account of his revealing thoughts: “I was emotionally overwrought, the rites of baptism, the claims of sibling rivalry and this stab in the back all mixed together. I felt guilty. I felt as if this wound were deliberately self-inflicted.” Feelings of abandonment, jealousy, envy, guilt and reactive masochism define the anguished Matthew and deposited their traces in a permanent dorsal scar, which his mother unsympathetically helped to turn into a brand:

My mother sometimes used to refer to this memento, not wholly joking, as the brand of Cain, this perhaps after I’d beaten up on Tony or broken something that belonged to him. And the Biblical reference, once I understood it, infuriated me. Tony was no Abel, I knew, and I was no Cain.

Thus the shift from a sadistic to a masochistic posture was abetted by the mother’s fratricidal inculpation.

The second trauma came from the hands of Marianne, Mr. Goderich’s restaurant employee, who publicly pulled down the pants of the nine-year-old Matthew and gave him his first and only physical punishment. Thereafter the crying boy was filled with both rage and passionate attraction toward her and even adored

her. He tried afterwards, abortively, to court more physical punishment from her. In the analysis of the scene offered by the novel, Matthew recovered from this incident without psychological damage and purportedly resolved the previous split in his attitudes between respecting the women of his household and both devaluating and mistreating any others. I would suggest that he redirected his hostility from family female members to female figures outside the family circle so that now any woman became a maternal centre of admiration and potential threat; in other words, castration anxiety, submissiveness, and self-assertion were groping toward a readjustment involving a disavowal of considerable fear.

We have now reached a vantage point where we might summarize Hugh Hood's impressive achievements: comprehensive vision, verbal genius, expertly organized narrative structure and movement, extraordinary dialogue, and astounding knowledge of literature and social history. As a psychoanalyst, however, I would have preferred that he joined to his memorable observations of personality an extensive examination of intrapersonal and interpersonal conflict. This said, we may resort to the psychoanalytic theory of Melanie Klein to clarify the creation of aesthetic beauty in general and Hood's in particular.³

Early infantile psychology for Klein is marked by the passage from the so-called paranoid position to a depressive one. In the paranoid position the child's psychic world is dominated by part or split objectives, either ideally good or thoroughly persecuting. The child projects impulses and parts of his self outside, with the result that he forms a false picture of the object, denies his own impulses and cannot differentiate between his self and the external object. Concomitantly he fears an attack on his ego by persecutory objects. Guilt exists but only as a simpler impulse, isolated and unintegrated; typical defenses at this time are splitting, idealization, denial, and projective identification (an unconscious defence whereby parts of the self are projected into the external object, which then becomes identified with those projected parts).

With the depressive position the child attains the stage where he sees people as real persons and also as whole objects being simultaneously good and bad. He introjects the loved object, which then forms the core of an integrated ego, yet he continually destroys and fragments with greed and hatred external and internal objects. The results are a predominant fear of the loss of the internal and external loved object; the attendant fear that fragments of the destroyed objects may return as persecutors; and a guilt for his attacks. Then the memory about his containment of the good loved object along with feelings of loss and guilt promotes the wish to restore and recreate the lost loved object outside and inside the ego (such a wish constitutes the foundation of later sublimation and creativity). If the child doubts his capacity to restore the loved object internally and externally, that object is experienced as irretrievably lost and the child's inner world becomes one of hopelessness. At which point, to protect itself from total despair

the ego resorts to manic defences — omnipotent control and a regression to paranoid defences.

The wish to create, rooted in the depressive position, involves some successful working through of mourning over lost objects. Successful symbol formation equally dwells in the depressive position. Since naming a thing means also losing it and acknowledging separateness, every aspect of an object and situation forsaken in the developmental process gives rise to symbol formation. Within this context the artist is often neurotic (like his readers) and may often lack complete objectivity but in two situations he exhibits a high sense of reality — in relation to his own internal reality and in relation to the material of his art.

Out of chaos, loss, and destruction the artist fashions a product which is whole, unified, and beautiful. As Rilke said, however, our difficulty is not to understand beauty but to bear it. Complete beauty makes one simultaneously happy and sad. Its seeming unchangeability expressing the death drive and its peacefulness constitute its terror. Preeminent among human activities, art confronts death, yet curbs it to the needs of the life drive and creation. From the fall will spring.

As much as these remarks on life and death might comprise an appropriate conclusion, I feel that I must add a final note about my own critical dilemma in this paper. I attempted throughout to analyze within the boundaries of the text and its depiction of character. At all costs I wanted to avoid completing the biographical details of the Goderich family as given. Yet at certain times I was drawn to conceiving a creative space of fantasy out of which the characters were shaped. My working presumption was that in that creative space either consciously or unconsciously the novel's dramatis personae were more completely imagined and subsisted in a more coherent line of psychic development. Nevertheless the essence of art is selectivity, and so to the extent that I have poached off bounds, I have will-nilly disregarded the artist's demand that he be judged on what he included, not excluded. Have I transgressed into a space where both fools and angels fear to tread? To apply my critical approach to what I myself have done, I could examine the very selectivity of my elaborations in that creative space. In the garden of criticism the swing never stops.

NOTES

¹ In *Essays in Canadian Writing: Hugh Hood's Work in Progress*, ed. J. R. Struthers (Erin, Ontario: Porcupine's Quill, Winter/Spring 1978-1979), pp. 187-210.

² See Freud's essay "Family Romances" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, tr. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1959), vol. 9, pp. 236-41.

³ For the next four paragraphs I am wholly indebted to the following article by Hanna Segal, Melanie Klein's principal living commentator: "A Psycho-Analytical Approach to Aesthetics," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 33 (1952), 196-207.

Hugh Hood replies:

IT IS A REMARKABLY VALUABLE EXPERIENCE for the author — the artist — to have directed upon his artifact the disciplined regard of the skilled psychoanalytic critic, whose special competence will often illuminate aspects of a narrative structure which conventional literary criticism will not detect. I have learned much from Mr. Mahony's examination of my novel, and I am extraordinarily pleased that in many places he selects for special attention precisely those passages which I had intended as high points, special moments of revelation, in the narrative.

I will begin a more specific response to his discussion by saying first that I have chosen the fundamental family unit, mother, father, three children, two boys and a girl, with four living grandparents in the background, because I believe that the greatest literature is built on the examination of intrafamilial relations, those of mother to son, father to daughter, brother to sister, or to brother, father to mother. One need only think of the great Greek dramatists, or the great novelists, Tolstoi, Joyce, Proust, to see how these fundamental human liens form the core of literary art. My epic series in its wholeness is a study of the epic journey of the family's knowledge of itself. It is important to state that *The Swing in the Garden* first presents us with a family structure which seems innocent and untroubled, but also one which will be understood more fully, with hidden motives and relationships more and more fully revealed as the sequence of twelve novels progresses.

In this first novel, we encounter the family as it is seen and understood by Matthew as a child. There is deliberate confusion of the persona of the adult, forty-five-year-old, narrator, and his child's vision of four decades earlier. I conceive the co-existence of adult and child in my narrator as one of the main technical devices of this initiatory book. The narrator understands/does not understand, AT THE SAME MOMENT, the conflicts in his person, and those which are inter-personal, in such a way as to allow these conflicts to lurk just below the surface of the narrative. Matthew is never certain exactly what his relationship with his mother or father is. He doubts as much at forty-five as at five that he will ever solve these motivational riddles, and at forty-five is just beginning to be able to rest content with half-knowledge, rather than insisting on resolution of all conflict.

The basic family situation is this: Andrew and Isabelle, the parents, are gifted and high-spirited people, richly-endowed by nature, who are ardently in love with one another, sexually and spiritually, in what I have attempted to depict as one of the great human love affairs. Their courtship is rendered, I believe, in *Reservoir Ravine*, in terms which justify this assertion. They are peculiarly for-

tunate people, even blessed people, to the point of an absorption in one another which excludes the rest of the world, the chief danger of the great love-affair. Their mutual absorption is entrancing for them, but perhaps unjust to their children. Matthew, in particular, has glimpses of a kind of sexual and spiritual Eden in which Andrew and Isabelle dwell, from which he is himself excluded, much as Cain and Abel were excluded from prelapsarian Eden. Matthew longs to enter the private kingdom of his parents' bliss, but knows that he can never do so. He would like to interrupt them, even to come between them, even perhaps to supplant the father in the relationship, and even perhaps the mother, in an intense and all-absorptive relation with his father. But these are impossibilities in life as it is socially lived, and Matthew forces himself to depart from this lost Eden of perfect understanding; this is signalled in the title, the swing in the garden away from perfect love and communion towards the "long fall."

In the actual family situation, then, Matthew constantly doubts the precise nature of his two parents' feelings for him, from a very early age. He is constantly imagining their perfect union, with Isabelle as "blushing, ardent girl," and this union is fully given in a later novel, but he feels distanced from them by the intense privacy of their obvious love for one another.

Matthew therefore suffers from the low-affect, relative coolness of his mother's treatment of him, and seeks a series of substitutes, Letty Millen, Alanna Bégin, Marianne Keogh, and develops a strain of masochism and a submissive posture towards women whom he admires which will colour his adult emotional life very deeply. He does not quite drive his siblings from the book (as Proust's narrator did Proust's own brother) but some of his later actions have the effect of alienating him from his brother very effectively. Matthew likes to believe that he is "his mother's favourite" but is deeply uncertain about it. His relation with his father is even more problematic, and it is in the analysis of this relation that Mr. Mahony excels. He finds here the source of the almost torrential legion of defences which both Andrew and Matthew Goderich erect, "throwing an intellectual structure over a flux of duration that cannot finally be contained." I have meant Andrew and Matthew to be men who see into things so deeply that their need to defend themselves from fragmentation in the "flux of duration" is clearly obsessive and compulsive. The intellectualizations, the categorizings, the skill in dialectic, the long lists and roll-calls, the continual attempt at control, before anything else, all are brilliantly picked out and thrown into relief by Mr. Mahony's analysis. I should call the passages following the opening paragraphs very distinguished psychoanalytic/literary criticism indeed.

The selection of the incident of the self-inflicted wound in the back, or "brand of Cain," and the primal masochistic scene of the spanking administered by Marianne Keogh, which issues in adoration of the woman who punishes, seems to me resoundingly accurate, as a choice of determinant indicators of the structure

of the narrator's emotional life. I intended these two incidents, with one or two others, to be specific keys to his development, and I am pleased that they have proved identifiable as such.

Mr. Mahony's concluding pages, which invoke Melanie Klein's notion of the progression from the paranoid to the depressive position, are not at first immediately clear to me, but if I judge them rightly, I conclude that they justify the sense, with which I have tried to imbue the novel, that joy and innocence may co-exist in and with terror, extreme anxiety, and the sempiternal fear of death. Matthew Goderich is a happy child and a driven "collector," terrified of fragmentation and increasingly afraid of dissolution, AT THE SAME TIME. The oscillation, the movement of the swing, is, precisely, the motion of time itself.

SANCTUARY

Mick Burrs

The accountant on occasion looks outdoors.
Where trees should stand
walls of brick have been planted.
Before his eyes the ruled sheets are laid
cold and null as algebra.

When he leaves the office he divorces himself
from alleys of dark ice that crust on his boots.
His day has now dwindled
to drops of black water
that bleed on the staircase of the building he lives in.

Inside his apartment he begins to see
small forests of crystals
sparkling, pencilled into opaque maps,
steaming countries to be explored
across his windowpanes.

Later, after dinner, he lies down in the dark,
and his eyes go, first, outside in,
then up the staircase in his brain
to another door, left open,
where the warm light guides him home again.