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Lone Man

Cinde Rawn

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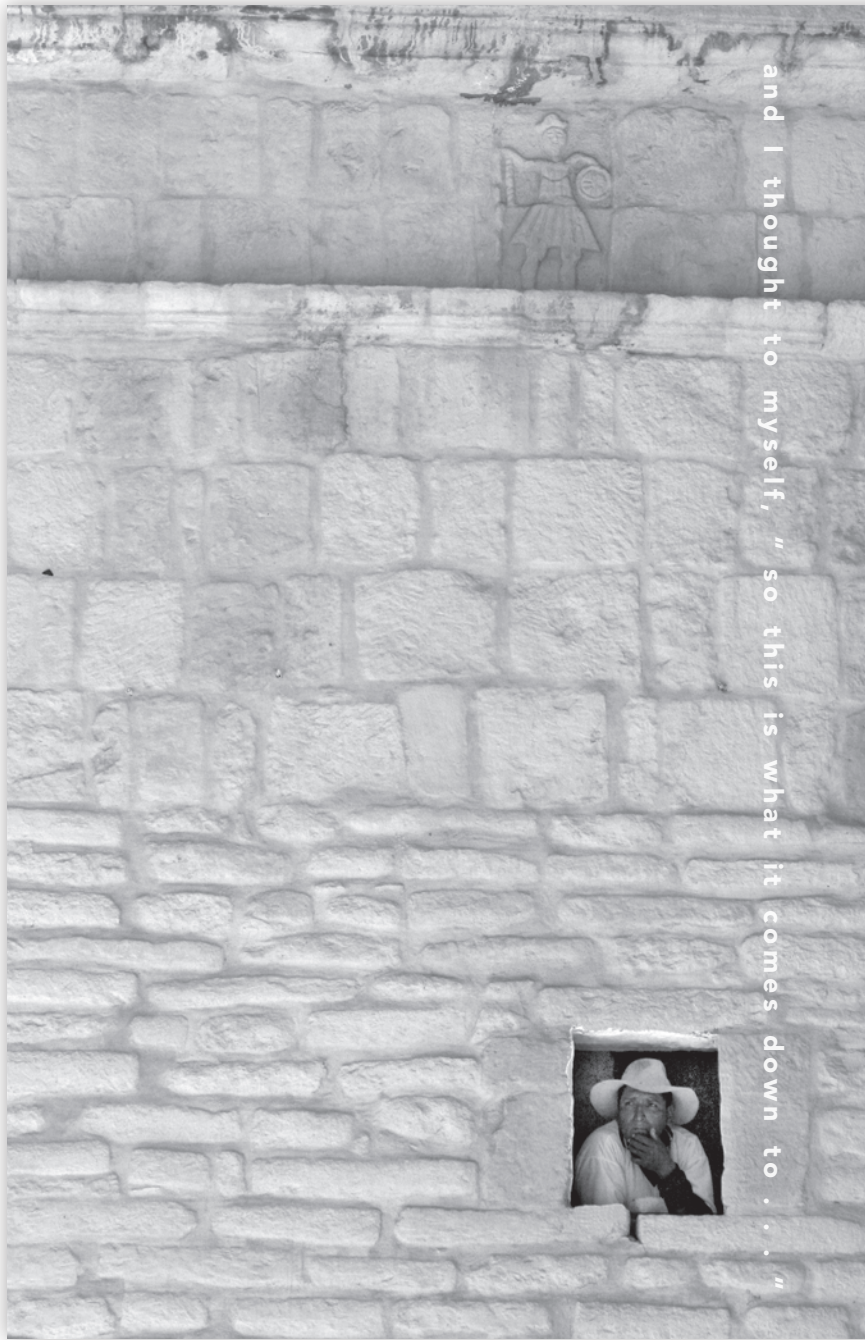
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the colored section and I went back to the car and drove to the other side. I knew it wouldn't be right to bury it inside next to any grave so I drove down a turn-row that was between the graveyard and a cotton field. I took the shovel out of the trunk of the car - I always carried one in case I got stuck at the farm. It used to really make Blanche mad when I drove that new Buick to the farm. One time, I came back home with twelve cottontailed rabbits that I had shot with a twenty-two. I don't know whether she was madder for me bringin' them home in the car or for me thinking she might cook 'em. Well, anyway, I take the shovel out and start diggin' a hole between the turn-row and the rock fence around the cemetery. When you do somethin' like that, you work hard and fast and don't do much thinkin'. But, after a few spadefulls of dirt, my mind did start to wander. I remembered digging graves with my uncle at that little city cemetery north of Lubbock back during the Depression. When I dug graves back then, I didn't think about why I was doing it or about the people who'd be planted there. I didn't know them anyway and when you're young, you don't think about death or dying because it seems so far off. I just thought about the dollar I was makin'. But, when you get to be about fifty, you do start to think about it. And every spade of dirt I turned reminded me of John and a fishin' trip or a domino game or a dirty joke he'd told. And I thought to myself, "So this is what it comes down to. If you're healthy or lucky and live long enough you are rewarded with the sorrowful job of burying your friends and loved ones." And then I thanked the Lord that I had lived that long and had only lost a part of a friend."



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