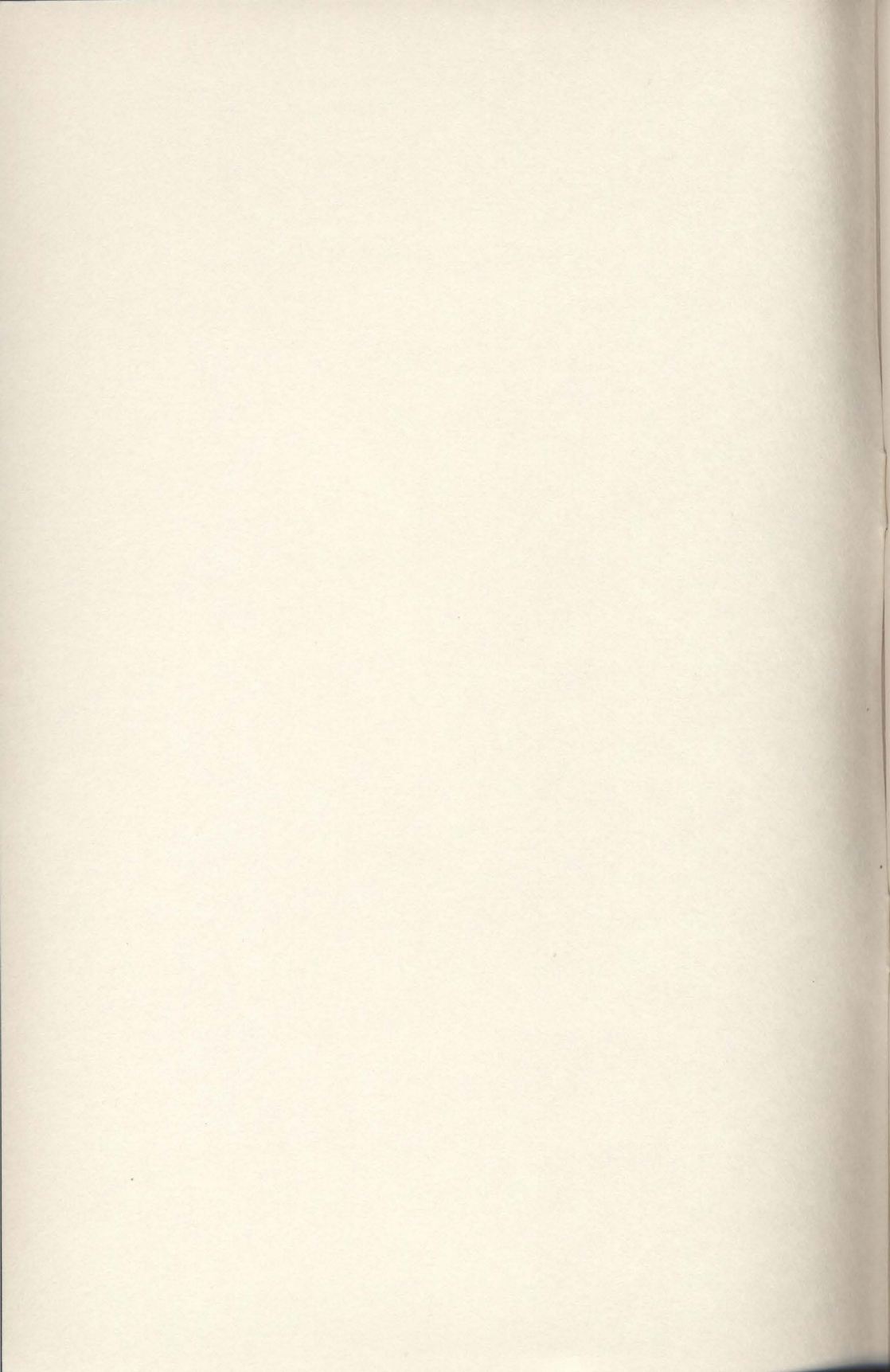


*The
Reflector*



Spring 1965



THE REFLECTOR

Literary Magazine

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FIRST PLACE AWARD

to

THE REFLECTOR

Shippensburg State College

March 12, 1965

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As I came to the edge of the woods,
Thrush music — hark!
Now if it was dark outside,
Inside it was dark.

Too dark in the woods for a bird
By sleight of wing
To better its perch for the night,
Though it still could sing.

The last of the light of the sun
That had died in the west
Still lived for one song more
In a thrush's breast.

Far in the pillared dark
Thrush music went —
Almost like a call to come in
To the dark and lament.

But no, I was out for stars:
I would not come in.
I meant not even if asked,
And I hadn't been.

"Come In," Robert Frost

Gay Tombsack
Jarome Downie
Barley Laine
Cynthia Smith
Cynthia Smith
Alois
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The Cat
Fisch-Holer
Something Bitter
Die
Intelligence
A Purpose
Aure
Loneliness
The Ballet
In Paradoxum
Halo

Fantasy

. . . GAIL TURNBACH

Since that fantasy of love,
That swept us into places
 Where no reality intruded,
 Where every object blurred with beauty
 Imputed by our gaze,
 Where we devised a lexicon
 Including only words that dealt with Now;
Since that fantasy of love,
That brought our glutton hearts
 Into a quick starvation,
 That left me as an infant, dazed,
 Between first slap and cry,
 That seared a sharp awareness of
 The travesty all fairy tales are,
I have debated (sometimes bitterly)
The value of ephemera,
And wondered whether memories
Are worth the making.

Rationalization

. . . JEROME DOWNIE

Behind the iron gate I saw my prize,
A yellow orchid with purple eyes.

I had to smell that single one,
So around the fence I had to run.

Upon my flower I plucked it free,
And felt at my nose in ecstasy.

But my selfish pleasure quickly sped,
I dropped the flower and left it dead.

A lean living stem I did but break,
One flower is merely a mistake.

Wherein the Reason?

. . . BERKLEY LAITE

What nonsense this!

This world is much misused;

'Tis nothing more than a plaything in the hands of children —
reckless children.

What nonsense this!

There exists the mind,

And tho the mind be not a plaything, possessed it is by children —
reckless children.

What nonsense this!

With this world and with this mind these children play. (So with these
toys that are not toys these children play) — these reckless children.

What nonsense this!

As a kite is to the winds and a buoy to the tides,

So too is reason to man. And as reason is to man then the fate of man is
to man. And as man is and was, so shall he be — a reckless man.

Two Thoughts

... CYNTHIA L. SMITH

THE OUTSIDER

Expect the unexpected,
 Be pessimistically optimistic,
 Use those eyes in back of your head,
 Think sensibly, for a change,
 Pity those poor ignorants,
 Those poor, little lying snipers
 Who try to use and step on you,
 Laugh at the whole unfortunate set-up,
 Loner!

AT SECOND GLANCE

"No man is an island," someone said.
 "Well, let me tell you, sir,
 I say a man can exist,
 Without a friend without a foe."

"No man is an island," someone wept.
 "Well, let me tell you, sir,
 I say a man can exist alone,
 But live, no!"

In Search Of . . .

. . . MARTIN CIPOLLA

My hollow haunting eyes
Look around —
The sun sinks
Into a sea of flames.

My shallow shining face
Turns again —
A star falls
Into the hole of the universe.

My still stumbling mind
Tries to grasp —
Both ends of a rainbow
Point toward Hell.

Alone

. . . JUDY ELLIOTT

Alone,
I am always alone,
Alone in the dark inner walls of myself.

I reach out,
Touch,
Love,
Return with hurt into the walls of myself.

Live,
I will always live,
Alone,
Hating these inner walls of myself.

Knowledge

. . . JAY KLAUDER

Soon. Soon. Soon to live, soon to refresh, soon to end. They talk; they don't listen. Life is funny that way, you know? I had an accident, he had an accident, they all had accidents, but no one listens — does anyone at all care? I doubt it. I sit and talk and tell a story by which they are amused because the story has no point, it is pointless and ignorant and unbeknowing, and they like it. Talk of Byron and Dickinson; talk of Cervantes and Hemingway, but of course not. Just sit and moulder in broads, and games, and pranks, and in everything that is meaningless.

Here's the game: try to dupe everyone in artificial and insincere intellect. Artificial because outside of the one profound thought, all is void. Insincere because there is contentment in knowing just that one profound thought. By chance, and just by chance, while looking for "Peanuts," I find a fact, a very impressing fact — now to wait my chance and use it, I say I because I'm the leader of the deceivers. But someday, someone will punch that bully, and he will retire in humility. But soon there will be no one left to punch him because no one will care about anything but his own game. Life is funny that way, you know?

Knowledge

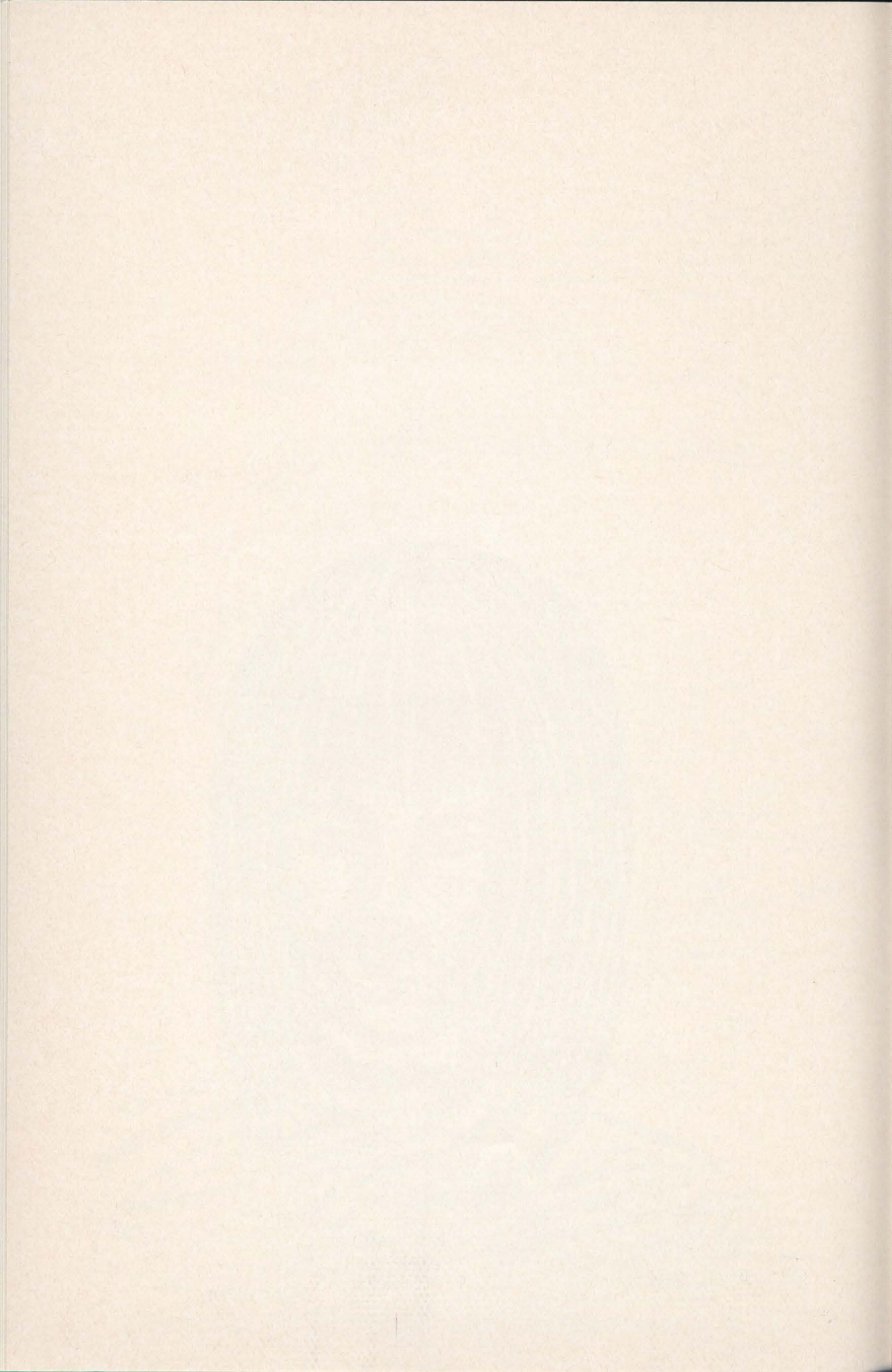
... JAY KLAUER

THOMAS YOUNG

Soon, soon to live, soon to retire, soon to end. They talk, they don't listen. Life is funny that way, you know? I had an accident, he had an accident, they all had accidents, but no one listens—does anyone at all care? I doubt it. I think that's about a story in which they are amused because the story has no point, it is pointless and ignorant and unknowing, and they like it. Talk of Byron and Dickinson; talk of Cervantes and Hemingway, but of course not, just fit and moulded to produce the game, and praise, and in everything that is meaningless.

Here's the game: try to give everyone in artificial and insincere intellect. Artificial because outside of the one profound thought of a void. Integers because there is contentment in knowing just that one profound thought. By chance, and just by chance, while looking for "peanuts," I find a fact, a very interesting fact — now to wait my chance and use it. I say I because I'm the leader of the deceivers, but someday, someone will punch that bully, and he will retire in humility. But soon there will be no one left to punch him because no one will care about anything but his own game. Life is funny that way, you know?





Prejudice

... CYNTHIA L. SMITH

Polished and Correctly
 He stood
 Glaring at me with His
 Big, black eyes.

I stared back
 In fear and
 In tears.

"Be gone," said He
 In a voice full of rage,
 As though hell had suddenly
 Engulfed the place where He stood.

I walked away,
 My head high, my heart low,
 Disgusted
 With Him and His followers . . .
 Then suddenly as though lightning had struck,

I turned,
 Only to find that he had vanished.
 To what poor unfortunates did He flee?
 The gods only know.
 But wherever he be,

His bad manners show . . .

How to Keep . . .

. . . RAY SAWYER

How to keep. How to keep back. How to keep back beauty. How to keep beauty from vanishing away. How to keep beauty.

Before one can keep beauty, one must know beauty, and know it deeply and intrinsically. For things which are deep and meaningful are everlasting. It is not enough to view something and say, "Gee, that's pretty," or "Isn't that beautiful?" Too many times true beauty is lost in an external materialistic manifestation. We must capture beauty. We must capture its true essence. We must capture ourselves.

The self holds one back. Before we can keep beauty we must know beauty. Before we can know beauty we must define beauty, and do any of us really know ourselves? It is hard for one to define beauty. There would be as many different interpretations (of beauty) as there are people. Upon closer examination of one's own particular definition, one often finds he doesn't really believe what he professed in the first place. Beauty? What really is beauty? Inter-course is a beautiful thing if two people are married, but if not, it's looked on as ugly. What a feeble excuse for beauty. Ask someone sometime why he thinks a particular object, say a flower, is beautiful. The arrangement of the petals? That's symmetry unless you want to start defining symmetry in terms of beauty. The color? Color is color and some colors are termed as downright ugly. The general over-all appearance? Appearance is not necessarily beauty. What may appear as beauty to me may not appear as beauty to someone else. Maybe there's really no such thing as beauty or ugliness or, for that matter, goodness or evil. Maybe these are all deformations or delusions in the mind. Maybe there is no mind. One might ask whether he exists the same way he evaluates the existence of beauty, and have just as hard a time doing it.

Beauty does exist, but it is that indescribable something which cannot be pinned down. Beauty is. It just is. I cannot describe it for I do not really know beauty yet. Maybe I just don't know myself yet. With more understanding of oneself, one understands beauty more. One never knows himself completely, though, so one will never know beauty completely. This would be an absolute, and this is virtually indescribable. But knowing ourselves more — we understand more. By more understanding, we capture more beauty and someday, somewhere, sometime, we may, too, be able to say:

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever.
Its loveliness increases, it will
Never pass into nothingness."

"It will never pass into nothingness"

A Place in the Past

Philosophy II

... SHARON HORTER

My house is cool,
Devoid of heat,
And carpets lie
Beneath my feet.
My chair is carved of cherry
With plush upon its seat.

I eat from dishes made of silver,
Of fruits of unknown colors
And tastes.

But can I stay
And live this way
When the sun burns hot outside today?

How to Keep . . .

RAY SAWYER

Comparably . . .

. . . CYNTHIA L. SMITH

First love is sometimes like reading

A new poem:

For although one wishes to hold on to

Its sweet sentiments to eternity,

Yet he finds these heart-warming

Rhapsodies slowly vanishing and stepping

Into the shadows of the past as

He becomes aware of other poems,

Other loves

A Place in the Past

... KATHERINE TARANTINO

When I was younger, it was a yearly ritual to visit my grandparents on feast days. What happy times we had. I'll never forget the look and smell of that lovely old house which stood unafraid in the midst of a large, barren field.

As we walked up the winding brick path, my grandmother, small and plump, and my grandfather, tall and thin, greeted us in the way which is so typical of older Italian people. I could sense that I was sincerely welcomed here, and it was such a warm, secure feeling. The house was rather old-fashioned; and when I entered, it seemed as if I were a traveler embarking on a journey to a wonderfully fascinating foreign land. Even the smell was unusual. The house was saturated with the delightful aroma of bubbling tomato sauce in preparation for the home-made spaghetti which was always a part of our dinner.

This place never changed; it seemed to have an eternal quality. The holy pictures were still hanging here and there on the white plaster walls. They weren't in any particular style or arrangement. They were placed wherever and whenever my grandmother decided to put one up. The player piano was still nestled in the corner waiting for me to pump the pedals. Even the roses my grandmother had artistically created out of crepe paper remained in the same vase, a little dustier perhaps, but still pretty.

My grandfather proudly insisted that I taste the sweet wine he had made from the grapes of his private vineyard. Just three sips warmed me all over, and I no longer needed the heavy woolen sweater my mother insisted that I wear. And then it was finally time to open the packages. I'll never forget the doll with the curly black hair and blue eyes that opened and closed so coyly when you moved her. My grandmother had sewn a complete wardrobe for the doll, and it represented the dream and desire of every little girl.

But all this is past. My grandparents and that lovely house don't exist anymore. Yet every holy day I remember them; and I miss them.

Something In Common

... CYNTHIA SMITH

PRISONERS

We have something in common

They and I.

"And what is that," you ask.

This I reply: 'I breathe,

They breathe. Nothing more,

Nothing less.'

DEATH

Help comes in the strangest ways:

When you least expect it.

When I was being torn apart

By the claws of reality,

Why did you not make your presence known?

Now, when I need you least,

Here you are!

The Viewing

. . . JOHN MORRIS

Heavy, black door, big, brass knob — swings open.
 Wide, beaming smile,
 Warm, sweaty handshake.
 "So nice of you to come; the Slumber Room on the right."

Lord! The Smell!
 Sickening, choking sweetness of thick air.
 And the colours — white and yellow and crimson,
 A grotesque avalanche of petals and ribbon,
 Inundating and isolating.
 Piles and heaps.

Sniffing; sober, quiet comments; sobbing now.

Dusky figures in the almost dark
 File past the spotlight — the center of attraction.

In a moment we will see him better;
 The netting will be removed.
 (Keeps flies off, you know.)

Intangible

. . . JUDY ELLIOTT

Gentle breeze

Caress,

Excite,

Envelope

My body.

You have not touched my soul.

Be . . .

. . . KAY WILSON

Be

. . . not of the looming horde,

The strain of canon

Or press of convention;

Smother the fertile whim;

Nor improvise a former chant;

Nor conceive in shadows of decay.

Be —

Unique

Hands Across

. . . RUTH KEENER

Grandmother Martin's porch was the perfect place to play. It was just high enough above ground level to need a sturdy railing around it. At the end and side a trumpet vine grew. This and the railing gave it a delightful privacy. At the end where there was no vine, the railing became a place for daring stunts or horseback riding. A wide set of steps leading up to the porch could be seats for all sorts of important events. Of the rooms just next to the porch, one was used as a bedroom and the other was the dining room. Since adults usually were not in these rooms, no one really kept a close watch on the children as they played on the porch.

When several of Grandmother's boys came to visit her at the same time, the grandchildren and the neighbor children that happened to be around all got together on the porch to play. One such afternoon when they were all there, Cousin Gene, who always had the good ideas, decided that the group would play church. He would be the minister, Luke would lead the singing, Dan would have the prayers, and Gene's brother, Gerald, would have the in-between parts such as announcements and introductions. The rest of the group would just sit on the steps — their pews — and listen and do the right things at the right times or whenever they were told.

When each had his position, Luke stood up and with a vigorous waving of his arm led the group in "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know." When this song was finished, Gerald nudged Dan and told him he was supposed to pray now. Dan did not seem to understand exactly what he meant, but as Gerald kept insisting, he finally got up.

"What do I do?" he asked feebly.

"Pray," Gene said. "Just pray. Make everybody close his eyes and then pray."

With a shrug he told them to close their eyes and then began: "Holy Mary, Mother of God . . ." Evidently this prayer struck Gene as being a little different because every now and then he opened his eyes and looked up to see what Dan was doing. But then seeing Dan's closed eyes, he quickly closed his own again.

As soon as Dan had finished, Moderator Gerald rose from his seat on the lower step and said, "Now Brother Gene will bring the morning message." This made some of the "congregation" break into little titters, but Gene soon silenced them. He sedately took his place in front of the steps but then decided that he needed a pulpit. After trying several things such as a tricycle and a wagon, Gene happily received the perfect pulpit—an old orange crate someone had found behind the house.

Once again Gene took his place before the group. "This morning," he announced importantly, "I would like to talk about the 23rd Psalm. 'The Lord is my Shepherd' — now just what does this mean to you, my dear friends? Brother Luke has just led us in that old familiar song 'Jesus Loves Me'. I wonder if . . ."

But "Brother Gene" was cut short by Luke who had momentarily forgotten his church etiquette. "What's the idea of calling everybody 'brother'? They don't do that at church. I think if we're gonna play church we ought to do it right."

"Anyhow," Dan agreed. "We ought to have some holy water and some benches to kneel on. And whoever heard of a church without mass?"

"What do you mean? We're doing it right. You're s'posed to call people 'brother' and 'sister' at church."

Soon the happy church-goers became quite a confused little group. Some thought the singing was not done right, and others thought that there should not be any singing at all. Gerald did not think Dan knew how to pray right, and Dan did not think Gerald knew much about how a church ought to be run.

Just as everyone was about ready to walk off, Gene thought of a bright plan: "I know what we can do. Gerald and I'll stop saying 'brother' and Dan, you can have the mass or whatever. Gerald, you do the prayers and let Dan take the announcing job. That way we'll take a little of everybody's church and make it our church. O. K.?"

Before the consensus of the group could be taken, someone suddenly appeared at the corner of the house. "I believe this little group better disband now," she said and, picking up the crate, added, "What's the idea of littering Grandmother's step with this?"

"Aw, Mom, that's our pulpit."

"Well, I never heard of anyone's needing a pulpit to play." And taking a little church member in each hand, she marched them into the house.

Three Pieces

. . . CYNTHIA SMITH

REALITY

Shutting out this world with just
A downward flick of the eyelids,
But opening one's eyes to another.
Hours roll by and
The mind is at peace,
 Only later to face
A bitter awakening . . .

VICTORY

"Put up your fists and fight," said Life.
And they dared to attempt it.
See how they crawl;
See how they quiver;
Hear their cries for mercy . . .
Fools such as these
Dare to be born.

SHORTCOMINGS

Time has its pitfalls, too:
Like running out of minutes
When they are most needed . . .

Death and I

. . . MARTHA E. WERT

Now that I have seen Death and know the wonders of it,
I beg of it to call the rest — that I might have someone
with whom to sit . . . and chat with —
about the days that have passed so
quickly before our eyes . . .

O, to talk once again with friends of varied age . . . about
the house where I used to live
with an attic full of flies which when
night fell . . . would swarm into my room
and I would cry aloud

"O, Death — Come take me to a heavenly cloud, that I might
live in peace again."

Golgotha

... SHERRY STEELE

The giant skull dome loomed over the people, its beard-like grass brown from the glare of the beating sun, its lower slopes crowded with people, and its pate waiting for the crown.

The mob was approaching with jeers and morbid laughter. Women had left their grinding stones to join their husbands for this event. Everyone from miles around was present for a variety of reasons. Some came because of pity, some because of curiosity, some because of love, and some because of hatred. Yes, many were glad to be rid of this trouble-maker, this charlatan, this imposter.

He was approaching now, this thief who had crept into the darkness of their lives. As the crowd watched, many spit in contempt as he passed. This figure of controversy caused some to mock, while others cried. A woman named Veronica dared to step from the crowd. She wiped the brow of this lowly man. His teeth clenched in pain as he tried to thank her, but in her heart she understood.

The man was young, but the pain of the moment had added years to his age, yet it did not harden his eyes. The whip had left its mark, but that was only on the outside.

As he staggered on the skull dome a shout went up from the crowd. The people had received their reward, but somehow it had not been so dramatic as they had hoped. The man was showing signs of pain, but to their despair he showed no hate, anger, or surprise before them. The detestable duty was performed quickly. As the crowd stared at the scene, the sun could glare no longer but hid its embarrassment behind the clouds.

Veronica knew that he was now crowning that dome. She knew it was her fault along with everyone's that he was there. She had wiped his brow; it was a small thing to do for the one hanging there on the cross, but she knew His good turn deserved another.

Metaphor

... CYNTHIA L. SMITH

They do not seem to have
 A care in the world,
 Those stars up there.
 How do they get along so well
 So close together
 While we are here miles apart
 And at war with war?
 So insignificant you are,
 So unimportant I am,
 So minute in form compared to them,
 So ugly compared to their beauty
 And the breathtaking night air
 That engulfs them

Die Auffassung

. . . JOHN THOMAS FLICKINGER

As we Americans prepare for the "Great Society" it would be a good idea to examine some of the social determining factors in our present society and the society of the future, whether it be "great" or not. In this instance there appear to be at least two major forces in the world upon which society must depend, namely science and theology. Let us therefore explore the dual implications of these two "sciences" in our present world.

For the sake of simplification, we will define our elements as they pertain to a structure. First, theology will occupy the basement level and serve as a foundation upon which we may build our society. Here, one must be careful not to mistake theology as meaning religion, for a theology must be nonsectarian. A nonsectarian theology will be a theology which has common ground for all sorts and conditions of men, hence not dependent upon the instilled bias of sectarianism. Religion is also defined as being the practicability of the theologically based abstract thought. Second, science will be represented as a tower or chimney of our structure, indicative of man's search for truth through fact. The two forces thus defined must be diametrically opposed to each other, having their common link at the point of intersection which will be defined as philosophy. Finally, society will occupy the **Lebensraum** which is analogous to the consistency of the wall material.

Structurally speaking, the walls of society are held in equilibrium and any swift advance on the part of the tower (science) without an equal advance on the part of the foundation (theology) would result in the systematic destruction of society and its individuals. Therefore, one can plainly see that in order for the society to thrive, it must participate in two levels of understanding. To do this effectively, each member of the society must attain more than a pseudo-conversant knowledge of theology, science and the binding power of philosophy. For the most part the individual must be concerned with the total affect of this combination upon his person, and not as separate entities. The **Lebensraum** cannot become a niche of complacent isolationism for the individual or a sect, but rather a realistically sound stand on issues which confront the society as a whole. In this country, in the recent past, we can clearly see the devastation brought about by individualized sects upon themselves as a result of isolationalistic approaches. As in our structure, we can only meld societies into the total picture so often; this might have all the condiments for a rugged conformal society, but bear in mind we must become less concerned with how the society fits the individual and more concerned with how the individual fits into a social structure such as the ultimate of such structures: society. Then it would seem that the social structure has more to fear from itself than it does from the combined reasoned heresy of theology and science. It would also seem that the social stand brought about by unreasoned orthodoxy in the past might provide the evidence necessary to condemn even the "Great Society." The only relevant question now seems to be one of how to prevent this seemingly innate downfall of modern society. Unfortunately, the answer is not to be found in a

scientific equation, nor is it to be found in a "new" theology, but rather in a new area called faith.

According to Johann Gottlieb Fichte, one of man's three vocations is faith (the other two being doubt, and knowledge), but not necessarily a faith in a god completely divorced from so-called objective reality. A faith not only in man's ability but in the ability of the self. Modern society neglects the self while trying to build itself up. Nowhere is the neglect of self felt more than in our modern dogmatic religious teachings. We are forced into the belief that all the "church" is interested in and concerned with is our money and some remote possibility that should we pay our tithes we will have a pie in the sky when we die. So modern movements have taught somewhat tacitly, that we should all fear to love because of hate, and even fear to live because of death. These ideas were all well and good for the Nineteenth Century dogmatists but not for today's people. We have new theology but it will not be accepted by society or the "church" because it has begun to preach a philosophy of the NOW and somewhat less the philosophy of hereafter.

We as citizens must also be aware of the great curtain that science has lifted before us during the last few years. We are no longer imprisoned to this sphere called earth; our bonds have been loosed. We must integrate these advancements with real interest lest the seeds of apathy breed in our bones. Science has for the most part shown the way toward non-sectarianism. When the rich of us lie down in their bronze car of wealth and the poor in the pine we all rest the same; only time counts our measure. The only immortality that might exist is the immortality of a memory, but this shall die as do men's dreams. We must now push on and ask about the future.

We must begin the future by first asking the following questions: Where do you stand in this structure? How well do you fare on the sea of individuality and where is your **lebensraum**?

If you do not care to answer these questions, you are contributing to the downfall of society. But one still must be concerned as to how history will treat our end. Will they say science destroyed all of it because of its endless quest? Will they say that theology is to blame for its lack of brute force and its wealth of awkwardness concerning the publication (in the true sense) of its ideas? Or perhaps history will treat us all kindly and say man knew not what he did?

The "Great Society" is only a chart to a possible salvation, but it cannot hope to cure everything. It merely gives us all some direction. Although I look to it and at it with a great many reservations, I feel that it is a direction that was needed. The society in which we live has been built not upon the graves of great men or their memories but rather on their accomplishments in science, theology, the arts. In the past we have been very quick to immortalize man for his deeds, whether good or evil, but these actions cannot in the end be the sum total for all that we, as a society, have stood for, but rather the articles of a passport to destiny.

Portrait of a Friend

. . . GAIL TURNBACH

I don't think she was born.
I think, instead, she dropped to earth
From some yet undiscovered world
Where everything was soft,
For she herself was such a fragile thing.
And yet she donned the human garb
With grace; and learned an earthy laugh
Full-throated and abandoned,
As if to let us know
She found enjoyment in her visit.

She quickly learned the need for some defense.
(As do we all, who live on earth
For any length of time.)
But her attempts, so alien to her soul,
Were touching to perceive.

(One day she said,
"I will be hard!"
And even as she spoke,
We heard the tears
Slide down her heart.)
I think sometimes she wanted,
Very badly, to go home.

Fantasy to Fly

. . . JUDITH KIMMES

If I knew how to fly
I'd wing to Zanzibar
And then to Timbuctoo.
I'd perch atop Saint Pat's
To contemplate the view.

My house would be the sky,
The clouds would be my friends.
I'd shower in the rain
And dust off in the wind.
My life would be a game.

And when an airplane neared
I'd have a little trick,
To dress in fluffy white
And peek in all the panes—
I'd cause a flightful fright.

Dialogue

. . . MARTIN CIPOLLA

Come here.
 I don't want to join the army.
 But no one ever refuses!
 Don't they?
 But you have no choice.
 Don't I?
 You're speaking to a government official.
 I know it.
 My God, where's your patriotism?
 What exactly is patriotism?
 You wouldn't understand such an abstraction.
 Probably not.
 But it's an honor.
 What's an honor?
 To give your life for your country.
 Is it my country?
 Of course it's your country!
 It's my country when it needs to be defended?
 Yes, No! I mean, it was always your country.
 Was it?
 But it's your duty as a citizen to fight.
 Is it my duty as a citizen to vote?
 Of course.
 They wouldn't let me vote.
 Well, they must have had a good reason.
 They did.
 What was it?
 I'm black.
 You can't accuse the United States Government of . . .
 I haven't accused anybody of anything.
 Don't be insolent!
 Yes sir.
 With every privilege comes a responsibility
 What privileges have I received?
 You live in the United States of America!
 Oh.
 If you refuse to join you'll go to prison.
 I know.
 You'll lose all your rights.
 Will I?
 They'll put you behind bars.
 Thus making theory practice.
 What?

Nothing.

Why do you look at me like that?

Like what?

It's not my fault!

What?

Why do you blame me?

For what?

It's not my doing!

What?

I'm just a little guy!

Yes.

Who am I to change anything?

You're not.

I hate you!

I know.

Stop accusing me!

I'm not.

Get out of here!

Yes sir.

I don't have time for ignorant savages!

Yes sir.

The China Cup

... JUDY ELLIOTT

She moved slowly around the drab, little room as she prepared to serve me some tea and cookies. The kitchen was back a hall, so I took the opportunity to look around her parlor after she left. The house had probably been one of the stately old homes, heir to dozens of fashionable parties. Now it was deserted. The paint was wrinkled and cracked, the steps broken, the chairs in the parlor were torn, and the plaster was ripped. The walls were bare except for an old, yellow photograph of her first husband. I was almost beginning to picture them moving in on their wedding day, blushing bride and handsome groom, when Mrs. Biddle's creaking voice lurched me back to reality.

"You know, dearie, I'm going to use my good tea service for you. I got it when John and I were married. See the pretty, little, yellow flowers? So pretty, pretty."

I commented on their loveliness, but I couldn't help sensing the stark contrast they threw on this shabby room. It was getting dark, but Mrs. Biddle made no effort to turn on a light. Why had I come to visit her? I felt it was my duty, duty to an ugly, old woman. Duty to depress myself.

She rattled on almost without ceasing. "We had a beautiful little daughter you know. Curly blond hair and blue eyes. We were going to do everything for her and make her a princess, but we couldn't do anything to save her. I hate to think of her in that box in the cold ground. She had such lovely white skin, so soft that it felt like fur."

She didn't want sympathy; she wanted someone to listen, to understand. She wanted to see that the world knew she had not always been like this, not always so ugly. She wanted to keep a sense of her beauty alive. I was the one to listen, so I sat and rocked.

"See my necklace?"

She pulled a tarnished gold locket from her neck and handed it to me. I took it from her gnarled, brown hands and looked at it — ugly, dirty, faded.

"That was from John when I was courting him. We were really quite the gay couple. Why, this house used to be the center of this town. We got that rocker you are sitting on for our first anniversary. Genuine needle-point."

She droned on, telling the history of this furniture and that rug. I heard nothing, but I saw all. The room was cluttered with trash, things that had once been lovely and new, but were now old and should be discarded. But how could she discard them; she would have nothing to replace them.

"Don't you think?"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Biddle?"

"I said, dearie, don't you think these are lovely cups. So pretty, and not a chip in one of them. I've kept them all these years up on the shelf of that cupboard. I even keep it locked to make sure that nothing gets in to hurt them. All these years, and they're still the same as when I got them."

I said yes, they were pretty.

I felt I had fulfilled my duty, so I began making my excuses to leave. This room was haunted with too much ugliness and shallowness. I wanted to breathe fresh air again; I wanted to feel vibrant and alive.

"Oh, I'm sorry you must leave. Please come back and see me again."

She rose to carry my cup to the kitchen, and I started for the door. I was stopped by a crash and low, wailing sobs.

She stood over the shattered remnants of her broken cup, sobbing. "It was so pretty. It was so pretty, so pretty"

Morituri Te Salutamus

. . . JAMES COLESTOCK

Within the shining structures lying,

Cities burning — children dying.

Hail bomb —

Nice bomb.

Glittering golden spheres of grief,

Praising fear — strange belief.

Yey bomb —

Cool bomb.

Extol the nifty silver ones,

A hundred million — megatons.

Great bomb —

Whatta bomb.

Praise the puffy mushroom cloud,

Melt the masses — kill the crowd.

Wow bomb —

Salom bomb.

Fools think bombs will make them free,

Behind the cloud — security.

Hail bomb —

Vive bomb —

Poof!



Punch-holes

. . . MICHAEL J. KEOUGH

All the world's a filing cabinet
and the people in it merely
punch-holes in a card

shut up in the dark

lost somewhere between

the smell of "My Sin"
and pencil shavings

thumbed through frequently
passed over

glanced at

never read

and brought to light only

to be tossed and shuffled
by the friendly, feeling I. B. M.

human dignity?

"Do not fold, bend, or tear this card."

Something Bitter

. . . JAMES M. MCGEEVER

In the midst of the fountain
of wit there arises something
bitter, which stings in the very
flowers.

Lucretius—"De Rerum Natura"

Sarcastic remarks, by their recurrence and degree of acrimony, would at first thought seem to indicate one's capacity for hate, insolence and hostility. In the nature of generalizations, however, this rule-of-thumb has unfortunately oversimplified matters. There are innumerable circumstances which tend to maximize or minimize one's use of sarcasm and to intensify or modify its degree of acidity.

First of all, let it be said that sarcasm, properly employed, can be an extremely effective literary device; it enables the writer to make his point unmistakably clear and has an open-ended affect on his readers — open-ended in the sense that those in wholehearted agreement as well as those in partial or no agreement can enjoy the gibe with varying measures of delight.

Perhaps an illustration will clarify this point. William Buckley's **National Review** is invariably replete with excellent examples of what I consider a masterful use of sarcasm. Recently he was explaining the absence of an article by a regular columnist. Displaying typical disdain for bureaucratic shortcomings, the distinguished conservative assured his readers that the article would certainly have been published had not the columnist been "so foolish as to assume that our postal service could deliver the article from Maryland all the way to New York in eight days" — in time for publication. While Mr. Buckley and I espouse opposite political philosophies, I nevertheless can enjoy his allusions to the drawbacks of a large federal bureaucracy purely from a standpoint of humor well-handled. Obviously those who echo Mr. Buckley's political sentiments enjoy his sarcasm much more than I.

As a journalist, Mr. Buckley knows exactly how to season his writings with palatable sarcastic "digs." He can easily avoid a general alienation of his readers by employing sarcasm with prudence and discretion. This, however, is not the case with those less experienced and less professional than Mr. Buckley. And it is precisely these unsophisticated, amateur users of sarcasm who reveal so much about themselves. As implied earlier, they actually don't reveal their capacity for bitterness — capacity in this sense, I am convinced, is relatively uniform — but they do disclose those areas in their personal lives where conflicts and frustrations have clustered. By extension, I submit a cause-effect relationship here: the presence of intrapersonal friction and strife very definitely triggers the use of sarcasm as a defense mechanism.

Consider, for example, one who is forever haranguing the promiscuous and lecherous trend of American sexual conduct; one who incessantly prophesies the imminent downfall of American society into the abyss of moral depravity;

the man who pictures all women as conniving, colluding creatures whose collective goal is worldwide matriarchy; the woman who fashions all men as uninhibited and uncontrollably aggressive cads whose common ambition is the exploitation of frail womahood.

This type of person unknowingly betrays his sexual maladjustment. Whether consciously or unconsciously, he attempts to mask his troubles behind a facade of overmodesty and unimpeachable concern for the ominous decline of American moral standards. More often than not he convinces no one but himself and others like him of the momentous nature of his cause.

Consider, now, the college professor who has resolved the difficulty so many students have in his classes and who never hesitates to reiterate his conviction that this difficulty lies in the basically shiftless and unconcerned attitude of the college student. Again and again he tells his students that if they would only study for once they would see how elementary the course material actually is. "Yet," they are cautioned, "never allow your studies to interfere with your social life. After all, the primary purpose of college is the development of one's personality and popularity, isn't it?"

Sarcasm in this situation serves well to veil the slight, remote possibility that the professor might be partially responsible for the failure of many students to do well; that perhaps he could somehow improve his teaching methods; that perhaps he could both radiate and generate a little more enthusiasm for the field of his life's interest; that perhaps some college students occasionally do find time amidst their all-important extracurricular activities to open a textbook, and that perhaps with a little more effort on his part this rare occasion of student zeal might become less rare.

Consider, finally, one who repeatedly asserts the utter worthlessness of organized religion and who is especially adept at pointing out inconsistencies and contradictions between one's religious beliefs and one's actions. He glories in enumerating instances where regular churchgoers pay little more than lip service to their church's teachings on morality and social justice. He delights in showing how much more Lutheran Theology he knows than the average Lutheran layman. Perhaps more than anything else he revels in interfaith conflict — or what he construes to be interfaith conflict; with little or no encouragement he can quote for you (verbatim, no less!) what his neighbor, a fervent Presbyterian Elder, says concerning the Catholic view on birth control, euthanasia, or scriptural interpretation. He derives immense satisfaction in demonstrating how he, an agnostic, is more Christian than a Christian; how he contributes more to humanity than any two-faced churchgoer.

This man's frequent sarcastic references to an overall religious hypocrisy in America constitute the ultimate in warfare strategy: befuddle and confuse the enemy by attacking him before he has an opportunity to attack you. This way one can avoid uncomfortable situations in which one must explain the intrinsic value of espousing no religion.

Sarcasm, then, aside from functioning as a potent literary device, can also function as a defense mechanism — in which case it is for the user an absolute necessity, a medium of refuge and reassurance, indeed a very convenient and commodious form of rationalization.

the man who pictures as women as creatures whose sole
lative goal is worldly mastery; the woman who fancies all men as un-
initiated and undisciplined aggressive cats whose common emotion is the
exploitation of frail womanhood.

This type of person unknowingly betrays his sexual misadjustment. Whether
consciously or unconsciously, he attempts to make his teacher believe a lecture
of overmodesty and unimpeachable concern for the opinions of American
menial standards. More often than not he convinces no one, but himself, and
others like him of the momentary nature of his cause.

Life

... MARK BURKHART

Consider now the college professor who has resolved the difficulty so
the man who pictures as women as creatures whose sole
lative goal is worldly mastery; the woman who fancies all men as un-
initiated and undisciplined aggressive cats whose common emotion is the
exploitation of frail womanhood.

Odd isn't it. People running here and there. In a hurry to get somewhere?
Nowhere? Anywhere?

Odd isn't it. People sitting in a class trying to learn. They plan to get
somewhere? Nowhere? Anywhere?

Odd isn't it. People out in the world making a living. They work to get
somewhere? Nowhere? Anywhere?

There are war and death knocking at everyone's door!

Odd isn't it?

Consider now the college professor who has resolved the difficulty so
the man who pictures as women as creatures whose sole
lative goal is worldly mastery; the woman who fancies all men as un-
initiated and undisciplined aggressive cats whose common emotion is the
exploitation of frail womanhood.

Existence

. . . CYNTHIA L. SMITH

I exist for lack of anything better to do.
I exist because death has not yet claimed me.
I exist because some man and woman willed it
And God had no objection.
I peddle around searching
For one thing with which I can be satisfied.
I look, wonder, pray
Hope that sometime, somewhere,
Someone or something will present itself to me
And bring happiness.
Here I hide, looking at the world through eyes
Filled with pity,
So far there is nothing save
The dark, solitary confinement
Of my soul,
Wishing that soon an answer will present itself
And I shall weep no more

A Purpose

. . . JAMES COLESTOCK

A note, A chord, A song.
fathomless figment
wood and steel
carried
on the backs of men
erasing
the lies of the years
Plastic pick.
Flying fingers.
The souls of men lie naked
in the breath of an instant.

Anna

. . . JOHN MORRIS

A blue pigeon with an iridescent purple throat beat her wings savagely as she skidded to a stop on the window sill; the yellow kernels of corn carefully piled there for the squirrels had caught her eye. She pecked and gulped hungrily at the mound.

From inside the room a resounding snap rang out; a small, steel pellet flew, and the wood splintered at the bird's feet. With a grunt of indignation and a frantic fluttering the visitor rapidly exited.

"Beggar!" I snorted, aloud, as I laid aside my sling shot; I had noticed my tendency to talk to myself much more since Anna left.

As I wheeled myself over to the window and placed some more corn on the sill, I smiled at the thought — "since Anna left." That's what the doctor and all told me; she had suddenly been called away to take care of her sister's kids because her sister and brother-in-law had been killed in an accident.

Anna . . . my housekeeper, nurse, and whipping "girl" of the past twenty years. To hear folks talk you'd swear she was my second mother; she **was** quite good that way, always putting up a devoted front. But old Anna and I knew better; people thought I put her in my will for a big chunk because I wanted to show my gratitude in some small way. Small, hell! Her share would've amounted to a hundred thousand after taxes! Anyway she told me, **she** told me that was the only way she'd consent to stay and "slave for an old fogey" like me. If it weren't for that will, she'd have packed up her bags and moved long ago.

She hated me; I was the only thing standing between her and a fortune. I must admit I got quite a degree of satisfaction out of watching her outwardly cringe before me and inwardly seethe. She wished me dead, and though she tried to conceal her desire, I could see it written all over her. I really didn't give a hang as long as they were only thoughts; I intended to get my money's worth before she collected.

The break came that day I saw her putting what looked like sugar in my milk. It didn't taste funny or smell or anything when she gave it to me, but I saved a sample of it. I put it in a little bottle and sent it off to be analyzed. I told the druggist I was a farmer and that my cows had been acting strangely. Whether he believed me or not, I don't know, but a report came back. It said that the milk contained a moderate dose of barbiturates, not necessarily dangerous as it was, but prolonged consumption could prove fatal. He suggested I check my milking machine!

I figured Anna was trying to poison me slowly to make it look as if I finally succumbed to my heart condition. That was so typical; she wanted me dead badly, but not badly enough to try anything messy.

Of course, this turn of events made it essential that I beat her at her own game.

They found her back at my old house in the first floor hallway exactly three months, four days, and some odd hours ago. She had been stabbed once through the heart with a sharp, pointed instrument; the police assumed that she had surprised a burglar and had sacrificed herself, true to the end, to protect me. The only question as far as they were concerned was what connection the puddle beside the body had with the murder; it proved to be a mixture of plain water and blood.

No one ever told me any of this, however. I was kept in my room for a variety of conflicting excuses; the doctor, I discovered, felt the shock would finish me, hence the story of Anna's sister's kids. I really owe a lot to my old intercom system; ironically, that was Anna's idea. She wanted to listen to me die.

Now I'm going to die, having committed a perfect crime; Anna really proved no problem. I'm not particularly proud of what I had to do, but I must take credit for my own little creative flair. After all, who but a true artist would conceive of a murder weapon which would literally vanish into thin air? Friends, I eliminated Anna with a homemade icicle!

Yes, now I can die happily with a genuine, if small, sense of accomplishment; I **just** wish I could die back home.

Outside the window, with the approach of night, a neon sign came to life and glared garishly:

Sunny View Acres
"The Friendly Haven of Friendly People"

In Paradisum

MICHAEL J. KEUGH

Loneliness

. . . BERKLEY LAITE

Loneliness . . .

Can you taste it?

Its acrid, bitter smear

cuts the mind's tongue

and deprives it of pleasure.

Loneliness . . .

Can you feel it?

Its maddening, deafening reverberations

crush the thin shell of thought

and atomize the mind.

Loneliness . . .

Can you see it?

Its unnerving shroud of rotting slime

encases the eyes with oily putrefaction

and dilutes their juices until perception withdraws.

Loneliness . . .

Can you recognize it?

It cannot be controlled or even managed,

but rather it becomes a cruel

tyrant—mindless, soulless, and heartless.

Loneliness . . .

Can you distinguish it?

It has a humble sister, preserver of man's wisdom;

condemn her not, but cherish her,

she is . . . solitude

The Ballet

. . . MICHAEL J. KEOUGH

Yes, I, too, am in the ballet
though I do not like tights
I dance
with the rhythm of the music
gracefully
so the show may go
smoothly

when it is ended
—hear the audience applaud—
I remove the tights
and plod
through the night
to the warmth
of my

apart-

ment.

In Paradisum

. . . MICHAEL J. KEOUGH

The chapel was too well lighted to create a penitential mood. Black figures dotted the neat parallel lines of pews and other black figures formed parallel lines along the walls. One of the black figures in the pews stood from a kneeling position and assumed a place at the end of the line against the wall on the Blessed Mother side of the chapel.

The line to the confessional reminded him of the dishwashing machine: the black figures were racked neatly in the pews to examine consciences first, then put along the wall waiting to be pulled into the washing part of the machine, and when the black figures came out they were clean. It happened every week that way, though the black figures probably were not very dirty, and there were probably some very dirty people out in the world; in the seminary everyone was clean, yet they were washed in confession once a week.

It was a cool fall night and the stained glass windows were open. Earlier he had watched the sun set. It had been framed like a picture by the stained glass windows but was more beautiful than a picture because it was real and there could never be a stained glass window that beautiful. The crimson sun colored the red of the window and charged it with life and fire, and the yellow became copper-gold and the cold blue melted and died and gave birth to royal purple. Then it was purple evening and the trees were black against the purple and he could see the whole world. It was beautiful through the open stained glass windows and made him feel beautiful and, for a moment, calm.

Last week it had been hot in the confessional. There had been a fat fellow in there ahead of him and when he finally did get in, it had smelled from the heat and the sweat of that fat fellow. He had pitied the poor priest who had to sit in that hot box washing those souls clean, but he had not washed that fat fellow too well. He hoped the priest did not think it was he who smelled so badly. He looked out the window again to breathe in the fresh air and to forget the memory of the smell of that fat fellow.

The stained glass windows were black now and he stared out into the night. He saw red lights on radio towers glaring back from the distance over the hills, or blinking, winking at him. They were red lights so different from the red vigil light in front of the statue of the Sacred Heart or the Blessed Mother at the end of the long, dark, quiet corridor upstairs. The other seminarians and he were vigil lights before a stone Sacred Heart, shimmering, consuming themselves.

Out the window he saw a full autumn moon brightening the night, and clouds rolling across it and pulling at it to go along with them. The moon shone full and then was obscured, hidden by the clouds, long and thin like all the souls that had died that day, dressed in long white gowns flowing heavenward. The moon and clouds cast shadows on the ground; below the window lay the cemetery, and the naked trees pointed dead fingers to the plot where

he might lie someday. It would be good to die young, as a seminarian, now, before doubt and disillusionment took root; good to be laid out in his new cassock with no wrinkles in it or in him, any of him, now; good to hear the Requiem sung for him and Faure's "In Paradisum," after an all-night vigil by his tired and frightened confreres. And what would they think of him during that all-night vigil as he lay in his coffin with a rosary tangled in his hands, as they mumbled the rosary to keep away evil spirits and to keep them awake? It would be good to lie there in his casket in his cassock before the tabernacle and before his God for eternity, — the eternal second of almost seeing the tabernacle open and almost seeing God himself, that second of suspense and waiting and eagerness at a pitch of high passion, not really seeing, and in not seeing, not being disillusioned, that second suspended for eternity. He wished he could die right then. It would have been good, then, before doubt and disillusionment took root.

Haiku

. . . MICHAEL J. KEOUGH

The young sparrow sings
and flutters her untried wings.
The vulture watches.

