JUST LIKE A NOTE OF THE SECOND SHOWING THE SECOND

Bazaar continues our series of original works from great artists and writers. By Jane Smiley Etching by Lisa Yuskavage

asculinity is a feeling, but femininity is a look—a look in the mirror, a look at another woman, a look down at oneself, a look at the one who is looking at you. If there is a feeling involved, then it is a feeling not of glory or of power but a feeling of relief: I look okay. I fit in. I have the right thing on. I can walk the balance beam between conforming enough to be safe and standing out enough to draw the right sort of attention. Does a woman alone in a dark room feel like a woman? How about a woman doing errands? How about a woman reading a book or climbing a mountain?

Womanliness starts early, with dress-up and Barbies and Miss America costumes for Halloween, ballet slippers and tutus and everything pink and lavender, but above all looking—looking at Mom and older girls and pop stars and into the mirror. Years go by and womanliness is just a stamp of approval, sometimes the only stamp of approval in a life otherwise defined by tomboy activities or bespectacled intellectual pursuits or other interesting strivings that can feel beside the point. Womanliness is something she does, not what comes naturally.

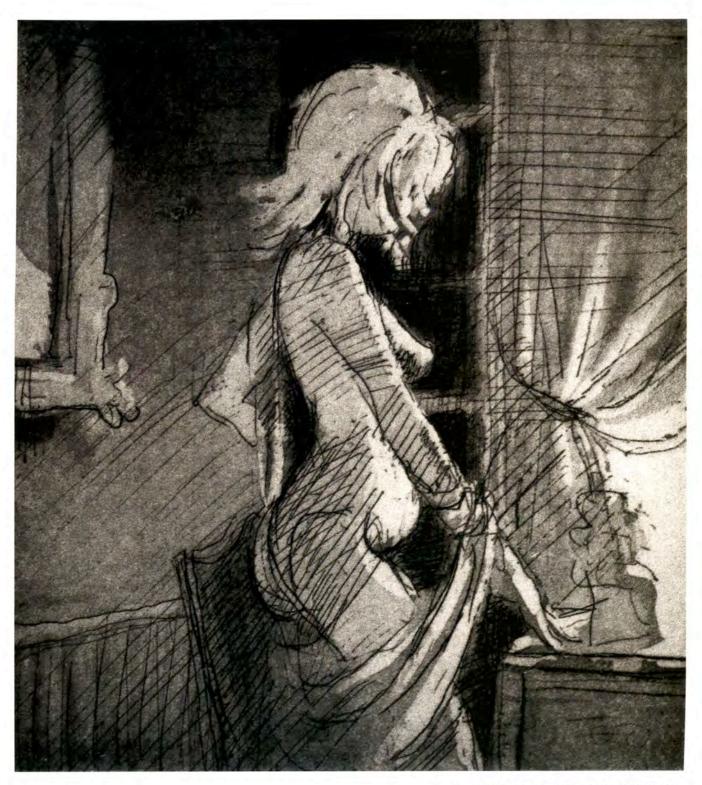
Until all that effort results in pregnancy, and then womanliness rises up and envelopes the woman, and she is, for once in her life, solely a reproducer, a body and a mind being molded by the shape-shifter within. Now the feelings begin, nausea and fatigue and sadness and fear, and now the new physical sensations begin, too, heaviness, hunger, wideness, the ache of things swelling and stretching, the movement of the child—first a flutter, then a kick or a rolling over, waking, sleeping. Last is that growing concentration of the mind, as full of the child as the womb is. The 10th month approaches, and the child becomes the intention of the woman's whole being. Now the feelings are not enough, as rich and complex as they are. To know the child, the woman longs to look at it, to recognize its face.

But there is no looking at her. She doesn't look at herself anymore and doesn't want anyone else to, either. Looks are too intrusive. Even though she feels purely reproductive, she sticks out like a sore thumb, all mystery gone, all privacy gone, the balance utterly lost between conforming and attracting notice. But everything apart from the baby is secondary. He looms at least as large as she does herself.

After the baby is born, femininity as a feeling recedes, and femininity as comparison and contrast resumes. For a while, though, because of motherhood, the task is more automatic, because the child never doubts the mother's femininity. For the child, her particular femininity is the baseline, the perfect model of what a woman is. For the woman, the child's acceptance overrules every other judgment.

Eventually, femininity—the looking and the wondering and the effort—grows a little abstract, more a game the woman might play than a survival skill she must master. But always it remains a look as opposed to a feeling, not a thing felt but a thing imposed.

The collection will be published in a 2003 calendar, which will be sold to raise money for victims of terrorism.



Grace (2001), etching and aquatint with chine colle.

Harper's Harper's



JUST LIKE AWOMAN
2003

invited influential contemporary artists to contribute an original

image capturing the essence of a woman, and renowned writers then used the images as the starting point for original All proceeds from the sale of this calendar will benefit pieces of writing. The results—provocative and beautiful— victims of terrorism. appeared as a monthly feature in Bazaar in 2002. They are collected here for the first and only time.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the exceptionally talented by Sam Taylor-Wood.

arper's Bazaar has a long tradition artists and writers who contributed these works: Tina Barney, of literary and artistic excellence. Ann Beattie, Jennifer Egan, Tracey Emin, Nora Ephron, During my first year as editor in Helen Fielding, Nan Goldin, A.M. Homes, Alex Katz, Jeff chief of Bazaar, it was my privilege Koons, Hanif Kureishi, Neil LaBute, Jay McInerney, Tracey to carry on this tradition by Moffatt, Rick Moody, Susanna Moore, Mariko Mori, Tim publishing a unique series, which O'Brien, Richard Phillips, Jane Smiley, Kiki Smith, Sam we called "Just Like a Woman." We Taylor-Wood, John Wesley, and Lisa Yuskavage.

—Glenda Bailey

Cover: Self Portrait in a Single Breasted Suit with Hare (2001), C-print,

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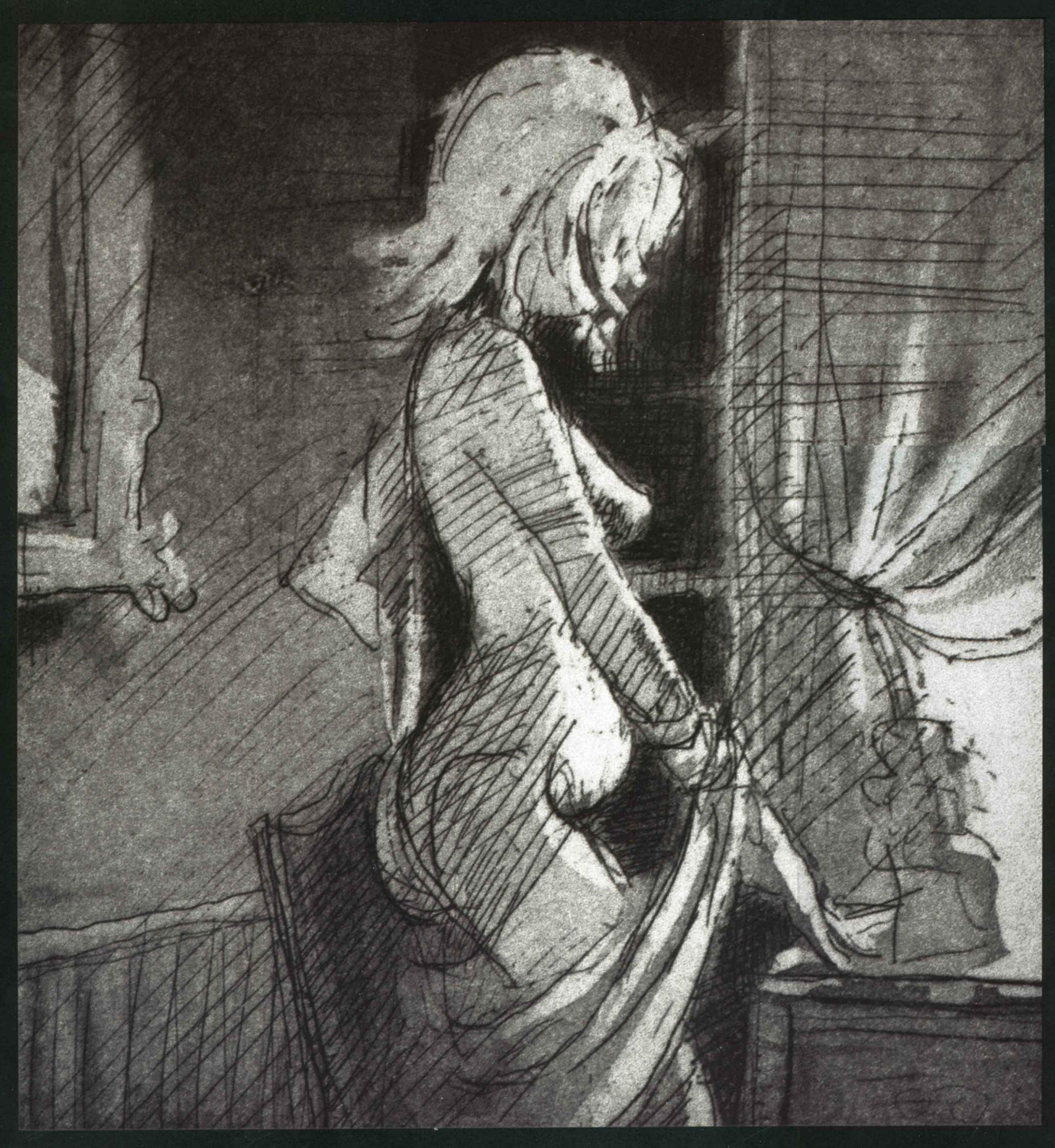
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—Jane Smiley

for once in her life, solely a reproducer, a body and a mind Jane Smiley is the author of 10 works of fiction, including being molded by the shape-shifter within. Now the feelings The Age of Grief, A Thousand Acres, and Horse Heaven. begin, nausea and fatigue and sadness and fear, and now the Her latest book is a biography of Charles Dickens in the



Grace (2001), etching and aquatint with chine colle, by Lisa Yuskavage.

JANUARY

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26	27	28	29	30	31								

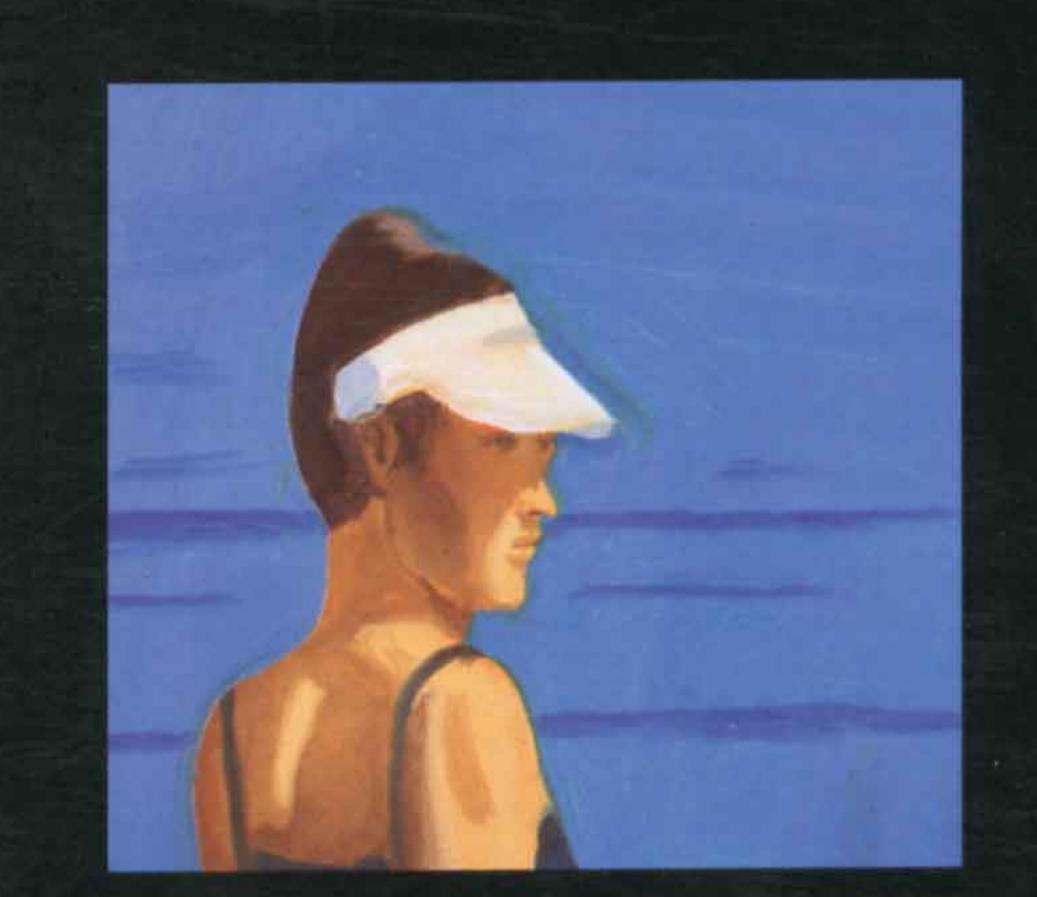


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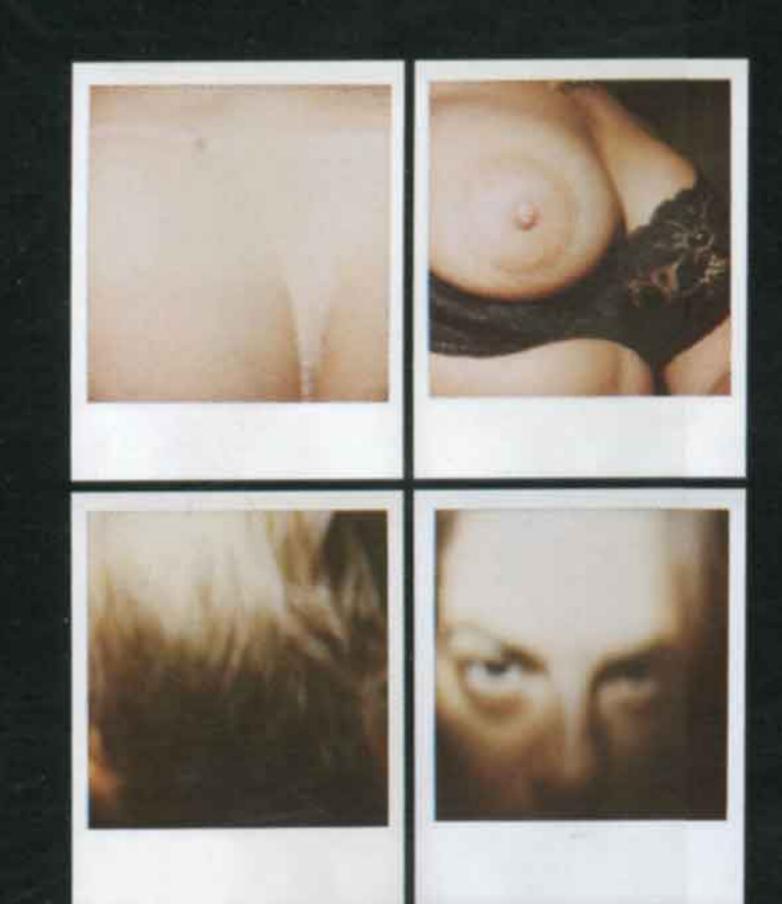
FEBRUARY

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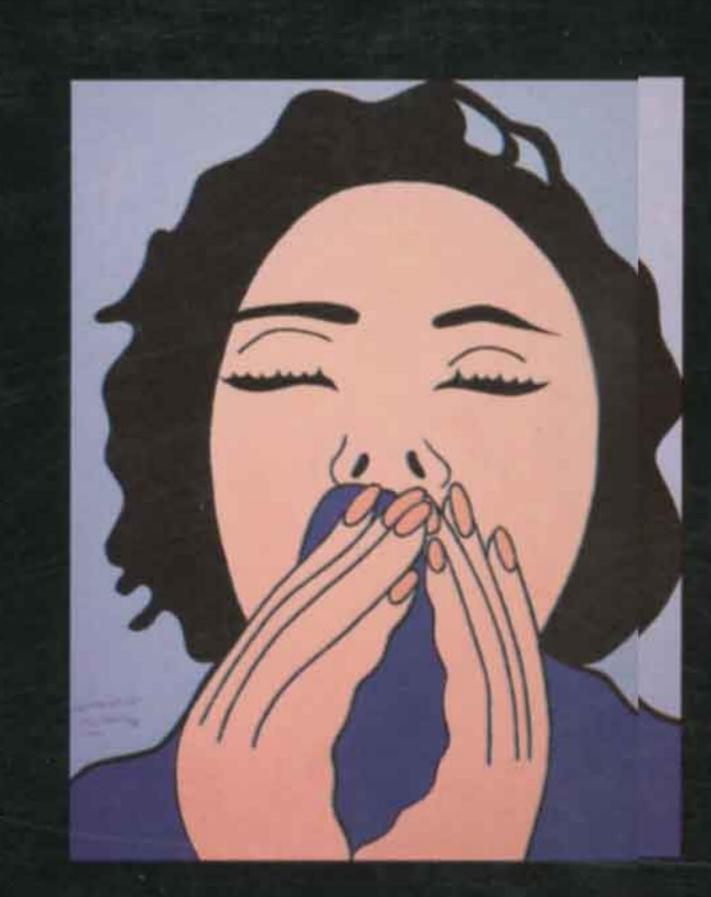


JUNE

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AUGUST

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NOVEMBER

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INTRODUCTION BY GLENDA BAILEY, EDITOR IN CHIEF OF HARPER'S BAZAAR

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