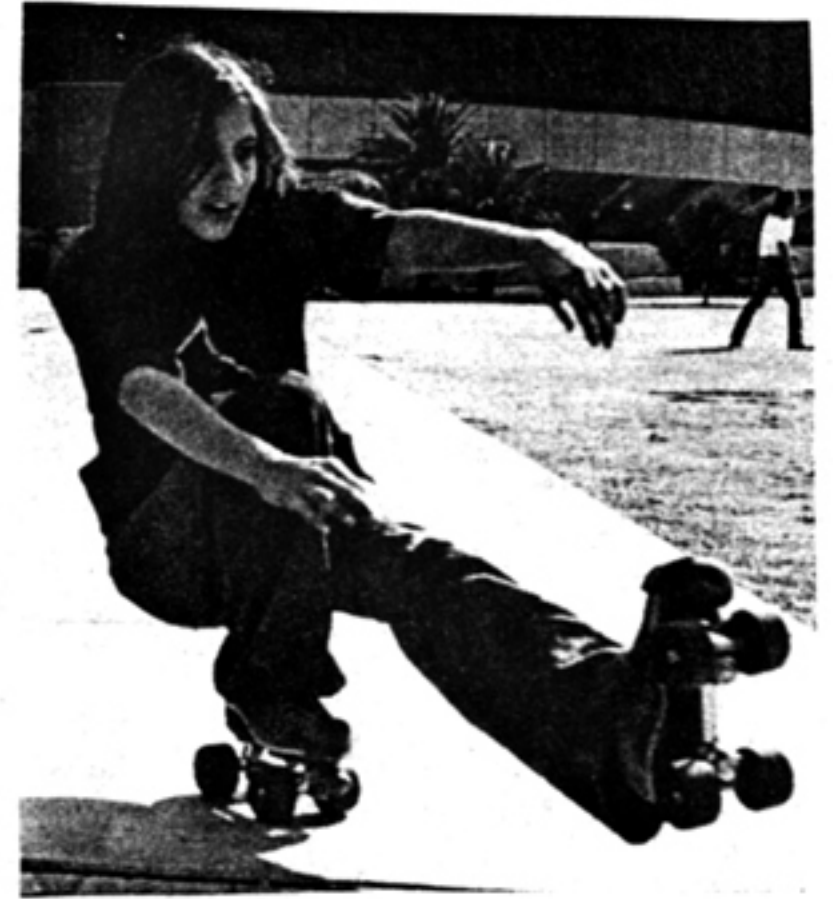


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Hunter  
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A W W

THE 17  
MINUS  
no. TIMES

MINUS RHYMES: Rivers, Letters Left Unopened

Unable to, that river silted over,  
I dragged a boat through the sand  
Hit a city of catacombs, rouge, you name it  
Found a bed like the rest of them  
But reached no peace with the whipping wind  
Hinting better at the screen.  
The pages fell out of my book,  
Then the picture slipped from the frame,  
But the birds never sang the same thing  
In the shade. Sometimes stay, sometimes leave,  
Never the river is back



*Abyssinian slaves.*

COUPLA STORIES: TALES OF THE WING

I had a roommate in boarding school whose grandparents had a house on the Kentucky-Tennessee line. The front door was in Tenn., the dining room and kitchen were in Tenn., but anytime they wanted to go drink and dance they went to the North Wing. Every child in the family got a key to the door of the North Wing when they turned eighteen. My roommate and I were almost seventeen when the grandparents invited us to ~~spend~~ visit over spring break. Every night for weeks he described the depravity of the North Wing with such effect that I was ready to split town, steal the key, and not look back. The night before spring break, just hours before the bus left for the airport, I knocked his tooth out in a fight over whether he should bring aftershave. Somehow I smoothed things out, came up with a story for his granddaddy about a clumsy stewardess, and we made it to the house in time for lunch. The third night after supper, Granddaddy Reed invited us up to the North Wing, and we followed him in with heads bent like solemn young Buddhists ~~with their heads~~. He sat us down in rockers, poured us each a glass of bourbon, and gestured to the broad bay window and the fleck of yellow porch lights behind the trees. He turned to his grandson and said, "Jimmy, out there are where the whores are quartered. You just whistle if you want a few." Jimmy couldn't whistle worth a damn without his front tooth, so the granddaddy sent me out to get them. They ate me alive.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE: 1992 POSTCARD From DAVID BERMAN To LIVING WATERS KENNEDY

"It's dark as two nights (at once) out. Xanax, champagne and soft lighting inside West's. On the attic side, Vega, Ramada, barrels in my inner stream. I can't not. So many Dallas memories swimming in my night canals. Rhinestone Nightz. I'll be in Red Click tomorrow if I can shake these waking dreams off and drive. But my maps are shattered."

Sincerely,  
Nightclub

\* A character in Pale Fire named  
"Chess Intelligence"