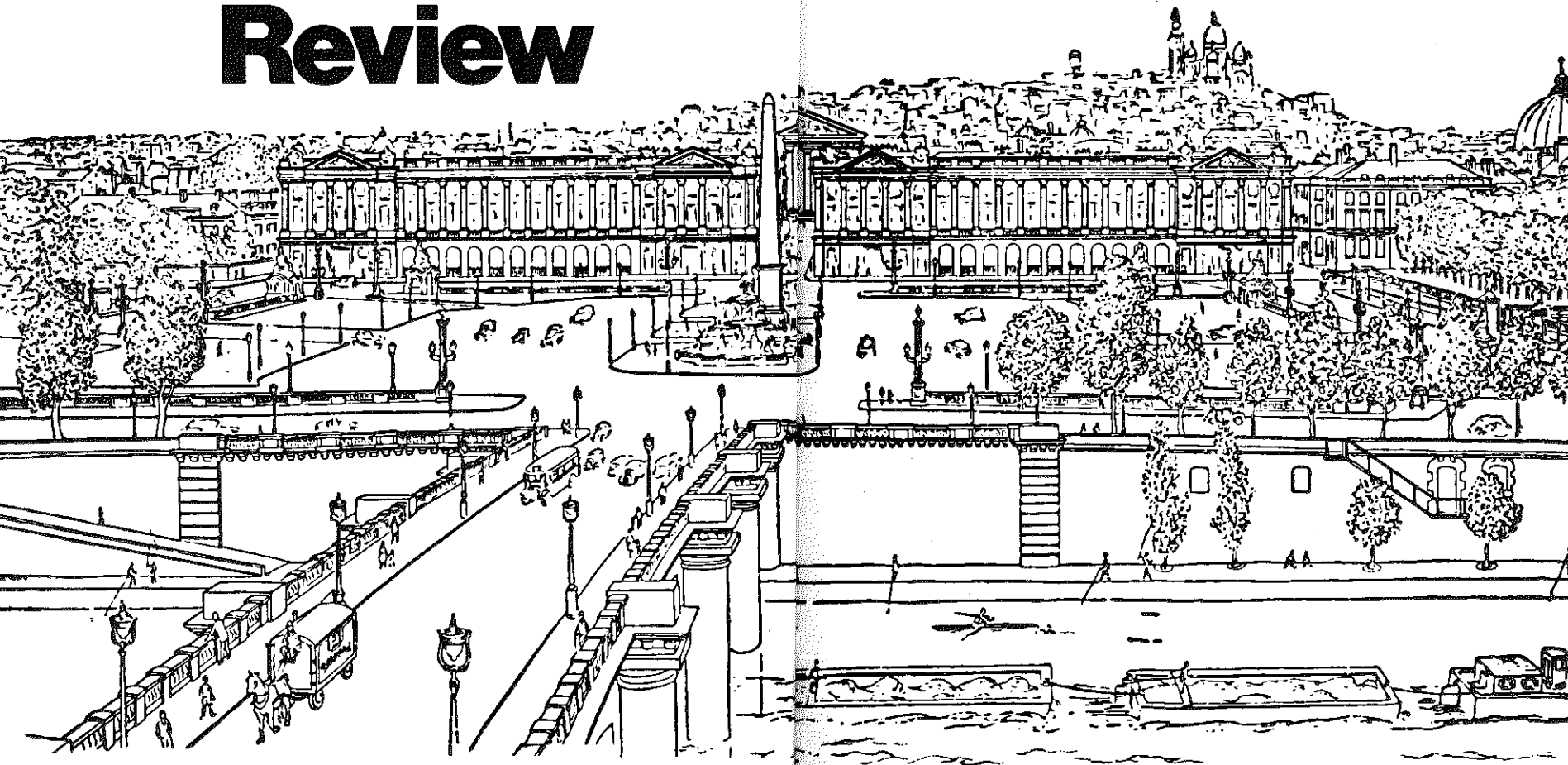


# The Paris Review



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reddening the very dark that was  
not meant for them to move about in.  
But in my room—in a red

dictionary—I saw the picture  
and consented to the proper sounds  
and lingered with *cicada*,

this now electrical word afloat  
in the same air with kisses that still  
had no sound and were not there.

## And Now

After I found my blood in trouble  
I could hear its rapid

underground current swell, terrorists  
setting tributaries aflame at low tide.

But here, on a late anniversary,  
I look in glass vials at a purple calm

drawn by a clean-up crew who report  
that while the gulls and dolphins

are dead, most of the war  
and its toxins have floated past.

An undertow, the mild threat  
of stubborn blooms, algae or jellyfish,

means no one would be wise to swim,  
but from the shore it's clear,

good for picnics or the building  
of unreasonable expectations.

## Two Poems by Dave King

### Esmé

It's never *love* that brings my name to mind,  
but *squalor*—awful word. A term tossed off  
one rainy afternoon in Devonshire,  
so that a small (and somewhat bored) request  
might seem a little more . . . captivating.  
I doubt I've ever used the damn word since,  
though it's used me, of course. A lesson there.

He didn't get me right at all. I was a flirt!  
Not the disarming blend of Alice and Eloise  
it served his purpose to portray, but bold!  
ironic! even grand! as only a thirteen-year-old  
aristocratic orphan dares to be.  
I loved—*adored*—the small attentions of  
American servicemen; they never failed.

It's true, though, that I sent my father's watch.  
I'm glad it did some good. But that's the part  
his café scene obscures; no one recalls  
my generosity. Still, dogged by love  
*and* squalor, the name has achieved some note,  
and I'd prefer to feel I'd been betrayed  
than go entirely *unimmortalized*.

## And How Long Since One of Us Spotted the *Isabel Archer*?

I remember when this harbor was filled with ships!  
White-winged fireboats and barges and fat rugs

and the tiny dart-about slivers Frank called sandwich boats,  
convinced they were bringing lunch to the longshoremen.

One elegant yacht passed regularly, and he gave her a name:  
the *Isabel Archer*. (There was something about her . . .)

And the ferries, Circle Line boats, the tall ships!  
In those days "the tall ships" were still a novelty.

In those days we knew the address of every building:  
twenty-two William, one-forty Broadway, one-eleven John.

He used to quiz me at the window over breakfast  
and any new construction inspired a field trip:

on the other side, progress was occurring,  
while our own neighborhood remained a backwater.

Sometimes we'd wake to find a freighter had docked,  
its triangular prow obscuring the skyline. The pier

would be bustling and stacked with freight, and once  
I saw a cargo of a thousand evergreens,

all tied together and heading south.  
The last freighter left while I wasn't looking.

Our pier's in litigation now, only restaurants bustle.  
The ferries persist, though scows take a different route.

A little dock nearby has become an historic site,  
with brass plaques and custom-designed railings—

nicely done, but where's the river traffic?  
And the little sandwich boats: has lunch grown obsolete?

Frank still keeps track of addresses across the way.  
I don't. I emulate him less nowadays.