

# ADVENT 1985



by W. H. H. Rees

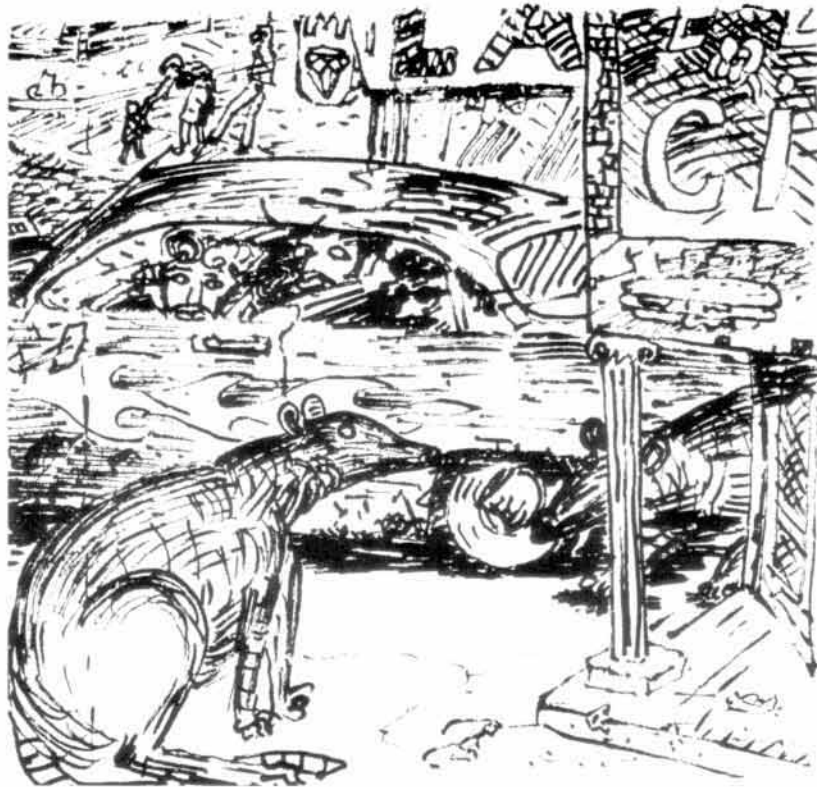
*Untitled*

## ADVENT 1985

*Text by W. H. H. Rees*

*Drawings by Patrick Siler*

- 12.01 another urge for Advent comes, another impulse to the hints as pointers and to pass them on
- 12.02 the North American Van Lines truck passing two billboards on I95: "Upscale your career" on the right; the arrow of its logo pointing to the "lights" of the Marlboro sign on the left
- 12.03 thinking of my son, Joseph, on a train and, then, of the scene from "Cotton Club", when the owner tells his bodyguard, whom he had just ransomed and who had complained that it was too low: "What's that? \$15,000.00? You think I paid \$15,000.00 for you? I paid \$50,000.00 for you. I would have paid ten times that for you. That's how much I love you."; thinking that's how much I love Joseph, when a lighted steeple as a comet flashes across the nighttime window
- 12.04 a lad on crutches swinging past the "Blue Chip" sign on a truck as the report is given on the radio that the Dow Jones has hit an all time high



*Chollos with large rats in urban setting*

- 12.05 driving on the Merritt Parkway past an exit sign with the "x" missing and, then, past a river sign with the "e" missing

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- 12.06 driving on the Merritt Parkway, passing a red "Wrong Way" sign on the left and a "Q 96" bumper sticker on the right

- 12.07 a white bag against a black coat; a white car on entering a building and on leaving a black car in the same spot; a black man and a white man changing a tire together;

another black man and a white man crossing the street together; "Help Save Lives" in white letters on a black bumper sticker; an advertisement for "Blood Knot" on the radio; nests of snow tucked into black branches; a Siler woodcut arrives of a black stiff dreaming of white cake

- 12.08 a yin-yang bumper sticker;  
driving Lewis Stein, dressed in black, past the Library as smoke bellows from its roof, and driving by, somewhat later, alone, it is free of smoke
- 12.09 at a Baptism the grandfather, dressed in black, stands directly behind the mother, in a black and white dress, and on her lap the infant, dressed in white, sits erect, a living totem; at night in bed reading Durrell's "Justine", at the passage of the duck hunt which is about to begin when the radiator begins to knock and, downstairs, my son, Nathaniel, distraught, in a cast from hip to toe, vents his frustration by making a racket, which the characters ignore and proceed with the hunt in which Capodistro apparently dies by accident
- 12.10 three  
directors of a child guidance clinic gather in the lobby after having saved a program for teen-age suicide prevention, threatened by budget cuts: one leaning against the front desk on the right, one standing on the left, and the tallest one in the center, in front of a drawing on the wall by a young patient of a ship with three masts, the right and the left of the same height and the center the tallest, and on each white sail a red cross
- 12.11 two  
trucks in the middle lane of I95, one behind the other, the sign "Make a Killing" on the rear of the nearer and "God" in view on the rear of the farther; exterminators versus a Godfrey & Company service van; a white lady pushing a black man in a wheel chair, as a lady in a black and white striped dress walks by
- 12.12 two  
trailer trucks abreast while passing a third parked on the right, the arrow on the rear of the North American Van in the center points to the "Servi" sign on the rear of the truck on the left and away from the "Atlas" on the truck on the right



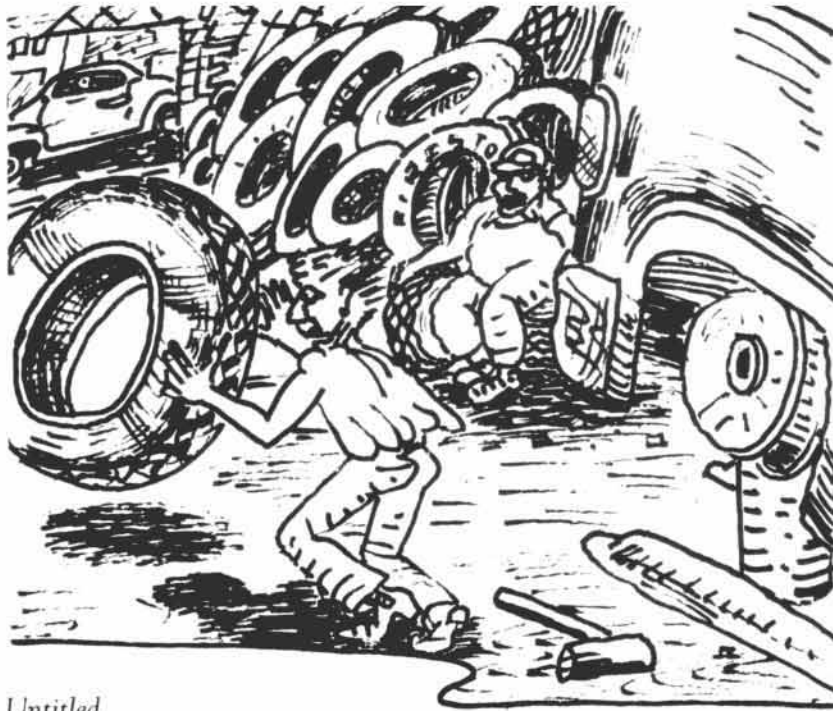
*Urban Setting*

- 12.13 walking down Hillhouse Avenue in the rain at night on Friday the 13th and thinking that the day has passed without a visitation when an explosion detonates a block away, more like a bomb than a car backfiring
- 12.14 at a stop light on Elm Street facing east before bank sarsens just after dawn, a slab of dark purple cloud completing the trilithon and, moving across the horizon, framing the cross on top of St. Michael's Church, while on the radio a Christmas carol is being sung, the only audible words being "Son of God"

- 12.15 at  
Mass after the consecration, the priest intoning “. . . Christ’s  
passion, death...” while an old man shuffles up the aisle on the  
left and disappears into a pew of kneeling parishioners, as the  
priest continues: “and resurrection”; the tube of a trombone  
alternating between red and green when pumped at a holiday  
concert
- 12.16 driving down Barnett Street in the dark, the blinker of a  
car, double parked, flashing to the right and, just beyond, a  
mother helping a child into the back seat of another parked car
- 12.17 on  
195 approaching a toll booth and reaching into the two dozen or  
so coins in the change compartment in the dashboard and pick-  
ing out a trinity of coins at random, a nickle, a dime, and a quarter,  
the exact amount needed



*Two men crossing the street, #3*



Untitled

- 12.18 walking into a room where trival pursuit is being played: "What is the leading horserace winner of all times?"; "Man-o-War"; "Wrong"
- 12.19 at a meeting at a shelter for the homeless, a minister sitting in the back of the room explains: "You can advocate for the homeless without being an adversary", when the back door crashes open as though someone had been pushed through
- 12.20 it passing a billboard in Bridgeport in the process of being painted with a stripe of yellow in the upper left hand corner and "Coming" on it in white letters and nothing else on the unfinished surface but an irregular burst of yellow in the center; and on the next license plate passing by is "25"



12.21

walking to Macy's  
past a parked car with a blinker pointing left and, immediately  
past the car on the left, two shoppers talking inaudibly except  
for the word "trust"; entering Macy's and, after a bell sounds  
three times, a child says "Daddy"; leaving Macy's, past another  
car with a blinker pointing left to two other shoppers, one of  
whom is smiling and humming; then, in a parked car at the mo-  
ment of the winter solstice with "Grand Canyon Suite" by Paul  
Winters on the radio from St. John the Devine, a piece for three  
instruments, the announcer having explained that the drum was  
for the earth, the organ for the canyon, and the saxophone for  
the spirit, when the doors of Macy's burst open and a crowd of  
shoppers hurry across the vacant street and into the Chapel Mall  
and, then, all is quiet again

12.22

at 7:00 am with the others of the  
family asleep, beginning to read an article in New York Times  
Magazine by Don Wakefield, "Returning to the Church", and  
being startled by a noise as of a broom falling down the cellar  
stairs, which upon inspecting is not the case, no cause being  
found



*The Door*

12.23 watching shoppers at Richard Thomas', the first lady entering a room with three yellow bags; a second lady entering with three yellow bags; a third with only one; but, later, on the way home, three green lights flash "go" after having stopped for a red light; a parked car at the right with the blinker pointing to the right and, passing the car, seeing two children on the making a snowman

12.24 driving past 7 boarded windows on one side of a building on Whalley Avenue, while 8 birds fly overhead and the choir on the radio sings "... Christ the King"; one man saying to another on entering the Yale Coop, "... concerning reality, Hume said one can not know anything absolutely", as a women says to her companion on exiting, "Well, at least it wasn't crowded"; at midnight Mass, at the alleluia before the Gospel, the candle at the 12th Station of the Cross, the Crucifixion, together with the protecting globe crashing to the floor for no apparent reason as the choir sings, "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day I have begotten Thee."

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