

**CHRYSALIS**

**1960**

*Immo*®

Rather than delve into the esoteric meaning of the word "**Chrysalis**" for the third consecutive year, we would like to take this space to discuss the function for which the magazine exists. **Chrysalis** is intended to be primarily an organ for the development and expression of student creativity — the recording of emotions or impressions, so that they may be reproduced in the reader, as well as the communicating of ideas. With this function in mind, it follows that agreement by the Editorial Board with the feelings and ideas expressed is irrelevant; the important thing is the manner of expression itself. The obligation of the creative reader is to recognize the role of **Chrysalis** in acquainting us with a variety of ideas, as well as in giving us an outlet for our own.

The Editorial Board extends its recognition and appreciation to Dr. Fodaski for the initiation of **Chrysalis**, for the time she devoted to the magazine last year and the moral support she has given us this year. We are also indebted to Dr. Eby for his sponsorship of **Chrysalis**, to Dr. Locke for his aid in establishing the Rinehart Award for excellence in creative writing, and to Mr. Diller, our Art Coordinator.

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# CHRYSALIS

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The Madison College Literary Magazine  
Spring—1960

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**Fiction**

What Time Is It? .....	3
by Mary Ann Shinaberry	
A Night On A Train .....	5
Miss Grace .....	14
by Sally Fosnight	
Construction Job .....	7
by Lura Ann Dillard	
Trees, Fences and People .....	10
by Nedra Schultz	
Between Bull Run and Chancellorsville .....	18
by Marcia Angell	
Togetherness .....	20
by Joan Neibert	

**Poetry**

Serenity .....	19
by Virginia Schaaf	
The Game .....	6
Summer's Children .....	13
by Bonnie Feather	
Paradox .....	8
by Judith Roberts	
Squash .....	8
by Marcia Angell	
A Question .....	9
The Thinker .....	9
by Eleanor Gullion	
Earth .....	2
Progress .....	16
Not With A Whimper .....	16
The Gray Men .....	17
A Monody .....	13
Pop Goes McDowan .....	17
by Edie Witcher	
The Eon of Transition .....	4
by Pamela Guy	
Gloria .....	23
by Sally Fosnight	



# CHRYSALIS

## EARTH

The Madison College Literary Magazine

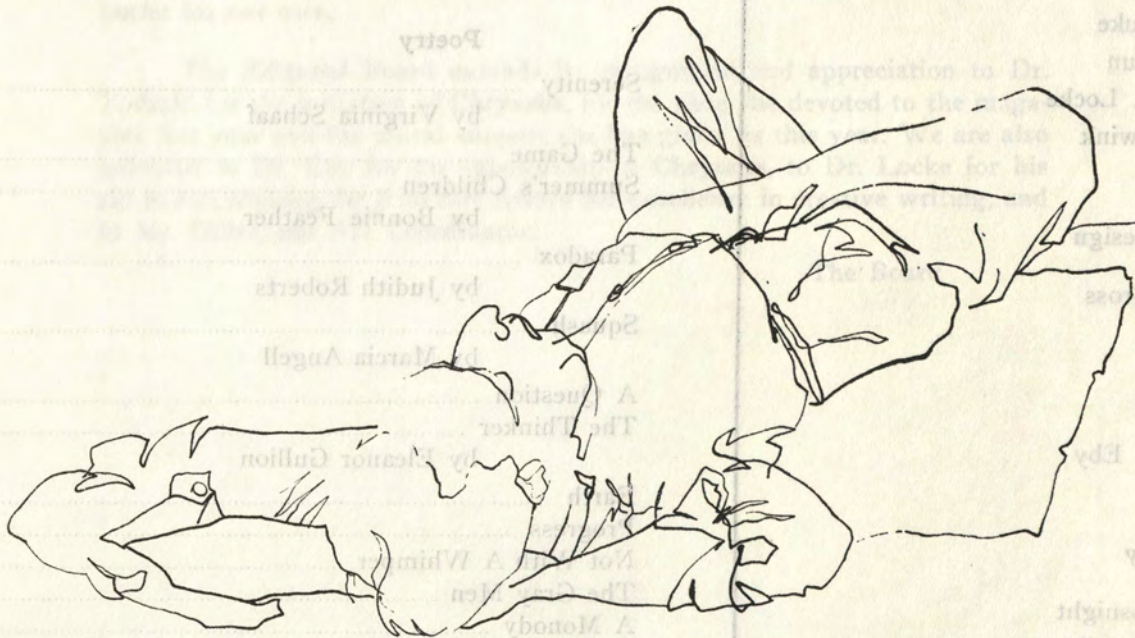
You yellow little pear,  
—1960

How come your shape ain't round?

Spinning black out there

So up ain't up and down ain't down.

by Edie Witcher



3	.....	What Time Is It?	by Shmaberly
5	.....	A Night On A Train	by Sally Founight
14	.....	Construction Job	by Lura Ann Dillard
7	.....	Trees, Fences and People	by Nedra Schults
10	.....	Between Bull Run and Charlottesville	by Marcia Angell
18	.....	Together	by Jean Neibert
20	.....	Poetry	by Virginia Schaal
19	.....	Summer's Children	by Bonnie Feather
6	.....	Paradox	by Judith Roberts
13	.....	A Nest	by Marcia Angell
8	.....	The Thinker	by Leonard Gullion
8	.....	Not A Whim	by Len
9	.....	A Nobody	by Edie Witcher
9	.....	Pop Goes McDowan	by Pamela Guy
2	.....	The Era of Transition	by Gloria
16	.....		by Sally Founight
16	.....		
17	.....		
13	.....		
17	.....		
4	.....		
23	.....		

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"Wherever you see a little huddle around here," they said to me, "they're talkin' politics," and then they'd sorta wink. In the mornings before work I even found myself in the midst of one of those buz-zin' groups. The boss use'ta come in bright'n early just bustin' to tell us about where he'd been campaignin' the day before and how many of the good farmers he'd talked to. My dad's a farmer, and a good one I guess; at least the boss hinted a few times that he was but I knew that he really meant that Dad had a little bit of influence when it came to politics and stuff like that. Dad and the boss were good friends, I suppose, but I think the boss always got just a little friendlier around election time. It did seem as if I got the job in his office at a pretty significant time.

The boss had made quite a number of enemies while he was Sheriff. Then too, there were those who said that he had gotten the Clerk's job in an underhanded way. Everyone thought that Frankie should've had it. She had been a Deputy Clerk for years under Lyle Goodman and then when he died, of course, it was no question that she was in line. People like my Dad went and talked to her, but she was so broken up then that she didn't know what she wanted. Her beloved Lyle wasn't even in the grave yet. It had always been a curiosity to everybody who knew them why they never married because they had been going together for so many years. I heard someone say once that theirs was not a passionate love—it was the kinda love that was deep and it had just become convenient and comfortable for them not to be married. There were always those people, though, that talked and had that all-knowin' look in their eyes, yet Frankie appointed the Sheriff to fill the vacancy, it shocked and angered a lot of the county folk. Judge Owlby, wise in years of dealin' with people, knew and understood Frankie probably better than she herself did. He knew that she was the legs of the office now, no matter what title she carried, so it really didn't make any difference. Mr. Grabbit resigned as Sheriff and accepted the appointment as Clerk. After all, when opportunity to step up knocks on one's door, it's hard to resist, no matter whose toes get stepped on. He had a family to support—she didn't.

The one thing that made Mr. Grabbit accepted by Frankie and the rest was the fact that he was humble. He knew that the job was foreign to him and he told Frankie that he was completely at her mercy—without her, he would never be able to learn all the intricacies of the office. Oh, he would learn in time, but it would be the hard way. So now after two years he was up for election—the real test.

Henry Smallwood, first cousin of Lyle Goodman, had announced himself also as a Democratic

candidate for the Clerk's office. Before Lyle was Clerk, Henry's father and grandfather had held the office. No one except those real enemies of Mr. Grabbit's voiced an opinion until they learned how Frankie felt. Frankie told us, and it got around, that she would resign her position if Henry Smallwood won the primary. Still, opinions were varied. Henry Smallwood also announced that he had had fifteen years of experience in the office. Frankie useta laugh because she knew that he may have sharpened a few pencils or written some hunting licenses when he came for his Dad a little early in the evenings. Someone figured out that he could only have been thirteen at the oldest then. The Smallwood name carried a lot of weight though, and Henry took advantage of it. He never surmised that Frankie wouldn't support him and refused to believe that she wouldn't work for him.

I went to work the first of June. Mr. Grabbit explained that I was to be Frankie's secretary for the summer because he would be there so little. I had never so much as been in a court house except to see Mr. Grabbit about the job. All of the big, dusty books, the court room, the criminal records, the dockets, the marriage licenses, and the divorce and adoption files, until then, were only things that I read about in Earl Stanley Gardner's books. Honest to goodness, those lawyers brought three or four new divorce cases in a week. Frankie said it was kinda funny to record all the divorce proceedings of a couple to whom you had issued a marriage license only a couple of years before. I had to read so many of those darn depositions that I almost became convinced that all men are wife-beaters and that all women are pregnant before they're married. Of course, those lawyers turned everything around so that you never really knew who was to blame. Some of the cases were actually pathetic, especially when there were a lot of kids involved. Usually within a few weeks the husbands were dragged in again for contempt of court for not payin' the support money.

On court days when there wasn't too much office work to be done I useta slip into the court room. These long-winded attorneys talk for hours sometimes and don't say a thing really, and of what they did say, I know half wasn't true. Just as long as they could apply some passage of law to it and they got their fee they were okay. Judge Owlby just sat up there in his big chair with his eyes closed. I often wondered if he got bored. There were times when some of the cases got real interestin' though, like the time they had half of the jury, the sheriff, a deputy sheriff and even the boss on the stand. One of the lawyers had accused the officers of the court of conversin' with the jury-men and tryin' to sway them. Things got pretty hot around there because it was a pretty important case—whiskey smugglin', I think. When asked



what they were doin' talkin' to the jurymen, it came out finally that they had been politickin' and just chewin' the rag about the election. Then of the others, there were a couple of rape cases which were much more revealin' than "Anatomy of a Murder"—gosh, sometimes I got so embarrassed I had to leave right in the middle.

The front page of tonight's paper was filled with the story of the Sadie Smith murder trial. I remember the day they brought her over from the jail just a few days after she had strangled her three-year-old illegitimate son to death. She stood right up in front of the court room and said, "I did it and I'm glad, and if I had it to do over again, I'd do the same thing". They sent her to a mental

institution for observation for ninety days. The story said that she had been pronounced perfectly sane by all the doctors. The jury found her guilty of first degree murder.

The election return tabulation was in the paper too. I think Frankie would have been pleased with the returns. After the funeral the other day, folks were expressin' their sympathies to Mr. Grabbit. I can't be sure, but I think I saw a trace of fear in his tear-filled eyes. I can't be sure of much of anything though anymore because things are so unpredictable. Why, I hardly know what time it is. The sun is supposed to shine tomorrow, but how can you tell?

★ ★ ★

### THE EON OF TRANSITION

The eon of transition  
from opacity to translucence

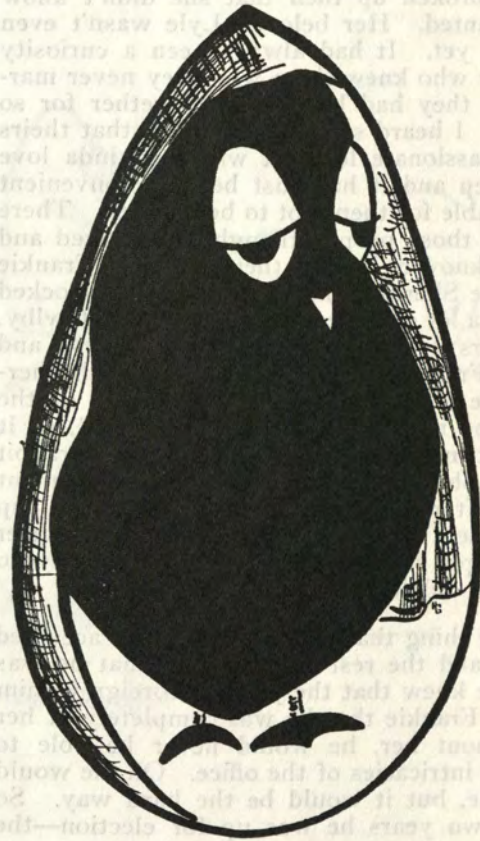
The age of reason  
(such a pain)

The new-born robin  
still damp,

peeping

Hurry,  
burn your shirt of cocoon cloth.

by Pam Guy





She came from a Christian home. Her father was a missionary among men, a preacher. Those who knew her called her a good girl. Now she stood in a train station in a small town, to take a train to nowhere, anywhere, as long as it was away from her present home. The train pulled in and the closed hearts alighted, giving her room to advance to eternity. She boarded, put her few hastily gathered belongings on the rack, and sat cautiously in a seat by a window. She decided to observe her fellow passengers.

Directly across from her, to the right, sat a woman who was stout, and rosy. Her face was lined with the worry of many years. She had strong hands which were busy with the sewing in her lap. She smiled often as she sewed. The girl wondered what she was sewing so avidly and asked her; the old woman replied, "A shroud."

Two seats ahead of her sat a man with long white hair who was reading a newspaper. As he flipped the pages over, the girl tried to see what he was reading. She couldn't believe what she saw: each page was just like the one before—blank. He looked like he might be a nice old man so she asked him what he sought so diligently. As soon as she spoke, his head snapped around and he looked directly into her eyes. His look was cold and his voice low as he replied, "An obituary."

What unusual people were these. They thought only of death. However, what had she been thinking of when she had boarded? Life? She leaned back in the seat and closed her eyes as the train lurched forward. Her thoughts sought the packet she placed above her—the packet containing a Bible, a volume of poetry, and a letter.

For awhile she wondered what her reasons had been when she had chosen these few possessions. She had many others that had more monetary value. She thought of her Bible. This old moldy book contained the message for mankind; it contained the solution for eternal life. It was the pattern of her life as it had been until a few weeks ago; a few short weeks ago when she met the one person who came to be her life. Now when she thought of him she could not see his face, only his hands which were the hands of a strong man, a preacher. She had taken him into her and she now bore the fruit of his message within the open shelter of her virtue.

The volume of poetry was of no import. Her parents had given it to her. Now she could only laugh at it, for it was not the poetry of her heart. No, it concealed within its narrow pages the poem that she herself had written; the poem which she had cried about until the pages were wet and crumpled. The volume served only as a press for the poem. The last time she had looked at it, its pages were still wrinkled. There was nothing to

be gained by pressing it except the hope which she kept within her heart.

The letter was written for her parents. They would wonder, comprehend, and, finally scorn. It was all she could think of to give to them. She wept a little over the contents, but she could not retract them for they were the essence of herself.

The conductor entered the coach and took up the tickets, bringing her out of her reverie. It was he! He of her heart's longing and abhorrence. With only a closed glance, he showed that he knew her not as he moved on to the next passenger. She arose and put out her hand to stop him, but when he turned, a hideous visage greeted her eyes. The pointed teeth revealed his soul and she was powerless before him.

She resumed her seat and watched the night fly swiftly by. As the night continued she felt, rather than saw, different objects fly by her window. She felt herself falling asleep. Her dreams were filled with a myriad of symbols which meant nothing to her. When she awoke, she gazed around the car again. The train must have stopped for there were new passengers in back of her. They seemed familiar to her, but she knew that she had never seen them before. There was a young mother with her daughter. They looked a great deal alike. The mother was an older, wiser replica of the girl who had an air of undefinable innocence.

She got up and removed the letter from her packet. After she had read it once, she decided that it was of no use. It meant nothing and gained nothing. She tore it into tiny bits and scattered it in the aisle. She made a present of the volume of poetry to the child. The child glanced through it and smiled at her, happy and charmed with the gift.

She placed the poem in the pages of her Bible. She tried to read it, but not for long could she read in peace. She became aware of the person who had somehow managed to seat himself beside her without her notice. His face seemed gentle, but when she met his eyes, she saw that they were hard and unforgiving. She looked away, but she could not return her thought to the Bible. The presence beside her drew her attention; again she could find no change in his visage. He said nothing to her, and suddenly she realized that he never had. Sunday after Sunday she had listened for him, but there was nothing that could pass between them. When he had gone, moving slowly up the aisle, she looked once again at her Bible, shrugged, and put it back on the rack.

The train was slowing now and she knew that this was where she wanted to alight. The sun was beginning to rise, spreading golden-pink, misty rays across the blue-black sky. The old woman had finished her sewing and now wrapped the thing



into a small bundle. The man smiled for he had found what he sought. The conductor had resumed his natural form and took her arm as she moved to the door. The mother and the child had seemingly vanished, probably to another car.

As she stood on the platform, the old woman approached her and pressed the bundle into her hand, but before the girl could speak, the old woman had vanished into the semi-black fog. Then

the man came and handed the paper to her. There was a bright red circle around the only print on the page, her name at the head of the column. Lastly the conductor came and put his arms around her and kissed her mouth until she could only gasp. She withdrew smiling. As the train pulled away, she tossed her only remaining possession under the turning wheels and it was crushed into the cinders below.



### THE GAME

"Deal the cards," said Black to White

(A man's soul waited to learn its plight;

A trembling wait as he saw the stare

In the eyes of the gamblers seated there).

The cards were dealt, the game began,

No heed was paid to the waiting man;

Each card turned held a different date

The deeds of these would decide his fate;

Both opponents knew this game well,

One bid for Heaven, and one for Hell.

On and on the figures played

(The waiting man bent his head and prayed).

"Black," said White, "He's paid his price,

You won once but I win twice."

by Bonnie Feather



PARADOX

**CONSTRUCTION JOB . . . . . Lura Ann Dillard**

It's wonderful to be alive, Joan thought as she lay back in the truck and enjoyed the smell of the newly mown hay. She had met Jim tonight, the new boy in town. He was very tall with hair the color of ebony, but other boys were tall with hair the color of ebony. The thing that set Jim apart was his eyes—brooding and blue, the color of a Siamese cat's.

They met quite by accident, but as they talked Joan felt none of the customary awkwardness between strangers. He asked her if he could walk her home from the hay ride and she eagerly accepted his offer. She could hardly wait for the truck to get back and unload the others, so she would have the chance to be with Jim alone. They had talked a lot on the truck, but that wasn't the same as talking with him alone.

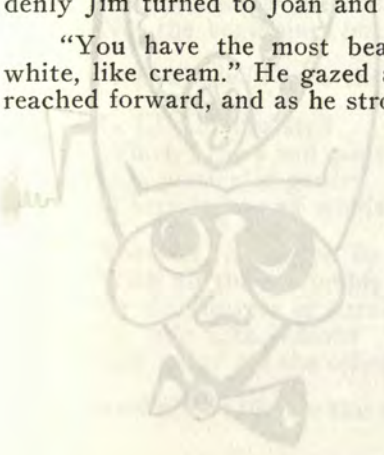
As they walked down the dark, shadowy streets, Joan felt content and secure with Jim by her side. They walked in silence for several minutes; Jim made no effort to start a conversation. It was a strange night—the moon was full, and yet it seemed to cast an artificial ghostly illumination. They walked slowly along the block where Joan's father was excavating for a new housing development. Almost home, she thought with regret. Suddenly Jim turned to Joan and said,

"You have the most beautiful neck; it's so white, like cream." He gazed at her intently, then reached forward, and as he stroked her neck gently

he continued talking, "It feels soft as feathers, but it's also firm—sort of as I imagine a pearl would feel. I'd like to put my fingers around it and press until all the life oozed from your body and it turned blue. You know, it would be quite simple to do. Yes, it would. I could kill you here and bury your body under one of those houses, and tomorrow, when the carpenters come, they would build the house right up over you. No one would ever know that you were there."

All the while he was talking, his fingers were tightening around her neck. She had been so hypnotized by his voice that, at first, she had hardly realized it, or if she had, it had all seemed natural. Now the pressure at her throat brought her back to reality with a ghastly wave of fear and panic. She screamed and was astonished by the silence. Wildly she pulled at his hands, trying to break their grip so that she would be heard. But she knew that he couldn't strangle her. Help would come; a car would pass; she couldn't be strangled. Even when other people were strangled, it never really happened. Suddenly she was tired and wanted to go home. The face in front of her was gone; all that was left was a vague awareness that somewhere, far away, a neck was being squeezed.

You know, it's actually rather funny; my wife and I have lived in this house for five years now and only I know that we walk over Joan at least a hundred times a day.





# HONORABLE

## PARADOX

Smug man  
 pretends  
 his own coronation

Then locks  
 himself  
 in a palatial web

In this dismal bog  
 the brain  
 smothers itself

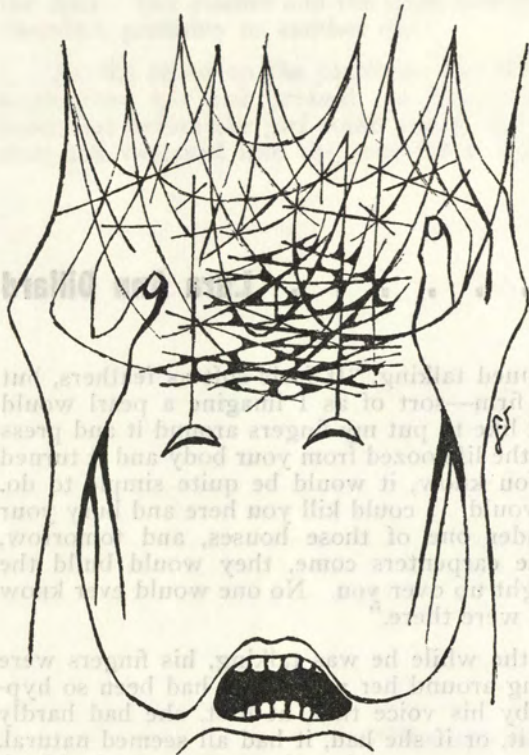
(A painless death  
 anesthetized

by self-content)

Yet the prattling mouth  
 lives on

to explain

by Judith Roberts



## SQUASH

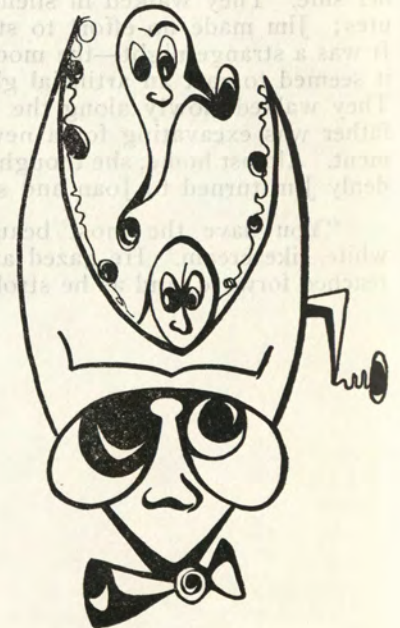
Swiftly striding a measured span, Balzin  
 In arm, amorphous suit and tie awry  
 Ten degrees to the left, descrying eye  
 Relentless brain, devising a Plan for Man.

He lectures friends, strikingly few, a review  
 Of darkness about, of a machine unseen  
 By those it gulps alive, and gleaned clean  
 Of mind, released to plague th'eschewing Few.

His black beads glint and gleam with mighty light  
 Through horn-rimmed glasses, chaotic careful hair,  
 The toiling brain spews out its fare, aware  
 Of raptured stares, and sets the Cosmos right.

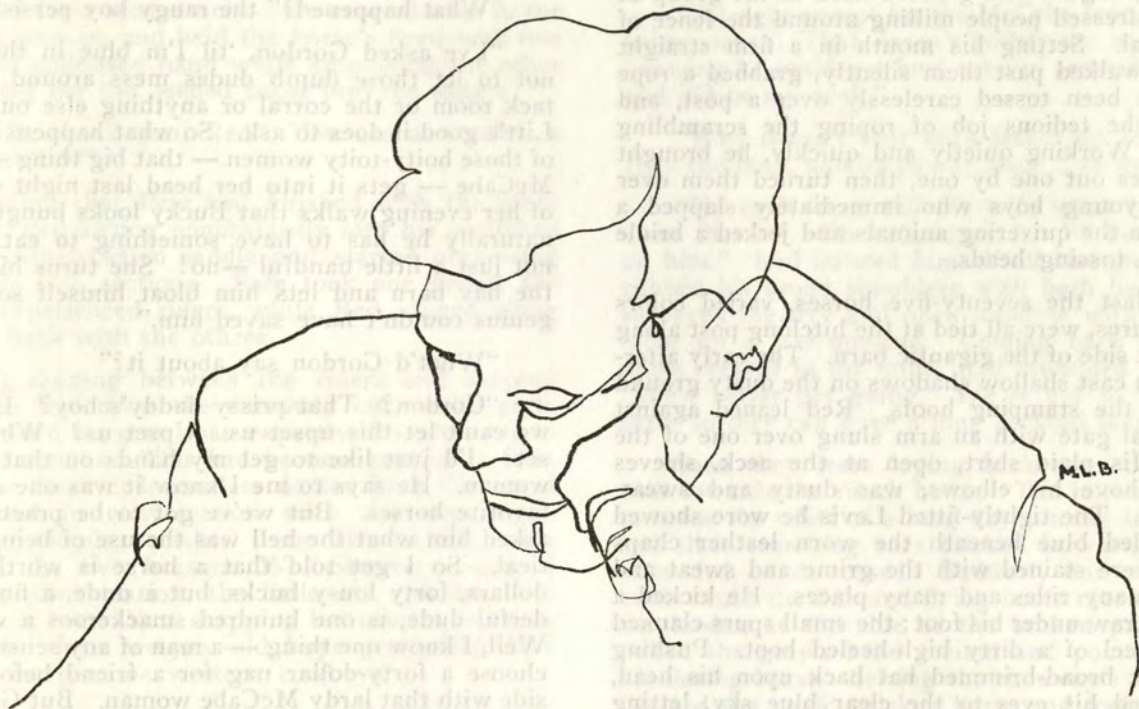
Thus his life is spent perfecting effect,  
 And now — Behold the Pseudo-Intellect.

by Marcia Angell





# MENTIONS



## A QUESTION

Is Life a giant fortune wheel  
Which is spun once, twice, again,  
And coming slowly to a stand  
Glares in red and black our destiny?

Ten! Ten is your number.  
Go through that door to the right  
To receive your prize.  
The hallway is long, long  
And you know the end,  
Not the beginning, but the end.

And who will turn the wheel?

Is Life a tiny seed  
Which grows and pops open  
In a particular garden  
Where rains and winds settle it down?

There is your place, by the wall  
With all the marigolds (or sweetpeas  
Or cornflowers or turnip plants!)  
To fade with seasons  
And never see the other side of the garden.

And who will sow the seed?

by Eleanor Gullion

## THE THINKER

On his pedestal  
The mighty thinker sits  
Alone.

And all the world marches by  
and stares  
And laughs  
booming laughs of scorn  
giggles of surprise

Yet he thinks

Alone.

Wars are fought  
(He thought as much)

And peace is made

(He perceived it)

Death moves suddenly and often

(It was revealed to him)

Down from your stand!

If you are wise

Tell us

tell us when the world will end

Tell us now!

But the thinker smiles

(A thought suggested it to him)

And returns to meditation

He must think

Alone.

by Eleanor Gullion



Strolling towards the barn with his leisurely bow-legged gait, Red glanced hard at the group of smartly-dressed people milling around the fence of the corral. Setting his mouth in a firm straight line, he walked past them silently, grabbed a rope that had been tossed carelessly over a post, and started the tedious job of roping the scrambling horses. Working quietly and quickly, he brought the horses out one by one, then turned them over to two young boys who immediately slapped a saddle on the quivering animals and jerked a bridle over the tossing heads.

At last the seventy-five horses, varied colors and statures, were all tied at the hitching post along the front side of the gigantic barn. The early afternoon sun cast shallow shadows on the dusty ground beneath the stamping hoofs. Red leaned against the corral gate with an arm slung over one of the bars. His plaid shirt, open at the neck, sleeves rolled above his elbows, was dusty and sweat-streaked. The tightly-fitted Levis he wore showed as a faded blue beneath the worn leather chaps which were stained with the grime and sweat and dirt of many rides and many places. He kicked a tuft of straw under his foot; the small spurs clanked at the heel of a dirty high-heeled boot. Pushing his black broad-brimmed hat back upon his head, Red lifted his eyes to the clear blue sky, letting his gaze descend gradually to the tops of the trees, to the wire fences, to the people. His mind was turbulent. What's the use, he asked himself, of bowing and scraping to dudes all day? What's the use when all you get in return is a bunch of lip? Some of these high and mighty people might as well spit on you — they do almost everything else.

"Pete," he said suddenly, "Did the gluetruck come for that horse?"

"Yeah. They got here right after you took the ride out this morning."

"Uh-huh." It was a low sound expressing what may have been acknowledgment, but it remained entirely void of expression. Pete turned to scrutinize the cowboy's face, the tanned and weathered skin, the wrinkles creasing his brow — put there not by age (he was only twenty-six) but by long days in the saddle, squinting at the sun — the little lines at the corners of shockingly blue eyes, the mass of carrot-color that fell across his forehead. Pete, a tall youngster of eighteen, ambled over to his fellow-employee and folded his tanned arms across a wrinkled denim shirt.

"Red . . ." He hesitated, but then continued in quickly spoken words, "Just what was it that happened to that horse?"

"You wanta know what happened to the horse? Go ask that dude-lover boss of ours. He can tell you. Anyone that'd take sides with a damned dude

must need his head examined."

"What happened?" the rangy boy persisted.

"I've asked Gordon, 'til I'm blue in the face, not to let those dumb dudes mess around in the tack room or the corral or anything else out here. Little good it does to ask. So what happens? One of those hoity-toity women — that big thing — Mrs. McCabe — gets it into her head last night on one of her evening walks that Bucky looks hungry. So naturally he has to have something to eat. And not just a little handful — no! She turns him into the hay barn and lets him bloat himself so big a genius couldn't have saved him."

"What'd Gordon say about it?"

"Gordon? That prissy daddy's boy? He says we can't let this upset us. Upset us? Who's upset? I'd just like to get my hands on that stupid woman. He says to me I know it was one of your favorite horses. But we've got to be practical. I asked him what the hell was the use of being practical. So I get told that a horse is worth forty dollars, forty lousy bucks, but a dude, a fine wonderful dude, is one hundred smackeros a week. Well, I know one thing — a man of any sense would choose a forty-dollar nag for a friend before he'd side with that lardy McCabe woman. But Gordon's cut out of the same cloth as these dumb rich dudes. No wonder he likes 'em so much. I'll take horses — they've got more brains."

"Can't say I blame you much. Seems like Gordon's been riding you a lot lately. No wonder you've got a burr under your blanket. Why do you stick with this stuff, Red?"

"Sometimes I wonder myself. It's a job — and horses are all I know. I've got my ranch over the hill — yeah — ten acres of soddy ground around a rat-trap of a house. Big deal. I didn't have a rich papa to give me a ranch, lock, stock, and barrel. I had to sweat for what I got. So I want a better place — so I keep on here — so I keep taking what's dished out — so I . . ."

Raucous laughter and gay chatter interrupted the two wranglers. Turning towards the sprawling ranch house, they saw all sizes and shapes of financially unburdened, high-class sophisticates emerging mob-like from the double doors. More vacationers issued from the pine log cabins nestled among the cedars and pines, making their way towards the waiting horses. With a disgusted grimace, Red turned his face away from the onrushing waves of rich humanity and with long strides, reached the horses and began to lead them over one by one to the eager, but inexperienced equestrians.

"Oh, Red — Red," sang a falsely soprano voice. "Here, Red. I need your help. I just don't know



what I'd do without you, you dear boy, you" The soprano was that of Mrs. McCabe, a fleshy, gushing, middle-aged woman, the wife of a lawyer from St. Louis. Red clamped his teeth and his blue eyes snapped for a second only. He crossed over to the robust woman, and held the horse's head with one roughly calloused hand while employing the other in giving her the needed boost into the saddle.

"Oh, thank you, Red. You are a wonder, a real wonder!"

Seeing that Pete had finished with the other guests, Red swung nonchalantly into his scratched and weather-beaten saddle and started organizing the ride into sections. Pete took one group, the more experienced riders, while Red jogged along at the back with the others.

Zig-zagging between the riders and keeping them in line upon the narrowly cut, rocky path, Red guided his gray roan expertly, his eyes watchful and serious. This had become routine to him. He saw the ever-humorless doctor from Cleveland engrossed in conversation with the curvacious, bleached-blond socialite from Minneapolis. He noticed the two brusque Wall-Streeters engaged in deep conversation, the little old spinster who had never been West snapping her camera at every turn, the three ten-year-old boys pretending that they were genuine western cowboys.

Suddenly spurring the roan, and skirting several horses, Red halted beside a pudgy freckled-faced youngster who hunched forward in his saddle, with legs up, and a pine branch in hand.

"What do you think you're doing?" he asked sharply.

"I'm a jockey. Gotta win this race," he answered rapidly with a look of annoyance.

"Well, this isn't the race track, mister. You just sit up there in that saddle and mind your business."

"Aw, for cripes sake. Can't do anything around here." The stout child sat like a statue. "Is this better? Or is something else wrong now?"

"You heard what I said." Red spun around and cantered away. The whole family is nuts, he thought. Mrs. McCabe isn't bad enough. She drags that kid out here, too. And that old man of hers isn't anything but a pain in the neck. His son can do no wrong.

Climbing steadily to the top of a rocky ridge the horses and riders reached an open meadow of short clumpy grass. Here they dismounted and rested for a short while, the guests gathering together in little conclaves. Red sat cross-legged on the bunchy grass and rolled a cigarette carefully, licked the paper around the tobacco, and held a flickering flame, cupped between his leathery hands,

to the limp end of it. Pete ambled over and crouched beside him.

"How goes it on your end?"

"All right except for the McCabe brat. Always being smart. That doesn't bother me so much as knowing he could get hurt messin' around like that and it'd be my neck."

"Why doesn't that kid's father do something. He's the most namby-pamby dude I've ever seen."

"He can't even tell his wife what to do, let alone that kid. Oh well, forget it. I'll keep an eye on him." Red hoisted himself off the ground and rubbed his broad shoulders with both hands. He surveyed the free and open meadow with contentment for a few minutes. Coming back from the miles created in his mind, Red mumbled hoarsely, "We'd better get going. We've got to get back early so they can have a long cocktail hour."

Soon they were loping back over the rough trail towards the ranch house. The horses seemed to sense the relief of a long day coming to an end, and their twitching ears pricked forward, nostrils expanded, heads tossed. Suddenly one of the animals broke the line and flying hoofs raced towards the bushes at the side of the broken path. Red jerked the gray's head around and pounded after the fleeing beast. Seizing the runaway's bridle, he stopped the panic-stricken horse and looked up to see the McCabe boy's terror-filled eyes, ashen face, and whitened knuckles grotesquely curled around the saddle horn.

Perceiving that he was out of danger but thrust into a new situation, the child blurted, "I didn't do nothin'. This crazy horse just went wild. I didn't do nothin' — nothin'."

"Where's your boot?"

"It-t-t fell off," he stammered.

"I'll bet it fell off. What were you doing? Playing jockey again?" Red grabbed the boy's arm sternly.

"No, I wasn't. I wasn't doing anything," he panted, struggling to disengage himself from the tight grip.

"What's going on here? What happened?" The boy's father had jogged up beside them. "You all right, son? Not hurt, are you? Don't worry. It could have happened to anyone. The horse was just skittish, that's all." The redfaced, fast-breathing man wheezed as he spoke.

"Skittish, my foot. Not by a long shot," Red retaliated. "The damned kid was messing around again. I've told him time and time again to act like he had a little sense while he was on a horse. This kid wouldn't have sense enough to come in out of the rain."



"Now let's wait just a minute here, Red. My son has a good enough head on his shoulders. You know how kids are — he's no different from any other kid his age."

"All I know is that he needs a little fanning in the direction of the seat of his pants and if he was my kid he'd get it," Red retorted angrily. "Seems to me that some of you people could keep your kids in line and save us a little trouble."

"You're paid to watch them. But I'll thank you just to watch them, hear. You keep your hands off my boy. My son didn't hurt anything. You had to exert a little energy. Well, you're paid for it, so don't be a sore-head." The moon-faced mound of flesh stood in front of the rangy cowboy, looking up into his cold, grim countenance. The red-head squared his shoulders and sent a piercing blue stab through the other man. Clenching his fists slowly and stalking silently to his horse, he yelled, "Come on. Let's get this ride home."

Talk, he said to himself with vehemence, always talk — nothing else. I'd like to get one fast punch at that guy — just one. This is it. Some people have big mouths, but that McCabe's got the biggest. He'll run right to Gordon. Red was preoccupied as he slumped his loose frame like a sack of potatoes in the saddle. So what. Another riot act read. Won't be the first time, nor the last. He knows no eighteen year old can do the job. And it's dead sure he can't do it himself. He may own a money machine but that doesn't make him a man.

Clattering into the dusty area facing the barn and tack room, the horses snorted and shook. The riders tumbled off and the wranglers went to work unsaddling and rubbing down the glossy wet, quivering coats. The guests hobbled stiffly off to their respective cabins, leaving milling, stomping animals and fast-moving hard-working men in the barn.

After he had finished the last horse, Red swung aboard his gray and shouted to Pete, "Come on, fellah. Let's get them out to the pasture."

Suddenly a familiar figure presented itself at the side of the ranch house. "Red," the authoritative voice boomed. "Will you come in the office a minute?" It was stated as a question but the tone was imperative.

"Yeah, Gordon — hold on a minute." Of all the times to get the spiel, Red complained silently. Nothing like holding up our work. But that's a minor matter.

He jumped to the ground and with great strides reached the office as Gordon was settling himself into the cushioned swivel-chair. The tall bulk folded itself into the chair and slowly exhaled a stream of smoke from a sensitive mouth. Gordon Lyles, owner of the prosperous Circle L, vacation wonderland of the West, was swarthy-faced and

pock-marked. Straight wiry hair fell down the middle of his forehead, almost to the small black pin-pointed eyes. With an air of contempt he motioned with a large paw-like hand and Red plopped down on the soft couch, stretching his long legs in front of him. This will take a while, he thought, as he reached for his cigarette makings and stared directly at the brawny man at the desk. He glanced around the room, taking in the plush office furniture, the colored photographs decorating the opposite wall, the dark knotty pine interior of the stifling room, the curling deliberating smoke rising through the pregnant stillness. Suddenly a gruff accent pervaded the quiet.

"What in the world is your gripe, Red?" Sarcasm and scorn pervaded the abrupt words. "What was the meaning of that fiasco this afternoon? McCabe is ready to leave the place. For the love of Mike, Red, what do you think this establishment is for? We entertain, in case you haven't heard."

"Listen Gordon, I know my job. I know I get paid out of the dough these dudes bring in. I've learned the lesson, I'm not as dumb as you seem to think. And it's not bad most of the time. I've known some mighty nice folks we've had out here. But there are some I can't tolerate. That horse business last night — now that's too much. And now this today. A man can only take so much, Gordon." Red spoke forcefully, but his face was calm except for the flickering blue eyes. Pinpoints of light flashed across the pupils as he spoke.

"These people don't have to be so unreasonable, Gordon. You know it as well as I."

"Look here, cowboy, I run this ranch. I've made it into what it is. I work hard for what I get. I've combined hours and sweat and tears into this place. And I say it's your job to entertain. No fussing, no hot-headedness, just plain and simple consideration."

The two men eyed each other cautiously but with an open visage. Gordon lowered his eyes and fumbled with some paper clips strung together end to end. Red sat quietly. Another lecture, he remarked to himself. This makes two in one day. I'm getting good. His employer said nothing more, but raised his eyes to the open window and stared fixedly at the tall trees, the gaudy people, and dense maze of wire fences. His face was somber and meditating.

Realizing that nothing more was to be said, Red cleared his throat and scrambled to his feet, spurs scraping the floor. Without a backward glance, he started out the door.

"Just a minute, Red. We've got a few more things to settle, I believe."

Red pivoted slowly, and stood straight, boots planted apart on the brightly-colored Indian rug, wonder written on his brow.

(continued on page 15)



## SUMMER'S CHILDREN

Summer's children,  
Restless, untamed vagabonds,  
No longer children of a family,  
But children of the world.  
Today's children,  
Each wrestling to put  
His narcotic fantasy into metallic reality.  
Children with everything, who have nothing.  
Playmates for a season,  
Playing games of hide and seek,  
And run sheep run,  
Each living his own rules,  
Each struggling to win.  
Hiding and seeking,  
But running,  
Mostly running.  
Beaches, taverns, beds,  
But no satisfaction and no answers,  
Only games,  
No thoughts, no conclusions, only feelings,  
Feelings jumbled in jazz, abstracts,  
Poetry, and smoky coffee houses.  
Wandering, seeking, running.  
Playmates.  
Summer's children.

by Bonnie Feather

### A MONODY

Blue, lasting blue  
The laughing sea is bitter blue . . .  
Mocking, mocking, mocking  
While gentle breeze ruffles silence into smile  
Around infinite blue.  
So gentle his eyes were  
But, Christ, how blue.

by Edie Witcher





Miss Grace was going downtown today and she asked Mary Ellen to drive her. Now, on any other day, Mary wouldn't have minded too much. But today, she had so much to do. Tonight was her first date with John, one of the best-looking boys in the school. Her plans for the day did not include driving Miss Grace anywhere, let alone out in that slushy rain. It would simply ruin her hair. So when Miss Grace asked her, she explained her problem and told her to ask Sonny. Her mother overheard her and called her out into the kitchen for a big lecture.

"Sister," she started, "I just don't think that's the way to treat Miss Grace. You know she is too elderly to take buses and she has no other way to go—now you just go right back in there and tell her you'll go, and I don't mean maybe!"

"But, Mom," she tried.

"No 'buts' little girl! Your hair is unimportant. Miss Grace only goes out once a month and Sonny took her last time. I have this whole house to clean today and you know she only gets in my way. Now, march!"

So she marched. She thought about Sonny, but she knew that he wouldn't go, especially if Mom said he didn't have to. She also knew that he would check. She thought about her dad, but he was downstairs repairing the hi-fi. He went into the basement every Friday and didn't come out until Monday. It was like trying to move the Rock of Gibraltar to try to budge him on a Saturday. So she resigned her hair to its fate and went to tell Miss Grace that she'd take her.

Miss Grace had on a black cloth coat, old rubbers, and that silly old umbrella that she always carried. Mary Ellen just hated that old umbrella, she thought it was the silliest thing she had ever seen. It was some kid's umbrella and it had all kinds of holes in it. Her aunt's hair was gathered back in a little grey bun. She had been standing there during the whole argument polishing her silver-rimmed spectacles with the hem of her Paisley-print dress. As Mary Ellen entered the room again, she straightened up and smiled, "Well, dear, are we ready to go now? It is very sweet of you to take me. Now don't you worry about your hair. You always look nice and I'm sure a little rain won't hurt you too much."

Mary Ellen shrugged on her trench coat and threw a scarf on her head. She opened the door for her aunt and waited for the old woman to draw her loose coat over her thin, boney frame and shuffle out into the cold. They made their way to the car very slowly because Miss Grace was afraid of the slippery walk. After she had shut her aunt's door of the car, she dashed around to her own side and slid behind the steering wheel. She glanced in the

rear-view mirror and was not surprised to see that her hair had gone completely berserk.

"Miss Grace" was what she had always called her aunt. She could still see that day, three years ago, when her aunt had come to live at her house. She had entered the house somewhat hesitantly, but as soon as she had been there for a week, she started trying to take over. Miss Grace had cared for Mary Ellen's grandfather for years, and when he had died, she had come to live with them. She was used to running a house and she couldn't seem to realize that this new house did not need her.

"Sister," twittered Miss Grace, "Sister, don't you think you're going a little too fast, dear?"

"Of course not," she snapped. Well, she was going a little too fast, but she was in no mood to hear what her aunt had to prattle about. She just wanted her to shut up. Here she was with this cool date tonight and she was just going to look horrid. Oh, fish sticks, she thought to herself.

Her aunt made a few attempts at conversation, but when Mary cut her short each time, she must have taken the hint because she stopped trying. They drove down the main street and parked in the Municipal Parking Lot. As Mary Ellen had anticipated, her aunt insisted that she be accompanied to the doctor's office. Like all old people, she just loved to talk about her illnesses and operations and Dr. Tom, the family doctor, would always listen. She thought that she had heard about her aunt's gall bladder and colitis until she was green in the face! Finally, Miss Grace was through talking to the doctor. She entered the outer room of the office and smiled at Mary Ellen.

"Well, Sister," she twittered, "I'm going to live, te-hee-hee, aren't I, Dr. Tom?"

"Yes, Miss Grace, you are indeed." He turned to Mary Ellen, "Your aunt is quite a remarkable person, you know that, don't you, Sister? She is going to be with us for a long time yet."

Mary smiled wryly and replied, "Yes indeed, sir."

From there, they walked all over town while Miss Grace went to rummage sales, book sales, and any kind of sale that struck her fancy. Each thing she bought was purchased in cash. She had a phobia about banks. This was something that irked Mary Ellen to no end. The Lord only knew how much small change she had hidden away in that room of hers.

Her room was something else. She was always asking Mary to come up and spend the evening with her. For one thing, she always kept her blinds down and her windows shut. She also kept shelf after shelf of bric-a-brac around the room. She col-



lected antiques. She had more bric-a-brac and more antiques than one small, stuffy room could contain. She was especially fond of her velvet drapes which really looked awful in a modern house. They were long maroon drapes and the mouldy smell of them filled the whole room. Mary Ellen always tried to avoid having to go in, but there were times when she had to give in.

Mary Ellen waited impatiently for her aunt to finish. Her main thought was to get out of there before she saw anyone she knew. But it was too late. She could see John walking down the street right toward her. She forced a smile and said, "Hi, John." Of all the people she had to meet today!

"Hi. Mary Ellen," he returned. He gave Miss Grace an odd look and cocked one eyebrow as if to say, "And who is that?" Mary flushed from head to foot. She wished that her aunt was a thousand miles away. Here was the one person she really wanted to impress and she had to have her aunt with her to ruin everything.

"I'll leave you two children alone now. There is a yarn sale I want to go to down the street. I won't be too long, Sister." Then off she toddled, merrily humming to herself. Mary Ellen wanted to sink into the pavement. If there was one thing that John hated to be called, it was "child."

"Don't get upset about Miss Grace, Johnny," she started hastily, to cover her chagrin, "She always calls everybody 'children,' even Mom and Dad. It's just her way."

"S'all right, Mary, babe," he replied, "Didn't bother me that much. Old biddies have a tendency to classify anyone under fifty as a child. She certainly is a queer old duck, isn't she? Where in the devil did she dig up that cool umbrella?"

"Well, it's a long story, I could tell you to-night . . ."

"Don't bother, hon, we'll have more important things to do than talk about Graceless there."



## TREES, FENCES, AND PEOPLE (continued from page 12)

Two weeks later, many states distant, Red leaned against a mailbox at the side of a hard-baked dirt road. Vastness and blue stretched as far as the eye could see. The breeze rippled the prairie grass beneath his feet, and a dusty tumbleweed wrapped itself around the bony legs of the big gray roan. Red held the bridle of the crow-hopping animal while he tore open an envelope. The letter was scrawled in pencil, the lines running up and down across the page. As he read, Red's mouth set firmly but his eyes gazed softly at the written page. Folding the paper and shoving it into his shirt pocket, Red threw his lanky frame into the saddle.

With that remark he sauntered off down the street. He paused at the corner and looked back and winked; then he moved to the opposite corner and went into the town hangout, Max's.

Mary Ellen floated down the street to the yarn shop. At the window, she stopped and looked in to see if Miss Grace was there. Sure enough, she was rummaging through a big pile of yarn balls. She opened the door and walked in. As she tapped her aunt on the elbow, her aunt turned swiftly.

"My goodness, child, you startled me. I was just thinking about a young man I once knew named John. He was tall and full of sunshine." She stopped here and the clerk took her money and stuffed her yarn in a sack.

"What about your John, Miss Grace?" Mary Ellen asked. She was interested in spite of herself.

"Nothing much more, dear. One day a long time ago, I almost married him . . . but it was a very long time ago and he's dead now . . ." Mary looked at her aunt and was surprised to see tears in her dim blue eyes. She turned away and pretended not to notice.

They walked back to the car together. Mary Ellen was surprised at her aunt's behavior. She had never seen Miss Grace cry. John's laughing face flitted across her mind and she blushed. She fumbled for the car keys and was about to get in when her aunt called to her from the other side of the car.

Sister, dear, come around and help your old aunt get aboard, will you?"

For a minute she tried to quell the rise of irritation which almost choked her. She really tried, but finally she clamped her teeth together and stomped on the accelerator. The car roared out of the lot. When she reached home, she got out of the car, slammed the door, ignoring the call from behind, and went to her room to set her hair.

Pete's a good kid, he mused. Nice of him to write. I miss that kid — a solid guy — dependable. Like to see him again — maybe someday. He wants to know what happened — always curious.

No one had really understood exactly what did happen. Red had left that night. Speaking to no one, he had packed his belongings and loaded the big gray in a trailer. Driving down the winding road and away from the Circle L, he had thought about nothing, felt nothing, said nothing, only knowing that the wheels were turning — on and on — and away.





PROGRESS

And they took up their plowshares  
 And melted them into rudders for moonships  
 And they mixed the molten metal  
 With powerful pruning hooks  
 Wrought to withstand the living flames  
 As they lapped up pre-progressive man's aims.

Land formerly fertile lay fallow  
 Around the rudder furnaces  
 Where asbestos asses plodded patiently:  
 Plowshares piled high for the asbestos apes  
 To stir into sterile rudders.

Asbestomats  
 Immune to the living flames  
 Which laughed while they lapped up  
 progressive man's aims.

NOT WITH A WHIMPER

Black cats are creeping on the roof tonight  
 Black clouds are hiding blood upon the moon  
 Black clothes are covering men whose souls were white  
 Before they knew the end would come so soon.

Black figures file across a metal page  
 Black fuel feeds a blacker metal tank  
 Black sighs escape the men who lived an age  
 When X and 2 were simply Bill and Frank.

Black bottles are clinking final farewell toasts  
 Black gloves are grasping indiscreet knobs  
 Black smoke is prematurely shaping ghosts  
 Of eerie, acrid red and yellow mobs.

Near earth they crouch, Black Angels keen and hover  
 They watch the smoke rise, then reach for the cover.



**THE GRAY MEN**

Little gray moles  
 Scurrying, scavenging  
 Unhoused but unharmed  
 They blunder underfoot.  
 Covered eyes and hidden ears  
 Only sun-warmed instinct urging  
 Faces down in folded hands.  
 No homage for sound, none for sight  
 They crow, they chant: "Lord make Light."



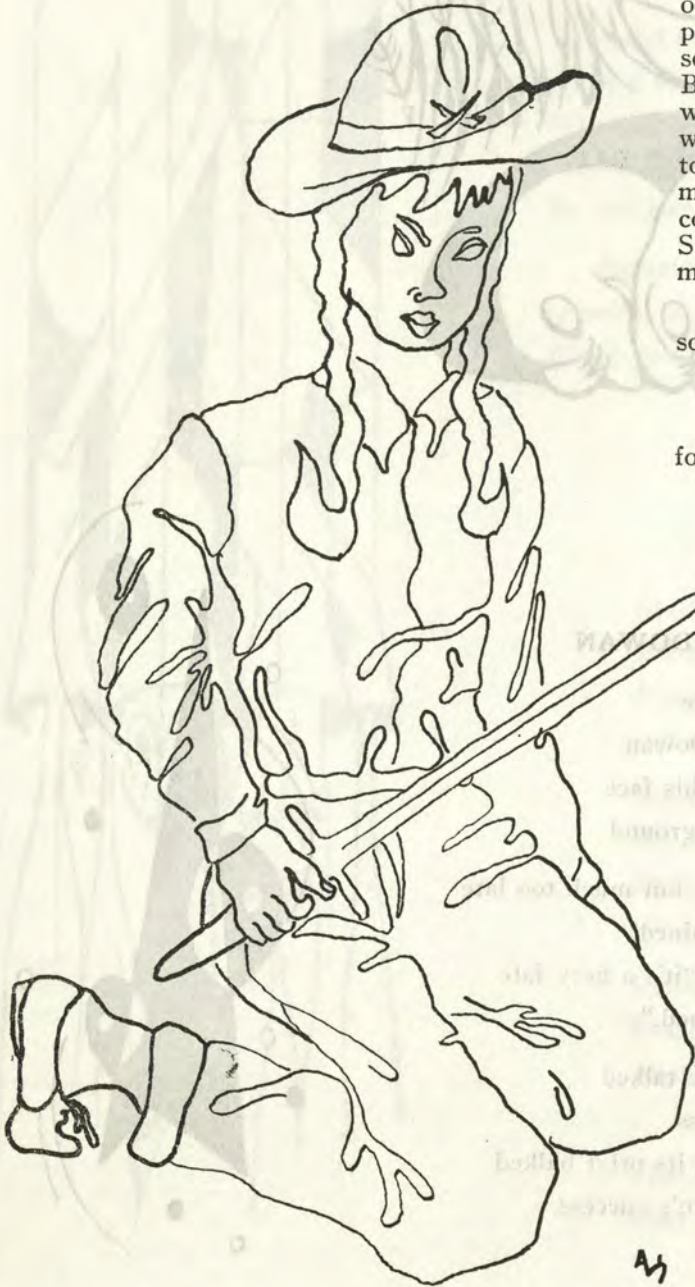
**POP GOES McDOWAN**

All around the missile base  
 McPhearson chased McDowan  
 He tripped and fell upon his face  
 And rolled round on the ground  
 "McDowan," he screamed, but much too late  
 Just a trail of smoke remained  
 "McDowan," he groaned, "it's a fiery fate  
 The moon will not be tamed."  
 Reporters sang and people talked  
 But none would ever guess  
 Why the harvest moon in its orbit balked  
 On the night of McDowan's success.





\* Honorable Mention—Selected as the best of the short story entries.



My name is Stonewall Jackson (it's really Thomas Jonathan Jackson) and I don't care what Miss Quist or that lady who was here tonight thinks. The other kids at school get called by their names but I always get called Sharon, or when Miss Quist is angry, Sharon Ann, which is a pretty silly thing to call a Confederate General. Whenever I correct anybody, they always say that I'm not Stonewall Jackson and I always say that I am Stonewall Jackson and this goes on for a long time sometimes. Especially with Miss Quist. And all the while the kids laugh. The only people who call me by my right name are my parents, but sometimes they even seem to think there's something funny about it. Even after the Battle of Bull Run, while I was eating supper, I saw Daddy wink at Mother, but if I hadn't won I don't know what would have happened to them. We lived so close to the Yankee lines. But the worst one was that woman who was here tonight—Mrs. Allen, the guidance counselor from school. At first she seemed okay. She came into the living room where I was polishing my sword, and she smiled at me very nicely and said

“Hello,” very friendly, “Are you Stonewall Jackson?”

I said, “Yes, Ma'am. General Jackson.

And she said, “How do you do?” (but didn't wait for me to tell her) “I'm Mrs. Allen.” Then she pulled a chair over real close to where I was sitting on the floor, and looked at me long and hard and then looked at my sword and then at me again, but all the while with this silly smile still on her face.

“How long have you felt you were Stonewall Jackson?” and she looked back at my parents sitting on the couch, like she wanted them to watch closely because she was about to teach them something. I didn't like her question, probably because it didn't make any sense at all, and I told her that it didn't.

She said, “I see,” but I guess she didn't because then she only smiled some more, leaned forward in her chair, and said the same thing again, only louder and slower this time.

So I said, “I suppose I've been Stonewall Jackson all my life, at least as long as I can remember.”

She said, “I see,” again, and I really hoped that this time she did so I could go back to polishing my sword. But after only a few seconds I heard her voice again, friendly I suppose, but sort of like Mother's is when she's talking to people she doesn't like on the phone.

“Do you know a little girl named Sharon Ann Higgins?” she asked and took off her

M



glasses and looked around the room like she didn't really care whether I did or not, but I knew she did.

"No. But I know a little girl named Brenda Higgins. She's my cousin." I don't really like Brenda but I hoped this would solve Mrs. Allen's problem.

"Doesn't Miss Quist call you Sharon Ann?"

"Yes, but that's because she doesn't really believe I'm Stonewall Jackson." My parents sort of smiled.

"But Honey," (I hate to be called Honey by old women), "Perhaps Miss Quist is right; perhaps you really aren't Stonewall Jackson; perhaps you are Sharon Ann Higgins and you just pretend you're Stonewall Jackson."

I thought about the time General Lee had put his hand on my shoulder and said to me, "Jackson . . . you are my right arm; I could do nothing without you." I really didn't like Mrs. Allen at all but I tried to be polite.

"No, you're wrong. I am Stonewall Jackson, General Lee's right arm, and if you'll excuse me I must check on the troops and go to bed." I really didn't have to check on the troops. I just said that. I had checked on the troops a half hour before. But I took my sword and went into the kitchen where I could polish it in peace. Through the door I heard Mrs. Allen talking to Mother and Daddy—not like she had talked to me, but fast and excited, like she was very worried about something.

And then I heard Daddy say, "Oh, I think you're making a mountain of a molehill. What harm can it do for the child to have her dreams?"

And Mrs. Allen said, "Don't you see, Mr. Higgins? Sharon pretends she is Stonewall Jackson because she is not willing to face reality, because she is not willing to adjust to her peer group. As long as she continues in this delusion, she cannot make a normal emotional adjustment to her environment. It's very serious. Please understand that."

Then I heard Mother say, "Maybe her environment should adjust to her," and she and Daddy laughed like it was really funny. But I didn't hear Mrs. Allen laugh; I only heard her talk faster and more excited than ever.

Daddy interrupted her, "Well, if you really think it's that serious, Mrs. Allen, we'll do what we can. Although I really can't see that . . ."

I didn't wait for them to finish because I felt terrible. I really had thought that Mother and Daddy knew, but I guess Mother was just joking when she asked me whether I was wounded in the Battle of Bull Run. I just picked up my sword and ran out to the garage and fed my horse and then I went up the back stairs to bed.

It's a clear cool night, with no clouds—just a black sky and a full yellow moon and thousands of bright glittering stars. Good. Tomorrow will be a perfect day for the Battle of Chancellorsville, and I'll be brave. I won't even mind if it hurts.



Darkness,

hearthfire glowing

light, orange

shadows, brown.

Wonder,

excitement growing,

yet within,

calm unbound.

by Virginia Schaaf



"This plan will net you ten thousand dollars a year or I'll eat my hat!" Those were Mr. Jones's exact words. At the mention of profit, my mother's eyes took on that dollar mark gleam of expectation.

"What do we have to do?" she asked.

"Well, you all got this land here, and there's a big demand on for pheasant reserves where businessmen can come and shoot in a restricted area instead of having to walk miles and maybe not get anything anyhow."

Well, all this sounded pretty good to Mom who was already visualizing wall-to wall carpeting, mink stoles and such.

"How much will it take to get started?" she asked.

"Well," said Mr. Jones. "Seeing as how your fields are already cleared, all you'll need is the birds and pens to put them in." This didn't sound like much trouble for ten thousand dollars in profit.

"If I was you, I'd start off with at least five thousand birds," said Mr. Jones. "I'll send you some pamphlets in the morning to show you how to go about it." Those were Mr. Jones's parting words.

That night Mom fixed an extra special dinner to get Dad in a good mood. He was pretty tired considering that as soon as he got home from work, he and my brother had headed for Mom's strawberry patch to unmulch the straw from the plants they had broken their backs covering last fall. These berries were another of Mom's get rich quick schemes, but that's another story.

After the final cup of coffee and the piece of homemade apple pie, Mom hit Dad with full force.

"John, Mr. Jones has this wonderful plan where we can earn ten thousand dollars a year, and all we have to do is raise these little birds called pheasants, and these rich men come out and shoot them and pay us five dollars a bird" I saw Dad cringe, but by now he had learned that when Mom sets her mind to something there is no use trying to talk her out of it.

He sighed and said in a low voice, "What do we . . . I mean I have to do?"

"Well I don't know for sure yet. Mr. Jones says we need five thousand birds and a pen for them. John, you're really lucky, because our fields are already cleared. Wouldn't it be awful if you had to clear those?"

Dad just looked at her in amazement and said, "Yes, I guess it would have been kind of tragic."

That week-end Mom ordered the baby birds from a hatchery in Pennsylvania. Fortunately for

us the man could only fill half the order. The delivery was to be made the first week in June. That meant Dad and Brother had two whole months to prepare for the new arrivals.

While Mom busied herself with literature on "The Pheasant and Sex," and "How to keep your Birds Happy or Pheasants have Problems too," Dad was using every spare minute he had from his regular job to build a house for the "little strangers," as Mom called the birds, and after all she had never seen a pheasant, so I guess in her eyes they were strangers.

The work on the "pheasant's abode" began on a Saturday. Dad said to my brother, "Let's go boy. It's time to start building that shed!"

"Abode, John, not shed," said Mom who was horrified by the very vulgarity of the word shed. Dad and Brother quickly made their exit.

Not having anything better to do that afternoon, I decided to go and see how Frank Lloyd Wright's competitors were doing. Upon approaching the diggings all I could see was a hole in the ground, which I presumed to be the foundation, and Dad with a level in his hand running around that rectangular gap in the ground hollering, "Damn it boy, can't you do anything right?"

Dripping with perspiration, Brother later came in the kitchen to get a jug full of ice water for him and Dad to drink. He stood by the sink and said, "That old man is going to drive me out of my mind. I get a wall half way up, and damn if he don't come along with that level of his and make me do it over again."

I said, "Well Brother, you know he's a perfectionist."

"Hell, I don't begrudge him that," said Brother. "But it's my back that has to carry those blocks up and down!" He continued to cuss to himself.

"Brother, please!" said Mom. "Why anyone would think as a child you played with the very devil himself!"

Brother made a hasty exit. This went on every Saturday and Sunday for a month. Dad would bawl Brother out, Brother would "hell" and "damn" about Dad, and Mom would accuse Brother of playing with the devil himself.

Dad finally applied his level for the last time and the "abode" passed his rigid requirements. I thought that we could all sit back and relax a while, since the arrival of the pheasants was a month away. But after supper that night, Mom unrolled a colossal blueprint of the "ideal playground for the growing pheasant." Dad took one look at it and went to bed.



The next week-end Dad and Brother began to cut and creosote the posts that would support the wire enclosure. I stood around and watched them and suggested why didn't one of them do that and the other dig the post holes to save time. When they threatened to put me to work if I didn't shut my mouth, I left.

After Brother cussed a while and Dad ran around with his level for a while, the pens were completed in time to welcome the "little strangers," all 2500 of them.

At first the pheasants were no trouble at all. Brother fed and watered them twice a day and saw to it that the infra-red light stayed on to keep them warm. They grew bigger by the day, and then one day Brother noticed that several of the birds were losing their feathers. Mom became frantic and went running to find her pamphlets to see what was the matter with her "babies." She came across a very interesting little tid-bit. It seemed her "babies" were carnivorous, or in other words, they enjoyed partaking of one another especially around the posterior end.

"Well, what does the book say to do about it?" was Dad's reply when she told him.

"It says here that cutting their beaks is an effective means of counteracting this desire for one another's flesh, as the beaks are no longer sharp enough to pick with," said Mom.

"What in the hell do you cut them with, a pair of scissors?" was his reply.

"No, of course not John," answered Mom. "There's a machine that does it. It's called a de-beaker."

Well, that's a logical name for it," said Dad.

By the following Saturday Dad had found one he could use for the week-end, which meant all 2500 of those birds had to have their beaks cut in two days.

Saturday morning dawned hot and sticky as only an August morning can. Unfortunately I was drafted into the assembly line for debeaking birds. In order to compensate for the discomfort the pheasants had to go through, Mom decided that after their beaks had been cut, we would let them out in their "playground."

The four of us headed for the "abode" early that morning so we'd have a few comparatively cool hours to work in. The idea of spending the day with those putrid smelling birds didn't exactly appeal to me. Brother must have realized this for he kept walking behind me and pushing me onward every now and then.

We formed our own little assembly line. Brother would catch the birds and hand them to me to

clip their wings. Then I handed them to Dad who debeaked them, and he handed them to Mom who let them loose on their playground."

By this time the smell alone had etherized my senses. Brother was cussing like a sailor as he chased those birds around trying to catch them. They scratched him, flapped their wings in his face, and occasionally did "what comes naturally" on him. Dad already had band-aids on two of his fingers, because he had misjudged the red-hot cutting blade and had debeaked two of his fingernails instead. I won't tell you what his exact words on this occasion were, but Mom turned quite pale at the time.

Sunday evening, as the last bird was turned loose on the "playground," we felt quite proud of our accomplishment. Gradually the pheasants began to grow back their feathers and everything looked like it was going to be okay. Then one month later the same thing began to happen all over again. Mom ran for her pamphlets again and began to read. While we all stood around waiting she gave a startled gasp.

"Oh no!" she said. "It says a little further on that debeaking is only effective for a short time as the beaks grow back. John, what are we going to do? We'll never catch them now to debeak them again."

"Well," said Dad. "I guess we'll just have to let nature take its course. If they want to dine off one another, that's their business, not mine."

And that's exactly what the pheasants did. Mom said, "I don't see a thing wrong with them. They just have bare posteriors, that's all."

"I don't know about that, Mom," said Brother. "But I do know we've got the baldest behind pheasants in the whole country, and that's no lie!"

When the hunting season opened we thought all our troubles were behind us, fool that we mortals are. During the course of the five month season, we had many interesting hunters, and a few of these have become engraved on my memory.

There was Mr. Sands who knew more about money matters than hunting and who was accompanied by Mr. Winterfield who knew more about the mail than hunting. They were both in office at the time because the Republicans were in power. They told Mom not to be surprised if they brought the Vice President with them the next time they came out. When Mom heard this she said, "I just wonder how much the Democrats would pay for a little accident to happen?" Both men laughed but for some reason they never came back to hunt again. I told Mom she was going to have to forget her party ties for five months out of the year. She said, "Child, you're what you are and there's no sense trying to fool somebody, even to make money and that's hard for me to say!"



We also had a lot of officers from the armed services. I remember one of these parties too well. They insisted on having thirty pheasants let out in the fields at one time. They had been in the fields for an hour, and we could hear all this shooting, so we thought everything was going along fine.

All of a sudden Brother came stomping into the house. "Where the heck's my gun?" he hollered.

"Boy, what are you doing up here?" Dad asked. "You're supposed to be guiding those hunters."

"What hunters? I came to get my gun. They haven't hit a thing yet. The easiest shots you ever saw. I'm sick of seeing five dollars fly off the place every time the dog flushes a bird."

"Not a bird yet?" Mom asked as if she couldn't believe it.

"Nothing and we've flushed about the whole thirty," Brother said. "Man, if this is what's defending us, I'm moving to Russia!"

"I've been watching you all through the binoculars and I've already reserved a ticket," Dad hollered from the next room.

A little while later Brother returned with the hunters. Out of thirty birds, they'd shot six and Brother had gotten five of them. Mom was a little sick and I thought Dad was going to explode when the officers asked Mom to clean the birds for them.

The next day Mr. Knoll, a wing commander in the Royal Air Force who is stationed here, came to hunt. For some reason he took a liking to us and in spite of his English accent, which Brother and Dad adored, we took quite a liking to him and his family. Fortunately he was a good shot, which put him on stable ground with Dad and Brother. He always seemed to be celebrating something or other, and he had a black retriever that he simply adored.

One day when he was celebrating he started to talk about married life. "That's jolly good, old man," he said. "I sleep with my dog and until my wife learns to retrieve, that's who I'll continue to sleep with!"

Dad is still laughing about that one, and I don't think he'll ever get over the day Mr. Knoll asked if he could go swimming in the lake. Under ordinary circumstances no one would have thought a thing about it, but at the time it was thirty degrees out. The thought of it made me so cold that I had to go wrap myself up in a blanket by a radiator.

As if human catastrophe wasn't enough, nature had to put her two cents in. One evening Brother

went to feed the birds and came running back as if something was chasing him.

"Dad, something has gotten into the birds and fifty of them are dead," he said. "It's the funniest thing. Whatever it was, it just grabbed them around the neck and sucked all their blood out."

Well, Dad blamed Brother for its happening, because he didn't sit up every night and watch out for such things, and Brother blamed Dad because he hadn't built the pens animal-proof enough. Traps were finally set and the blood sucker turned out to be a mink.

A few weeks went by and suddenly it began to snow, and snow, and snow. Not a light, dry snow, but a wet, heavy one. After the storm was over Brother went out to check on the pheasants. When he returned I knew something was wrong.

"Those dumb, stupid birds," he said. "They didn't have enough sense to go in out of the storm and part of the roof of the pen caved in on them. I lost count of the dead birds."

Mom looked like she was going to cry and finally she said, "This is the last time I'm ever going to try and raise anything. Something always happens."

Dad's face lit up. "You mean it," he said. "No more of these crazy schemes?"

"No more," said Mom as she wiped a tear away.

The end of the season came and Mom had to tabulate her loss and gains for the income tax. She was sitting at the kitchen table figuring away when all of a sudden she said, "I can't believe it. I just can't believe it!"

"Can't believe what, Mom?" I asked.

"Well dear, the government pays for all the birds I lost, and besides that I made a thousand dollars in cash. Isn't it wonderful?"

Just then Dad entered the kitchen and Mom told him the good news.

"That is good," Dad replied.

"Yes I think so too John," she replied. "So good in fact that I've decided to continue with the business."

"You've what?" Dad bellowed. "And after you gave me your solemn promise."

"But, John dear," Mom said. "I had my fingers crossed all the time."



\* This poem was  
selected as the  
winner of the  
Rinehart Award

# GLORIA

The day of joy  
  birthing of the boy  
will soon be here  
when its  
  jolly  
    jolly  
Good Will Towards Men  
It came upon a midnight clear  
with blurred eyes  
  egg-nog noses  
  and nutmeg  
  in  
    our  
      teeth  
We forgive our trespasses  
not as they are forgiven  
  but  
    just for a day  
  (Better that way, you know)  
What would the world be  
  without  
    a  
      little hate  
makes nations strive for moons  
                                  and stars  
Deck the hollow halls  
with boughs of  
  forgotten holly  
    and  
    arid trees  
    with  
bright angels

Alleluia  
  He is born  
    Son of God  
praises ring  
(Here comes Santa Claus  
Here comes Santa Claus  
Right down Santa Claus lane)  
We sing  
  Gloria in Excelsis Deo  
Holy  
  Holy  
    Holy  
      Lord God  
      of the Almighty  
Santa Claus  
Blessed Mary  
  Mother of God  
  where art thou  
  Mrs. Santa and elves and  
  all things good  
    and  
    tangible  
And I say unto you  
  Rejoice  
It is the season of  
jolly good will towards  
                                  yes  
I guess  
  for  
    one  
    day  
men

by Sally Fosnight



...the day of joy  
...the birth of the boy  
...will soon be here  
...when its  
...jolly

# GLORIA

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praises ring  
(Here comes Santa Claus  
Right down Santa Claus lane)  
We sing

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Holy  
Holy  
Lord God  
of the Almighty

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Blessed Mary  
Mother of God  
Mrs. Santa and elves and  
all things good  
and  
tangible

And I say unto you  
Rejoice  
It is the season of  
jolly good will towards  
Yes

I guess  
for you  
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