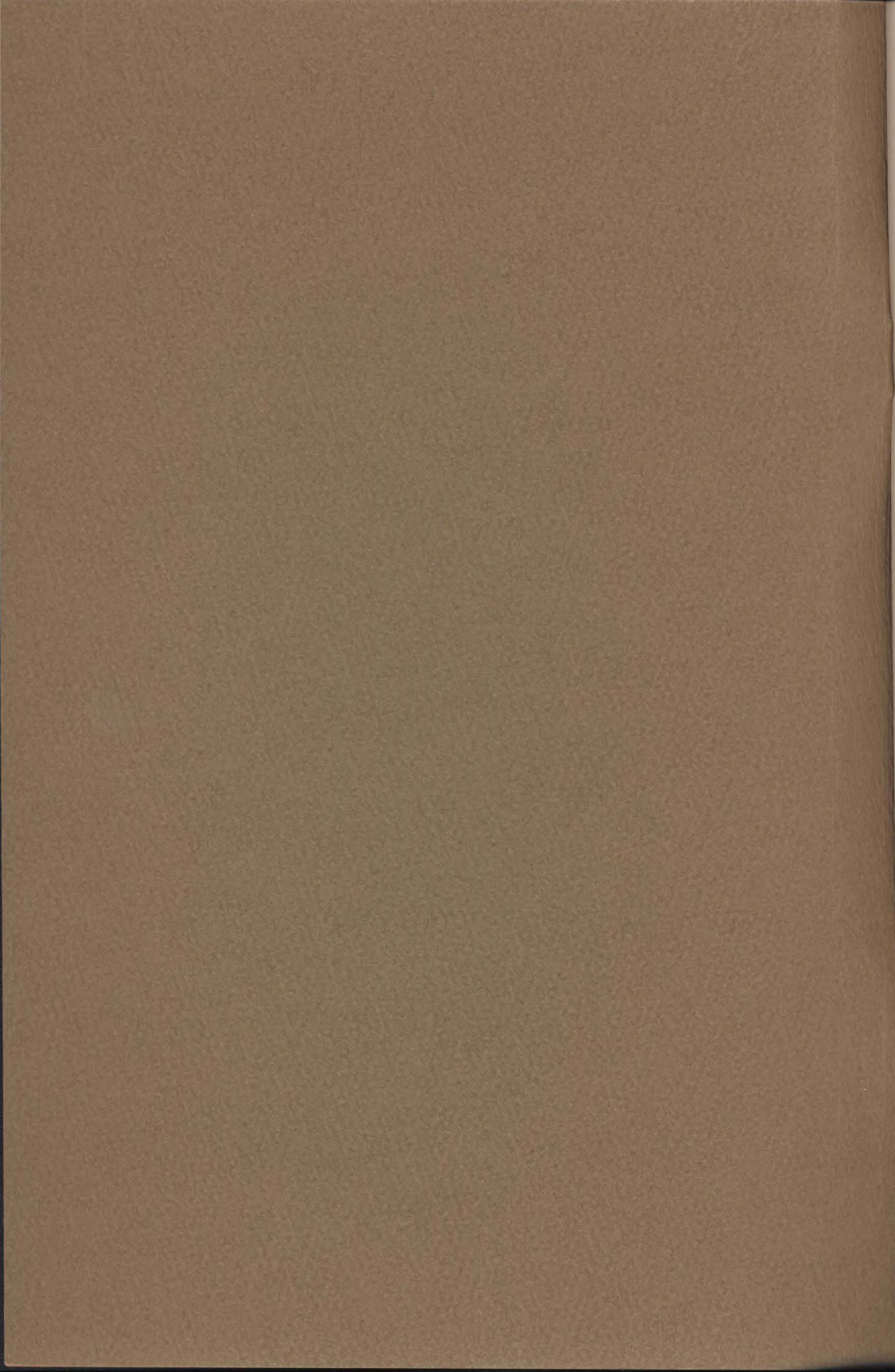


Autumn 1967



REFLECTOR



THE REFLECTOR

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FIRST PLACE AWARD

TO

THE REFLECTOR

Shippensburg State College

March 10, 1967

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"The proper stuff of fiction does not exist; everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought; every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss" . . . Virginia Woolf

*Editor's Choice: PROSE***"There Are No Gilded Christmas Trees"**

. . . LINDA HENRY

Winter wind whipped her un-hatted hair. Balancing her armload of Lord and Taylor-named packages on one arm she pushed a chestnut lock from her eyes. A crowd had formed around her as she stood on the curb, all of them waiting for the traffic signal to change. "Walk" flashed white and the crowd started to move. Her foot landed in a half water, half snow puddle; she cursed and moved on.

She reached the opposite curb and her companions in the "Crossing of the Street" melted away in all directions leaving her alone.

She turned uncertainly and sidestepped a Salvation Army volunteer. He smiled at her; she dropped her eyes; "He knows," she thought. She walked on, avoiding the eyes of the oncoming crowd. A chill went through her body. The pink neon letters spelling "Whelan's" atop a nearby drug store brought her a moment of comfort.

She walked to the booth in the very back of the room and sat down facing the back wall. A waitress approached.

"Just coffee," she said.

"Cream?"

"No."

She drew a cigarette from her hand-tooled, Italian leather case, a trinket from her parents, one of their "Twelve Days of Christmas" gifts. They were in Rome for the holidays.

The waitress brought her coffee and placed the check, face down, on the formica table top and walked away.

No one was watching; she drew a small paper package from one of the larger packages. Nervously she unfolded the brown paper and lifted the bracelet from its dull surroundings. Its hundreds of facets caught the fluorescent light and reflected it in a myriad of colors.

"Such a beautiful thing," she smiled. A small white tag hung on the bracelet. It read simply, "Tiffany's — \$4,000 plus tax."

She hadn't bought anything at Tiffany's; all of her packages were from Lord and Taylors'.

It wasn't the first time she had stolen anything, not by any means. She dropped the bracelet in her purse and lifted the steaming cup to her lips. The

boiling black liquid scalded her throat. She inhaled on her cigarette and thought about her first "Robbery."

It had been at Macy's on a busy Saturday afternoon, just a net scarf that only cost a dollar. At the time she had forty dollars in her wallet. It had been so easy. And she had kept on stealing sweaters, jewelry, anything. It had been nothing she couldn't afford; she was just doing it for kicks. She wasn't really stealing, she thought. She could have bought any of those things.

She had finally told her mother. She had never had any close friends to confide in; her mother never liked any of the girls she liked so she quit trying, eventually.

Her lips tightened as she remembered the day. Her mother had walked into her room as she was putting things away. She picked up an apricot, Swiss-knit sweater from her bed.

"Julie, this is beautiful! "Forty-seven dollars? Better hadn't let Daddy see this!"

There was a moment of silence, then:

"Julie, where did you get the money for this? We don't have a charge at The Boutique."

Julie stared straight into her mother's questioning eyes.

"I stole it."

She waited for her mother to get angry, to scold, reprimand, make her take it back. A tense thirty seconds passed. Julie waited.

At last her mother spoke, "Well, Dear, don't let Daddy find out; he'd be quite upset. And be careful you don't get caught."

The remembered numbness again went through her body as she mentally relived the day.

"Don't get caught; be careful."

It had been the same thing as the time she came home from a party so drunk that she couldn't walk upstairs. And she had been only fifteen at the time.

And then something that she hadn't let herself think about at all started to gnaw at her memory. She inhaled again.

There was that wonderful Dr. Adams, his bald head shining above clear blue eyes as he bent over her telling her not to be afraid. Then blackness. A few hours later she woke up. She stared at the ceiling and slid her hand down to her stomach. It was flat again.

Her mother was bending over her.

"Everything's okay now, honey. Dr. Adam's took care of it. Now Daddy won't have to know."

Tears stung her eyes. She had loved Jimmy. In her own young, unknowing

way she had loved him. Jimmy wanted to marry her but he wasn't good enough, her mother said.

Her cigarette had burned down to the filter. The odd odor floated up to her nose.

"Such an ugly world." She laid a dollar on the table and walked out.

It was just turning dark and it had started snowing again. She pulled her navy muffler up over her head and walked a block and reached Rockefeller Plaza. There it was in all its superficial glory — the grandest Christmas tree in the world. To the left sat a Nativity scene. She walked over and stared at the plaster of Paris Christ child. A Ferlinghetti poem ran through her mind:

Christ climbed down from
His bare Tree
This year
and ran away to where
no Bing Crosby carollers
groaned of a tight Christmas
and where no Radio City angels
iceskated wingless
thru a winter wonderland
daily at 8:30
with Midnight Mass matinees

A tug at her sleeve brought her back into the world. She looked down into the upturned blue eyes of an angelic-looking little boy.

"Hey, you look like her."

"Like who, dear?"

"Like Her," he said again his chubby arm pointing at the Virgin.

A sob tore at her throat and she ran from the scene. The dull staccato of her heels on the sidewalk seemed to tap out, "Thief, Murderess." She ran faster but could not escape the accusations which had now taken on the pitch of a scream. She ran blindly across the street.

The morning papers carried an inch-high headline about the \$4,000 robbery at Tiffany's. Right beside it was a 150-word story of the accidental death of the daughter of two of New York's most prominent citizens. The couple would return from their Roman holiday in time for the funeral.

One for the Road

. . . GARY BAILEY

It was a sticky, glaring, July day and I had been driving for almost four hours without food for my car or myself. The gauge on the instrument panel told me gasoline was necessary and my stomach growled like a lion about to be fed. I had not seen a building for some time and was beginning to hope and pray when a small restaurant and a solitary gas-pump, standing like a statue, jumped at me from around a bend in the road.

I pulled up to the pump, I would swear that old car wheezed a sigh of relief when I turned off the motor. After attending to the needs of my machine, I turned and strode to the door of the small building. I was hot and miserable as it was, so the sight of the dirty little place did nothing to cheer my spirits. Walking to the door I could smell grease, onion, and beer. The sounds of a juke-box came slamming through the battered screen-door with the bulge in the screen where hundreds of hands had pushed. I threw the door open and walked in. Well, I almost walked in. Before I could take three steps a big, peroxide-blond screamed, "Close the door, mister!" I turned to notice there was no spring to close the door and a squadron of flies in close formation had just made their entrance. The blond screamed again; "That's better, now what'cha want?"

I hated that woman. Even though I had never seen her before, I knew I hated her.

Not saying a word I crossed the small, dim room and sat near the big, noisy fan. The jukebox stopped and a young boy in jeans and T-shirt got up to revive it. The big-mouthed blond came over and wiped the table with a rag that only spread the mixture of catsup, coffee, and gravy instead of cleaning it from the surface. I ordered the special of the day from a menu that looked like it came over on the Mayflower. As she walked away I added, "Put a Bud on that too." She brought the Bud. I finished that before I got my meal and ordered another when she brought the food. The blond with the painted-on-face mumbled something as she went into a back room for my beer.

It was while she was back there that the other fellow came in. He stood by the cash register watching the door. He seemed unaware of the rest of the room. When the blond came back he grabbed her arm and said something about money. She tried to get away and I sort of enjoyed watching her struggle. He pushed her behind the counter and commanded her to give him all the money in the drawer. She refused until he pointed a gun at her. She quickly handed it to him in a bag and he left.

I sat finishing my meal and asked her where my beer was. She brought the drink, screaming obscenities that echoed around the cubicle. I sipped the coolness while she ranted about why I hadn't helped her. After finishing my beer I got up to leave. She said in a calmer voice, "That will be \$5.73 with the gas." Not even looking back I yelled, "You couldn't even give me change!"

I laughed a long, loud, sadistic laugh as I drove off leaving the blond and her mouth for someone else to tolerate.

"A Rose Is A Rose Is A Rose"

. . . FLOYD ROBINSON

"I guess my dog is a tiger. After all, he has four feet, a tail, and whiskers." The above statement, obviously spoken by a child, may seem ludicrous to many adults who read it, but is it so farfetched from the preconceived ideas which many of us possess concerning ethnic groups in our society? Unfortunately, many of us form an opinion of an ethnic group from the actions of one or a few persons of that group.

Stereotyping has commonly been treated as a broad, rigid, relatively inaccurate way of perceiving a category of persons. Some consider prejudice and stereotyping to be different, but related phenomena; others view stereotyping as an aspect of or even a "cause" of prejudice. Stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, and race hatred are problems to the point of viciousness, even murder.

The Puerto Ricans have been severely stereotyped in this country. Living in a town where many of the summer migrant workers are Puerto Ricans, I see daily how these people are treated. I have often seen people sneer at them in the supermarket, merely because they are Puerto Ricans. Many people believe Puerto Ricans are dangerous; therefore, they are less likely to befriend them. **West Side Story** expressed our image of the Puerto Rican in an extremely popular play and movie. The Puerto Ricans were seen carrying switch blades, traveling in large boisterous crowds, and standing on street corners planning a malicious "rumble." Perhaps this typifies a small group of Puerto Ricans, but is it fair to judge the entire group from the actions of a few?

Another society which is highly stereotyped is the African society. Africans are rarely pictured as human beings with a set goal in life. We normally see the Africans completely without empathy, being contained solely to the bush country, wearing little or no clothing, with bones piercing their noses, and the inevitable spear. Some students expected an exchange student from Nigeria to be a stereotyped African. Many were reluctant to speak with him because they thought he looked mysterious. Sociologists have completed studies proving that the darkness of the Negro does suggest mystery. They have also stated that this is an unfortunate stereotype. Many students were astonished to find that Bala spoke English so proficiently. I often wonder if they expected him to communicate by using his native drums. Is it not sad that the American school which he chose to attend could not find him a roommate. This member of the royal family of Nigeria has helped his family in their palace in Kaduna to entertain the King and Queen of England, heads of other countries and states, and visiting dignitaries. Is it fair, then, to stereotype the entire African society as primitive?

Although the members of the clergy are not an ethnic group in themselves, they, too, are stereotyped. Some believe that ministers should live by the Chris-

tian rules; therefore, they have to be sanctimonious. Some go even so far as to believe that ministers should not drink, smoke, attend theatres. A church congregation in my town was extremely upset when they found that their minister had chosen to spend his vacation appearing in a summer stock production of "My Fair Lady." He received many letters and calls which expressed disappointment in his use of his own vacation time. One tends to forget that ministers are not superhuman, and therefore have human tendencies. We build an image to which a member of the clergy should adhere, and if he doesn't, we are ready to criticize and condemn.

Being a Negro, I have often been the target of malicious stereotyping. When I was young, I wasn't aware of its deadly sting, but as I grow older I am made more aware of the unnecessary harm which it can cause, not only to one person, but to an entire race.

I was once involved in a civil rights debate in high school with a student who was adamantly against the Negro race. He suggested that if the United States ever expected to rid itself of the civil rights dilemma, it should first send all its Negroes back to Africa. I am usually levelheaded when it comes to discussing civil rights, but this statement caused me to feel hostile toward such an attitude. This debate continued for three days, with one hundred percent participation from our fellow classmates. On the final day he got around to answering my question as to why he felt so strongly against the Negroes. As is so typical of one who stereotypes, he based his intense hatred on one incident involving an attempted rape of my opponent's cousin by a Negro boy. The parents of the girl filed suit against the boy, and he was found guilty and imprisoned. I am not attempting to uphold this Negro, because he was certainly guilty and should have been punished, but isn't it just as great a crime to hate an entire race because of one overt incident?

The stereotyping which I have received at college has been slight, but unfortunately it is there. I once invited a student to my home for dinner and his reaction later that evening was one typical of those who stereotype. My parents enjoy entertaining my friends, yet they never attempt to impress them. This particular evening was no different. My mother was preparing dinner, while my father was attempting to make my friend feel at home by telling some of his humorous stories. The dinner was a success; in fact my friend ate two helpings of everything. We left the house shortly after dinner; we had planned to take two girls from a nearby college to the movies. His reaction came while I was driving him back. He told me that his visit to my home was the first time he had ever been in the home of a Negro family. He was surprised to see that Negroes live as well and as happily as white families. His statement may have sounded trite, but I could tell that he was very sincere. He was not the first to make this statement to me, and I am sure that he will not be the last. Perhaps more incidents of this nature are needed to break down the complete ignorance of stereotyping.

Midnight Ride

. . . CHARLES DYER

Among the false priests, swindlers and fools of Boston town could be found one unique and unusual wight named Paul Revere. Paul was an industrious fellow, living comfortably but humbly above his silversmithy. A better citizen and better friend were hard to come by. Mistress Revere was proud of her husband as were the decent citizens of the neighborhood. He provided for his family, said his prayers daily, attended church weekly, and never came home reeling from rum.

But lately Paul had grown a little adventuresome and rebellious. In the spring of '75 he had joined a group of local ruffians and misfits called the Minutemen. The purpose of the unit was not known and was the subject of much debate among non-members. Some maintained it was a glorified beer and ale club. Others argued that its leaders controlled the houses of ill repute in the colony. Poor Paul had some hard explaining for his family and friends. 'Twas not for the sport, he claimed. Being a man of strong principles Paul had risen to defend his faith. A staunch believer in his natural rights, Paul had joined Samuel Adam's group to defend his country. Patriots were few and far in Boston. Doubtless many scalawags were among the Minutemen, and the few like Revere did little to overcome local opinion of the band.

The acts of Parliament that aroused the blood of the patriots scarce need retelling here. All good Americans know of them. It is with the events of the night of April 18 that the narrative is concerned. Paul and Mistress Revere had said their prayers and settled for an early evening bedding.

It was not long after that a horseman clattered up to the gate, leapt from his mount, ran up the steps and pounded furiously upon the door.

Paul's son John was the first to the door, muttering and rubbing his eyes. "What a bloody hour to wake a man. He's been out drinking and wenching all evening and when he finds his way home at last some bastard comes and wakes him, the poor soul. The Lord hath little pity for a drunkard. Aieee! My head!"

He clasped his hands to his temples and cried to the visitor, "Keep your britches on. Have pity on the dead."

John wrenched the door open at last and eyed the intruder.

"Are you a Christian? 'Tis doubtful, my friend, for you pound like the heart of a devil. Come and find a chair. Give me a straight head and you may have my soul. Deal or not?"

"The only man I deal with is your father, John." It was the first time the stranger had spoken.

"Say false. Take me. Please good devil. Father is a frightful bore with his talk of patriotism and other piffle. He would rather fight for this scroungy little colony than swive a good woman. He cares little for death but my pounding head cries for the final justice. Oh 'tis true, 'tis true. Thou art the Angel of Death come for a poor silversmith who has to support a wife and daughter

plus an unworthy scoundrel of a son."

The visitor slipped by John as he fell to the rug on his knees, whispering, "Mercy." The rider found the master room and rapped loudly. Paul crawled from the bed, found the latch and opened the door.

"Peter Cooke! What is it you want at this accursed hour? You're not drunk, are you?"

"No, Revere, but before this night has run its course we may all be. 'Tis the redbacks. Know ye of the arms in Concord?"

"Surely. But continue."

Cooke drew a breath and went on. "Gage found out of them and is marching a troop to seize them. They are also after Sam Adams and he is to be charged with treason."

Peter was muttering again.

"How know you all this?"

"'Twas the bloody reds in me tavern. They're supposed to watch us, ye know. But as usual, the wenches had their eyes. Drunken up, the lobsters talked freely to me ladies. Told every word I told ye."

"Have you seen Samuel?"

"Damn ye, no! He left yesterday for Lexington with Hancock. He must be told."

Paul reasoned quickly and devised a strategy. He would row to his friend William Dawes' home in Charleston, secure a horse and ride overland to warn the Minutemen of the British move. Adams could be found and told.

"'Tis an outrage. The king and his blockade would burn if I was to say."

Paul got his hat and boots.

"A man must be ready to die for his country, you know."

"Damn your country. 'Tis me rum from the Indies I speak of. How does an honest man like me earn his half-crown or two?"

Paul was shaking John, who had passed out on the rug.

"By rebelling, Peter. Tell George to keep his acts and taxes."

"Rebellion?" Peter's voice was shrill. "'Tis a powerful thought. But me neck is already long and slender. I'm not a coward, mind you.

Paul had succeeded in awakening John and tried to tell him what was happening.

"Are you coming, son?"

John laughed. "For what, father?"

"For your country."

John grabbed his stomach and fell back on the rug.

"Father, 'tis not I am afraid. The bed looks too inviting to my poor body."

"Damn. To the Devil with you all!"

Paul stamped out and slammed the door. But outside he waited 'til Peter left.

"When the British march hang a lantern in North Church tower. Don't fail your country, Peter."

And Paul was gone. He rode towards the Boston wharves, past the British ships and to the home of a certain boatman. He dismounted and ran for the door. Rain was beginning to fall.

"Open, boatman. You have a passenger for your ferry."

The door swung open and a huge man with a black beard and a hairy chest stood before Paul.

"Shove the boat up your arse, damn you. What does a devil like you need with me?"

"I need you to row me to Charleston. 'Tis for your country, sir."

"You can shove your country too, for all I care. Here I am with a ready and willing wife and loaded with good ale. Then you come demanding a ride. 'Tis the first time I've had her willing in many a year."

Paul was soaked and shivering. The boatman noticed this and slyly put it to advantage.

"Come in, kind sir. I'll give you a brandy or hot rum. 'Tis a shivering wet night to be rowing to Charleston. Come and enjoy some brew."

The temptation was powerful to Paul. He craved just a nip of brandy but he knew one nip would lead to another 'til he lay in a gutter somewhere, hopelessly drunk.

"Sir, I will pay you double your fare!"

"Double! On a night such as this I should demand triple!"

"Triple it is. But hurry."

The crude fellow found his pants and coat and Paul followed him to the boat.

"I hope Peter keeps up his half of the performance," he thought.

But right then Peter was performing with a well-loved woman. After leaving Paul he had returned to his tavern and put on a good load of brew. His stomach bulged like a keg and he was fast dropping to sleep. Only a whore like Roxanne could keep a man awake under these circumstances.

" 'Tis quite a night for bed frolics, eh Peter."

"Aye, my sweet. I have nothing to do for my remaining life but drinking and swiving.

She laughed and slapped his back. "Peter, ye certainly light up my eyes with your antics!"

"Lights? Ah, Christ, 'tis not tonight. I have slept a week. Tell me 'tis not tonight, Roxie."

She looked at him queerly. "Yes, 'tis tonight and only tonight. 'Tis all ye paid for."

Peter stumbled from the bed and found his clothes.

"Amuse yourself, me love. I shall be back soon unless I hang."

"Hang? what the devil for? You can't leave me like this, Peter Cooke. I lose respect when men flee my favors. 'Tis not your missus, is it?"

"No. 'Tis Paul Revere and Massachusetts that calls me. I would love to play the night away with ye but I am promised to another. I will singly save the colony. 'Tis a small thing I do."

Roxanne snorted and said, "And where did Peter find the courage to save his nation?"

He patted his stomach and burped.

"The beer I downed, me sweet. 'Tis courage in a keg. Now I must be gone."

He stepped shakily to the door and turned. Roxie lay in bed unclothed, twisting her hair around her finger and smiling sweetly.

"Courage, Peter," he muttered. He grabbed a bottle and downed the contents in an instant. He reeled out the door and tumbled down the stairs. He picked himself up and walked out to the street.

"Oh, where is North Church. For lack of a clear head I lose a colony. 'Tis not I to play patriot. I am a sunshine soldier to the hilt. Leave the odd folks like Revere save a nation."

He saw a steeple and decided it was the church. He tumbled against the door with such a crash that a sober man would have had his skull split. But stout Peter survived and found the lock.

"Even burglary and entry are necessary for one's nation. Here I break into God's house and will likely be damned to purgatory for it. But patriots like I care little. We find joy in martyrdom."

He smashed the door open and found the steeple steps. After much slipping and falling he made the steeple but discovered he had no lights.

"A torch for a chorch," he sang. "Such a poet. Where the hell are the torches?"

He stumbled about until he collapsed to the floor. He attempted to stand but failed. He finally pulled himself up by the bell rope which set the thing ringing loud enough to assemble the largest congregation ever.

"Who's in there?" he cried. He held a lantern above his head to search the pews. Peter was seized with an idea. He sprang at the old man, wrenching the lantern from his grasp.

"I have it! To the tower! It was like a fantastic war game now. The church was a castle that Peter must storm. The victory signal would be the lantern in the steeple. He ran up the stairs and waved the lantern high.

" 'Tis ours! 'Tis ours!"

But all the liquor plus the wrestling was too much for Peter's innards. He swung the lantern one more time and then proceeded to empty his stomach onto the roof of North Church.

Paul saw the signal and ran to the houses, down a side-street to the outskirts of the village. At a sturdy stone house he stopped and knocked.

William Dawes opened the door. "Paul Revere! What brings a Christian citizen like you out on a night like this? You are soaked. Come in and dry off. 'Tis an ungodly hour but I shall overlook your foolishness."

"William, there is no time for idling. The British march tonight."

"Easy, Paul. You speak wildly. Can you be serious?"

"Never more serious. Will you ride with me? For Massachusetts?"

Dawes laughed. "'Tis a night for devils. You cannot think of patriotism on a night like this. There is good women, good wine and good sleep to be had. And doubtless thou are tired."

Though Paul was nearly dead on his feet he shook his head.

"Your offer sounds good, but my nation needs me. My heart cries for your pleasures but my head says to do my duty. 'Tis duty wins the tug this time."

"Well, you are a better man than me, Paul Revere. Good luck and good night!" He started to close the door but Paul blocked it.

"Wait, William. Let us compromise. You ride with me to Concord. In that town I know a fine tavern, The Bullhead, and a finer woman. You can savor the pleasures at the end."

The door reopened. "You lure me, Paul. Your tavern and your woman draw me with you. To the stables!"

Dawes grabbed a coat and the two ran for the barn.

The road was now a swirling sea of mud. The rain had slackened but Dawes was soon as wet as Paul anyway.

"Damn you, Revere. A night like this was not made for man. But a cursed patriot is an odd fellow who belongs with swindlers and cowards."

Paul said nothing. Lexington was upon them. Paul told Dawes his plan.

"Ride up the street yelling of the British movement. Yell loudly, William."

"Yell your arse. I am not a fool. 'Tis the tavern I head for."

"Then go to your brew, damn you. I shall do it."

Paul whipped his horse up the street at full gallop. Dawes proceeded into the ale house and drew a mug.

Paul walked noisily into the tavern. He was dripping water and his head was cut. His hat was gone.

"Are you hurt, Paul?"

"Your damn horse threw me on the common. Even the dumb beasts are against me."

"Down some rum, Paul, and we will head back to Charleston."

"Nay. 'Tis Sam Adams I now seek. Does anyone here know of his whereabouts?"

He put the question to the slovenly lot of the tavern. They were a bunch of cut-throats for certain, with bristly beards, disarrayed hair and stained clothing. One with a patch over his eye smiled to his comrades and winked slyly.

"Now I may have and I may not have. Describe your friend, good sir."

Paul proceeded to describe Samuel Adams down to the mole below his left eye.

The patch eye nodded his head.

"'Tis like the man me heard say was goin' to meet a certain someone. 'Twas a stranger in town. Looked mighty important."

Paul was excited. "Where was he bound?"

"To the house at the end of King's Row. What for I know not."

"Great thanks to you, sir. A Christian you are."

Paul was gone in a jump. Dawes noticed the men were roaring in merriment.

"What is the joke, my friend? I heard naught."

"'Tis that man you knew."

"What of him?"

"I never heard of Adams. The place I sent him was Mary Malcolm's Inn. 'Tis the place of whores and pimps!"

Paul made his way down King's row till he reached the last house. The lights were on and much noise came from inside. Paul rapped anxiously until the door opened.

"There is no need to knock, kind gentleman." It was a woman of enormous features. She was old and wrinkled, dressed in a gown that revealed her withered neck and upper chest.

"Madame, I . . ." Paul began.

"Hold the Madame, me sir. 'Tis Mary Malcolm you speak to. Call me Mary."

Paul looked about the place. Men and women were drinking and laughing. Women would shriek occasionally and one man lay on the floor, dead drunk. Pandemonium ruled.

"Perhaps you can help me," Paul started.

"Me? Sir, Ye surely don't think an old wench like me is the best in the place. 'Tis a fine, well-formed one I have for you."

Paul's strange fears had been realized. Sam Adams in a common house? Was it possible?

"'Tis possible," he whispered.

"Eh, sir?"

"Nothing. Have you a Mr. Adams here?"

She looked at him suspiciously. "Maybe I do, maybe I don't."

"Please, Madame. It is a necessity. For the colony."

"For a price I may tell."

Paul sighed and gave her two crown and she slipped them down the front of her dress.

"'Tis a Mr. Adams in the room at the stair top. But you can't go up there now."

But Paul was gone. He ran up the stairs and knocked heavily on the door.

"Adams, 'tis Revere."

No reply was heard save a scuffling. Paul rapped harder with the same result. He turned the handle and rammed the door. "For Massachusetts," he muttered.

He flew headfirst into the room and landed on a bed. He sat up quickly and saw a man hurriedly pulling on a pair of britches.

"No, sir, no. Thou art a Christian gentleman. A perfect gem of a man. I knew not she was your wife!"

Paul looked at the woman lying next to him.

"My wife?"

"She never told me. I swear if I had known I would not have touched

her." He was pulling his shoes on and placing his wig.

Paul looked the fellow over. "You are not Samuel Adams."

"Heavens, no. 'Tis Henry my name, sir. I knew her not. Spare the sword on an unknowing soul such as me."

But he leapt out the window before Paul could reply. Paul turned to the lady at his side.

"Ah, Mr. Revere is it. Such a brave man. Just finds me room and chases the other man out. 'Tis a mark of courage for sure."

"You misunderstand my intentions, Miss. I came for a certain gentleman who was supposed to be here."

"But I certainly can offer more than a friend, can't I?" She put her hand on Paul's shoulder and blew into his ear. Paul was sweating like a flood. He rubbed his hands on his trousers and took off his coat.

"That's the way, dearie. Now off with the rest." She slipped under the sheet and winked at Paul. He put his coat back on. Trembling had seized his body.

"Miss, I find you a powerful enchantress but I fear I am an unusual man more tonight. I lust for liberty, not for ladies."

She sprang from the bed.

"Thou art a swine and a toad! You come in here like a true fighter and leave whimpering. Courage in your arse, maybe, but that's all. A poor girl like me in need of a full stomach is rejected by a sniveling idiot like you. With what shall I eat?"

Paul wavered. "'Tis a cruel world, Miss, full of unhappiness. Help you need but so does Massachusetts."

She began to rub his chest now and to kiss his cheeks.

"Come on, sir. 'Tis only a crown."

"Aieee!" Paul ran through the door, down the stairs, through the tavern, and outside in an instant. He ran up the King's Row 'til Dawes stopped his flight.

"Revere, what ails you? You sweat like a smithy and pant like a man full of lust."

"'Tis a cruel night for me, William. You have little known what I have gone through. A colony needs help but only a few are willing. My own son finds a bed more inviting than Massachusetts. Money bought a boatman, not want of freedom. Temptation has been placed thrice in my path but I have fought it off. 'Tis an unusual man who can forget earthly pleasures to aid his country. Most unique and unusual."

Dawes roared. "But where go you now?"

"To Concord. To find Adams and escape temptation."

"Good luck. You will certainly need it."

"Will you help me?"

Dawes looked down. "I will catch you later. Now I head for the last house on this lane."

"In Concord, perhaps?"

"Perhaps."

Paul turned and ran up the street crying to the houses, "The British. 'Tis the British. Help defend your nation!"

The Gunner

. . . DAVID THOMPSON

His hands tightened on the twin grips. The enemy fighter veered away in a steep bank. Beads of sweat dotted his lips as he swung the guns toward the plane. "Give it enough lead," he muttered, "Give it enough lead."

This had been one of the toughest missions he could ever remember. He had already downed four of the enemy's brightly colored fighters, but they were still coming on from all sides. If he let just one fighter get through his fire screen, it might mean the end for the crew of his bomber.

He opened fire just as the single-engined plane came into range. He nodded with grim satisfaction as he saw his bullets scoring heavily. The fighter lit up in a bright flash as a bullet found its gas tank.

His fifth kill of the day made him feel good. His shooting today would certainly do no harm to his reputation as the best gunner in the entire squadron. He could even now visualize the looks of envy on the green kids' faces when he told them of today's exploits.

There were not so many fighters coming now. Perhaps his terrific fire screen had driven the enemy off. After all, he thought smugly, they had probably seen their buddies go down under his guns.

Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, he became aware of a slight movement. An enemy fighter he hadn't seen was sneaking in close as six o'clock low. In desperation, he swung the guns around and opened up with a wildly erratic burst. It was too late. The gunners' wild line of tracers arched over the fighter, doing it no damage. The gunner had failed; his crew was lost.

The brightly colored sign lit up; "game over." The boy turned dejectedly around to face the big man standing in back of him. "Let's go, Billy," his father said, "Why you have to waste your allowance money on these damn fool penny arcade machines every week is beyond me."

Friday Night

. . . CAROL BAIRD

It was Friday night and Kathy sat alone in her room. All her friends were out for the evening, and Kathy was left alone to entertain herself. It was not that she expected them to stay with her because she did not. She reached for a cigarette and lit it. She sat down on her bed and tried to decide what to do for the rest of the night until one o'clock. She knew that at one o'clock they would be back and they always came over to see her.

She sat there smoking her cigarette, thinking how quiet it was in the dorm. It would be a good time to study except it was Friday night and nobody studied on Friday night. She decided to listen to records. It is strange the different affects that records can have on a person. Depending on her mood, a record could put Kathy in a good mood or depress her. She decided that she had better not listen to anything that was slow and moody. She put on one of her fast albums and leaned back against the wall. Her cigarette had burned out in the ash tray and she reached for another one. She always seemed to smoke more on Friday night.

The music that she had thought would be good therapy was having an adverse effect on her. It was bringing back too many memories. She thought about how ironic it was. Everyone had always told her that at college she would have a great time. She would not have to worry about her parents or their restrictions. She would be on her own and could do whatever she wanted to do. It was true that she had more freedom but she had lost the desire to do anything. She thought that maybe that had been half the fun, trying to put things over on her parents. She never thought that she would miss them but she did. She missed her Mother's questions and her Father's good-natured kidding. She reached for her pocketbook.

Kathy walked out into the hall and down to the telephone booth. The hall was empty and the silence was a little unnerving. She dropped the dime into the telephone and placed the call. After a few minutes she heard her Mother's anxious hello. Kathy quickly explained that there was nothing wrong, she had just felt like calling. It was good to hear a friendly voice. She answered all of her Mother's questions about school. She could not help thinking that now her Mother's questions did not bother her. It was good to know that there was someone who cared about her. She asked to talk to her Father. He got on and teased her about calling on a Friday night. She laughed. It felt good to laugh again with someone. She talked to her Mother again and promised that she would come home one of these weekends soon. As Kathy put the phone back on the receiver, she felt a wave of homesickness sweep over her. She could picture them sitting in the kitchen drinking coffee. She wished that

she were there too. Then she thought that even if she were at home she would be out; it was Friday night. She walked back to her room.

It was ten-thirty. She had only had two and a half hours to go. The record she had put on kept playing over and over again . . . "You've gotta go where you wantta go, do what you wantta do . . ." She could not help wondering if it was worth it all. It was not the staying in that bothered her. She had no desire to date. She and David had both agreed to date other people, but she just did not feel like it. She started to think about David. She wondered what he was doing tonight. She thought with a chuckle that maybe she was glad she did not know.

It was not the social life or the lack of it that made her wonder about school. Everyone placed so much importance on getting a college diploma. She thought about her friends who had never gone to college or who had quit. They seemed happy. They were making money and could buy all the things they wanted. They were having a good time, too. At home there was always something to do. It was a hard decision. Kathy knew that she could quit if she wanted to. Her parents would understand; she knew they would. There was something stopping her from packing up and going home. She had tried and tried to decide what she wanted to do with her life. She had thought it all out and got nowhere. This was one decision that she had to make for herself. The trouble was that Kathy could not make decisions. Tonight it did not seem like such a hard choice. She reached for a cigarette.

There was a knock at the door. Kathy looked at the clock; it was five of one. She called, "Come on in." It was one o'clock and everyone was back. Friday night was over. Of course, there would be many more Friday nights and Kathy could decide then. She sat down and listened to everyone talk about her evening. She crushed out her cigarette.

Saturday

. . . J. MARSHALL BACHMAN

It was Saturday again, and Herb Arthur resumed his once-a-week role of guitar teacher. He'd had almost a full week of students all summer—except they were always out for some reason or other—and he'd gotten used to being in the thick of things at the store. Now, with his wife working full time and classes started again, he was cut to one day a week, the only day in which nothing ever happened. It looked like a nice day, and as he walked from the parked car to the store, he remarked to himself that it seemed a shame to have to stay inside.

As he entered the store, guitar case in hand just like an executive with an overgrown briefcase, he thought, Herb Arthur was immediately aware that chaos, as usual, reigned supreme. Even at eight fifty-eight a.m., there were three students paying for lessons, two parents sitting on whatever seats were available, browsers at the sheet music, and in back, Danny Byrd was sawing away at a piece of wallboard. As soon as Herb got to his studio, Danny approached and said, "How about using one of the other studios for a couple hours? I'm gonna be covering this wall and hammering around and it's gonna be noisy as hell in there."

There wasn't any alternative, so Herb started collecting his paraphernalia from his studio, moving it to a larger, but ill-arranged studio. His first student arrived — one of his favorites, a dependable, hard-working boy who had just gotten a new guitar, and could finally play all the high parts that he'd been trying since he'd gotten into the third Mel Bay book.

At nine thirty, Danny knocked on the door, opened it, and said, "Your next student is out. Just thought I'd tell you." Herb made a sour face. "Great. Wonderful. Glad to hear it."

Herb turned to his student, and asked if he was in a hurry to leave, and, since the boy said he wasn't, continued the lesson overtime.

Twenty minutes later, at a logical stopping place, the boy departed, and Herb looked at his schedule for the first time. Ten o'clock — nothing. Ten-thirty — nothing. Another productive morning, he thought. The afternoon looked more promising to him, however, with only one hole.

He had time on his hands now, so he wandered out into the store to talk with Jud, the old man who worked behind the counter. They talked about Jud's idea for a lighted guitar, a psychedelic contraption that was to flash a variety of lights according to what was played on the neck. When Herb said he still didn't know how to keep it from interfering with the electronics, the discussion stopped, and Herb started polishing guitar necks. After a few minutes that palled, so he returned to his studio and began to practice some songs in chording melody. He was in the habit of keeping it simple so he could write it out for some of his students.

At eleven o'clock, his second student arrived. Herb Arthur would have called her average. The girl was a little better than that, but Herb was perhaps too demanding. Some of his new students had been darted off in two or three lessons, but those who stuck to it learned their material well.

In the meantime, Herb's chair was getting awfully hard, so he thought. He also thought it was stupid to be so tired in the fanny after only two students. He poked his head out the studio door to look at the clock, saw with relief that it was eleven-thirty, then saw his next student due and waiting.

Herb dismissed the eleven o'clock girl, and admitted the waiting student, a twelve-year-old drummer named Douglas, who always tried Herb's patience to the limit. Herb thought, maybe today he won't be such a brat; on the other hand, he thought, this might be the day to strangle the little S. O. B.

Herb still remembered the day he asked the boy's father to leave the studio. The man had planned on staying for the lesson, and observing his boy. That idea hadn't lasted long.

As the boy entered the studio and bounced down on the edge of his chair — it was on Herb's left — he started talking immediately, ignored Herb's "good morning," and rattled off something about not understanding the lesson he'd been assigned to do. As usual, Herb was annoyed. The little stinker understood it when I assigned it, he thought; now he storms in and tells me he doesn't get it. I wonder if he didn't practice all week and this is his reaction to seeing the material again practically for the first time, or is he trying to soften me for a poor performance so I'll be easier on him for not doing better.

All these thoughts went through Herb's mind as he somewhat heatedly explained paradiddles to the boy all over again. Douglas sat on the edge of the chair, rocking back and forth, and sticking in a word or two which Herb cut short. All the while Douglas rocked. It was getting on Herb's nerves. Herb forcefully requested that the boy stop rocking and listen with every pore of his body, so he would understand the lessons better in the future. The boy looked at Herb, stopped rocking, and wagged his head, in dismay.

Explaining an important point, Herb became aware of the boy's unabashed stare, and, angry at his own self-consciousness of a small boy's actions, ordered Douglas to pay attention to the lesson page, since that was where the important issue was. The boy looked toward the stand which held the music with great apparent interest, and resumed rocking. He muttered under Herb's explanation and demonstration of a skill drill; Herb asked what he'd said. The boy said something very quietly, which was a change worth noting, to the effect that he felt Herb expected a student "to do somethin' they never show a guy."

Herb's eyes widened and his hands shook slightly from the tension in his shoulders. "What did you say?" he asked slowly, quietly.

Unaware of the anger he had already aroused, the boy answered, "Well they sure don't teach you very good." The boy sat silent then, looking at

the music on the stand. Herb sat silent too, staring at the boy until his eyes hurt from the thoughtless, blank fury that pushed at his temples. Finally, a sentence started to form in his mind, but he continued staring. As the silence grew painful to the boy, he looked at Herb, and saw something there he had never seen before, and it surprised him. About the time he started to say, "What's wrong with you?" Herb had finally regained speech, and said, "Kid, before you criticize the teaching around here, you better look **long** and **hard** at **yourself**, and the quality of the effort **you're** producing."

Douglas tried to say something conciliatory, but Herb was still furious, his voice unreal. "There's nothing that galls me more than a kid having the audacity to accuse me of his own inadequacy. If you think you can learn to play in the half hour you spend in here each week, you're sadly mistaken, and you can consider yourself corrected on that point. Now if you've got the guts to try to learn something, have a look at the music, boy, and don't interrupt me!"

The remaining ten minutes of the lesson went slowly and uncomfortably, but they went smoothly. When Herb opened the door to dismiss Douglas, the boy's mother was standing there, obviously wanting some glowing praise of her wonderful child. Herb Arthur ignored her, calling out, "Next patient!" with forced cheerfulness. With the next student seated, and the door safely closed, Herb thought, "Man, I definitely will buy a quart of beer tonight," and settled down to deal with barred chords and cheap guitars once again.

Fire

. . . MARJORIE RUHL

The fire siren cut through the raw December night like a death scream. One-seven-three—that was the signal for the center of town. The engines raced to the scene of the fire which was quickly spreading out of control. The one department store in the small town had become a victim of one of those freak accidents so common to ordinary life. What had begun as a tiny spark from a frayed wire was rapidly spreading into a holocaust which was engulfing the entire structure.

The firemen responded immediately, acting almost instinctively. Hoses appeared magically and writhed in the slushy streets like serpents. Ladders scaled the walls of adjoining buildings. The intense cold soon changed the scene into a grotesque fairyland as the water transformed the adjoining buildings into huge ice palaces with columns of icicles. The street resembled an ice-covered lake with the street lights and spot lights reflecting off its surface like diamonds. The building had become a huge bonfire where giant ice skaters could warm their hands. The full moon cast an eerie glow over the scene. The firemen had become snowmen with helmets and axes instead of stove pipe hats and brooms.

News of the fire spread as quickly as the fire itself, and within a short time hundreds of townspeople appeared to witness the death agonies of the building. Most had been part of the huge throng of Christmas shoppers making last-minute purchases that afternoon as they listened to piped-in Christmas carols and hurried past the line of excited children waiting to whisper their secret wishes to Santa Claus. As the long hours passed, the building groaned and writhed in torment. Then with one final gasp it collapsed completely. Toward dawn the firemen abandoned it.

Several hours later I stood staring at the open grave of the building. The top floor of the store lay in complete shambles in the basement. The pungent odor of the smoke hung like a heavy fog over the entire area, adding to the grimness of the black ruin. Destruction had been complete. As I turned to leave, I noticed a bit of white out of the corner of my eye. I walked closer, and as I gazed into the gaping hole which had once been a display window, I saw the one object which the fire had not destroyed, a simple Christmas card.

Hunger

. . . BARBARA EVANS

The dormitory loudspeaker crackled twice, grew silent, crackled again and a faintly audible female voice began speaking slowly and distinctly. Betsy Brindelans chewed the tip of her already gnawed pen and strained to hear the house-mother's calm unhurried words. "Girls, as you have all probably heard by now, there have been rumors circulating to the effect that one of the girls was attacked here in the dormitory . . ."

Betsy knew only too well about those "circulating rumors" because she had been the intended victim. With an involuntary shudder at the recurring thought, she tried to concentrate on the rest of the housemother's impersonal speech.

"We have searched the story thoroughly and have come up with no substantial foundation upon which such wild claims can be reasonably based . . . please do not be alarmed . . ."

"Oh fine," thought Betsy hopelessly, "It was bad enough that the house-mother and campus police were skeptical of her experience, but now Donna, her roommate and closest confidante was beginning to have doubts also. "That housemother, that Old Bat, she thinks I made up that whole story!" muttered Betsy furiously.

"Stories?" "Bets, you're not writing one of those ridiculous horror stories again?" Donna entered in her usual dormitory dress of jeans and a sweatshirt just in time to hear Betsy's last few angry words. "Honestly, people are beginning to think that you're starting to actually believe in those silly things. I mean it's just not normal to say the least. Take last night for example."

"But there was a man in this room last night, Donna, and he started toward my bed, and he limped, and I was petrified, and . . ."

"Betsy you know very well that I was only out of this room for at the most fifteen minutes. I came running the minute you screamed that unearthly scream of yours, and I saw absolutely nothing. Besides that, the doors and windows were all checked and nothing has been tampered with. How could he get in and out so fast without anyone seeing him? The maids and janitor were all questioned also and they saw nothing."

"Well, maybe it was an inside job," said Betsy listlessly.

"In a girl's dorm? Don't be silly."

Betsy sighed, nodded and decided that Donna was right. Of course, she had a realistic nightmare brought on by the combination of the new murder misery she was concocting and the double pizza-burger she gobbled

down before retiring. With these semi-convincing and not entirely comforting thoughts, she began once again to work away at her oversized Geography assignment, while Donna practiced her latest speech.

Gradually, partly due to the dullness of her assignment and partly due to the unresolved state of events, Betsy's mind slipped back to those vivid details of the previous terror-filled night: After taking a long delicious shower and attending to various other sundry bedtime tasks, she had gone to bed. Donna was up later than usual and decided to return a borrowed book to a friend who lived downstairs. She left the room, turned off the light, and went happily on her way. Betsy guessed that all this would have taken place around one o'clock in the morning. She lay there in the darkness thinking about the various events of the day, her mystery story, and the perfectly rotten dinner she had eaten, when slowly, almost imperceptibly the door knob moved. It moved until the door opened cautiously and silently. Very very stealthily, a shadowy dark figure eased itself into the room. Mechanically and painfully the hulking object stole toward her, lurching with every step like a broken toy. Betsy, having been exposed to the darkness the longer of the two, could distinguish his form quicker than he could discern hers, and in the split second of his adjustment and hesitation Betsy screamed. She closed her eyes tightly and screamed for what seemed to be hours. She was still screaming and sobbing hysterically when Donna rushed in.

The figure had disappeared and no one had seen it except Betsy. All through the hectic hours which followed, through the endless questioning of the police, the housemother and the other girls in the corridor, she saw their disbelief shaping. Now everything was peaceful again. In the misguided illusion of safety created by daylight the incident was regarded as the trivial product of an over-active imagination.

The day and evening gave way to night and, Betsy's self imposed reverie was broken by gnawing hunger pains. With a jolt she realized that she had not eaten anything since that last horrible dining hall meal, and so she headed for the vending machines in the basement. She descended the six flights of stairs and walked through the silence of the deserted maintenance corridor. Her footsteps echoed loudly and the yellow walls glowed in the eerie light. Betsy shuffled over to the softdrink machine, pressed the right button and waited. Suddenly for no explainable reason she jumped and stiffened with fear. Someone was watching her so intently that she could feel the stare searing into her back. Slowly, scarcely breathing she turned and nearly fainted from relief — the janitor! It was only the janitor.

"Oh! You scared me for a moment!" Betsy breathed.

"Did I?" he countered, looking at her strangely. He forced a weak smile to his sardonic lips and asked, "What can I do for you?"

Betsy smiled back and replied, "Oh nothing, I can manage fine alone."

"Oh no," he murmured, limping toward her, "I insist."

Temptation

. . . DEBORAH PALMER

"Now the woman saw that the tree was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for the knowledge it would give. She took of its fruit and ate it, and also gave some to her husband and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened and they realized that they were naked so they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings."

Temptation is a familiar experience to everybody. The serpent evilly lured Eve into partaking of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Theoretically, she was the first person to endure the inward tension and struggle in which she knew one way of acting was the right way but yet was powerfully drawn towards the enticing although more limited alternative. When Eve succumbed to the serpent's allurements, the whole world for the remainder of time was to know the suffering of choosing the right from the wrong.

The similarity of the Greek myth of Pandora to the story of Eve's temptation and fall is noteworthy. Pandora, as the first woman, yielded to temptation in the form of curiosity. Upon opening the lustrous amber casket given her by Zeus, all the woes and cares and diseases which affect mankind were set loose to pursue mortal men.

Temptation is but a matter of choice between the good and the more limited good (not necessarily the bad). Webster's definition states that to tempt is to entice to do wrong by promise of pleasure or gain; to make trial of; or to lure. In Genesis, chapter 3, the serpent lures Eve by promising her the knowledge between good and evil. Eve's situation was definitely a moral one. She was torn between the choice of obeying God's order or satisfying her own desires. Had she been able to rationalize and thus acquire insight into the deeper virtues involved, she would not have fallen and caused punishment to be inflicted on all men.

Every temptation is, of course, not a moral question. It is a matter of who is affected how. Thus, it can be assumed there are varying levels. In Macbeth, for instance, the temptation presents itself in the form of Lady Macbeth's and Macbeth's lust for sovereign power. Left to himself, Macbeth would not have fallen to crime. Here again, the story of the original sin could be brought in—the lady tempts the man. However, a unique combination of temptation and circumstance compel his will. Macbeth had no justification for killing Duncan, as he realized when he said, "I have no spear to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting ambition which o'er leaps itself and falls on the other—" He is only being honest with himself when he says he has no incitement but ambition. His original ambitions become distorted and after listening to his wife's irresistible plea, he decides to carry out her evil plan.

The example of Macbeth's tragic temptation can certainly be classified as one of the more moral temptations. Had he not murdered Duncan, he would

have remained Thane of Cawdor. A choice was necessary and Macbeth yielded to temptation. The evil deed was nothing but a good, represented by ambition, tortured by his own hunger and thirst.

Proverbs 14:12 says "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." With respect to temptation, all mankind is alike. Hardly a day passes by when the mind is not confronted with a choice between the good and the bad. I have said that there are different levels of temptations, and that all temptation is not moral. Take, for example, the woman who must lose twenty-five pounds under a doctor's watchful eye. If she is faced with a rich dessert at her weekly bridge luncheon, she may take it thinking that one small piece won't matter at all. Or, she may refuse it knowing that she has done exactly what the doctor ordered. Suppose she accepted the dessert. Thinking that "just this once" will do her no harm, she is rationalizing to make the "bad" look "good." No one is affected but the woman herself. This brings to a point the major difference between the levels of temptation—affect.

Laura and Fred were married for ten years. They lived in a nice home and had two lovely children. However, Laura was an unhappy woman. Her husband, although affectionate, was a dull person. Laura did her shopping in the same supermarket as Alec, a good-looking and prominent doctor. They fell in love almost at once and began meeting clandestinely. After narrowly avoiding adultery and contemplating going away together, they decided to part. Laura came close to suicide, but eventually returned to her unsuspecting husband. This is an example of a person exposed to the temptations of the flesh, but who overcame them in the course of time. If Laura and Alec had gone away together or if Laura had committed suicide, the affects might have been disastrous to several people. An unhappy divorce suit, hurt children, and extreme bitterness would affect those involved.

The woman who eats a piece of pie, or smokes a cigarette while trying to quit smoking, or takes LSD is hurting no one but herself. Temptation and self-control are opposing forces which push and pull at a person's conscience. One who acts against a better judgment lacks such self-control. Judgment, reason and intellect are what control or fail to control such passions as lust or going against previously staunch beliefs. This is a relevant point when discussing what a moral situation is. A person may contemplate picking a pretty flower from a neighbor's yard. Technically, if he does so, he has trespassed and broken a law; hence, a lower level of moral temptation. However, if that same person were to think about assaulting his neighbor's wife, the temptation to commit adultery becomes a far greater moral situation. The conscience must weigh heavily the alternatives. Temptation may become honorable by the sheer fact of being enticing.

Kahlil Gibran in *The Prophet* expresses what I have been trying to point out. "Your soul is oftentimes a battlefield upon which your reason and your judgment wage war against your passion and your appetite." The choice is never an easy one to make, but if the alternatives are evaluated and criticized with intellect, the necessary conclusion may be reached profitably and the temptation defeated.

Father Hugh

. . . LARRY STANEVICH

I was a young man when Father Hugh Avery, then also tender in years, was assigned his first parish in my home town, and we fast became friends. Mutual interests and his engaging, warm wit at first attracted me, but I came to respect and admire him for other reasons. There was, and still is, an inward beauty and sensitivity about that man that never ceases to inspire me. As time passed and the increasing commitments of the business of life encroached upon our leisure, we met less and less frequently. A few years ago we arrived at a sad point in the world's curious order of things. We met only upon request, and more often than not an occasion requiring such a request was one of some urgency, respecting as we did the value of each other's time. A peculiar turn of events — that as our friendship and worldly responsibilities deepened, the causes of our meetings should become such grave ones.

At any rate, in the dead of winter last year I received a letter from my old friend Father Hugh, inviting me to his parsonage. Though now quite old, he still maintains a supervisory hand in the activities of his parish and his small day nursery for underprivileged children. I replied, saying that of course I would come as soon as I could get away for a bit, probably the following Sunday.

The evening I arrived at the parish, a shroud of clouds covered the moon. Father Hugh welcomed me as heartily as ever, possibly more so because of the long interval since my last visit. But his countenance bore to some sense deep in me the feeling that he was perplexed, aggrieved. I didn't probe, knowing full well that I would find out what lay behind this particular meeting in due time. And in due time I found out.

"About a year ago," Father began, "an unusual situation was brought to my attention by a county social worker. It seems that this social worker had, for some time, been involved in arranging aid for a woman and child who lived a few miles from here. I had heard of the woman before. Apparently she had made her living in the past by selling the pleasures of her body, and had become pregnant. She had her child, a boy, born with a veil over his head. For one reason or another, she never married the father of her child. The social worker told me that for a while the woman had had difficulty getting a job because of her reputation, but had finally found work as a part-time maid. She also took in some laundry and, along with the financial aid from the county, she was able to support herself and her son Jesse. The social worker and I arranged to have Jesse taken into our nursery here while the mother was working away from home.

"Well, in short time it was discovered that this boy was extraordinarily brilliant. He took to reading and writing with ease and quickly exhausted the educational facilities at hand, as our meager operation is geared for normal children of pre-school age. I had a district school official administer some tests to him,

and the results were astounding. I was told that the results of standard tests lost meaning with Jesse because his mind went far beyond them. Although at the moment accuracy was not attainable, it was clear Jesse's I.Q. was high in the genius range. We hired tutors for Jesse and his progress during the past year was something to witness. He absorbed anything and everything—mathematics, Latin, Greek, philosophies, you name it. His propensity for assimilating knowledge was like nothing I have seen before.

"The boy got along well here with his tutors and the nurses and the women who help run the nursery. He got along especially well with our handyman, a young Negro lad named Caleb, who drove Jesse to and from the nursery. But Jesse's relationship with the other young children here was a different story. They had nothing in common with Jesse, and the children resented his special treatment. The older ones called him the prophet and teased him whenever they got a chance. The forms of their abuse became more cruel as the months passed, and when I heard of a certain serious incident involving Jesse and some of these older boys I called Jesse into my office to speak to him about it.

"He told me that the usual group of boys had been taunting him as he and Caleb walked toward the car to drive home. Their comments had become extremely vicious. They called him a bastard, and his mother a whore. They began to chant and run around Jesse and Caleb. As they circled the two boys, chanting 'crucify the prophet,' some of them started throwing stones. When one of the stones hit Jesse on the forehead, the boys cheered and continued their chanting. Only when Caleb, who suffered a few bruises of his own from the stones, caught one of the boys in the group did they give up their sport.

"I remember Jesse telling me then that he wished he hadn't been born the way he was. I told him he was fortunate to have the potential perhaps to offer the world something of value someday.

"Then Jesse said, 'Was I fortunate to be born this way, and into this world, this house of fools, this madman's paradise? Caleb. The color of Caleb's skin is different and somehow this makes him an outcast. Why? I feel no hidden malady, yet something about me makes me an outcast too. Why this? Why must everyone in this world be the same? Why do people feel that anything that cannot be forced into their mold must be broken? I see a different world than they do. They can't understand it and their ignorance turns to wrath. I'm blameless yet condemned, and the situation is beyond the grasp of my understanding.'

"Well," Father said, "I couldn't find words to reconcile his problem for him, though we talked on for quite a while."

I commented that it was a perplexing situation, indeed. Father Hugh shuffled in his chair and when he was still again he continued.

"That's not the worst of it by far," he said. "About three months ago Jesse's mother was told she had a malignant form of uterine cancer. She experienced intense pain and Jesse was deeply affected because he had grown

quite close to his mother. You see, Jesse's veiled contempt of his tormentors caused a lack of interest in his studies and his happiest times were spent at home with his mother. Later on, when she spent most of the day in bed under mild sedation, Jesse would read to her and tell her stories.

"I visited their home often then and spent much time in private with Jesse's mother, talking about the boy's future. When I had stayed quite late one evening, Jesse interrupted us and said it was time for her to sleep. He brought her a sleeping pill and then walked me to the door to wish me good night. He told me then that knowing his mother was in such pain was terrible for him and that he wanted to do everything he could for her. He said that at night, when her pains grew worse, he would lie beside her and she would ask him to tell her a story. He would recite some Greek myth he had learned from his tutors until the sedative he had given her brought the comforting veil of sleep to her pained body.

"Well, to make a long story short, I was at Jesse's home last Friday when Jesse came running in crying. Seemingly the boys who were involved in the stonethrowing fracas with Jesse and Caleb had organized a gang of big brothers and had waited for Caleb and Jesse after school. They had forced Caleb to run their gauntlet and had beaten him, had pounded him mercilessly. In fact, their beating was so severe that Caleb is now in the hospital, suffering from internal hemorrhages. Jesse was shaken severely by the incident. He spoke repeatedly of the debt he owed Caleb, and of his inability to fulfill that obligation.

"Later, when he had calmed down, he made us some tea and we tried to talk of more pleasant things. Jesse didn't see me to the door that night. He was lying in his mother's arms when I left and I heard him say, 'Tell me a story, Mommy'.

"Late the following day a policeman came to my home. 'You know that boy Jesse who used to come here to school,' he said. 'Him and his mother was found dead today. Looks like both of 'em died from an overdose of sleepin' pills. I always heard they was weird ones, specially the boy. Anyone that smart, there has to be somethin' wrong with 'em'."

I tell this as it was told to me, and I tell it because it bothers me as it bothered Father Hugh. It sticks in my brain. I don't tell this as an exemplum. I don't tell this out of any hope that "good" will eventually triumph over "evil". That kind of hope is fruitless, for it is dead before it is born. The world is neither "good" nor "evil." There is no solution. Men will go on being as small as they are, and man will somehow survive. The cosmic muse will continue to sing a sad song, and nothing can be done to change it, not even by men of high purpose like my old friend, Father Hugh.

The Butterfly

. . . JANIS DOFNER

The young boy had been helping as the man methodically stacked the papers on the old wooden newstand. Now as he settled himself beside the old man he noticed the butterfly. It was fluttering and weaving on the same wind that drove the grit through the busy New York streets.

He had never seen a butterfly alive before. He remembered the collection his teacher had shown him. They had been in a small painted cigar box. Each of them had been labeled and pinned securely to its own special spot. All of them had been dead, not living and moving as the one before him now.

The boy's eyes followed the butterfly as it dodged and wove its way through the rush of nine-to-five employees. It seemed so out of place—this fragile, preciously free creature in the stagnant, concrete mass that was the city. The butterfly moved towards a dead tree that stood in a nearby grey stone planter and landed lightly on an upper branch. The young boy nudged the old man and pointed towards the tree. Without looking the old man mumbled, "Freer than most New Yorkers," and put the change into the pink palm of a Fifth Avenue businessman. The boy slid off the dark worn bench and started towards the tree. With his hands clasped behind his back he peered curiously at the creature. It was a white butterfly—the shade of fine white English porcelain, a fragile white with black markings that made no particular pattern. It balanced delicately on its dead pedestal. It had no place to go yet it was ready to fly, anywhere, anytime.

As the boy reached out with his hand the butterfly flittered and toppled from the limb. It moved elusively through the stream of people. With youthful impatience the boy followed until it came within reach again. He'd take it back to show the old man, but mainly he wanted this precious bit of freedom for himself.

So the boy moved, keeping his eyes on the butterfly and staying away from the crowd.

Finally, the butterfly dropped. Quickly the boy cut in front of the men and women who pushed against him. It had settled on the concrete ledge of a large plate glass window, its wings erect and jerking sporadically. Moving in slowly the boy put out his hand and pinched the wings together. Just then a man ran past and knocked the boy off balance. The butterfly dropped to the pavement near a crushed cigarette butt. The boy watched as the butterfly tried desperately to fly above the crowd. Again and again it fluttered uselessly.

The boy raised his foot and brought it down hard on the struggling insect. Turning he moved off with the rush of nine-to-five employees.

On The Other Side Of The Bridge

. . . . PAUL POLITIS

About three weeks ago, I was down there with a friend of mine, when we saw this kid all dressed in black, with dirty black boots, and long hair, and my friend said to me, "Lookit that kid. Man, that kid's practically a celebrity around here. You just say, 'Hey, ya know that kid with the hair that comes down here,' and everybody says, 'Yeah, I know who ya mean'."

The other night I was down there again, and we saw that kid. My friend said, "There's that kid again. Man, I don't know. Wonder if he does anything. I doubt it. What a mess. You know how you always pick up hitchhikers. Man, I'd never pick that kid up." I had to agree with him on that. The kid did look like a hood.

As it turned out, my friend had a problem with a girl that night. She was a student at a parochial school, and lived in a nice house at the southern end of town with her parents and four brothers and sisters. My friend had known her for about five months. Some guy we knew was going with her more or less, and that's how he met her. But then this guy went in the Marines and broke up with her, so my friend started to go out with her a little. He took her out once or twice, lent her some money when she asked for it, and I guess he thought maybe . . . I had never met this girl, but he had told me a lot about her, and it was all good, so the other night he and I were going down there to the dance, and he asked me if I'd take this girl and her two friends down with us. Naturally, I agreed to this, so at 7:30, we went down to her house, beeped the horn, and out she came. I had to admit she wasn't bad looking. Not the most beautiful thing in the world, but pretty good looking. She got in between us, and we drove up to the square to pick up her two friends. They got in and the one girl started to show off her shoes. She said that she just bought them and they cost \$10.95. She also said that she liked my shirt. I told her I didn't. As we continued, it developed that this girl who my friend had gone out with and lent money to, and who was currently sitting between us, wasn't going to the dance with my friend at all. She was going down there to meet some other guy, and to top it off, my friend had lent her a half dollar to get into the dance.

As we drove along the highway, we saw two girls walking along the side of the road. They were dressed rather cheap; whiteblouse, tight pants, sandals, hair piled up, cigarette in hand; you know. As we drove past, the girl who was sitting between us suddenly leaned out of the window and yelled one word at them; "Whores!" As we drove on, she asked if anyone had a cigarette. I said, "No." Then she asked if there was any booze in the car. I said, "No." They made a lot of noise, mocking out the nuns at their school, and laughing about guys they knew. Finally we got there and I left them out, all of them, with no trace of a "Thanks." I parked the car and my friend and I went into the dance, but he didn't dance at all; he just stood around looking gloomy. I guess it bothered him.

Later on he asked me if it would be all right if we took them down to the hamburger place at half-time break. I said, "I don't care. Ask them if you want to." (I knew what the answer would be). So he walked up to them real optimistic and said, "Would you like to go down to McDonald's at the half-time break?" She just stood there shaking her head horizontally. A few minutes later he found that she had had an argument with the guy she went down to meet, and she had left with some other guy. By this time my friend was really angry and depressed. I told him the impression she had made on me, and I told him to forget it, but I guess I cut her up too bad in my short dissertation, and he got mad at me. So I took him out of there and dropped him off two blocks from his house at a delicatessen where he used to work. It's funny that people never want to go home when they're depressed.

I wasn't depressed, but I didn't feel like going home yet either, so I took off down the road. I was just thinking about that word that girl had yelled out the window a few hours earlier. I was wondering how she had the nerve to condemn others for maybe being what she definitely was.

Suddenly, I realized that I was back in the area that I had come from a while before, and as usual on Wednesday nights, a few people were hitchhiking home from (or at least away from) the dance. I spotted a group of about six people walking on the side of the road, and one or two of them had their thumbs out, so I stopped and waved them in. It was dark, so I couldn't tell anything about them, except that there were four girls and two guys. I asked them where they were going, and they named five different places. The five places were close together (about four miles to the farthest), and it really wasn't out of my way since I wasn't going anywhere in particular anyhow, so I agreed to take them.

I headed toward the hill section of the city, where two of them lived. They were a noisy group. They kept yelling out the window to everyone they knew, and it seemed like they knew everybody in this section of the city. The girl sitting next to me asked me if I would blow the horn at people she knew, so I told her to blow it whenever she wanted to. She did. This was probably the toughest section of the city. If you knew kids from up there, you were safe anywhere, 'cause the kids from up there were famous all over the area. I knew a few.

We approached the street where two of the girls said they wanted to be let out. They thanked me as I turned and let them out in front of two large modern houses. I thought this a bit strange. Somehow, they didn't look the part. When they got out, one of the girls in the back seat switched to the front seat, and I turned around and headed back down the hill. Then, as we were approaching the bridge, a little tale unfolded. The girl in the back seat said, "You know those two girls you just let out. They don't live where you left them. They live about three blocks away, way back in there, on the other side of the bridge, but they told us they'd get let off at some real nice houses tonight, and they did." The car crossed the bridge and continued.

I got talking to the one guy as we headed toward the restaurant where he worked as an all-night dishwasher. He told me that he had moved out on his parents a few months ago. I asked him how come, and he said that he just figured it wasn't worth it to live there anymore. They had no machine where he worked, so he had to wash the dishes by hand. He said he got pretty good pay though; nine bucks a night and a meal. I told him I knew what he meant, because I had worked through a lot, too. I recalled the job I had had as a dishwasher when I worked with Eddie, and Joe the Dummy, and I remembered cleaning dried sugar off the cellar floor and throwing out the dead cats that were in the cellar. They smelled so bad I had to hold the shovel in one hand and my nose in the other. And yes, I remembered the guy in the parking lot behind the restaurant. He used to park cars in the restaurant parking lot when his lot got too full, and one day the boss asked me to go over and tell him to move the cars, so I went over, but before I could get out a full sentence, I remember him yelling, "Get back in there, dummy, before I kill you." And I remember going back in. And I made 71 cents an hour, which at the time was over a penny a minute. But some of the minutes were long.

The kid in the car told me that I was almost as bad as he was, 'cause he had worked for 50 cents an hour once, so we both laughed funny regretful smiles at what fools we'd been, but just now we were at the restaurant, and I left him off so he wouldn't be late and get fired.

At the next light, I happened to turn around and look in the back seat, and to my dismay, I realized that the celebrity was sitting in the back seat of my car. I privately cursed myself for having left my pocketknife home, but decided that it didn't really matter. The celebrity told me that the other day he had walked all the way from the lake (about thirteen miles). The girl in the back seat asked him how come he didn't hitchhike. He told her that he tried to, but nobody'd pick him up. She asked him if it was 'cause of his hair, and he said, "Yeah, that's why I'm gonna get it cut."

I got talking to the girl in the back seat, and she told me that she had a problem. I asked her what the problem was, and she told me that it was a four letter word that began with "j." I realized that she was being purposely vague. She had no problems, but she considered herself capable of solving them herself with no outside advice or interference. Being vague gave her the relief of saying something, and the satisfaction of saying nothing. We arrived at her house, and after giving me directions for getting back to the highway, she thanked me and left. I noticed when she got out that on the back of her blue denim jacket, the singular name "Midge" was written in gold, dime-store glitter. This, I knew, was her real name, even more real than the name on her birth certificate, for it was the name by which she was known among her friends. And so, rather than refer to her as the girl in the back seat, I will say that Midge thanked me and left.

The blonde sitting next to me gave me directions to her house. She told me that she had to be home by 11:30 because she was on probation. Her

father had said she was incorrigible, and that she "stole his car once" with a girl friend of hers. She was on probation for a year, but eight months of it were up. She said that she wanted to get a job, so she wouldn't have to depend on "them" but her mother wouldn't let her, and because she was on probation, she couldn't do anything about it. Anyhow, she was still in high school. We talked about school between other bits of conversation, but she came to the same conclusion that every potential dropout comes to: "I wanna finish, but the way things are now, I don't know." I told her to "go straight" after she got off probation, and she said, "Don't worry, I will." Then we laughed a little. As we approached her house, she told me that I was different from most guys like me, and thanked me. I gave her the standard, "I'll see ya," and she said "Yeah," and left.

The celebrity was still in the back seat, so I headed back to the city. He said he lived "way out in the boondocks," so it'd be all right if I just let him out on the square. He told me that he had lived around in New York and down by Greenwich Village for about two months. Right now, he was working in a warehouse. It's weird the way people come back to a place like this. I asked him how old he was and he said "almost 18." It was almost midnight when we got to the square. I stopped at the first red light, and he thanked me and headed across the square. Two girls in the shiny car next to me looked at him, and then looked at me kinda weird. Then the light changed.

The next day my friend called me and said he had called that girl, and that everything was straightened out between them. He said that she had explained it all to him. I said "Yeah" and asked him how much he lent her this time.

And yes, I did see that blonde again about two weeks later. She seemed real happy to see me again, and we talked for a while. She wasn't a bad kid. I guess I was kinda' happy to see her, too, but I really don't know why. Maybe it was because I had been able to prove something to her. Maybe it was because she had proved something to me. Maybe it was . . . Really I don't know why. But I was — I guess.

EPILOGUE

The shiny blue car pulled off the flat dusty Oklahoma road at a small roadside hamburger stand. A young man, in his early twenties, got out and headed toward the window, his huge college ring reflecting the late afternoon sunlight. A young woman, about twenty years old, came to the window and asked for his order. "Give me a hamburger, and a large orange," he said.

"Okay." She went to the grill and began to prepare his order. He waited in his usual, nervously patient manner.

"Hot day," she said, as she handed him his order.

"You know it. I've been on the road since six o'clock this morning, and I really feel it."

"You're just passing through, eh?"

"Yeah, headin' west. I like to travel; always did."

"Yeah, I do too, but right now, I'm just trying to get together some money so I can go on to someplace else. This is a good place to just stop and think things over though."

"Yeah, there isn't much around to disturb your thinking."

"That's for sure."

"Well, guess I'll get going. Back to the road."

He turned and walked toward his car, but as he was opening the car door, the girl yelled, "Hey!" And after a brief, obvious pause, "Thanks for stopping."

"That's okay."

He waved goodbye, and the blue car sped up the road, leaving only a cloud of dust behind. He thought about that girl at the hamburg stand as he continued. There was something familiar about her. But a lot of people look the same. He remembered noticing the high school ring on her finger, because it looked like something he had seen back home in Pennsylvania. But he had seen a lot of rings that looked the same. It was silly to think about it. He didn't know anybody in Oklahoma. Still, there was something about her. He stopped to rest for the night. Maybe by tomorrow he would forget.

A Weekend of Something

CHARLES DYER

The beach was great. Little kids were running, screaming and playing games. Junior High girls paraded in two-piece bathing suits, showing off their budding bodies. Fat, misshapen women in straw hats and sunglasses lay everywhere, looking like piles of wet laundry. The most fantastic thing about the beach was the girls. They were everywhere. My eyes were straining, trying to catch everyone of them. Don't get the idea I am a wolf. I have almost no experience with girls. Girl watching is just a natural result of my functioning male instincts.

Jack nudged me and said, "There's two we can sit next to."

He pointed towards two girls. One was a blonde, the other dark. They were nice. I'll admit that. But when I thought about sitting and talking with them I clamped up. I mean looking at girls and thinking what you could do is a lot different than actually talking to them and maybe doing something. I am no conversationalist around girls. It's like I said before. I have no experience with girls. I've had one date and that was nothing. A real horror show. I had just gotten my license and I asked this girl named Mary. I didn't even like her a lot. I just thought I'd ask her to go if she was available. Well, when we got in the car, she didn't even sit next to me. I tried to talk with her but the words wouldn't come without great effort. When one or two did squeeze out they were either squeaky and high-pitched or low and unable to be heard. But I was waiting for my moment. We were going to a movie. I figured when we got to the movie and she sat down next to me I would slip my arm around her shoulders. I was sure it would be a triumph. It wasn't. When we did get to the theatre we met some of her friends from school. She immediately sat down with them and I crawled in next to her. With two girl friends by her I certainly could not try anything. I was too scared to touch her. We saw the movie and left. I might as well have gone alone.

You can see what my sexual experience has been. That's why I was nervous when we sat next to the girls. It wasn't long before we were talking to them. At least Jack was talking to them. I slipped in a word or two but nothing substantial. I could see Jack was interested in the blonde. I can't remember her name. Since Jack was interested in her I gave my attention to the dark-haired girl. Her name was Karen. I'll call the blonde Sue.

While Jack and Sue talked, buried their feet, and some other silly stuff, I was busy watching Karen. I felt all sort of empty inside when she and I looked each other in the face. She smiled at me. I didn't know what to say but I managed to get out, "H-How do you like the ocean?"

"I love it. It seems to be boiling now. Yet in a little while it can be calm as tub water."

We both looked at it. It was getting rough because a wind had sprung up.

I watched her toss her hair back from her face. She was looking far out to sea like she was searching for the end.

We decided to go on some rides. The beach was nearly empty and would close soon. Karen was walking in front of me. Jack and Sue were in front of her, holding hands. I wanted to hold Karen's hand but I was scared. You probably think this is ridiculous. I can't explain how I felt very well. I never had any real relationship with a girl. I didn't know what to do so I just walked with her.

In the roller coaster I was with Karen. The car was narrow and Karen's body was pressed against mine. When we got to the top of the coaster track we had a great view of ocean. The wind was strong. White caps could be seen very far out. All this wind, rough seas and beautiful view plus Karen's being close was too much for me to handle. I put my arm around her and pulled her against me. It seemed so natural. I wanted to kiss her but I was afraid she wouldn't really appreciate it. It might seem just plain sex to her.

After the coaster we went to one of those strength testers where you have to ring a bell at the top of a pole. Jack tapped me.

"C'mon, Tim. Let's try it."

He raised the hammer and swung down hard. The striker went about three-fourths of the way up the pole. My strike was off balance and it went up a little less than Jack's. I walked back to Karen. She squeezed me and smiled as I took her arm. She sure did seem to like me. I led her away from Jack and Sue. I wanted to kiss her so bad. But I felt it would be wrong to kiss a girl until you were sure she loved you. A kiss is more than something to be thrown about. You have to have a good, sensitive type of relationship to kiss a girl. So I thought then. I wasn't sure about Karen's feelings. She was rubbing my stomach and leaning her head on my shoulder but my innocence could not decipher these subtle hints. We walked back to the place where she was staying and talked a while about what fun it had been. Jack and Sue came up the street. They kissed before coming to the door. I knew I should kiss Karen good night. I really wanted to. But I said goodnight and walked back to our place.

In bed, I lay thinking. I really liked Karen. I wanted to neck with her but was afraid of what she would think of me. I couldn't call my feelings love. I have been told that your first experience with a girl always feels like love. I thought a girl was worth more than an evening of necking. The relationship between Karen and me seemed different from the ordinary boy-girl pickup. I decided I would kiss her tomorrow. You can be awful brave in bed.

We picked them up at eight A.M. The ocean had lost the rough character of the night before. It was lapping gently onto the shore. The water was ice cold and the ocean floor was covered with crabs, shells and seaweed. We only stayed in a moment and then headed for the beach. Karen ran up to me.

"I'll follow you," she said.

We put our towels next to Jack and Sue. Karen lay next to me. I suddenly

realized that I should have kissed her in the ocean. I could have gallantly carried her over the shells and seaweed, bent gently down and kissed her. But I blew the chance. It's amazing how you can think of clever things to do after your chance to do them passes.

Her face was turned away looking at Jack and Sue. I pushed myself up. When I saw Jack and Sue necking like the devil I dropped quickly down. The kind of thing Jack had was nothing. They had started kissing as soon as they met. To Jack, a kiss was pleasure for him. I was sure I had more than that with Karen. I would kiss her when she rolled over towards me.

She was lying on her stomach. I pulled closer and threw my arm over her back. I was quite surprised when I accidentally poked her in the breast with my fingers. My arm was a little too long. It's a good thing she was turned away from me. I would have hated to see her face when that happened.

I thought I was ready for the big moment now. But I realized my placement was wrong. If she rolled over now I would kiss her forehead. I slowly pushed myself down. But then I was too low and would kiss her chin. I finally was on target and waiting for orders. She rolled over. I grabbed her tight and kissed her.

The rest is nothing. It shakes me up to try to recall it. We took them home. Karen told me she wasn't going to come back to the shore for the rest of the year. I told her I'd write. Jack and I just got in the car and left. I didn't even kiss her goodbye. I could have sworn she liked me but I guess I expected too much. It seemed to be a growing relationship. But that weekend was the last I saw her. I never wrote or anything. I can't really understand why. I saw something in love that wasn't there. Maybe Jack is right. Love is just one blunder after another, like with Mary. Or it's a poked breast and a weekend of necking. I don't know yet. I do know I had nothing going with Karen. I can't even remember her last name. Don't you think this is odd? Or maybe ironic? Or something?

After The Sunday Night Movie

. . . JOEL DECKER

Why don't I ever listen to my own advice? I always break the vows that I make for myself. Two weeks ago I promised myself that I wouldn't wait till after the Sunday night movie to come back to school, but here I am parking my little old "VW" in the parking lot, and it's late, because I stayed to watch the Sunday night movie.

There absolutely is not another parking lot which could be farther from my dorm. You'd think that the student Senate would have some respect for kids like me who have to work over week-ends. There I go again — work over weekends. Everybody knows the real reason that I'm working is because I wanted a car on campus this year, and being a sophomore, I had to have some excuse for keeping it here. So the student Senate made me park it here.

Sure, on campus! Why this lot isn't even on the real campus. No, I have to park over here on what they call "the west campus" parking lot and then walk back over to my dorm which couldn't be any further to the south of the whole campus — that is except if I were a girl and lived in McLean, but even that dorm is right beside Naugle.

The campus newspaper calls Naugle an off-campus dorm. That's dumb. If Naugle's off-campus, then so is McLean. Those jerky editors don't seem to realize that the whole campus center is shifting south. Of course, that doesn't help me any — my dorm is still about ten thousand miles from where I park my car.

I like this stretch of the walk anyhow. Whew, it makes you feel like you're the last person in the world. Almost all the lights are out in the girls' dorms. Let's see — one, two, three — only three lights on in McCune. It really does seem lonely, but the leaves look so cool in the glary light of these lamps. It's good this school is at least picturesque. It needs that one saving grace.

I'm glad I'm alone — except for the fact that it's so late. Crud, it's almost one thirty and I have to face geography class in just a couple of hours.

In the whole walk up this driveway, that tree is the only thing I don't like. It's so forbidding and dark. And the way Sharon talks about the way the house mothers warn the girls about potential rapists and everything. Whenever I see that tree, I think about some townie jumping out and yelling and everything. Oh well, at least I don't have to worry about some townie raping me — unless this place has some very forward girls who like to hang around dark trees at one thirty in the morning.

Oh well, there goes my enjoying this walk. I think somebody's walking behind me. Oooh, that bothers me. I hate to look around. I won't. That looks so stupid. His steps are following mine exactly. He must have legs about

the same length as mine. I know he's back there though. My steps couldn't echo across an open hockey field. Oh well, I won't start thinking about townies again. Even if it is some goon with long sideburns and white socks, he's probably a student. Yes, it's probably just some student who parked his car just like I did, and he's walking back to his dorm too.

Let's see, if he comes up from behind and clubs me, he'll want my wallet. Maybe the dumb townie just wants to club somebody. My wallet only has eight dollars in it. It's the cards and licenses and everything that'll be a pain to replace that I'll mind losing.

Oh for god's sake, I'm acting as if that guy behind me were a murderer. What an imagination. But if it is another student, why doesn't he hurry his pace and walk with me or call out or something. He probably doesn't like walking alone at night either. Of course, if he did hurry his pace I'd probably run myself.

I gotta get my mind off that kid behind me.

How do I know it's a kid behind me?

Well, if he's going to do something, now's the time. This building casts quite a shadow. Slow down; don't make it obvious that you're a little scared. Oh, I'm so dumb. For all I know, it could be my own roommate.

Ohh!

See! Look how jumpy I am. Some guy there on the steps barking his guts out and just seeing him makes me jump. Probably some fraternity had a kegger and this is one of the last to be sick. Boy, he looks old, all bent over and sick looking. I wonder how long he's been wandering around. Dumb drunk like him wouldn't be any good if this joker behind me jumped me or beat me over the head or something.

That's funny, the drunk didn't seem to notice either of us, but I can still hear him behind me. I don't think he moved up any. I hope he doesn't.

He certainly had his chance if he was planning anything. Now I'm okay for a while. These back lights of the dining hall seem brighter than I've ever noticed.

He must be trying to walk like me. He steps whenever I do. I hope whoever it is lives in one of these dorms and turns off now. Then I'll get a good look at the creep.

I know he's following me. I speeded up and he must've too. His footsteps are still falling as mine do.

Dew is on the grass already. I really do need a new pair of loafers. I can feel the wetness right through my shoes. I guess he cut across the grass right behind me. Damn. I was hoping he'd take the sidewalk so I could see him. I like walking on the grass — even when it's dark and wet.

Uh-oh. Should I go around this hall or not? If I go in front there are street lights, but if I go behind I'll be in the shadows, and I don't know what Joker back there will do. His footsteps don't sound as distinctly as when we were marching in time on the road. Well, I have to decide whether I'm too scared to walk through the dark. Well, I'm going to be brave. Going by the way of the light would be out of my way and just too obvious.

Too bad, he must have decided to follow me. This is his last chance. When I walk into this darkness, it will be the last dark spot on campus before I reach my dorm. O God, let it be some other kid living in my dorm.

I knew this was the last dark spot, but did it also have to be the darkest? All those bushes and things.

My god, I thought I heard him take an extra step. Yes, he's still following. That makes it the whole way across campus.

I'll run.

No, I won't. I'd feel so stupid if it was just some kid in the dorm. But why is he so quiet? He can probably hear my heart pounding. If my nerves don't settle down, he won't even have to club me — I'll have a heart attack and lie down and die.

I wonder if I could do any of that karate or whatever that my brother was talking about. Let's see, if you get him under his nose with the side of your hand, you can tear it off his face. Oh gech! That makes me sick. Really, I wouldn't have the guts, besides karate won't be any help if he clubs me.

Who the hell said he was going to club me?

I'm blowing this thing all out of proportion.

The light of the dorm is coming up. Thank heavens. He must not be a gangster; he must not even be a townie.

I'll count the steps to the dorm. At least that'll give me something to do.

One, two, three, four — that's boring. I'll cut that out.

Oh finally, the dorm. I'll never come back from a week-end in the middle of the night again.

Now if I work it right it doesn't have to be too obvious, and I can get a look at my shadow. When I reach the door, I'll swing it open wide and half turn to see that jerk who's been following me.

Finally, okay whoever you are, I'm ready for your unveiling. My god, that's strange. I could have sworn there was someone following me.

Five

. . . DONNA HARPSTER

Five is little in a big world. Friendly tree-giants offered rough-bark refuge from formidable many-eyed houses as she skipped along between stops at anthomes and beetle crossings. Summer was, real and warm. Pieces of sunlight reached down between the leafy arms and patted her head as she hurried and stopped her way to the store.

"I hope Mommy gave me enough money this time; she hardly ever does." The sweaty red-facedness of having to put something back on the shelf made Five shudder. "What was I to get, oh yeah — a loaf of bread. How can she shop all the time and not know how much a loaf of bread is? Mothers are sure dumb sometimes."

She went the down-hill sidewalk to the street around the park where the road split and fattened itself around an island of trees, grass, a firehouse, and a fountain-pool for goldfish. The goldfish were fat too, and lazy. It was fun to watch the messages they sent as in their aimless swimming the sun bounced from their backs. Five stood for a while, then remembering her errand, skipped to the drinking fountain and on to the store, her chin cooled by the drops she carried with her.

The store was crowded, old, aromatic, and A&P. On a rack along one wall she found the bread they always bought. A sigh of relief escaped her lips when, unclenching her fist to the clerk, he took it all but did not ask for more. Nor did he bag her bread and Five was too shy to ask. She thrust the bread under one arm, tomboy style, and started home, skipping and stopping her way back to the park, through it to the now up-hill sidewalk, and on her shadowy way.

Cellophane is not strong, skipping is bumpy, and of course it split in the middle. When Five is little a loaf of bread is big — and hard to control, sliced. A Mommy wail begat tears and tears a Mommy scream, but Five lungs are small and two blocks are long. Mrs. Lee was nearer. She heard, then came to see: a fat, grey-haired angel well disguised, except for the look in her eyes. She took Five in murmuring "there, there," and bagged her bread back in a problem-solving big world pantry, all cozy and secure. Five was sniffy-smiles and "thank you very much's."

Just a paperbag, an arm around her shoulder, and the slices of her day flew together. Flat swatches of sunlight held it whole as Five skipped and stopped the two blocks home.

Upstage Rumba

. . . STEPHNE WEST

Misinformation led me to the wrong end of the platform, and already-delayed Greyhounds have no patience with misguided sophomores. Miss Information had structured, to my dissatisfaction, three hours of my youth. But she was only the latest of a seemingly never-ending procession of well-meaning people who had inadvertently or intentionally been advising me, sometimes falsely. This new addition to the sequence was the final element in the formation of a state of people-weariness, leaving me with the intense desire to be completely ignored.

The rays of the sun pierced my thin jacket with a penetrating heat that seeped steadily into my thin frame, spreading warmth and causing the blood vessels to protrude on the backs of my hands. A cooling breeze bathed the moisture from my face, deposited tiny specks of dust from the dingy platform, while trapping strands of hair between the lens of my sunglasses and my squinting eyes. Balancing on one foot, I leaned against a window ledge with an elbow anchored securely on my upturned guitar case. Then began comforting thoughts of having what now amounted to two and a half hours in which there was no one that had to be spoken to, and nothing that had to be read. Without feeling negligent about anything, my mind could wander in long neglected daydreams.

My eyelids seemed heavy and began to droop with the warmth that throbbed through me. Where did I hear or read that birds perch on one foot while sleeping. What strong legs birds must have. The better to sustain one's weight on one foot, naturally. To compensate for my inability to measure up to bird standards, I'll inconspicuously shift my weight to the other foot. Of course, one need not be a bird to have certain bird abilities. But wings on my sandals would appear odd in some circles. Not to mention that they're most unprofessional. Perseus was not plagued with . . .

"Hey! Wanna go for a ride?"

I reluctantly opened my eyes. Just beyond the curb I caught sight of a long-legged, long-haired, rather mangy looking animal perched masterfully astride a huge, two-wheeled machine that roared with such vibrations that the victim's body seemed to be convulsing from helmet to boots. The shout attracted two or three loitering cab drivers who strolled over to gaze on the rumbling machine. His trembling lips stretched into a proud, amiable grin.

I responded negatively but politely, thinking of the fillings in my teeth. Having received the sought-for attention, he lurched the motorcycle forward, off to a screeching start. Gravel flew from beneath the back tire. A contribution of dust was added to the already overburdened air, and the front end of this mechanical wonder momentarily left the concrete. The Willian Tell Overture would have been appropriate.

That interruption was a minor disturbance. I quickly withdrew again to the peaceful solitude behind my eyelids to view the bright, soaring flashes of light that exploded and dwindled into tiny dots before disappearing beneath the next

burst, streams of red and yellow light diving into formlessness, disintegrating together. They could be set to music, drawn into a symphony or perhaps a concerto featuring the diving reds and yellows represented by violins with woodwinds for . . .

"Hey! Zat a violin?"

Could it be that question is directed at me and my guitar? Why is this passer-by taking the trouble to disturb me from my concerto? So what if it is a violin, or a fluglehorn! Shall say it's a small harp or a large piccolo?

"No, it's a guitar," I replied, forcing a faint smile. But that was only the beginning of this inquisition. He needed to be assured that it really was a guitar, because he had once known somebody who played a violin which looked exactly like my arm rest. After establishing that fact, I explained defensively why it was not "lectric," and almost apologized for having never heard of Hank Hasbeen and the Deadweeds. After admitting to such gross ignorance, I was no longer interesting and was abandoned at last.

The afternoon heat grew more intense. Removing my sunglasses and wiping my forehead and under my eyes with the back of my hand, I began to anxiously anticipate the cool, quiet, two-hour bus ride when I would recline lazily, conscious only of the satisfaction in leaving and going. I cast a futile glance toward the busless street, then allowed my eyes to relax into what must have appeared to be a glazed expression. There, in the microscopic view that only bright sunlight will permit, travelling across the moist surface of my eyes, were the delicate, familiar forms that I had not noticed lately. Daintily shaped specks of bacteria floated back and forth, up and down. Some were round, some oblong. Others resembled a paramecium, without the cilia. Once I asked somebody if he had ever seen the bacteria on his eyes. He said he hadn't, but had I ever tried Colt .45? Some people just aren't aware of what goes on in front. . .

"Hey! Are ya goin' to be aroun' in about an hour?"

It was a coarse voice belonging to a friendly cab-driver at whom I was staring intently, or so he thought. Never would he suspect I was observing bacteria. I asked why he asked. He informed me, without ever realizing that I might have an opinion on the matter, that in an hour he was going to lunch, and so was I. In the midst of my explanation about the arrival of the bus, Miss Information began casually to call out track numbers and destinations. I replaced my sunglasses, grasped my suitcase, guitar, bag of dirty clothes, and headed for the opposite end of the platform.

There spouting blue smoke from behind, was the finest Greyhound I'd ever seen. I stepped up to the quiet aisle, spied a lonely looking seat in a back row, hopefully my only travelling companion. Edging toward it, I was careful not to bump anyone. After depositing my guitar overhead and slinging the dirty clothes on top, I collapsed into the seat near the window.

What would be on the dinner menu? I had suggested succotash in my last letter home, but left the details to my mother's good judgment. At the thud beside me, I peered to find a pleasant, middle-aged female figure. . .

"Are you going to Philadelphia?"

The Blue Ice

. . . DEBORAH WALTERS

She walked out of the darkness into a deeper darkness below. Each footstep downward she took with great caution. With each step she felt the cold of the stairs shoot through her body like a jabbing pain of ice. She shivered.

A sharp turn to the right led her to a narrow passageway. As she walked between the frigid walls, pale blue lights were blinking on and off, one after the other, and leading her deeper into the unknown ahead. She remembered seeing the blue lights before, only they were not pale. Before, the lights were daring and luminous, and blazed the words, "The Blue Ice."

She came to a doorway and lingered for a moment. The air had become more dense and heavy as she came through the passage, but in that inner room, the air was like a viscid fog. The pungent smoke was repelling, but the fog enveloped her. With faltering steps she moved about the room. It was like a stuffy cell jammed with people end to end. Couples were sitting at the tables and sprawled on the floor. Their voices became a dull roll of everlasting thunder.

She came to an empty table, sat down, and looked about her. She had always put these places off-limits. Why had she come here? What made this sadistic chamber so appealing? She was lonely and craving for love, but how could she find love?

The ice blue lights moved in and out like a patchwork quilt with no specific design, but each block having its own mystic implication, so smoothly the hues were woven. She realized that in the middle of all this, were two figures moving languidly and pensively toward each other. The figures cautiously and slowly revolved within their own circle, each step drawing them nearer and nearer.

She would have continued to watch, but a dark shadow was suddenly cast before her. A lanky, broad-shouldered male confronted her. He was neatly dressed, not wearing the conventional garb of the surroundings. Although his attire was not outstanding as such, there was something about him which permeated through the fog. His dazzling blue eyes were the focal points. She was provocative, and she sensed his awareness of it. His salacious gaze created a deeper inhibition within her. She hated him for making her feel that way and for all the memories he revived. He was why she had come to this foul place. He made her cold.

Before she could ponder any further, he sat down next to her. The figures once again caught her attention. They were moving more slowly now. Automatically a voice was heard, not coarse or rough, but soft, warm, and vibrant.

"There were two spheres of dust, each attracted to the other. They fused and made one."

With this the hues blended, whirling faster at each turn. Beyond what seemed to be a whirl of confusion, was a glow of warmth. She felt so relaxed from the warmth that she did not mind as his arm slithered about her waist.

She hated herself when she felt fun-loving and carefree, but whenever she was with the opposite sex, she was compelled to let herself go. All the other times she felt cheated and shamed, except this time it would be different. She would see to that. There would be warmth, and he would be there to provide it.

It was then that the volcano erupted and spewed forth its steaming, hot lava. Its sweltering passion destroyed everything in its path. The fiery furnace was overbearing. The lava went down and round the valley and up again. Boiling, seething, stewing, scalding, the uncontrollable rage reached its peak. . . .

She was alone. She rose, walked to the window, and looked below. The blue lights flashed—"The Blue Ice." She shivered.

