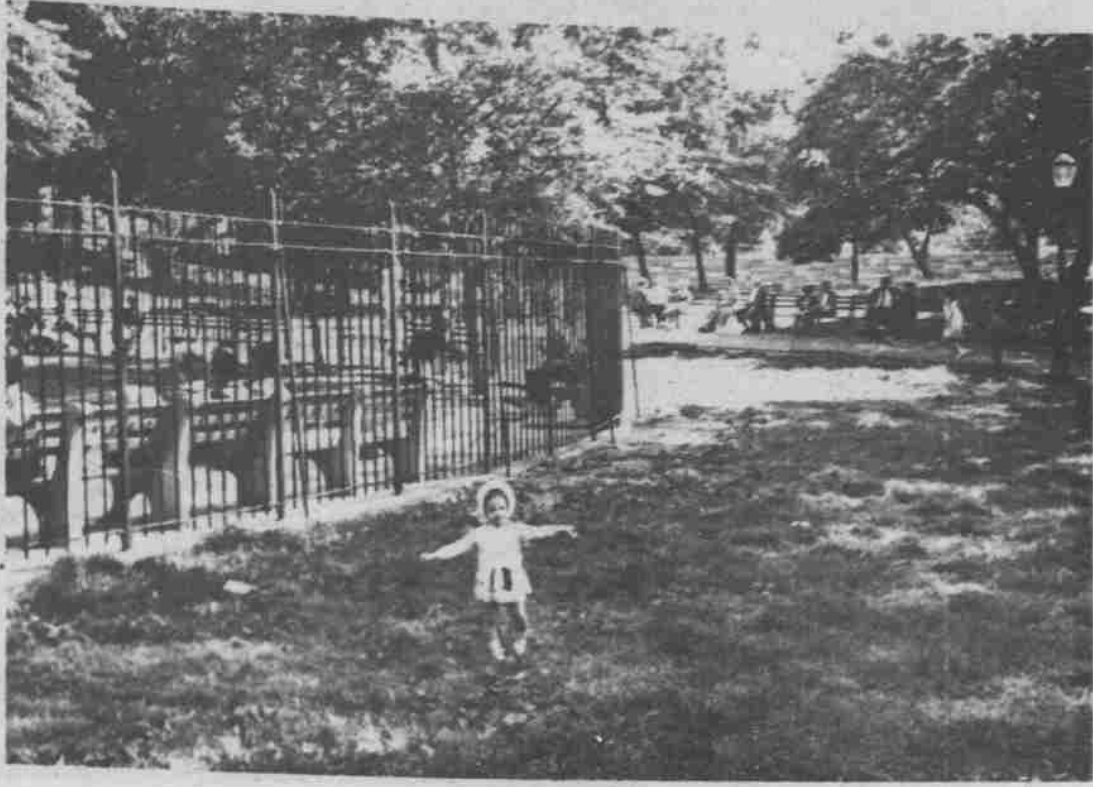


Motion Of Time: Spring In Central Park



Spring's child, fresh. Ready for a twirl, a flip, and grassy fields of green. Through the pink perios, she smiles. Oh, Mommy, look . . . The joyous swirl of red balloons, the wind carrying us along. Cotton times are here again and flowers sweeten the air with fuzzy bumble bees.



Innocent's child. Honest with life, naturally. Here on to enter a world tempting blackness of spirit. There the shade, granny's laugh, the age-old sardonic passer-by. But, it's spring, and baby it's for me, now. The butterfly above flutters for me while I'm waiting to fly with sunshine's wings.



We're together, searching for the rubber ball that bounced away. Where did it come from, where will it go? Cracker-jack kid, a rock and a brush of the breeze. A monkey springs in the trees, and fellas, that's free. Let's get it.



Susan's pigtails. I can remember back many years ago. There we were with Sam, the ice cream man. Mommy held the treat, hmm. . . a kid's delight. But, Sam, Sam, where have you gone? They say you've faded away, your youth flown with the wind. Have you left, Sam? Where is the sunshine that used to be, the blue sky and the robin redbreast that came in the spring, with you, sam . . . ?

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Trod along. lit's all said in me; the people, the city, the sea, the flower that once budded . . . on my birth-day.

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.

—T.S. Eliot

How often had it happened before? Ten times, fifty, a hundred?

Saturday night, sometime, he had sat on the couch surrounded by people and music. Another drink, another cigarette and another five thousand sentences that meant nothing to anyone. Flushed faces and bright teeth had scored another empty victory. The tabulations of irrelevance groped forward with clumsy hands in the dark to another triumph.

Inside, he had seen it and recorded it, but for how long? Give the mushy grey brain a year or two; time, and these few precious hours will be lost forever, unredeemable.

The foolish mind had been caught in its theft before, toying with elementals in a vacuum, when he walked the wooded street one fall day stupified, a gentle brute animal, sensing and stupified.

In these unthinking gaps of living history, there was sadness too deep for words. One instant he was lost, feeling the world and without purpose, and then the torrent of longing smashed his solitude.

The time was being lost, and the bony living death of winter's branches were pointing desperately to the ends of the earth.

His first living memory of consequence was history and truth before him: The small child who had just learned to walk followed the endless city sidewalk and its rowed guardians, the massive elm trees of spring.

But the telephone poles, what were they, those tall brown spires that followed as far as the eye could see (three blocks), and made the child feel infinity's meaning? Youthful minds seek simple explanations: they were monuments to all the "yesterdays" that had passed.

And maybe, that one there was last week, and that one beyond it . . . Time present and time past . . .

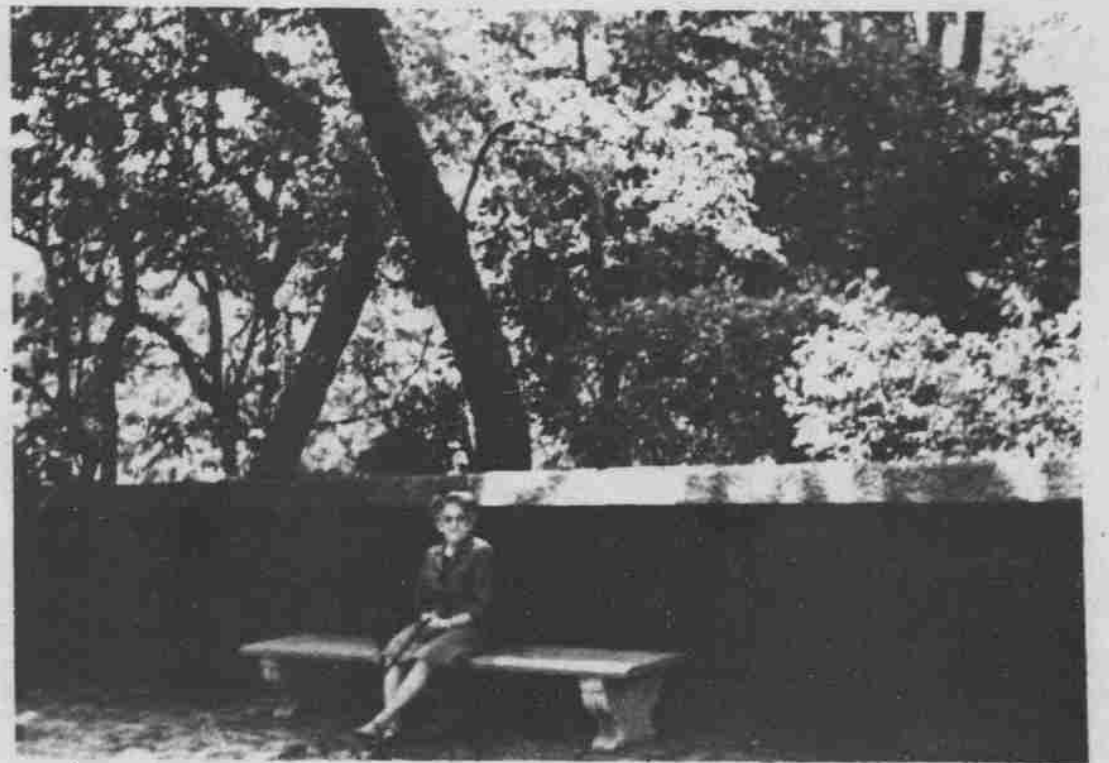
He had seen, too, the old men. The great uncle, who had sat in the sun with withered mouth agape, staring at the rolling land he had long called his own, knew the time was fleeting through the pines on the hilltop. The old man's youth had been marked off in glowing points of void, externally present. Where, oh where?

Unredeemable? God, no!

The youth is here yet, and youth cries now to have it. Let time future contained in time past rejoice when this youth has gone through the pines. Gold help him to know it all, time present and time past. Have him touch it to its inner depths and communicate with its soul, tomorrow and yesterday, past and future, present and past.



You know, if that little frog had just jumped the other way . . . but now, we've got the hook for bait and maybe, if we wish hard enough, a fish will break the surface, and our romp through the muddy waters of Central Park will continue . . .



Sparkling sun. It's for me after time has filtered away all the shade and handed it to me in a bundle. God has given me a veil to think beneath, to imagine the new times and never ever, let on that old times were once, too.



What have you got in that brown satchel, old man? Is it a bag of tricks, or a bag of knowledge wherein the black wall lies? Deep, gone in the white sunshine back there . . . California's glowing youth flip in their salty surf, not the brown ground where you lay your feet.

And mother of old . . . is the sun so bright that age cannot see? Your canes ought to be filled with candy and lollypops, for little children to enjoy. Open them, oh, please.



We're happenin'. It's Fifth Avenue and we're what's happenin'. We know it. That swan . . . it came in the bargain.

So die young man, in the prickly heat of oppression; and kid yourself no end—it's the bitter folly.