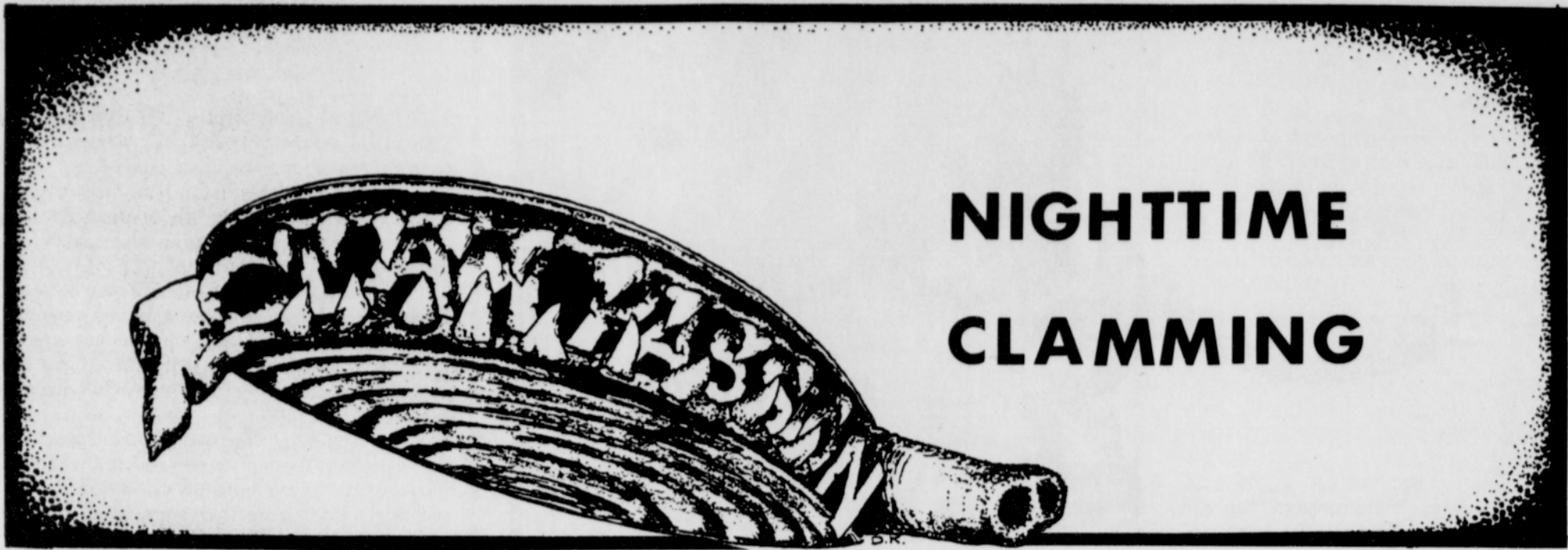




DRAWING BY DAVE KRON, ABNORMAL TIMES 4 (1988)

NIGHTTIME CLAMMING

RICHARD SCHULTZ 1952 - 1993

Richard Schultz was killed in an automobile last January 23, his 41st birthday. He and Sharon McClean were driving from Astoria through the coast mountains when Richard lost control of the car on a snowpacked curve and hit a pickup truck headon. He and Sharon were killed instantly, though the other driver escaped with minor injuries. Richard and Sharon were on their way to a birthday party in Portland his parents were hosting, and one can imagine the shock of grief when word of his death reached them as they awaited his arrival.

Richard's form of "consciousnesstreaming" was meant, he said, to be read aloud. The following three examples of his free flowing wordstream appeared originally in the marvelously original *ABNORMAL TIMES*, which, like Richard, perished far too early. Founded in Seaside in late 1987, *ABNORMAL TIMES* (which quoted Emerson on its flag: "Imagination is not the talent of a few, but is the health of all") lasted only four issues. The dates following Richard's stories indicate the issues they appeared in.

Richard also submitted a few poems to the Times Eagle.

-MPMc

HAIKU

January sun
Warms the east wind coastal town
The ocean is flat

Lonely figures stand
Black against the sea-gray sky
The cold fog is white

Cold rain blows sideways
His hands are red with fishblood
His nets need repair

(1987)

On a cold cold (whoosh) east-wind cold blowing January night with the black sky filled with bright silver stars John the gasstationman and I the-something (still haven't figured it out) decided to do a little nighttime clamdigging in that cold so cold wind that it hurt your mouth to breathe and the rum sure tastes good when your hand is so cold that the tips of your fingers sting and it hurts your skin (hurts until your hand goes numb) to put your hand down into that cold hard rough sand to pull out a clam and you feel its neck but your fingers are so numb that you can't get a grip on that smooth slippery neck but you feel it and you know it's there but your hands are too numb to pull it out and it was one of those cold nights that John the gasstationman decided to go clamming so I with the lantern bright with new mantle and gas glowing like a falling star on a cold clamdigging January night went down to the little gasstation in my old truck with the beach sand all over it and John was still counting his money from the days traffic and he was cussing about a starter that wouldn't fit and he just took the deer jerky out of the smoker the hot cayenne pepper deer jerky from the yearling James gave him and it was still warm and it was hotmouth burning cayenne hot and the cold wind felt good in your mouth and I said let's go hey it ain't gettin much warmer and the east wind blew gently against the back of my neck and John the gasstationman said let's go so the old tired truck filled with clam shovels and cold fingers growled through the small coastal town past all those big old sadfaced tired houses filled with nuthin but the memories of generations toward the hardsand cold beach and the flat eastwind ocean just barely breaking lake-like against the cold windy shore and the sky was so black and filled with those bright silvery stars and the truck growled like a tired dog and John bitched about the starter and the rum sure warmed your gut RIGHT THERE John the gasstationman hollered thats where they've been gettin em right there gasbobby told me right there they're gettin the big ones so the truck slowed and turned toward the surf and the headlights glowed against the white wavetips and the tired growling truck was put to sleep with the turn of a key and we stepped out into the cold night and the wind blew against our faces and stung us and we drank more rum and that cold wind was bitter but the surf was flat and they'd been getting clams so we pulled our waders and boots on and the boots still had a little water in em from last time and when that water hit our socks god our feet were cold so a little more rum was in order and the lantern was bright and new mantle lightdancing and the clamshovels were ready and the surf was flat you could hardly hear it and the wind was cold and our hands were cold and I thought of ottmilk pouring brandy and I could've easily persuaded to turn back but we pushed on the cold wind at our backs and that bright lantern ready glowing strong the only light on the beach and the clams were showing and our hands ached when we shoved them down into that cold sand and the clams were big and fatoozing over their shells and they were necking and I screaming down by the old fir stump I poked her in the rump and John laughing and us in wildfrenzyhighdigging clams going nowhere frozed in that hard mortar sand and our sacks full and our feet cold from being

wet in bootsocks and my finger bleeding numb from sharp razorshell cuts and the quiet surf breaking over our boots and the cold wind blowing against the rubber of our boots and our noses numb from the cold wind and our eyes watering from the cold wind and we finish off the last of the hot rum and walk back to the truck our sacks full and the new mantle bright lantern light shining up the dark sand and reflecting off the shiny tape on the old sandy beach truck and the rum still burning in the gut and the thought of ottmilk pouring brandy in the warm trapsand and the faces red with glowing warm-booze and I and John the gasstationman piling in the truck and our hands numb and me trying to turn the truck key but my hand too numb and us laughing and the truck finally starting and cold air coming out of the heater and finally we move back toward the paved streets slowly cutting our way through the dark beach night on the cold hard sand and the sky still dark and full of silver lights and we reach the paved road and we turn into the trapsand where its warm and ottmilk pours the brandy and we sit at the table and order more rum and we tell stories of the cold windy black beach and the black sky and I show them my bloody finger and my hands start to itch as they warm and those listening want to hear more and one wants to eat a raw clam so I go back up to the truck and get one and John the gasstationman cleans it and spathlare eats that shiny-slick thing with a smile and everyone smiles and everything is good.

(Dec/Jan 1987-88)

ASTORVISIONS

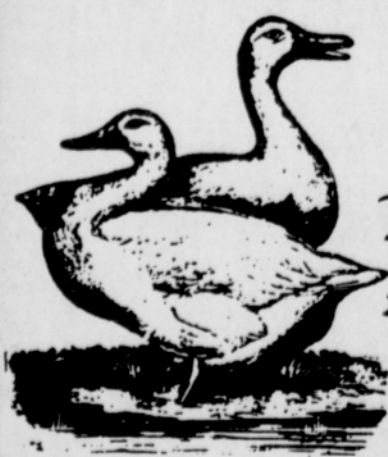
Walking through the seagulls and the
fishguts-in-hot-dumpster smell,
looking at the river.

Cannery workers sit on the pier,
smoking, drinking coffee, their knee-high
rubber boots flecked with fishguts
and shrimp casings.

Tired fishermen tie their boats
to the pier, their eyes sore from
looking at bright reflections
on the water, their faces twisted
with worry.

And I in my slacks and tie, carrying my
briefcase, feeling stupid, embarrassed,
inferior, my penny-loafers slipping
on fish slime.

(1988)



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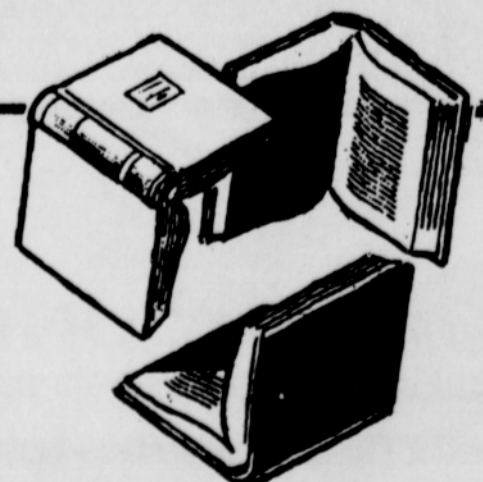
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Happy Valentine's Day!



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