SPRING
1961

Chrysalis
One cool autumn day, God looked down, looked way down, at the earth. From His lofty gold, gleaming throne God saw the earth as a painter sees his palette—a bold yet subtle mass of colors. He smiled a bit and was about to turn His gaze away when He noticed a small, oh, so very small and colorless crawling caterpillar. God paused and a frown formed between His heavenly blue eyes. "That caterpillar," He murmured to Himself. "I've got to do something about that caterpillar." So God gathered up the caterpillar and gently wrapped him in a case of many threads. God said, "Now, you stay there until I figure out what to do with you."

Time passed and the cold white winter came. God was very busy during the winter months, before He quite realized, Spring, the soft, pink time of the year, had arrived. After God dispatched life to all the little seeds and set up the schedule for spring showers, He sat back and relaxed with a contented smile on His face.

All during this time the tiny caterpillar had waited patiently in his God-woven home, hoping to be released. Now, God hadn't exactly forgotten the caterpillar, but He had pushed him to the back of His mind.

One day when the apple trees were as pretty as strawberry ice cream, God again looked down. He saw the young, cotton-covered lambs in the meadows and the swish of color marking the bird's flight. "Those birds are mighty pretty," God said, "but they move so fast. The babies and puppies can't play with them. I need something that moves more gently but is just as pretty." It was then that God thought of the caterpillar He had stored away. God smiled, raised His hand, and out of the small brown case He had made last fall fluttered a shining butterfly.

God smiled again and said, "That's good."
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We are pleased to announce with this issue the winners of Criterion Club's 1961 Creative Writing Contest.

First place winner of the Rinehart Award is Carol Almond for her story "Preacher" (p. 4). Tying for second place were Pat Botkin for her poem "Birthplace Visit" (p. 27) and Margaret Pence for her story "Oak Leaf" (p. 12).

Honorable mention goes to Molly Hall for her story "The Egotist" (p. 16) and to Tina Hillquist for her story "Catalyst" (p. 26).

We wish to thank Mr. Fodaski, Miss Grun, Mr. Leigh, Mr. Locke and Mr. Wood for acting as judges.

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Chrysalis

THE MADISON COLLEGE LITERARY MAGAZINE
THE DEATH OF MOBY DICK

The surface wreathed into a whitish foam
As whale ascending spouted forth his stream
And stood upon a titan tail—alone.
There was no garish sun to purge and gleam
Upon his base and wrinkled brow that day
When sea regurged the treasures it devoured
And showered down its vermin on the bay;
When atoms fell and all the green life soured,
A stagnant yellowed stain of weed and shell
On shores where whale boat bones stood bleached and dry;
When stars went out, and black gave birth to hell:
He spit his red defiance to the sky—
Chaotic waves then licked his gore and hurled
On rock the wreckage of a maddened world.

by Midge McClellan

SEA SOUNDS

Ebb and flow
like season's rush
retreat and throb,
its minstrel roar
and gush of blood
within a snailshell,
summer's wreck
upon the seeded shore.

Sigh of gulls' wings
eternally renewing
inconstancy of pattern
and all things
that change:

Crabbed feet
their rush and flux
far inland-reach
erosion like sorrow
tracks on a lost beach
sifting slow
like sounds of
season's rush, its
ebb and flow.

by Midge McClellan
REFLECTION IN THE WATER

Alas, then, she is drown'd—Hamlet

When the evening dark as smoke
Held star and moon suspended
And waves their whispers turned
To kissing, by the water’s edge
Shown the opal of her face—
Waiting like a silent fern
That closes when light thins out
And goes . . .

In water there is recognition—
All the means of linkage.
She wished her life candid
As a meadow stream
Long, smoother, silver
Tying together the maze
Of lakes . . .

The reflection wavered—
As though it could not hold
That woman weighing time
And weighed with child.
Her last step
Into currents of the world
Where time cannot endure
Was like cracking
So much thin glass . . .

by Midge McClellan
A steady drizzle pelted against the aluminum roof of the garage in a hypnotizing tattoo, pattering away the minutes that dragged like hours. A young boy stood leaning against a wall, staring intently at the large authoritative house which loomed out of the shadows like some forbidding monster with one eye shining brightly through the fog. The boy was young—only nineteen—but his mouth was set in a thin firm line that belied his age. Because the dark night hid his features, his black hair and steady blue eyes melted into the hollow lines of his cheekbones, giving him a lean, hungry look. He was dressed in slacks and a grey jacket that opened to reveal an off-color shirt. One hand was shoved into his pants pocket. With the other he nervously reached up and pulled at his ear. His dirty face and clothing contrasted sharply with a pair of shocking blue eyes. Toby thought back to his introduction to , The Outfit. He had been run­ning almost a hundred dollars in insurance when he got sick. At the age of seventeen, Toby had worn white oxfords. This idiosyncrasy earned him the nickname “Preacher.” Most of his friends knew him by that name and no other.

All the guys in The Outfit knew him as Preacher. Toby thought back to his introduction to The Outfit. He had been running through an alley after picking up almost a hundred dollars worth of costume jewelry from Clemson’s Department Store. As he neared the end of the alley, a figure had stepped in his path from a doorway. “Where ya goin’ in such a hurry, kid?”

Toby had thought at first that the man was a store detective that had headed him off. Closer inspection told him he was probably safe. This man was wearing a loud, plaid sport coat with red shirt and black tie—not exactly the type that did the pinching.

“What’s it to ya?” came the prompt reply.

The man laughed silently, only the jerky movement of his heavy shoulders betraying his amusement, “So yer good at heistin’ an ya’ve got spunk too.”

“I never stole nuthin’ in my life. You lemme alone.” Toby tried to pass, but a burly arm held him back. The man threw back his head and laughed loudly.

“Be damned if you ain’t got a sense a humor too.” Then his face darkened suddenly. “Listen, boy. Don’t give me a bunch a lip. I’ve been watchin’ you for some time now. I know what you do, where you live, and how you operate. In fact, there ain’t nuthin’ I don’t know about you. The fact is, I’ve decided to give you a job, see? Somethin’ a lot betttern’ this ten cent racket you’re pushin’ now.”

That was it, all of it—his brief but binding introduction into The Outfit. He hadn’t always liked the jobs they’d assigned to him, but at least he’d eaten regularly and had a place to sleep. That was more than he’d had since he was put out on his own at fourteen. They’d started him off with little jobs, not much more complicated than his old shoplifting bit. The Outfit ran a protection agency and they put him in on the “cleanup” detail that “visited” storekeepers who hadn’t paid for insurance. At the age of seventeen, Toby had gotten pretty good at wrecking grocery stores and pouring acid into machinery. Finally, he’d started helping the “collectors.” He and a couple of “insurance men” would make monthly, sometimes weekly, stops at different stores to pick up payments. He’d stand outside the door as watchdog unless the proprietor decided he couldn’t pay; then the two collectors would call him inside where he would help hold the debtor while one of The Outfit roughed him up a little to remind him to pay on time from then on.

Once the men had gone in to see a woman who didn’t want to pay. This time they simply came outside and told Toby to go in and “knock ‘er around a bit.” Toby hesitated; the rest had been bad enough, but hit a woman? He wasn’t sure he could do it.

“C’mon, Preacher. Get the lead off them nice white shoes and go in there.” The men glared at him with a threatening half-smile. Toby knew his actions would be reported. He went into the room where the thin young woman stood defiantly, almost proudly. For one terrible moment he stood there staring at her, wanting to run, but knowing that he couldn’t. He couldn’t remember what he had said to her or her reply. He only remembered that she picked up a book and threw it at him, hitting him on the shoulder. It didn’t hurt, but it gave him an excuse to get mad. While he was mad it didn’t seem so bad—hitting a woman—but now all he could think about was the look on her face when he hit her and the soft feeling of her jaw as he slapped her. When he hit her, her mouth began to bleed, smearing his hand. Then he stopped, dropped his hands to his side and grasped for breath like a swimmer after a race. He tried to make a mask of his face as he walked out the door, but the two men looked at him and laughed. “Whatsa matter, Preacher? Lose yer stomach?” Then, noticing the blood smeared and dripping from his hands... “Hey, you didn’t kill ‘er did ya?”

All Toby could do was shake his head. No, he hadn’t killed her, but something inside him felt dead and rotten. He hurried back to the apartment where he lived with several other “youngsters” in The Outfit. It wasn’t until he got there that he noticed the red stains on his shoes—deep red stains that stood out loudly against the stark white. He barely made it to the bathroom before he got sick.

He felt sick now as he thought of what he had to do tonight. In three years he had become a pretty stable part of the organiza-
tion. He had been shifted out of the collection racket to being a messenger for one of the big boys. He never knew just what the result of his coded messages were, but he didn't care; he knew he was involved too deeply in The Outfit to ever get out, but at least he quit having to dish out the violence that he hated so much. He would have liked to quit, but once he had seen what happened to a man who tried to ease out of The Outfit—it wasn't a pretty thing to think about.

The last light blinked out in the house, causing Toby to jump nervously. The rain continued its steady drip, drip, drip on the roof. He'd have to wait a few more minutes—had to give the judge time to settle down—fall asleep. Toby knew every room in the house. It had all been carefully mapped out for him before hand. If he pulled off this job without a hitch, it would mean the big time for him. The light had just gone out in the den. The next room was Judge Marshall’s and around the corner was the kid’s room—Johnny, age four and a half—apple of the Judge's eye.

Get that kid! These were Toby's orders. "Get that kid and bring him to me." The orders came from Carl Slate, the one that had singled Toby out to join The Outfit and one of the hatchet men for the Top. "Remember that alley where I first picked you up, Preacher? Bring the kid there. I'll be waiting in that little room you saw me come out of. Leave the kid in the alley; he'll be too scared to run off. Just come on in and get me. That's all you have to do."

All of this had been arranged to get back at Judge Marshall for sending another one of the hatchet men up the river. Toby figured that the big boys would really make the Judge pay through the nose to get his kid back. He wondered how they'd planned on getting messages to Mr. Marshall. Holding out for ransom from a judge seemed pretty risky business.

Toby was making his way toward the boy's window. It was a low one. He wouldn't have any trouble getting in. He reached in his pocket and pulled out a short, tough wire. Quietly he slipped one end of it through the screen and probed at the latch. In a few seconds the hook slipped out. He eased the screen up in its slide. It stuck briefly then gave way with a jerk to slide up to the top. Toby stopped to listen, glad that the shadow of the house blocked the beam from the street light. He could hardly see to work, but then he could hardly be seen. The window had been partially opened to let in the early summer air. It was a simple matter for Toby to shove it open a little more and to slip in quietly over the sill.

Inside, the room was dark except for one small night light that illuminated the floor by the open door to the hall. Toby started to close the door but changed his mind. One little squeak might wake up the boy's parents. Toby stood beside the bed for a second and then easily scooped the little boy up in his arms. The sleeper sighed restlessly but didn't wake up. Halfway to the window, Toby paused and turned back. On the floor by the bed was a small pair of bedroom slippers. Holding the boy in one arm he stooped and picked them up. Still the bundle in his arms didn't awaken.

Once outside, Toby hurriedly ran for the alley. Now the boy awoke and began crying. Toby slipped the slippers on the boy's feet, clamped one hand over his mouth and kept running. The boy shivered with the cold rain, and his crying gave way to dry sobs. Toby placed him on the sidewalk, took off his jacket, and wrapped it around the boy's thin shoulders. "C'mon now, Johnny, don't cry. We're just gonna take a little trip that's all. O.K. boy?"

The little fellow blinked his eyes free of tears and wiped the back of one small hand across his runny nose. Toby pulled a fairly clean handkerchief from his pocket and offered it to the boy. "Here blow." Johnny wiped the handkerchief across his nose with no more success than when he used the back of his hand. "All right. C'mon now, Johnny. We just have to go around the corner."

It was nearing one o'clock. The streets in Cicero were quiet except for the splashing of the rain and the sound of two pairs of feet hurrying through muddy puddles into the alley. Johnny's bedroom slippers soaked in the wetness and little blobs of black mud covered Toby's white shoes.

The alley towered around them—pitch black in the center and with just a little light coming through from the street at the other end. "Johnny, you've got to stand right here, now. Don't move. I've got to go inside for a minute." Toby opened the door that entered an office that The Outfit used in back of a candy store. The room was empty. He'd never known Carl to be late for anything. Toby looked at his watch—five minutes to one. He had told Carl he'd make it by one. Slate should have been there waiting.

There was a sound at one end of the alley. A car pulled in around the corner. "This must be Carl," Toby thought; "something must have held him up—the kid...where's the kid?" He looked around and saw the boy standing where he left him in the middle of the alley, clutching the jacket that hung down past his knees. Johnny was staring at the head-lights that moved toward him from the mouth of the alley.

Toby turned suddenly. "Hey, they don't see him, they'll hit him." He started to yell and then realized—"They do see him; they see him and they're going to run him down. They're going to kill that little kid."

The car moved faster now, barreling down the alley toward the child. Toby moved—moved fast and sure. He darted into the path of the car, grabbed Johnny and pulled him against the opposite wall. The bumper of
the car caught the grey jacket and ripped it off the little boy’s shoulders. The walls of the alley echoed with the screech of brakes as the car slid to a halt. Toby grabbed Johnny up into his arms and ran out of the alley behind the car. He heard the sound of the motor starting up again. Unable to turn around in the alley, the car shot out the other end and squealed around the corner. They were going to head him off.

Toby turned and ran toward the Judge’s house. His muddy feet slid on the wet street and his arms felt like lead with the weight of the boy. Now he could see the house just a block away. Behind him the car careened around another corner and raced toward them. Only one thought raced through Toby’s mind, “The kid, they were going to kill this little kid.”

The car was getting closer. In another few seconds Toby and the boy would be caught in the beam of the headlights. He set the boy down. “Run home, kid. Run home like mad. Don’t stop and don’t turn around. Go on, Johnny. Run.”

As the little boy ran down the sidewalk, Toby cut across the street to the other side. The car turned toward him. “Good,” Toby thought, “they didn’t see Johnny get away.” He kept running as fast as he could, trying to give Johnny time to get in the house. The car slowed and pulled beside him. A back window was rolled down and the words “Dirty double crossing wop” shot out along with two sharp reports that sent fingers of fire tearing through his back and into his stomach. He fell to his knees, rose and was hit again as a bullet smashed into his shoulder.

This time he fell and lay on the pavement, one arm hanging limply in the gutter. The car sped down the street. Through the mist that slowly blocked his vision, Toby saw lights start blinking on in the Judge’s house. He smiled and closed his eyes. The rain pelted him lightly. The sound of water rushing in the gutter soothed him, found him lying in the grass beside a waterfall. He was tired . . . very very tired . . . and sleepy . . .

The rain slowly washed the mud from his shoes leaving them white and clean again.

★ ★ ★

FIVE HUNDRED MORE OF EVERYTHING

The chickens flew at the stealthy fox who stole among their fields
To strip them with toothy leers of last season’s sweat-earned yields.
The staunchest of the cock crow cowered beneath the paw
That clutched at the earth and snapped the barley raw.
The Want to yield in five times spring
Five hundred more of everything.

The oiled brain in the red fox fur kept turning in its bed . . .
A chicken in each coop; others to be led
So up he snatched a poor plucked bird, robbed of all his seed,
And hoarded him in a filthy hold to drill a Five Year Deed.
The Want to yield in five times spring
Five hundred more of everything.

The preying fox kept circling about the cock he’d stole
“Five hundred more, five hundred more of everything,” the goal.
White fangs gleamed with pleasure as he unloosed the bird
And watched him fly on hasty wings to spread afar the word
The Want to yield in five times spring
Five hundred more of everything.

Five hundred more, five hundred more, pounding came the clue
Five hundred more, five hundred more with him homeward flew.
Five hundred more of everything when quick a vulture rose
Five hundred more, five hundred more, five hundred more of those?

by Sandra Hepp
THE FENCE

In a fit of tree-climbing abandonment I fell and the world was a white picket fence thrusting jousting and I lay in the grass cursing the slats and the tree Damn you all and me

—Jerry Tyson
She lay in the delivery room, and the voices welled up at her through the waves of pain. The Doctor was saying, "This is not going to be an easy birth. I hope we can save him. You must help us." She struggled against the surge of pain washing her toward the blood-red darkness, struggling to remember that he could only be normal if he were quickly delivered and quickly transfused with new, good blood.

"'I gave my life for thee-ee-ee, my precious blood...!' Damn that hymn... 'my precious blood I shed...'." For some reason, it had run through her mind the first time she had ever given blood. As a biology major, she had been interested in the process, and the idea of mournfully humming, 'my precious blood I shed' had been incongruous—until she received the donor's card a few days later: "A, Rh negative," scrawled almost casually, she had noticed, and had allowed herself to feel self-pity.

"Lucky she's wide," the doctor was saying. "... Press down. Push... Push." "'Wide.' No matter how thin I tried to stay, my hips were always wide. I can hear Pop now, 'Look at those hips! Just like your Old Lady's. Good breeding stock there. Too bad you're not horses.' Horses. 'Healthy as a horse strong abdominal wall. You could represent us in the Olympics.'"

Even the doctors, during routine physical checkups had commented on her good health, and she'd been glad of it, had worked at physical fitness, had often thought, "Just call me Mother Earth."

"Mother, nothing. I married too late... 'Always a bridesmaid...' All my friends married before me, one by one, like drops in the human pool..."

The pool became one of the lights, then was obscured by a nurse's head. She was saying, "A breech, in a situation like this. But it will be a boy." "A boy in the pool of humanity. Another drop... Indiscriminately, mingled drops..." But she had tried to be discriminating. "... should be educated, protestant, have Rh negative blood. The field is narrowing... Narrowing... must push against the... Oh, God... contraction... must not think..."

But the facts were there, from college courses in genetics, embryology, years of reading... "if the mother's blood is negative and the child's positive... Antigen-antibody reaction... usually the second child... end of pregnancy... If the father is negative, the child will be negative, no problem..."

But there are many genes, responsible for several Rh reactions, and people aren't bred like horses. What woman ever married a man for his blood type?

Even knowing all the available facts, she hadn't, and there was Robbie.

"... Robbie needs a brother. But God, Robbie needs a mother. I'm too old... Old? Mom had Val when she was almost forty-four, but breech? If he would only come on... 'I gave my life for thee-ee-ee...' Stop thinking that! Will even life be enough? If this child is not perfect, why give it life?"

Give... Life. She'd given blood many times after that. Rh negative is fairly rare, and absolutely necessary in transfusing an Rh negative person.

"Donors and their families may draw on Red Cross blood bank without paying' or something like that... Paying... Can there be a God who would make me pay for marrying a man with the wrong blood type?... Or for wanting children, or for not adopting, or, or, or... What am I paying for?... Pay, give, PUSH... ah, ah, ah..."

The doctor gave the last unbearable tug, and the white figures rushed into action, injecting tubes, watching gauges, watching for heartbeat, watching for the first breath, not watching the woman.

"This pain... the unbearable noise... God, I wish whoever that is would stop that moaning, that screaming, would stop that clatter, would stop that crying... Crying? That's my son... "My Precious Blood..."

She let herself slip into a soft black sleep.

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PRAYER

How do I praise Thee?
How do I thank Thee?
In my weasel existence reflecting—
X divorces husband for $$$$,
19 yr. old back in jail.
Murderer on trial,
Widow takes sleeping pills,
Reckless driver kills six,
and if not here, where?
How do I find Thee?

—Barbara Rixey

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SNOWSTORM

White damask, never unceasing
Floats in bolts to the material earth.
It is lovely, and abundant now
But I cannot save it for a summer dress.
I will sell you a yard, cheap.

—Pattie Lou Jernigan
A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE
Margaret Pence

The heavy framing timbers of the barn's dusty interior looked new and smooth, but when Sam absently ran his calloused finger over it the paper-thin surface cracked away and spiraled to the floor in flakes, exposing catacombs partly filled with yellow dust. Unthinkingly, he pushed his finger back and forth along the grooves.

His eyes were fixed vacantly on some spot beyond the open barn doors, away where the olive-drab clover field met the grove of leafless trees at the river's edge. Yet he was seeing neither the fields nor the trees nor, between the black branches of the trees, the lead water that mirrored the lead sky. Slowly he took off his battered felt hat and rubbed the back of his neck, creasing the leathery skin between his fingers. Blankly he replaced his hat.

His eyes focused on a patch of broom sedge making an irregular yellow scar on the brown pasture field.

"The next time I clean the chicken house I'll have to put the manure on that patch," his long years of farming said before his new self could interfere. Then he said aloud, slowly and with emphasis, the way he would bite on a sore tooth to make it ache, "There won't be a next time."

Unconsciously he hit the upright timber with the heel of his hand and a shower of yellow dust fell in the hay chaff at his feet.

He sat on the upended bale of hay that he had thrown out of the mow a few minutes before and pushed the curve of his spine against the wormy eight-by-ten. With his hands braced against his knees, he spat on the cupped boards beneath his feet and unconsciously stared at the bits of hay chaff that floated on the frothy pool. He examined the splinters on the boards of the barn floor, not really seeing them and only vaguely conscious of the iron shod horses and iron bound wagon wheels, the scoops and pitchforks, that had scuffed them and worn them smooth and scuffed them again. A barn floor was a barn floor as long as the wood hadn't rotted.

Three bales of hay. That was all he had had to throw down this evening. Three bales for twenty-eight cows. Two nights ago he had had a hundred, and twenty springers—a hundred milkers and twenty to freshen and two bulls. It was good stuff. It had taken a long time to breed out the scrubs and the throwbacks. It took twelve years to build that herd. He shifted the pressure off his backbone again against the upright. Damn Long and his bull! Damn Long's broken-down fences! Damn Long! The muscles knotted over his jaw as he clenched his teeth.

It was small comfort to him to know that Long's herd had gone down in the test, too. Long had had eight cows and a scrubby bull that broke through his rotten fences and went where he pleased. Of course he had picked up Bangs. And because Long wouldn't keep his bull penned, he had gotten with Sam's cows; twenty-eight cows had passed their last test. He rose stiffly, like one not used to sitting, and walked to the open barn doors.

He hammered softly with a clenched hand on the door frame, feeling the rough unplaned wood under the pain. Paint was getting bad. He'd have to paint when the corn went.

Somebody would have to paint, he amended grimly. With his blunt, caked shoe he pushed a knot of hay into the barnyard.

He had to sell. He knew that. It was like he had told Kate last night after he had loaded the cows to go to the slaughter house.

He'd been late coming into supper and it was black night. The cook stove with its wood fire only partly warmed the big kitchen, and November sifted in around the rattling windows and the thin floorboards.

He jerked the handle of the pitcher pump up and down, filling a wash pan in the galvanized sink in the corner. Then, with his back to her, he said it as he reached for the yellow cake of homemade soap. "Kate, I'm going to sell."

With a spoon she scraped the pan from which she had just emptied the potatoes.

He vigorously worked a lather in his hands, then cupped them and filled them with water and scrubbed his face. He splashed more and more water on his face before he groped for the coarse towel. "What did you say?" he asked her.
“It’s for you to say.” Those were her words. Her voice had a tight flat inflection, at once aching and resigned. Sam understood the pressure of tears in her throat that produced it. She wasn’t going to fight.

She set the beans and potatoes on the printed oil cloth beside the lamp, and Sam slumped into a chair and began to fill his plate. He didn’t have the energy to fight either, not anymore. He was going to sell.

He wanted her to agree with him. He wished that she would say something, anything. She sat down opposite him and began to push the food around on her plate. He watched her out of the corner of his eye as he filled his mouth and swallowed hard to get rid of the tasteless lump.

He wondered how she thought he could do anything but sell. She knew as well as he did that everything that they had had, had been tied up in the herd. To be fair, though, he was sure she didn’t realize how serious the depression was, even though she knew the prices they had had to take these last few years. Slowly he rubbed the back of his neck with his work-hardened hand as he struggled for words that would reassure her now.

“I thought I might get some tools and do some carpentering,” he volunteered.

She didn’t look up from her plate to ask, “Do you really want to?” Her voice was still strained with tears that didn’t fall.

“It’s a thing I know how to do,” he hedged. “I worked with Uncle Joe before I went in the army, and I don’t reckon associating with the Kiser has ruined me for that.”

It was a clumsy attempt at humor. Kate merely sat there and buttered a thick slice of bread with the measured movements of a blind man. He didn’t look at her.

The November wind whined around the corner of the house and down the chimney, making the stove smoke the way it always did in a northeast wind. That sound blended with the click of Sam’s knife and fork against his plate so that when a stick of wood burned in two and fell against the grate in the stove the noise made them both jump. Kate left the table, went to the wood box behind the stove, and chose a thick round stick from which a branch had grown. She struggled with it, turning it this way and that until she finally wedged it into the firebox.

“There,” she said, fitting the lid back into place and wiping her hands on her apron, “that ought to hold for a while.”

Sam pushed back his chair without looking at her, took his hat and sham off the nail behind the door and went out. The cold fresh air felt good in his face after the smoky kitchen. But the wind cut through him like a knife.

He carried with him a picture of Kate laboriously fitting the big chunk of firewood into the smoking stove. Women were like that, he thought. The stove may not warm the room and it may smoke till it puts your eyes out, but they’re bound to keep on trying.

Standing now in the open barn doors with the gray evening heavy around him, he noticed that the sky was growing quickly darker, and there was the oppressive weight of snow in the air. He’d better get on with the work, what there was of it. It didn’t make things easier to grope around in the night with something that should have been finished in the daylight.

* * *

**HOMAGE TO A WEED**

What a folly to call  
You a weed!  
Just because the  
Generous Giver graced  
In abundance his  
Balmy, nature-budding fields  
With your delicate  
Graceful person ruling  
Serenely as Queen Anne.

—Helen Caravas

(10)
SUPERSONIC CHASE

Vikings sail in supersonic chase
To victor in the conquest of universal space—
A planet for every country
A star for every race—
For tenth-century population presses wars
Germany deplores—
That there was not a fiery meteorite
For parasitic Jews.
Spectators in the arena sit and smile
While the fences weaken—
And the tortured dead rise
To smear the golden laurel leaves
With the bloody axe of revolt.

Pilate leads legions to Calvary
And mobs gore Ghandi
What hillside shall the meek inherit?
Bosch brings Dante's dream to light
And hell gurgles terror like a shroud
On the Garden of Delight
Where statesmen sit—
And each wrapped in his own toga
Gorge from hundred-dollar plates
Caviar and lobster tail
Exotic fruit and breast of quail—
Will the money buy a place—
A satellite perhaps
For those who press their face
Against the cold panes.

But on which star
And in which galaxy—
On which star
Or has it burned out—
On which star is Armageddon?

Bonnie Feather
A thick spruce hedge bordered the driveway that circled behind the house, a hedge that, in addition to its ornamental value, at present had trapped a semi-circle of thin winter sunshine for the old man who sat bundled in the padded wheel chair.

He blinked his rheumy old eyes in the brightness and raised a skeletal blue veined hand to shade them from the sun as he watched Mrs. Hall sag across to the house and go inside. Then the door was shut, and the wide lawn was still, except for the faint stiff stirrings of the tenacious wintered leaves on the oak tree across the driveway.

As if exhausted with the effort of supporting his hand, he let it drop to the quilt across his knees. He closed his eyes against the glare and allowed his head to roll along the high back of his chair, enjoying the warm red privacy behind his eyelids. The day was beautiful.

"Grandaddy, are you all right?" Frances called from the back door.

"That girl!" he thought in sudden violent irritation. "The minute a body relaxes . . ."

He was tempted not to answer her.

"No—in another minute she'll be out here if I don't answer . . ."

"I'm fine," answered his unsteady falsetto.

He had hesitated too long. She was there anyway.

"I'll send Mrs. Hall out if you like," she said from beside his chair.

He sat bolt upright, his leaky old eyes spilling over as he opened them to blink at her.

"Don't send that woman out here!" he piped in a somewhat more irritated tone than he had intended. It was just that he couldn't stand to hear that gusty Hall yawn one more time. Her heavy courtesy didn't disguise the fact that he bored her. If she only knew how she bored him! He had told her she could go to rest ten minutes ago because he knew if he didn't get her out of his way he would be rude to her.

Frances laughed.

"I don't think you like Mrs. Hall," she teased him. Then, in the amused voice one would use to placate an unreasonable child, she added, "We were awfully lucky to get someone like Mrs. Hall."

"That's a matter of opinion!" he snapped mentally. But if he said it Frances would laugh again. The dignified thing would be to refrain from answering.

"I told her to go and rest," he shrilled. "You go on with what you were doing. I'm fine."

"All right," she agreed. "When Joe comes home from school I'll send him out."

He made a thin unintelligible rattle in his throat. He bored Joe even more than he did Mrs. Hall. At seventeen Joe thought of just two things, basketball and girls. Why his mother would think that he and her grandfather could enjoy an afternoon together was something the old man couldn't figure out. If she wanted his opinion, which she didn't, that hulking son of hers had better be out working after school instead of sitting around and talking. Well, the boy wasn't going to sit around talking (or making a pretense of talking) with him. He'd send him packing, too.

At seventeen he had been a man, doing a man's work. At fifteen he had been hired out to old man Swecker to work in his cabinet shop. He had swept out the mill and run errands, and by the time he was Joe's age he had known everything that went on there. By that time old man Swecker had picked him out for special notice from the half-dozen fellows who worked there.

It had been notice he had earned, he assured himself. It was easy for him because he loved the work and the Old Man had known it. He loved the smoothness of the wood when it was ready to apply the finish; there had been an unspeakable satisfaction in sanding and sanding and sanding until the raw wood had had an almost living sheen.

When he had finally graduated to the position of putting furniture together, it had been his pleasure to hunt painstakingly for exactly the proper wood with the proper grain, and he made his chairs with the same dedication to hunt painstakingly for exactly the proper wood with the proper grain, and he made his chairs with the same dedication of purpose and sense of achievement that a painter feels when he puts the oils on canvas. It had been good, he remembered, savoring the remembrance of it.

"Hello, Mr. Whitticker."

He jerked his head with a grunt and shaded his red-rimmed eyes with a fragile, palsied hand.

It was that woman from down the road. Who—what was her name? He wondered if she considered him her chance to do a weekly good deed. This must be Wednesday. Let's see, yesterday was—yes, it was Wednesday. She always came in on Wednesdays afternoon and brought him "a little something."

"I didn't mean to wake you up."

After an interval of not being in use, his voice thinned out to a whisper on part of the words when he answered her.

"I wasn't asleep. I was just resting my eyes."

"Oh, I see."

The knowing half-smile with which she answered didn't go unnoticed. He let his bony hand fall into his lap and mentally pulled a plug to let the resentment drain out of him.
"And how are you today?" she continued with a conscious smile and a sugar-coated voice. Once he had seen her pick up Karen's baby and give it the same treatment. The baby had claimed the privilege to scream. He wondered somewhat wryly what she would do if he asserted the same right. Frances, the vigilant grandmother, had rescued the baby. It was ironic that it would either make her ashamed of him or make her think of sending him off to a home for the demented senile. He struggled weakly for a "company" manner.

His visitor interpreted his pause in her own way.

"You're tired," she exclaimed with what struck him as genuine concern. "What does Frances mean, to let you stay out here this way. Let me wheel you back to the house. Where's Mrs. Hall? For the price you pay that woman I would think you could let her know what her job is."

"I'm very comfortable, thank you Mrs. Burke."

That was her name, Burke. He ought to remember that.

"The sun makes the weather very pleasant for a winter day," he continued in a tone that became more sustained as he spoke.

"Yes, isn't it?" she rejoined. She chattered for fifteen minutes and he listened, making whatever comment he was called upon to make. With an effort he sat erect. He refused to close his aching eyes, knowing that he would have a torturous headache by night if he kept them open, but realizing the impression his visitor would receive if he closed them.

A small pulse began to throb in his temple, and his wisp of a voice had sunk to nothingness before Mrs. Burke stood up to leave.

"I've brought you a little jar of boiled custard,"
Mrs. Burke said, coming over to take his wasted hand. "Be sure Frances doesn’t forget to give you some of it for your supper."

"That’s good of you, Mrs. Burke," he managed to make barely audible. The idea of food made him faintly ill. "I’m sure that Frances will see that I have some for supper."

From past experience, he was very sure.

He struggled to raise his leaden hand to her outstretched one.

When she was gone he relaxed against the padded back of the chair, aching from his effort at hospitality.

He could remember when his strength had been equal to the demands he made on it. He had worked long, tired hours without stopping for old man Swecker, never feeling a strain on his energy, hardly realizing it was work. When the Old Man had ordered a hundred and twenty-four chairs for Cornelius Vanderbilt to put in his newly finished dining room in Newport, he had supervised their construction. He had earned the privilege; he had known it then and he still knew it, but it was quite an assignment for a man of twenty-six. Some of the men had tried to take that away from him because of their seniority, but the Old Man had known what he was doing and had held fast.

"If I want a thing done better than perfect, I ask Ed," he had said, and had not changed his mind.

The Old Man was something of an artist, and he had the capacity of recognizing a greater one. So it was that, when the Old Man dropped dead at breakfast seven months later, no one was very much surprised when Ed Whitticker bought his shop.

The thrill of that ownership was still the most vivid thing he possessed. It was far closer to him than Mrs. Burke’s visit that afternoon, or his headache that was beginning to claw behind his eyes. Without becoming misshapen it could swallow all of those things and all the annoyances that had clustered around him across his ninety-seven years of life.

A subconscious wave gathered momentum until at last it crashed into his awareness with splintering irritation. Trying to place its source and name it, his blinking eyes wandered beyond the oak tree in the side yard, with its brown leaves twitching nervously in the imperceptible air current. Finally they focused beyond the lily pond, where the neighborhood children were running and shrieking and prancing. Reds and blues and yellows whirled in a disorganized spectrum, following the flying arms and legs of their various wearers, tumbling and running and kicking like a rainbow gone wild. It could only result in broken bones and shattered personalities. He must stop them. Their barbarous screams tore through him like a physical pain, vibrating and reverberating against his ear drums and lifting the hair under his hat.

He couldn’t reach them. He didn’t have the strength to roll his chair across the lawn and he could never shout to them to make them hear him. Tears squeezed out between his closed eyelids and ran jerkily down his withered cheek. Why didn’t someone make them play somewhere else? Now he had that to put up with for the rest of the afternoon. He dragged his hand to the broad arm of the chair and drummed his fingers for several seconds before it became too much effort and he allowed his arm to rest on the cushioned arm of the chair with the hand hanging free. The slanting sun shone through its translucency; the bones made dark shadows set his every fiber quivering.

"Hello, Grandaddy."

Joe’s newly-bass voice lately had the undertones that had belonged to that other Joe, his son, this lad’s grandfather. He wished that Joe were living; maybe he could do something with the boy, make something of him. He thought fondly of Joe, who had struggled so desperately to find a cure for cancer, who had worked so carefully to train others in his skill, had succumbed to the thing he had tried to master. Joe, with his self-discipline and dedication of purpose, might have some way been able to point the way to this completely unorganized life.

"Grandaddy?" Joe tried again. His voice on the rising inflection expressed his determination to do what his mother had asked of him, unless by good luck his grandfather was asleep.

"Yes, son."

He didn’t open his eyes. At least he and Joe knew where they stood with each other. There was a curious sort of camaraderie between them that resulted from the unexpressed agreement that they didn’t enjoy each other’s company and would make no pretenses.

"Mom sent me out to talk to you."

Silence. The seconds fell with emphatic impact.

"Our team is going to play the big game Friday night." Finally Joe was swinging into his element.

With strength born of the urgency of his need, his grandfather held up his hand in his old gesture of command.

"I’m sure you need extra practice, Joe," he said pointedly in his pseudowhisper that cracked into voicings on some of the syllables. "As you leave, please tell those children to play something else."

"Well, good Lord, Grandaddy!" Joe exploded. He started to say more, then abruptly got up and stalked away.

The old man watched his sure strides and easy, awkward grace as he ambled across the driveway and spoke to the children. The rainbow was for six
seconds arrested; then it writhed in a screaming flood down the street, out of sight and out of ear-shot.

There had been a time when he was not at the mercy of a pack of screaming children, he recollected. There had been a time when men had come to him for advice, when he had the respect of the finest artisans in the craft of making furniture. His had been the designs, his had been the perfect workmanship—Whitticker’s furniture had gone into the finest homes around the world. He made nothing but masterpieces. Men in the trade had considered it an honor to be chosen by him as acceptable to work in his shop; they had formed a kind of aristocracy that was envied on two continents.

He held his hand before him and studied its delicate, trembling fingers. These hands had done the most intricate carving, the most painstaking inlay. Last night their tremor had caused him to drop his medicine glass on the marble hearth.

Quick tears bit anew against his eyelids. Where was everybody? Would they let him sit here and freeze to death? Where was Mrs. Hall? He paid her enough that she could be on hand when he needed her. He lived in the bosom of his family, what was left of it, and no one cared enough about him to even find out if he was cold. He was. His lower lip rolled like a petulant child’s and quivered with indignation. He looked toward the house for someone to come and take him inside, but the only motion caught by his bleary eyes was the frantic flutter of the sere leaves on the oak tree by the driveway.

OAK LEAF (continued)

So many puppets charge and fire
So many shouts rise higher and higher
Bravely the soldiers face powderless shells,
Slaps on the rump and well-rehearsed yells.
So many troops drop behind the lines
Their eyes reflecting dollar signs.

by Carol Almond

MANASSAS 1961

Why . . .
suffer tortured souls
at rest at last
to stretch
and retch anew
and view
the scene where once the blood-stained carpet
sagged
with weight
of fallen dead?

Why . . .
torture disembodied minds
with recreated scenes
of madness
mingled with the stench
of sweat
and blood
and viscera?

A century stands between
uniforms . . . blue and grey,
mud-splattered,
torn
and
uniforms . . . blue and grey,
correct in detail
but . . .
without
the blood
. . . and sweat
that gave meaning
to worthless cloth.

And why? . . .
Mavinsky had been reading Dostoyevsky for a week. He had also read Heidegger, Camus and Nietzsche. Mavinsky was bored. He was bored with piddling in the liberal arts. He had tried medicine with even less success. The sciences, he found, were a bore, but the humanities, although more interesting and more subtle than science, were valueless; they solved no problems without creating newer and thornier ones.

Mavinsky had seen just about everything. He had followed his father, a brilliant bio-chemist, around the world until he was sixteen. At this tender age, he had been placed in a military academy for discipline, but more specifically because his father had taken on a mistress who disliked him intensely.

Mavinsky had resented being shoved out of sight in the hills of Pennsylvania, but had quickly remedied the situation by attempting to seduce the daughter of his Latin professor. This was among the more drastic of a series of revolts, revolt from authority, from discipline, from the necessity of enduring the pedantry of inferior superiors. Like Sartre’s Mathieu, he was left with nothing. Like Mathieu, he would have given anything to do something irrevocable, but unlike him, Mavinsky felt no despair, only boredom, a boredom that had crept up on him little by little, had surrounded at first only small words and actions, but had finished by invading his whole self, paralyzing his brain.

Mavinsky had always been conscious of his superiority, although he prided himself on not being overly conceited. A truly superior person, he reasoned, is painfully aware of his talents. The difficulty lies in adjusting oneself to mediocrity. Mavinsky loathed mediocrity. Stupidity he could tolerate, but the average, the common, filled him with disgust.

And so Mavinsky found himself in a co-ed college in an average town, among average students, taking insipid courses in botany and the Romantic Movement, and filling his leisure hours with Flaubert and Shakespeare and all the other great masters. Only Mavinsky was bored. He was bored to the extent of nausea which bored him even more.

One day, Mavinsky could not remember afterwards exactly how or when he had first seized upon the idea, he decided that he should make a study of mediocrity. He would do this by singling out from among his companions, altogether a common lot, one individual whom he would get to know thoroughly.

One student in particular aroused his interest. There had been no single factor that had influenced his choice, for there was nothing extraordinary about Michael Mazetti. In fact, it was probably just this which had arrested Mavinsky’s attention.

Mazetti was so average, so uninteresting, so utterly devoid of significant attributes, that Mavinsky was attracted to him immediately by a morbid curiosity.

Thus Peter Mavinsky hatched his harmless plan and set about the difficult task of introducing himself into the life of his victim. This was not an easy task, for he must arouse no suspicion. But Mavinsky was discreet and extremely clever.

First, Mavinsky decided that he must limit his observation to seven days or 168 hours. This would necessitate careful planning, an orderly procedure, but ample time to attain his object, that is, the complete confidence and subsequent full confession of his subject.

That Mazetti had a confession to be made, Mavinsky was certain. In the dark recesses of the mind, everyone housed thoughts which were not meant for other ears. These thoughts, Mavinsky believed, were what constituted personality and individual conduct, and the suppression of these thoughts was what made up his subject’s total lack of significance, his mediocrity. If he could succeed in gaining Mazetti’s complete confidence, these thoughts would be forthcoming.

On the pretense of borrowing a book, Mavinsky was able to introduce himself into the life of Mike Mazetti, sophomore. A casual friendship ensued, followed by a lively affection, for Mavinsky was a likeable sort and gained friends easily.

Mavinsky learned that Mike Mazetti was born in Springfield of parents with an average income; he had two sisters and a brother. He had made average grades in school and had come to college as a matter of course. He learned that after college Mike planned to take over his father’s business and marry his girl who lived in Springfield. He learned that Springfield had a population of 170,000 and that his girl’s name was Melinda. In fact he learned a wealth of insignificant details.

Mavinsky asked discreet questions. He became indiscreet. He smiled his sympathetic smile and calculated the brilliance of his understanding grey eyes. He probed and hinted. He became blunt and crude. But Mike Mazetti looked at him steadily and confessed nothing. Mavinsky became infuriated. He loathed this simple creature who sat before him chatting about yesterday’s football game, as if there were nothing else of importance in the world. He abhorred him. Suddenly, everything about Mike Mazetti was repulsive. Mavinsky lowered his eyes so that he would not have to look at this repugnant face. He tried not to listen to the pleasant voice that droned and paused and continued. Mavinsky wondered why he was sitting in his room with this donkey of a boy who insisted on bringing out his average ideas, his average, worthless, ignorant, supportably mediocre ideas that kept pouring out, faster and faster, with no pauses now, no pauses.
THE EGO

My roommate’s roommate
Dizzily packs the wrong toothbrush.
Straightens the room by moving the dust.
At other activities she’s a regular Joe,
Like letting me flirt with her favorite beau.
My roommate’s roommate
Wears cover-girl clothes
All borrowed from me, everyone knows.
She studies and studies without ever stopping,
But, in spite of it all,
Her bridge scores aren’t dropping.

Barbara Rixey

REVELATION

The sun was once an orange,
Spilling its bright sweet juice
On all of the world,
And feeding my mind
With its dazzling sweet cells.

But it is a lemon now,
Its brightness diluted and hard,
Its acid tainting all,
My mind now smarts,
Washed by its bitter biting rays.

Tina Hillquist

THE EGOTIST (continued)

even for breath, till Mavinsky’s head began to spin and and his whole being was filled with an indescribable, nauseous loathing. He would put an end to the words that were suffocating him.

Deliberately he arose from his chair and crossed his room to the dresser. The noise of Mazetti’s babbling increased and Mavinsky felt that he was drowning in it. He watched himself calmly as he fumbled about on the dresser for something, anything. He even smiled to himself as he approached the source of his agony, this babbling which seemed to penetrate into his skull.

They found Mike Mazetti, or what was left of him, the next day in the incinerator. Someone had noticed a strong odor of burnt meat. Obviously, it had been the work of a madman, for still embedded in the gums of the dead boy was a huge safety pin, the latch closed, as if someone had tried to pin his jaws together.

THE YELLOW SNAIL

’Though the day was green and young,
My thoughts were dull and brown,
When I saw the yellow snail,
A piece of solid sun, fallen to the ground.

Warm to my hand as its mother Sun,
I held shining shell, the day,
’Till the wormy body crept, cold to my palm.
Edging my golden moment back to gray.

Tina Hillquist
We were all standing on the platform in the drizzling rain waiting for the train to pull in. We could hear the whistle far away coming closer and closer. No one was saying anything. We just stood around waiting for it to come and take her away. Nana stood tall with a very proud neck underneath the black umbrella. In the dim light I could see her white skin all shriveled up. All I could think about was that maybe she was going to die. It wasn't just that I felt sorry for her being old and all. There was something else to do.

None of the others had even noticed Nana's niceness. I saw it break through in a smile, a frown or a tear many times. You see, we'd been real good friends for years, Nana and I. Nana liked me a whole lot. Maybe that's why I liked her so much. She was wonderful. When I was a child, Bess and I (Bess is my older sister) used to tease her quite a bit. We used to make delicious looking sodas from the dishwater with soapsuds on top and ask Nana to drink them. She always did. Now I know that she was only pretending, but Dad never did things like that. I used to love to watch Nana eat. She was from England and they have a special way of piling food onto the fork over there. I learned how, just like Nana, but Dad said it was disgusting and made me stop all the time. Once he asked us both to leave the table. Nana and I didn't mind really. We'd just go to her lilac-smelling room where no one else came and talk about life.

I always liked the lilac room. It had lavender flowers all over the walls. No one ever heard our discussions in that room. Nana told me all about her husband (he died a long time ago), and marriage and having babies, and I could just listen to her for years. To me Nana was just like a big friendly dog-only not a very active one. She was very tall and wiry, not built like a dog at all (unless a Russian wolf-hound). Her stiff hair was piled high on her head sort of victorian style. Sometimes though, she got real morbid and sad-like Dad when he drinks. But mostly, Nana was happy and realistic like a dog. I always wanted a dog, but Dad said it would only cause everybody a lot of trouble. Anyway, if I had one he would be like my Nana, real friendly and realistic. If my dog could talk he would tell me all the things that Nana told me. She said that someday I would have the dog of my dreams. Sounds kind of silly but somehow I've always believed it.

It was Mama's idea to let Nana visit us. Dad always kind of groaned, but then he did everything Mama said anyhow. Only Nana stayed longer this time, about four years longer than Dad wanted her to. Dad was a very weird person. He was a businessman so I guess everybody must have found him very interesting. At least he had lots and lots of silly friends that came to our house for parties. Nana and I were never invited, not officially anyway. So we just never went. I used to sit on the cold stairs in the front hall with my head stuck between the banisters waiting for Mama to sneak me goodies. I wanted to sit with Nana in the lilac smelling room. She was in there all right. She was leaning through that old black album, the one with gold letters on it full of dried up roses and brown pictures. You could hear Dad all over the house though. His laugh was very loud and unfamilar sounding—at least from where I was. Sometimes I could see him dancing and showing off in front of everybody like a real child.

I never liked grownups to act that way. Nana never did. Nana was refined and fully matured. So naturally I was curious to know why Dad acted that way. Once Mama smiled wistfully and explained that big men sometimes need to let loose to feel like being big men again. But what kind of explanation was that anyway? I always thought Dad acted childish and drank a lot because he didn't like being a government clerk (that's what he said his job was), and because he was worried about getting wrinkles and gray hair and everything. In fact, his favorite expression every morning at breakfast used to be: "Well, one more day nearer the grave." I can say it exactly because Dad said it so often and it always bothered Nana so much. Anyway, I'd find Nana in her lilac-smelling room crying later on. I never asked Nana what it was like being eighty years old. That was awfully personal, and besides I think I knew the answer anyway.

Dad was a problem sometimes. Oh sure, I've seen Dad drink before, but one night it was very different. He made the whole family very unhappy. He said that all of us females were ganging up on him! We only were doing what Nana told us to do—trying not to let Dad drink so much. Nana was pretty worried about Mama and all of us, I guess. Anyway, Dad heard her talking to Mama in the kitchen about how Gus had died because he drank too much. Then he called Nana a goddam fool—those were his exact words. I learned a lot that night.

I guess that was just about the end of everything. Anyhow, Nana hardly came out of her lilac-smelling room anymore after that. Then one day she told me confidentially that she was going away. When I asked Mama about it, she only said in a very tight voice as though she was mad at me for asking: "Your father thinks it's better this way, dear. Nana is his conscience." Now, what in the world kind of answer was that for a child? I only knew they wouldn't even let Nana stay for Christmas next month. Nana always made it so much fun too. She believed in God very much, you see, and she always told me what Christmas was supposed to mean—how it was the spirit of giving and all. Together in the room, we wrapped beautiful presents for everyone. Nana didn't have much money either. Still, her presents were better than Dad's—and he knew it too.

As we stood there in the cold drizzle waiting for the train, I just knew what Christmas would be
PLEA TO SPRING

We cry to Spring to bring us waking light,
To thaw the frozen ground with glowing sun
And nurse the life from earth of rotten blight.
We wait for gentle rains to wash off dun
And nourish green to color barren brown.
Embrace us tender winds, assure us breath.
Unloose the icy fingers pulling down
The crimson passion ‘til it joins black death.

Oh Spring, when will you find my broken soul
And heal my frozen mind with warming joy?
I crave the touch of tears that softly roll
To stir the flush, despair would soon destroy.
Sow fertile seeds that ripen into fruit
With scent so sweet time cannot make it mute.

Bonnie Feather

LAUGHTER

He laughed and in his laughter was all the fun of a circus, all the warmth of a June afternoon, all the dreams of a hundred years, rolled into one pleasing package.

It was Christmas and he was enjoying himself as though somehow a bit of the magic stuff of childhood had found a spot within him and could not be brushed away.

Those around him always laughed. His was a contagious easy laugh that could make one believe the lid of Pandora’s box had at last been closed.

She laughed and in her laughter was the gentle echo of his own, the subtle crack of a shell being broken, and all the fantasy of the ages. She loved him with the sort of love that is separated, perhaps by a laugh, from reality. She loved him everywhere she looked.

He took her home and there alone with him her voice fought its way through the cracked shell.

“I love you.”

He laughed and with that laugh broke all the glass slippers of the world, transformed every Cinderella back into rags, and ground magic stuff of childhood into mud.

He laughed and every Judas winked, clanked a bag of silver, and laughed with him.

—Jean Fouke

THE LILAC ROOM (continued)

like this year. I wouldn’t want to get anything ever again. All of us would know what every present was under the tree anyway. On Christmas morning, the family would come down at different times. Dad would head for the kitchen for a cup of coffee, mumbling something about even this day being one step nearer the end. The presents would be signed from Mama and Dad—but Bess and I would know that he never had anything to do with it. Then we’d open them. It would be embarrassing because you’re supposed to kiss everyone that gives you a present, making it look like you suddenly wanted to. And I would never again hear Nana's wrapping paper crinkle and crackle in its fresh, green way in the room that smelled of lilacs, lavender and musty roses.

So, I couldn’t cry, even when Nana hobbled aboard the train that was taking her way down south to an old ladies’ home in St. Augustine. St. Augustine. That sounds like a religious place. Mother was saying Nana would really be more at home there, but I don’t know. The wheels of the train moved very slowly at first. Dad was already in the car beeping the horn real loudly. He wanted to seal up the lilac room for the winter. He would put ugly storm windows on the crystal light spaces Nana and I used to look out of. We watched the train fade into the gray mist with a roaring sound of wind and sad goodbyes. I’ll never, never forget how Mama turned from the track to look at Dad. Even Bess. But, I didn’t look at him at all.
ON THE DEATH OF A POET
HOMO SENSUALIS

In dim, delighted air
When dew’s comfort drips
Down unseen, unheard—
You remembered then, hot heart,
Screaming out of fools’ masks,
The lust for prey—your thirst
Climbing word bridges
On rainbow’s search
Between false heavens
And false earths

full of cattish pranks
Eagerly longing, sniffing
Peeked into every chance
That in jungles
Among speckled beasts of prey
You might sneak sound emblazoned
With blood-thirsting lips

as eagle's downward wind
Into ever deeper depths
(your own abyss)
You pounced! on lambs
Abruptly down, hot-hungry
Grimly raking whatever looked
Sheepish, lamb-eyed, curly-wooled

Under multi-colored artifice
How eagle-like and panther-preened
The poet’s longings!
Have you not hot and bloodless seen
Man as god and sheep
And craved blood’s innocence to keep
The laughter back while tearing flesh

In dim, disquiet air
When moon’s sickle creeps
Between spurned crimson’s light
Shrinks downward, shadowward
By one truth burned
And sinking, drowns in night
Can you know, now cold heart
How you prowling, preying
Thirsted once?

by Midge McClellan

Conception

In that immaculate hour
the pregnant moon,
tower of ivory,
began her climb
to give birth to a sun:
Domiciled in womb-dusk darkness
a potential sleeps untapped
to spill like milk on the black
edge of mouse-colored morning,
the destruction of Pompei and
Carmel in its wake. Whose
umbilical cord time dangles down
the belly of the western world
at dawn, a myth for tight-lipped
mouths, gaping sensibilities—
now unfurled, a full-risen sun.
Heat-haze drained and drenched
below, the bungled gloomy brood
looks up

to Calvary.

by Midge McClellan

“This poem, with seven others submitted from colleges and universities all over the southeastern area, was selected to be discussed by poets James Dickey and Randall Jarrell at the Hollins College Literary Festival last fall. Mrs. McClellan’s poetry was not submitted to the Madison College creative writing contest because she is not in school this semester.
REFLECTIONS OF SOLITUDE

Even in the gay heights of jazz and laughter
I find a rusted barbed-wire wall
   With so much to give
   Why no receiver
   To give and take
   Or take and pretend?
Imagination can
   (But not really)
Strike a chord
   (With no one to hear
   There is no sound)
But vibrations still exist
To resound again and again
In forms different and same.

Maryanne Franzoni
“Give me liberty or give me death!”

This eloquent speech was made amidst the strife of our revolutionary period by a well-known patriot to the American Cause, Patrick Henry. It has been studied, memorized, and eulogized by the contemporary citizen for its heroic and unselfish viewpoint. In it is embodied the general sentiment of the oppressed peoples who, nearly two centuries ago, fought courageously so that their descendants might enjoy the freedoms of which they had been deprived.

Although such dramatic and arousing speeches are not as common to our nation today, a somewhat similar pervading spirit exists because of the threat of Communism to our security. Even through the people of the United States have not yet been forced to relinquish their many freedoms, they do recognize a definite opposition to their ideals and concepts.

Some citizens continue to ignore the possibility of living under a totalitarian form of government where the free enterprise and creativity of the individual are abrogated. Although they may lightly discuss one of the many facets of the menacing situation in their every-day conversation, they seldom if ever, give serious thought to an adaptable and effective solution. On the contrary, however, many monopolize both time and effort with personal affairs and practical decisions, little realizing the consequence of a national crisis.

In every issue of importance, there usually exists a group of radicals—a body of forward agitators who clamor for war and destruction. It is not unlikely that these antagonists will over-estimate their own possibilities for victory while vigorously petitioning for battle. Stimulated by revenge or rash judgement, they sometimes fail to recognize the need for arbitration and compromise—thus they lack the much-required quality of foresight.

Between the two extreme courses of retaliation and indifference, however, there lies that of moderation, a sincere concern for our country’s welfare and an eagerness to devote our energy to its prosperity and betterment. Some of our more capable, more industrious citizens zealously participate in social and political activities that further this goal.

The continued strength and fortitude of our nation depends largely upon the degree of apathy or enthusiasm possessed by the average American. These qualities are immeasurable as well as unpredictable, and their depth is not to be approximated.

What, therefore, can the United States firmly rely upon for protection and defense in a time of stress? It may be the method of seizing reluctant men in the draft or allowing speculators and profiteers to exercise control over the battle and the moneybags.

How many citizens would sacrifice their lives for the continuance of their beliefs if the actual decision was forced upon them?

Modern living, with its conveniences and comforts, may have softened man and also possibly injured or weakened his spirit. Since he has never known the privations suffered through persecution, it is highly probable that he may consider fighting for freedom impractical. Would he accept the “If you can’t beat them, join them” viewpoint through utter ignorance of the trials of a dictatorship; or would he adopt the standpoint of a man like Patrick Henry, who had experienced the injustice of a corrupt rule?

The answer to this question can scarcely be revealed before the moment of decision has come. The valor of the majority and the individual’s own degree of courage will then be evident and probably not before.

THE VINE IS SINGING

The vine is singing red on dying tree.
Blood jells on battle-burned corpse.
The lesser weeds cower in the lea.
Sobered by the war, and autumn-browned,
They redden not for sharing not the flame.
Nothing is bright in their perennial lives.
Only the fallen great wave the banner
Of life, leeched by the scarlet stream.

by Grace Mercer

(22)
DAVID

Live stone
Birthed from strange grey peaks
The quarries of Carrara—

Fragment chipped by the master of perfection—
Marble contrapposto

Brooding spirit of the giant killer
From you mid-summer may burst in a moment!

Colossal youth
Constrained to sling and pebble
Bound to the rugged rock—
On your crown one morsel
One touch of uncut stone—

Touch by touch simplicity
In strength of naked form
In you is warm growth of the full earth!

Energy of conception—
Tower above deformity and plague—
Wrest from your marble bounds—
Command the world ex forti dulceds!

Bonnie Feather

★ ★ ★

THESAURUS HOLIDAY

As I stand on the pinnacle of my guilt,
I hear the derisive laughter
Of my tormentors
Reverberating from
The canyon walls of my disgust.

I have genuflected to Asmodeus
And attended the Black Mass.
I am the king of sycophants and parasites;
They have crowned me with rhus toxicodendron.

As I stand on the pinnacle of my guilt
And contemplate the abyss of horror below,
A flower from the Garden of the Hesperides
Falls near, and as I stoop to retrieve it,
I slip and plummet into Gehenna.

Maryanne Franzoni
THE BLACK THING

Snow is falling on the mountain
Making it a pretty white,
And a full moon is a'rising;
Reckon there'll be tracks tonight.

Folks don't rightly know what makes 'um:
Some even say it's from the wild,
The great thing that stalks the mountain
Crying like a little child.

Once I saw its red eyes gleamin'
By the spring out back our shed;
Its body seemed to hang in tatters
Like a thing that's too-long dead.

Two years ago, a little baby
A mite just barely three springs old,
Toddled from her house at dusk
Into a night both black and cold.

Her folks tracked her to the mountain,
Following her path of snow,
As it led into the timber,
Until the dogs refused to go.

When morning came, they finally found her,
Across a creek that's deep and wide;
A'sleeping warm inside the arms
Of the black thing at her side.

How her mother screamed and fainted,
Folks will tell you with a will,
As the great decaying something
Lumbered off, across the hill.

Well, the child was safe and happy,
She didn't seem to have no dread
Of the thing that all folks know
Has lived and died, but won't stay dead.

Anyhow, now we're accustomed
To its coming with the snow;
It don't hurt us, it's just seekin'
Something only it can know.

Barbara Lawson

STATUS SEEKER

The vine swerves.
curves upward.

Greedy roots strain,
drain lifeblood.

Leaves reach out giving nothing
absorbing all.

Support is weakened covered, smothered
by the brainless
writhing mass

till

heavy-handed Time slashes,

snaps the lifeline, and

the vine

withers dries
dies.

by Carol Almond
Katy was slipping her new black cocktail dress on as Liz, her nine year old sister, sauntered into the room.

"Can I zip you up?" asked Liz.

"Yes, please do," Katy replied, turning around and leaning backwards for the little girl.

Liz walked around her sister, surveying her critically, and exclaimed, "Gosh, you look just beautiful! Is that the dress you got downtown today?"

"Umm hmm."

Katy snapped on a bracelet, adjusted her stockings, and examined her appearance in the mirror.

Liz plopped onto the bed. Propping her chin on her palms, she looked up at Katy and said suddenly, "Katy, are you really going to marry Gordon?"

"Of course I'm really going to marry him. You already know that."

"Why?"

"Because I love him and we want to be together. Some day you'll feel the same way about someone," said Katy, as she sat down at the dressing table and picked up her hair brush.

"Mother said that too, but that doesn't matter," Liz retorted, brushing Katy's answer aside. "What I want to know is why didn't you marry Bobby instead. You used to say you loved him too, and I like him best."

"I bet you haven't finished your homework," Katy accused, beginning to brush her hair, but she noticed the earnest look on the little face reflected behind her in the mirror. She put the brush down, turned to look at Liz, and asked, "Why do you like Bobby better than Gordon?"

"Bobby used to race me on my bike sometimes, and he took Patty and me riding in his little car, and he always said, 'How's my girl friend?' to me, and he liked to see the pictures I drew, and he--" Liz tossed her head and threw her arms out.

"He was just real neat all the time!"

"Well, Bobby is going to school to learn to be an artist. Gordon learned something useful when he went to college."

"How to twitch--" Liz began but stopped at Katy's threatening frown.

"He learned to work hard and be an engineer like Daddy."

"Daddy doesn't twitch his nose."

"Don't you have any homework?" Katy exploded.

"Nope," Liz said, and she was silent for a little while. She began to trace the design on the bedspread with an index finger. Still concentrating on the design, she ventured, "Are you and Gordon going to have any little girls?"

Katy had turned back to the mirror and was pulling the brush through her hair. She answered Liz shortly:

"Probably."

"I bet he won't race 'em on their bikes or help 'em draw pictures like Daddy and Bobby. He'll just say, 'What did you do in school today?' all the time."

"He will not! Besides, he'll do a lot more than Bobby ever would—He'll be able to buy them food and clothes."

Katy's vicious brush strokes were taking their toll on her carefully set waves, but she failed to notice it.

"Bobby bought Patty and me ice cream cones when he took us riding."

"Yes, with his allowance."

"I buy things with my allowance."

"But Daddy has to work to make money to give you your allowance too."

"You keep on talking about money. Bobby used to say, 'Money doesn't mean a thing.'"

"Bobby just doesn't know! His father pays for everything for him."

The doorbell interrupted them.

"That's Gordon now," Katy said, trying to push her ruined waves back into place. "Come on, Liz, why don't you run on down and speak to him?"

"Phooey! I don't want to see him twitch his nose," retorted the little girl, jamming her hands into her slacks' pockets and stalks toward the door.

"Get out of here!" Katy screamed.

Gordon was in the den talking to her father, when Katy went downstairs. She watched his nose twitch as he greeted her.
BIRTHPLACE VISIT

I wonder what she was like?
The girl who became the mother of the President.
Each day I gaze upon the hills on which she looked,
And travel over paths she took
Or might have taken.

Almost a hundred years have gone
Since she was born
Down there
The white frame country house
Nestled in the hollow back of the weeping willow.

So many folks drove by today
To gaze that way.
Did she walk to school
On the old dirt road
Or did she go
Across my hill
On shining autumn days like this
Or in winters snow and chill?

The school, a weather beaten shed,
Is standing still.
And back of the boxes and sacks of feed
Is the old chalk board where she learned to read.

Many folks drove up the road today
To look that way.
Older people say that she was gay,
Had seven brothers and was orphaned young.
Tomboy at heart, she must have loved to play
Around the old brick house
Where she might have often gone
To visit with the Links or Wines,
And to swing on the old grape vines
Entwined
Around the oak.
At Salem Sunday School she memorized
Most Bible verses and won a prize!

Folks stopped by the house today
To ask the way.
When she went west to go to school
Did she really want to leave
The sawed off Blue Ridge mountains,
Or just for an instant, did she grieve?

This week her son will come.
A long black limousine
Will speed him from the airport to this home.
He, whom peoples of the world revere
And fear.
I wonder,
What does he really see?
A famous man, at seventy
Returning to gaze on hills she knew.

The roads will jam before the day’s begun,
With folk who came to gaze upon her son.

—Pat Botkin

METAMORPHOSIS

Little legs waving wildly,
Numerous little legs which never stop
searching for solid ground.

“He’s not well, sir, believe me.
What else would make him miss a train?”

Not ill. Afraid.
Excluded from human dealings;
Clinging with sticky feet on walls and ceilings;
Issuing brown fluid and unintelligible words—
not human.

No one understanding . . or caring to;
Clenched fists threatening and
Rotting apples which must lie forever in filth;
Feeble little legs dragging dead weight
that won’t respond;
Eating last-night’s bones with snapping jaws
but craving other food;
And finally death—
A few tears and many thanks to God.

Molly Hall
ELECTION 1960

Icy fingers fumble with the lock.
Cold metal clanks—
The gate swings back.

Mars rises in the east
Vivid
Red.
The dead
Shriek to the waning moon
Bravely piercing through a cloud,
There near the God of War,
Screaming,
"Why
Did we die?"

Orion and his dogs march on;
The prize, always just beyond
The horizon.

People awaken!
Athena has forsaken!
Dig your six by eight,
Three feet under.
Store supplies
Hide your eyes
From your blunder.

God concedes.
The dawn bleeds.
The eagle sleeps.
A rainbow weeps
Angel tears
For earth's fears.

Pluto wins.
Mars grins.

—Pat Botkin

CORNUCOPIA

Your words, my dear,

How like a

Horn of Plenty . . .

Filling, Spilling

Apples red, shining, Grapes green entwining

Sweet and bold and blooming

and inside . . .

Worms

—Carol Almond
On the outskirts of a small provincial town, some seventy miles from old Quebec, there lived an old Jesuit priest named Father Duvalier. The villagers knew little about the old man, for he had lived for thirteen years as a recluse, rarely showing himself even at the windows of his wretched dwelling, or in the pitiful garden at its side. Pere Duvalier was very old, and lame, and extremely feeble. He was said to possess great knowledge, and it was no wonder, since he spent the greatest part of his time poring over numerous books in Greek and Latin. He possessed, moreover, a largeness of humanity, and a kind, even saintly manner in his dealings with the children who, alone, were admitted into his house.

Although Father Duvalier performed no masses, nor was he connected with the small village church in any way, he was always seen wearing the black garb of the priesthood with the high, white Roman collar, though it was now yellow and tattered with age, as was his whole apparel.

The house in which Father Duvalier jealously guarded his privacy was small and built of large, irregular gray stones. It looked sturdy enough, and indeed it must have been, for it had had no repairs since the old priest had laid down the stones thirteen years before.

Of his activities and his means of sustenance, the villagers were ignorant. There was, it is true, an old French peasant woman who journeyed out the dusty road occasionally to leave a loaf of bread or a wedge of cheese on his doorstep. She never entered his house nor did they exchange a single word, but she laid her offering there regularly and retraced her lonely steps toward the village. On this meager fare, together with the few fruits that survived the long, harsh winter and lack of care, the old Jesuit lived, secluding himself behind the cold stone walls of his shabby house.

In the spring of that year, the thirteenth year of his self-inflicted confinement, there arrived in the village a young man from the north, a mere lad of five and twenty, with flashing black eyes and the habitual black suit of the brotherhood.

Frere Michael Cimon, as the young brother called himself, had been sent to the village by his superiors to conduct some business which would retain him there through the summer. There were, in the town, no hotels, so the young man presented himself to the mayor in order to find a suitable lodging for the course of his sojourn.

Mayor Lamartre informed the youth that there lived for the course of his sojourn, the young brother knocked loudly, then knocked again, as if annoyed with the delay occasioned by the old man's infirmity. Jacques Lamartre glimpsed the old man through the window as he limped hurriedly across the room in answer to the bold banging at his door. As the door opened, little Jacques caught a glimpse of the old Jesuit's face which reflected, in rapid succession, surprise, something like recognition, and finally undisguised dismay.

"Bonjour, mon Pere," said the youth.

Father Duvalier did not answer but with a feeble movement of his hand, dismissed the wide-eyed Jacques and motioned Brother Michael inside.

In the course of the following weeks, Brother Michael was seen several times by the townspeople as he strolled through the busy streets. He seemed preoccupied with deep thoughts of his own and ignored, indeed rebuffed, the overtures of friendship on the part of the friendly, curious children who followed at his heels. Father Duvalier did not appear. The lovely spring was transformed into an uncommonly warm summer. The days grew longer and cooler, and still the old priest was not seen outside of his cottage.

Mayor Lamartre, who had established quite a lively friendship with young Brother Michael, inquired one day of the old man's health.

"Il va tres bien, je vous assure," replied the youth and began to speak of other things.

Mayor Lamarture had, in addition to young Jacques, two older sons and a lovely daughter of fourteen years. Angele, as his daughter was called, though barely fourteen, looked considerably older, as is the case with most pretty little girls, to the dismay of their more homely sisters.

Angele had seen a great deal of Michael in the seven months since his arrival. He had always treated her with the greatest respect, albeit in a rather cold and formal manner, even lowering his gaze when her bright, interested face gazed too long at his flashing black eyes. Angele, extremely sensitive by nature, had been offended on several occasions by his abrupt manner, but he had only to look her way again and all was forgiven him.

Around the middle of September, however, Michael ceased to make his daily appearance at the Lamartre home. For two weeks he did not come, and for that length of time Angele's gentle face displayed the most candid sorrow. Mention his name, she did not dare, for although naive in many respects, she knew well what was denied the brotherhood—and herself.

For days she roamed restlessly about the house, inventing this and that pretext for paying the old priest and his lodger a visit. But then, one morn-
ing, Michael returned, and as she led him into her father's private quarters, she trembled like a new leaf in spring. Turning before the door to her father's room, she caught Michael's eyes on her face, and her poor little heart was irrevocably captured.

In the days to follow, Michael saw Angele every day. He held her hand in the deserted hall; he stole kisses behind the fountain in the rose garden; and on rare, forbidden nights, he told her that she was beautiful and she permitted him to make love to her.

Still Father Duvalier was not to be seen. In answer to inquiries in regard to his host, Frere Michael would murmur, "Ah, le bon Pere, il se porte bien, tres bien." Sometimes Angele, with little Jacques at her side, would drive Brother Michael to his lodging at the priest's cottage. It was on one of these occasions, as a sort of prelude to disaster, that Jacques Lamar tre caught a glimpse of the old Jesuit at the open window. What he saw made him whimper aloud with fright.

The old man, his long white hair in disorder, his holy black grab discarded in favor of a crude garment of rough brown sack-cloth, was crouching at the window, his distorted face thrust out into the cool evening air. But what especially frightened little Jacques Lamartre was the old priest's horrible flashing black eyes. They were eyes that Jacques had seen before—the eyes of a madman.

Three days passed and Brother Michael did not appear at the Lamartre mansion. Angele was frantic with worry and guilt. On the fourth day, she put aside her pride and begged her father to let her take a little wine to the old Father who, according to her brother, had looked exceedingly ill a few days before.

As the Mayor had business with young Brother Michael, he told his daughter that he himself would take the wine, and he set out in the evening coolness, behind his magnificent white horses.

The old priest's tiny house, as he approached it in the semi-darkness, had a gloomy and foreboding air. As the carriage drew closer, the Mayor noticed a small flickering light before the door, then distinguished a knot of human forms gathered before the cottage. He alighted from his carriage and hurried toward the group of men and women who stood as if dumbfounded, one man among them holding a large fragment of brown paper.

"Qu'est-ce qui se passe"?, demanded the Mayor of the man who held the paper. No word was uttered by the stupefied group standing before him. Mayor Lamartre took the paper from the peasant almost timidly, glanced at its contents and turned pale.

"Brisons la porte!" he shouted, and the stunned farmers seemed to come to life at last.

The door broken down, and the lantern introduced into the tomblike darkness, the Mayor gazed around the cold, dark room. He could distinguish nothing at first, and then he saw the son—his head smashed and bloody, and he saw—hanging motionless from the broad beams that supported the roof—the old Jesuit, clad in the black garb of the Church. The front of his cassock had been torn away and two horrible red gashes could be seen on his chest. It was the sign of the cross.

Mayor Lamartre looked at the Father, and at the son, and read aloud the first few lines of the last words of an unhappy man:

"Notre Pere, qui etes aux cieux, que Votre nom soit sanctifie, Que Votre regne arrive, que Votre volonte soit faite sur la terre comme au ciel. Par­donez-moi cette derniere offence contre Votre gloire, mon Pere, mon Dieu, Seigneur..."
His dad would really be proud if his own son could find a cave with treasure in it. Jerry wished that his father were still there for him to talk to.

“Mr. Roberts,” Jerry jumped to his feet, “I want to be group leader on the hike. My dad told me about cave hunting. I sure know a lot about it.”

Ronald Forbush, son of Reverend Paul Forbush, stood up. “Ah, Jerry, just hearing stories about exploring doesn’t mean that you know all about it.”

“Oh shut up, mush face.” Jerry gave Ronald a shove that sent him sprawling on the floor. “You don’t know what you’re talking about.”

A voice from the back of the group spoke up, “Let’s put it this way Jerry. We don’t want you.”

“We don’t want you; we don’t want you.” That’s the way it always was. He even had to shove his way into the scout circle to get a seat. “That’s OK,” he thought, “You just wait. I’ll make you want me yet.”

Later as the boys were gathering for the hike, Jerry stood alone. He imagined himself slipping through the woods ahead of the rest of the scouts, finding the quartz, and taking a specimen back to the searchers. He would find a stream and follow it.

Soon it would lead him to a spring. His dad had said that Indians often buried their dead near a spring so that the spirits could have a never ending supply of water. That’s how he would find the quartz. He could just picture the rest of the boys standing with their mouths hanging open as he calmly handed over the specimen. Then, they’d all follow him back to the cave.

“Jerry!” He was jerked back to reality. “Get a move on, will ya? We’re ready to go.” They were ready all right. Well, he was too. Now, here they were, trudging through the “Big Woods.” As they went on, Jerry’s hopes rose higher and higher. He was sure that he would find the quartz. His heart beat faster with every step. “I’m going to find it. I’m going to find it.”

Then, the sky darkened. What had been a beautiful but cold day turned into biting winds and ominous snow clouds. The only thing left to do was turn back and try to make it down the mountain before the storm broke. Shivering with the bone-freezing cold, the boys picked up their packs with numb fingers and stiffly eased into a crude, follow-the-leader formation. Each one was aware that the group was unprepared for the sudden bad weather.

“A hero, I’ll be a hero. Then they’ll listen to me.”

Mr. Roberts turned sharply. “All right, boys. I’m afraid this is it for today. We’ll have to double-time it back to town. Stay in line now. We don’t want to lose anybody.”

One of the boys up front shouted back. “Jim, Harry, y’all come on over to the house when we get back. We’ll have a party.”

“Oh, great, just great. Turn back he says, and why, so these lily-like scouts can get together for a tea party or something.” Jerry’s eyes burned. The muscles of his jaw tightened, drawing his mouth into a thin, hard line. For a brief moment, he stood still, unmoving. Then he started walking again. Finally, he dropped out of line altogether.

It would be some time before he would be missed. No one had turned to look at him as they climbed up the mountain. He knew no one would bother now. He waited until the boys were out of sight and then turned quickly and retraced his setps up the mountain. The wind was blowing stronger, and now a few loose flakes of snow were mixed and blown with it.

Jerry gritted his teeth and crashed through the underbrush. Soon he was off the main trail and deep into the woods, following the course of a little stream. It had to be around here somewhere. He had to find it. He’d show ’em. The snow fell thick and fast: within a few minutes, the ground was covered. He followed the stream until it disappeared into a crevice between two boulders. He shivered. It was no use; the water could have come from any of a dozen mountain springs. It was impossible to trace an underground stream.

The snow was falling so fast now that everything seemed to be blurred. Running as fast as he could, Jerry kept close to a narrow ribbon of water. Suddenly he tripped and fell, sliding into the icy stream. The water flowed across his legs, soaking his trousers. He took off his pack and left it. Pulling himself to his feet once again, he stalked off through the woods. The snow was blinding. Great gusts of wind blew the stinging spray into his eyes until he could no longer see. He called for help several times and then gave up. No one could possibly hear him over the sound of that wind. The water froze in his trousers forming thin layers of ice that cracked as he tried to run. He stumbled away from the stream and deeper into the woods. His hands were numb and useless, hanging like dead weights by his side. His breath came in great painful gasps, burning his throat and lungs. Then he heard it, a soft moan as if someone were calling him from far away. He ran blindly toward the sound, his legs chafed and bleeding, hands and feet senseless. The sound grew louder, it was a moan, the sound of wind rushing through rock. He slipped again and fell, once more into water, not a stream this time, but a spring, cold and dark, seeping downward into the earth. He lifted his head. Above him loomed a massive figure of quartz. The moan grew louder, rising in a liquid crescendo. Now it was more than a moan; it was a scream, an agonizing scream of horror and despair. The voice of the elements and the voice of the boy were one.
ENGINE

Frustrates you doesn't it, Big Boy?

To have the power to light a city

Yet to be chained to a siding

Running a monotonous course.

Go ahead

Gather speed

Smash into the cars

Crush their couplings together

Jerk them forward

Slam them back

Pull them pell-mell behind you

Down to Staunton and back again.

Maryanne Franzoni