

the swishing sound of fans on neighboring porches and the slap of fly swatters as plainly as the pounding of her heart.

"I'd like to start running," she thought suddenly. She would run and run, past all the houses, past the drugstore and the school until the lights of the town were far behind. She would run until she could not hear or see or think, and she would never come back.

She swatted at a mosquito so hard that the slap stung her face. She remained unmoving on the steps, wondering how long it would be before Maggie called her again.

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### Trial by Conscience

J. H. Monninger

Would you dare  
Convict me for my crime?  
Perhaps it would be well  
If just to ease my mind,  
For in these gruesome nights  
I still can find  
Those fragments lying near the crater's edge,  
The crater's edge one minute old  
And I, a mere observer passing by,  
Stopped long enough to vomit  
Then to cry.  
But I was not observer,  
Why do I lie?  
I am free. Your rules, your codes,  
Your laws have set me free.  
But then I know this cannot be,  
For through the many misty miles of sea  
Remains for me  
The crater's edge.  
Now I cry in my defense  
"How could I know?"  
For they were crouching low.  
Yes, you try to ease my mind  
By telling me I should be blind  
To circumstance  
That was not really mine.  
Now you stand aghast to find  
A man confused,  
A killer of his kind.

## Troop Train

*"Allez, Allez"*

J. H. Monninger

There was no whistle, there was no light;  
And moving as a snake would move, into the night  
It took us nearer to our fate.  
Three days, three nights, and all in darkness. . .  
*Why was the door locked?*  
"Allez, allez" we heard the brakemen cry;  
Then moved the snake again, with youthful  
Venomous load. Impossible! How could it be?  
And in the silent darkness there arose  
Some forty silent cries: "How could it be?"  
The hottest hell could not have kindled  
Greater pain. That door! *Why was it locked?*  
And when the snake grew weak it stopped and drank  
And feasted on the food it once had known  
In daylight hours. Refreshed, "Allez, allez,"  
(What did it mean?) it moved again.  
Where were our hands, our feet? Where were our souls?  
Could it be true that even then our souls  
Turned cold, then numb, as only limbs  
Should do when elements become too strong?  
No need to pound upon the door . . .  
*Why was it locked?*  
Cry out, you forty fools of saner times.  
Can you be proud of human sacrifice? But wait:  
Such youthful minds should never crack too soon.  
Seek not an exit from your stagnant, sickening  
Atmosphere, for you are only living  
With yourselves. Now let the hate unfurl in you;  
Desire a great revenge and build your will to kill  
Into great massive forms,  
For you are venom in its truest state;  
And fear, for fear shall drive you mad;  
And die, for death shall set you free.  
"Allez, allez." The door . . . *Why was it locked?*