

almost ready for her wake except that a valuable possession must be included in her casket: her baptismal cross. This time-honored custom dates back to the time of the ancient city of Mycanae when the kings and queens were buried with their riches.

My godsister's wake lasted until noon as relatives and friends brought flowers and kissed the icon that lay in the child's arms. Following this ceremony, the child was taken to church for the last time. It entailed a long procession through the village, led by the village priest; followed by four men holding the casket; the family; the relatives; and the friends. Next came the child taken in another procession to the cemetery. Here, while the priest read the death prayer, the cover of the casket, which bore her first name printed in large Greek letters, was fastened into place and my godsister was slowly lowered into her grave. When I think back, I realize how strange it was to see her holding in life and in death the one item that symbolized our close bond—the baptismal cross.

El Barrio de Nueva York

Judith Barnes

EL BARRIO DE NUEVA YORK is Spanish for village, locality, or ward of New York. The vermin-infested dwellings of this neighborhood, in which I experienced living, are what I am about to describe. I had the opportunity of living in Harlem with a Puerto Rican family two summers ago when I was on a church work caravan. I will use no hyperboles for the reason that there cannot be any exaggeration to describe these vile, crackerbox apartments that house several many-numbered families. Mothers are afraid to let their offspring play outside in Spanish Harlem. The dark, filthy streets are filled with swarthy, filthy people—prostitutes, addicts, and delinquents.

On one side of the obscene street exist the ruins of condemned buildings. On the opposite side of the street are the murky tenement houses. The windows of the structures have clothes hanging from them, as well as people sitting on the sills fanning themselves because of the sultry air. As one walks still farther down the street, he may observe a broken fence around hand ball courts on the school playground. Here and in the streets are the only places the children can play. The school has many broken windows and is, in general, a shambles. Unique sounds of the tambourine may be heard coming from the door of the store-front Pentecostal Church. There are sidewalk markets where unusual foods and fly-ridden fruit are sold. The many poverty-stricken people swarm through the market like the flies.

If one stops to go into an apartment house, he may have to walk around the loiterers who sit endlessly day in and out on the stoop. His eyes refocus to see down the dirty, dark corridor. He ascends the stairs and the stench of a dead rat hits him in the face like a brick

wall; a sickening smell of frying grease soon mixes in. A small, obviously unattended, two-year-old clad in a dirty diaper and buried in blackness crawls down the hallway. He has found that the roaches are his only playmates. For company he may pull up and look out the window to see the neighbors walking, standing, and sitting outside, no matter what the hour of the day or night. There are so many people that to look out onto the street they seem to have no identity; they just seem to exist.

Never so many people, never so much filth can be captured anywhere else as in this God-forsaken, inescapable blot. Here the horrid ugliness of reality arises and surrounds and suffocates us on all sides. This is *el barrio de Nueva York*.

My Window on the World: A Surrealistic Credo

Adrian Ford

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.
JOHN 15:12

Man—of all ages and cultures—is confronted with the solution of one and the same question: the question of how to overcome separateness, how to achieve union, how to transcend one's own individual life and find at-onement.

ERICH FROMM, *The Art of Loving*

I SWUNG open my window on the world. My reason stood gazing through my dreams, the sheer curtain of dreams billowing in the breeze. I saw a plain without a horizon, and flowing through its center a river without banks. The plain was my hope for mankind and the river was time.

On the plain were thousands and thousands of men. It appeared at first that some were moving slowly in groups, but I looked closer and saw that this was an illusion caused by their number and closeness—they were all moving alone. And their closeness was itself an illusion, for the distance between them was the greatest in the universe.

Then, in my heart, I heard the clock without hands strike the Hour of Man. I knew that some of the men had heard it before me, but not most. I knew that all of them would never hear it at once, just as they would never move along the river as one body. This mechanism of awareness, the clock without hands (Love is the soul's correlate of time, for the soul's time is movement in love), this clock must strike the Hour separately in each man.

A mist covered part of the plain and I could hear moaning within it. But when I heard the Hour of Man, I saw a bolt of poetry strike the plain and ignite lyrical fire which flickered in every direction. Another bolt cracked the sky and tore the mist apart. Angels,