



# **The Crucible**

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**Lock Haven State College**

**Lock Haven, Pennsylvania**

# The Crucible

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LOCK HAVEN STATE COLLEGE  
Lock Haven, Pennsylvania

1965

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## A Nice Night For a Drive

Ed Frye

IT WAS 1:15 A.M. when he left his girl's house, reversed the car onto the road, and started for home. The night was clear and the summer breeze coming in the open window was a welcome relief from the hot, stagnant air in the living-room of the farmhouse. On a night like this, he thought he could drive a thousand miles and enjoy it; the swirling air, a "swinging" radio station, high-beam lights piercing the night and illuminating his route, and the quiet movement of the car all helped to add to the enchantment of driving in this lonely hour of morning. He was driving his dad's car as he usually did when he had a date; his '50 Ford was too much past its prime for such purposes. His dad's car was a new Chevrolet, Bel Air, with a six-cylinder engine. It was a good car and was quite fast for such a small engine. Often, however, he wished that his father had bought a bigger and more powerful engine when he got the car. He started to think about the car as he drove the eleven-mile distance to his home. He imagined that this was not a Bel Air but an Impala, not a six-cylinder, but an eight-cylinder 409 Super Sport. He made-believe it had a floor shift and bucket seats and now and then he disengaged the clutch and then engaged it after an imaginary change of gears with his floor shift.

He lived in a rural area and at this time of night there was hardly any traffic on this route. Since he

knew the road well, he usually made very good time home in the early hours like this. There were never any cops between his house and his girl's except at Roth's Fort, an intersection with a red-light about two miles from his girl's place. He approached the flashing red-light and as he pulled to a stop he looked to his extreme right and searched for the cop car. "There he is, as usual. Big job! Sit there and wait for someone to go through the red-light," he muttered to himself.

He now had nine miles to drive with no cops and hardly any traffic. He decided he would be in Hedge-ton by 1:30. As soon as he was out of the cop's sight, he tramped the accelerator until the speedometer indicted 70 MPH.

He enjoyed driving fast. It was not that it was a way to show off—nobody was even with him now—but it was rather just the thrill of watching the road signs, poles, and brush go flashing past the car. A feeling of power came over him and he became absorbed in his car and his driving, unconscious of the road he traveled. He complimented himself on his driving ability and wondered why he was so skillful. He decided it was because he tried to make the car part of himself—a long extension beginning at the steering wheel and ending up front at the foremost piece of chrome. Surely, this made it much easier to handle the car smoothly and efficiently. He wished he had

entered the annual teen-age driving contest held at the county seat. "I would have won this year," he said, letting his thoughts become spoken words. Again he began imagining the Bel Air as an Impala, the six-cylinder engine as an eight-cylinder one. Again he disengaged the clutch and made the imaginary change of his floor shift.

He drove like this until he drew up behind an old Ford which happened to be a '50 just like his. Ahead, there was a slight curve with a solid yellow line, but one could see at night the lights of an oncoming car if it approached the curve. Seeing none, he did not slow down, but skillfully passed the Ford and pulled back into line at the other end of the curve. At this moment, his lights swung onto a barn bridge directly beside the highway, and to his horror he saw the white-and-green cop car—bubble-gum machine and all. He slowed down without using the brake but the damage had already been done. A minute later, he was waved to the side of the road. The car was no longer easy to steer. It was no longer an extension of his arm. It rocked with his gross uncoordinated movements and pitched forward as he tramped the brake too hard. He pulled to the side of the road and came to an abrupt, rough stop. His stomach felt sick and his heart was pumping very fast. He was both frightened and angry. This was the first time he had ever been stopped by the police. What would his father say when hearing about this?

"Let's see your license, lad. Mr. Roades, don't you know what a solid yellow line in the middle of the high-

way means?"

"Yes, Officer, but . . ."

In a few minutes (it seemed like hours), the officer returned to the car and handed him a ticket.

"You'll hear about this in a few days," the officer said.

"I'll hear about it much sooner than that," he replied, again thinking of his father.

He said goodnight to the officer, stuck the ticket behind the sun visor, and started again for home—much slower. It was difficult to drive and handle the car correctly now and his stomach had not yet returned to normal.

He was still about four miles from home and he looked at the clock on the dashboard. "One-forty—that's an ironical situation." He passed a tavern along the road and remembered on the straight stretch after it the place where one of his friends had struck and killed a drunk man who was walking along the road. He always drove slower than usual past this place. Tonight, it was even slower. He was still wondering what that damned cop was doing on that barn bridge. "There's never cops that far from the barracks unless they're called," he told himself, half-expecting himself to explain his freak encounter. "Just my luck! Probably a new guy with a quota to fill," he finally decided.

He came to his favorite dip on the highway, the one he loved to sweep down into and up the other side. Tonight, however, he didn't chance it—evidence that shell-shock still remained. As he rounded the curve at the top of the hill, he saw many flashing lights and instinctively ap-

plied the brakes. "It's a wreck," he thought and observed quickly that he had been right. He was motioned past by another cop. "Maybe this is what that other cop was doing on the barn bridge tonight. Sure, that's why he is so far from home."

As he crept by the wreck, he saw two mangled cars fused together by a head-on crash. He wanted to find out how bad the accident was and how it had happened. So, he drove a short distance, parked, and walked back to a group of men, whom he recognized.

"All four dead. Couple from Hedgeton (he knew them) and a couple from Trayton (down the road ten more miles). Both cars came around the bend in the middle of the road—both were speeding."

He crawled back into his car and drove carefully the remaining two miles. As he pulled into the drive and the garage, he plucked the ticket from behind the visor. "It's about time they start patrolling this road," he thought. He shut off the engine of the Bel Air, six-cylinder, and went into the house.

## Rain Ballad

Carol A. Young

Drops of rain  
Stinging my eyes  
And puddling the streets,  
I pump my bicycle back to school,  
Blinded . . .

By convertibles and kisses,  
Drive-ins,  
Dances . . .

Dreaming of sixteen.

Rain splotching my windshield,  
Wipers whirring,  
I speed to my classes,  
Dreaming . . .

Of graduation and freedom,  
Nightclubs,  
A rendezvous . . .

Wishing for twenty-one.

Rain splashing the schoolroom windows,  
Children yelling,  
Piles of tests and exercises to correct,  
I smooth my graded nerves,  
Remembering . . .

Pumping bikes through puddling streets,  
Dreaming . . .  
Of sixteen.

## Lines After Reading Gerard Manley Hopkins' "The Windhover"

Carl Mosch

See how yonder moisture flies  
Ecstatic in its noble fun,  
See how it hovers overhead,  
The great misfortune overheard;  
Notice now its moral splendor, before  
The gathering of the dust,  
Vanquishes ignorance in its prime.  
Gaze below, the desolate earth,  
Ever barren, ever churning;  
Gaze now on its Golden Law,  
All encompassing, all a-burning;  
Look at hope, yet, in its wake,  
The wondrous spectre of its yearning  
Fosters apathetic sin: a thought,  
A deed, built not on love.

Do not philander, O my soul, with  
Statuesque impurity,  
Drink not of that rusted cup  
That seals bad men in misery,  
But, warned by that dew-dropped rain  
Languished freely from the sky,  
Find the peace the soul doth reach  
When, in the presence of that light,  
A thought, provoked, is answered by faith,  
In radiance bright.

# Neighbor

Mary Grimm

THE WRINKLED HAND reached out for the rusty metal lock, found it securely fastened, and dropped back to the twisted hip. The old woman turned from the gate and limped back toward the house. Her daughter stood in the doorway watching her. Every day for a year now she had tried that lock, hoping to find it open so that she could go out and find her mother. The old woman was eighty-seven and had no mind. Hardening of the arteries, the doctors said. Veda turned away from the door with tears in her eyes. The old woman was her mother and she could do nothing for her but keep her safe, hold her prisoner, until she died.

The old woman's name was Keys — Bessie Keys, but everyone called her Mom. She'd been a favorite in the neighborhood until she lost her mind. She'd been cheerful and friendly and fun to be around. But now she just scared people, especially the old ones, who saw that her life would be theirs, and the young ones, who didn't understand.

Mom had had a garden out in back, neglected now. She used to work in it every day from her wheelchair. Even though she was sick and twisted, she never failed that garden. But she forgot about it when she lost her mind. She forgot everything except the beginning of her life, when she was a child in Sweden and had a dog. So she came to believe that she was in Sweden and that her mother was somewhere near and being kept

from her, and she started wandering the neighborhood. They hid her coat and shoes but she'd still go out. You'd see her in any weather, bare-foot and sweated, walking up and down the street. Veda's dog was the only thing she'd accept into her world; she thought he was her dog. She trusted him and he followed her everywhere. He helped them to find her many times.

Mom had two broken hips. She'd fallen down the stairs on her sixtieth birthday and they'd told her that she would never walk again, and she didn't until she lost her mind. She was sitting out in the garden when it happened. Veda saw her from the window. She was leaning over the side of her wheelchair weeding the petunias. All of a sudden she started, looked up, and a peaceful expression came over her face. She lifted a flower to her face and smelled it, then it dropped to her lap. She smiled queerly, said something, and stood up. Then she took a few steps and fell. Veda ran out to help her up. She stooped to take her arm, and when Mom turned to face her, she knew that she had lost her. Mom only asked for her mother. She's been like that ever since.

The police made Veda put up a fence because Mom kept wandering off. Soon after the fence was up, Veda caught Mom trying to bribe someone with the lawn furniture to open the gate. She told them that her mother had come but that these peo-

ple wouldn't let her in, that she had to go out and find her.

Mom never got sick, even after walking around in the rain and snow. Many times when the milkman came she'd be out sitting on the porch with nothing on but a sweater — even in the coldest weather. It was a strange thing. Mom didn't know what sickness was so she never got sick. She

seemed to have been freed when she lost her mind, freed of everything but her need for her mother.

And for several years she just wandered around that little yard, testing the lock and looking up and down the street, hoping that one day it would be open and she'd be able to find her mother.

## Ah, John Keats

Vickie Park

From the din of the dining hall  
I hurry to the bustle of my abode,  
Enter my flame-colored boudoir,  
And settle myself at my cluttered desk:  
Lipstick-smearing tissues,  
Empty hairspray cans, soiled clothes,  
Long-unemptied ashtrays,  
Bottles, tubes,  
And coffee-stained cups.

My brain must compete with reeling record players,  
Tittering girls' voices,  
Raucous and metallic,  
The tapping and rattling and clacking  
Of typewriters.

Bent-shouldered,  
My elbow tight against my side  
To avoid the smoldering iron,  
Eyes straining,  
My pencil clamped in my hand,  
I must compose a poetic work —  
With flowing cadence, concrete detail, and implication,  
Remember implication,  
Always remember implication.

But alas,  
In this atmosphere  
How can the beauty  
Which "must" be an inalienable part of my soul  
Declare itself?

## The Loner

Margaret Lutz

## One Crocus—Yellow in a March Snow

Gail A. Koch

One crocus—yellow in a March Snow,  
The singing of a choir that lifts me to my soul's height  
And gently puts me down again,  
The back-home smell of frying ham  
mingled with the smoky scent of burning leaves,  
Musky odors of an abandoned coalbin,  
Webbed shadows cast on maple-lined farm lanes,  
A lacy ice-coated landscape,  
The delighted shrieks of a baby tearing paper,  
The delicate rapport between friends,  
The exhilarating victory of enlightenment  
over the tedious struggle to learn,  
The fleeting moment of stillness before the dawn—

Oh, but these rare realities become but dreams  
dreamed long ago and in some far distant place,  
And I must live this empty day.

## The Loner

Margaret Lutz

RIGHT OFF HE KNEW that he should have stayed home, but instead, here he was going into the dance — and wishing it was all over. Somebody had got a bright idea for decorating the gym, yet it still looked like the gym — probably worse. Sagging red and blue crepe paper crisscrossed every-which-way up under the roof. A few half-deflated balloons hung limply from the net baskets. He could hear the notes of “D’You Love Me?” screeching from the same old warped record, with the volume turned up full blast. The music was so loud that it was impossible to think, let alone talk, in case anybody came up to him or he saw somebody he knew real well. So he just stood there staring into the dark cave of a gymnasium where last night the basketball teams had raced and dodged in a flood of light under the nets. The scratching, skipping, blaring record was a poor substitute for the roar of the crowd shouting in unison.

There were some girls standing together on one side of the court and some boys on the other. In the middle, a few couples were shuffling their feet over the shiny waxed floor, but most of the dancers were girls. The girls who had paired off with boys looked bored.

“If I danced at all,” he thought, “I would probably get a yawn in my face.”

Some of his buddies waved but didn’t come over, so he shifted his weight to the other foot and stayed where he was. A few girls he knew smiled but he wasn’t going to bother himself to talk with them while they were surrounded by ten giggling friends.

Mr. Carruthers, with an artificial smile, announced a ladies’ choice. Most of the boys were picked, and he stood there watching and enjoying the faces they were making. A tall homely girl with fat legs started walking towards him. He caught a glimpse of her embarrassed smile and ducked into the hall. He wondered if it was true that Mr. Carruthers got five dollars from the school board every time he chaperoned a dance.

“If only that Linda in my math class had asked me, I would have danced,” he thought, “but she was surrounded by practically the whole football team.”

Finally the last record trembled to a stop and most of the kids piled into cars to go somewhere.

He watched them go, then slowly walked home. Mom asked him if he had had a nice time. He mumbled, “Yes,” and climbed the steps to his room. Just after he got into bed he heard a car go by and he knew it was probably Ed with Linda. He couldn’t get to sleep for a long time.

## Spring Walk

Dianne Wolfe

1

A ribbed ocean shell wedged between two rocks —  
The situation was hopeless.

Whatever life once pulsated here has been gone —  
For I don’t know how long.

2

Across the rich awakening meadow —  
Dandelion flower and Quaker lady,  
Buttercup and early daisy —

Gambol three cloud-white lambs.  
Next week, as innocently,  
They will frolic down the hill  
To Sorgen’s slaughterhouse.

3

Of the six boys scampering on the merry-go-round,  
Only one is black.

He romps and shouts as much as any of the others —  
Knowing nothing of leprosy.



## On Campus Improvements

Dianne Wolfe

New buildings rise where old ones tumble down.  
Today the dusty suffocating piles  
Of rotted lath and powdered plaster drown  
Remembrances of once-attractive styles.  
Huge heaps of chiseled, broken bricks divide  
A scattered patch of splintered, brittle glass,  
And dry, stale airs that linger here deride  
A brighter, fresher atmosphere. Alas!  
No time is spent before the screaming cranes,  
The pounding plows and dozers grind and crawl  
Across the rubble. Mournful the remains  
That bludgeon with their threats the rising wall:  
The new alike will crumble, rot, decay,  
Their memories as surely die away.

## "The Hand That Signed the Paper Felled A City"

Dianne Wolfe

The drawer, opening, rattles with pencils and pens,  
The ones I use from day to day.  
What power exists in a piece of lead within a wooden frame,  
In pens and pencils rattling in an opening drawer!

## Sis

Harrison Hamlin

When I was ten and Sis thirteen,  
She entered high school,  
And there was no one to play with  
Or walk to school with.

I would see her at breakfast and dinner  
But matters were different.

At night her friends would call,  
And they never hung up.  
When her friends visited,  
I went to bed  
Or next door to Aunt Sophie's.

I knew that she was gone, somehow,  
But couldn't quite explain to Mom.

After her graduation,  
She got married  
And left the house.

I had never got around to expressing my sentiments  
to Mom,  
But I know she understood how I had felt  
When I was ten and Sis thirteen.

## Dear Shadow

De Lores Simons

DEAR SHADOW, I'm sure I don't know why, but I always seem to let you know when I'm depressed. I am depressed today because it is a dull day, cold and sunless, and because I failed my troublesome-verb test again. As you know, I've taken it four times and I've passed it only once. If I fail my English III only because of that test, I think I'll hate troublesome verbs for the rest of my life — here, back home in Bermuda, or wherever I end up. I'm really making them live up to their name. If I fail them again, I tell myself, I *shall lie* down and cry; I shall write home and say, "I just *lay* down and cried." And maybe I *am lying* down and crying now — who knows but you and me, Shadow?

But remember, Shadow, that I'm not always depressed; in fact, sometimes I'm very happy. Take the time I saw snow for the first time. I was both fascinated and happy. Wasn't it wonderful! Gee, it was great — seeing snow for the first time. It gave me a warm, tingling feeling inside when those first tiny snowflakes landed on my coatsleeve. I looked at them a long time. And the next day I made a snowman. And remember, Shadow, when I walked down to the woods for the first time after the snow. The whiteness felt like a soft carpet under my feet; and then suddenly, as I walked into the woods, the world was no longer any world that I had ever known — but a dream. I thought of the people over

at the College, of the Nicholsons back at the house, the people I lived with, the people who had opened their home to me. They all seemed far away, unreal, almost nonexistent. And then a bird, fleeing his perch over my head, showered me with snow, and you too, Shadow, dim as you were there under the trees; and the bird, vanished somewhere among the trees, it seemed must surely have been some sort of mechanical bird. A slight breeze sprang up, so fresh that it was crisp, and when I inhaled, my lungs felt the shock of it.

Snow is only one of the things we'll have to tell about when we get back to Bermuda, many silly as well as interesting things that have happened to me since I am here. Many of them, of course, have to do with college. When I first came here, I wanted to learn so much all at once that my brain seemed to be bubbling over with all sorts of things: enthusiasm, troublesome verbs, Spanish. And mentioning Spanish reminds me, Shadow. Do you remember the afternoon when I put on my most scholarly air and took the elevator to the Spanish laboratory to review my exercises? I needed that review, and you and I know, Shadow, that I still do! With what I hoped looked like practiced efficiency, I looked for and found the correct tape and set it on the tape recorder. Then I pushed the START button. Nothing happened. Then for fifteen minutes I read "Directions For Operating This

Machine," pressed the starter button — OFF . . . ON . . . OFF. The machine sat there as complacent and uncooperative as a stone wall. Finally, in desperation, I sought out a Spanish instructor. She came hurriedly, fidgeted with the starter button for a moment, then lifted the dangling cord as if to say "See," plugged it into the receptacle, and departed. We will tell that story, Shadow, when we get back home to Bermuda. I can hear my mother's rich laughter. I can hear my father's laughter. I can hear my older sister and her children, when they come to welcome me home, telling the story again and again and laughing, ". . . and then she lifted the dangling cord as if to say 'See,' plugged it into the receptacle, and departed." Then they will say, "Our De Lores almost flunked her Spanish course, and it wasn't just because the course was hard!" Then we will all laugh together.

Coming from Bermuda, where two-thirds of the people are colored, I hadn't realized, Shadow, that in Lock Haven I would be stared at because of my brown skin, but I was stared at. About two days after my arrival, I went to town on a shopping tour with the Nicholsons. Everyone looked at me as if I were the strangest thing ever to appear in the A&P or in Woolworth's, or wherever I happened to be. Actually I was fascinated by this attention; nothing of the sort had ever happened to me before. During the ensuing months the color of my skin brought on many surprising and often amusing incidents. One day a girl who was in my Matter and Energy class came up to me in The Eagle Wing and asked

me if I would mind if she asked me a personal question. Curious and flattered that any one as intelligent as her answers in Matter and Energy classes suggested that she would be interested in me personally, I said, "Go ahead!" Then the question, her voice lowered and her eyes averted from mine: "Are you a native?" After a struggle with myself to keep from shaking with laughter, knowing what her concept of "a native" probably was, I replied that I was a native of Bermuda the same as she was a native of Pennsylvania or whatever state she had been born in. My explanation obviously did not get across to her, for she repeated the question, this time with a still more secretive manner, and this time I had to laugh. "Yes, I am a native," I said. And then for the fun of it I recited the principal parts of the Latin verb *to be born*: "*Nascor, nasci, natus sum. Natus, native, natus, native,*" I said. I think I may have looked at her a little more intently than necessary. As I thought she would, she took my little show of erudition as some sort of barbaric incantation and turned to flee. But milling students shoved her closer to me, and I could not resist the temptation: "By the way, did you hear that good cannibal joke that has been going the rounds of the campus the past few weeks?" The next day in Matter and Energy class I noticed that she waited at the door till I had found a seat. Then she sat on the opposite side of the room. On another occasion a group of girls asked of what significance was the mark in the middle of my forehead. When I told them that it was a chicken pox scar, they looked

disappointed. I think they must have hoped that it was some sort of mystic tribal brand.

Once on the way to the Library I met a student teacher with a dozen or so kindergarten pupils. I guess that they had never seen a brown-skinned person before. They began to whisper and giggle, and one kid said, "Look at her face," as if I had three eyes or something. On another occasion I had accepted the casual invitation of a Caucasian boy to watch some motorcycle races on a little track out at the edge of town. My attention was on the roaring, leaping motorcycles, and I had not thought about the fact that my skin is brown and the boy's was kind of reddish-white. But a woman had noticed us and thought the situation sinister. She maneuvered herself into a position by my side, cut her eyes at me savagely, and said under her breath, but plain enough for me to hear, "This is ridiculous." Do you remember, Shadow, that I smiled at her, wondering what her reaction would be if she knew how completely integrated I am — in that I am part Indian, part Caucasian, part Negro.

There will be other things to tell, Shadow, when we get back to Bermuda — the time I mistook a bottle of liquid detergent for maple syrup and poured it on my pancakes, the time I joined the Nicholsons as they watched television and thinking that they were watching their favorite comedy program, observed that one of the actors looked like Winston Churchill and it turned out that they were watching a newscast and that "the actor" really was Winston Churchill. Maybe if my friend from

Matter and Energy knew about these incidents and others as stupid, she really would be justified in wondering whether I would revert to nose rings and mysterious midnight rites as soon as I left the boat and joined the other "natives" in Bermuda.

And we'll tell them, Shadow, about our Christmas-time trip to New York, and how I found the escalators a major hazard and the subways terrifying. Getting off an escalator, till I got the hang of it, was harder than stepping from a moving motorcycle, and the subway doors were so eager to slice me in two that only my quick leaps prevented them from accomplishing their purpose. Oh, I was a typical New York tourist, all right; again and again I stood with my head tilted back looking up at the tall buildings with the same inevitability that the typical tourist in Bermuda stops again and again to look out to sea.

Shadow, I like Lock Haven and shall be sorry to leave. I like the beautiful mountains all around the city. They were spectacular in the autumn when the leaves turned. I want always to remember the golds and the scarlets among the dark evergreens, and then the tans and browns and rusts just before the snow came. And I love the Susquehanna River, how it rushes and tumbles down through the gorge above the city, then broadens out to a quiet lake in the middle of the town, and finally slides crystal clear down over the long dam and hurries on its way to the sea. And I shall always think of the snow with love.

And I have many friends at the College—girls. Gee! Yes, I like girls;

but I'm a girl, and I like boys, too; in fact, I really like them better than I like girls. But the boys don't like me — not here, anyway. I could say I wonder why, Shadow, but I know why. Of course, I shouldn't complain about not having any dates — after all, I came to college to learn, but somehow I had thought that dates would be a part of my college experience. But they weren't, Shadow.

I wonder what kind of shadow you really are, Shadow — Indian, Caucasian, Negro? The shadows of all races are alike, aren't they? And now I remember The Senior Ball back in the high school gymnasium in Bermuda. There was a place where, when the couples danced by, their shadows danced along beside them, sharp as silhouettes cut from black

paper, but moving in time with the music. I did not think about it then, but I do now. I was dancing with a Caucasian boy — we had gone to a number of dances together. We laughed as we watched our shadows dancing along the wall. I remember now that his and mine were equally black and that as we moved away from the bright light that made our shadows so sharp, our shadows paled in the same degree.

Shadow, our Bermuda coat of arms says "*Quo fata ferunt*" — *where our destiny leads us*. Will I be in college next year and, if so, where? Someday will I marry — and if I do, Caucasian, Negro, or Indian? These are queer times, Shadow, for *all* shadows. "*Quo fata ferunt*." We will go where destiny leads us.

## Cinquain

Juanita Sprengle

At night  
The windows of  
A lighted room do not  
Tell secrets; they mutely mirror  
And mock.

## Of Roses

Juanita Sprengle

Why do roses tease . . .  
Perfume and perfect petal  
Persuade me from my path  
And offer their excellence  
To me.  
They have invited me to play this role before,  
And each time my trusting acceptance  
Is but a rehearsal for the next;  
For always I regress to naivete,  
Reaching towards the blossoms  
Only to withdraw my hand  
Reddened and sore.

I show you roses of flame-bright colors  
That, flickering in a careless breeze,  
Transform me into the proverbial  
Moth.  
Laughing at my allusion, you declare  
I singe only my pride.  
Shall I repine?  
I know that each day  
The end will be the same:  
I never touch a rose but that I cry.  
You tell me that you care,  
But why do you bring me roses?

## September

Glenys Thomas

September is a cruel month,  
Beginning with endings  
And ending with beginnings.

Fall —

Golden pieces of summer drift  
On the orange air.

Leaves scutter under new shoes.  
A plaid dress and trailing hair ribbon  
Disappear around a familiar corner.  
"Duck when you come to the haunted house."

## The Street Light

Glenys Thomas

The circumference of light  
In the night  
Is broken by two lovers,  
As passion hovers.

They stand face to face,  
Embrace,  
And kiss with eyes and heart  
Before they part.

The circumference of light  
In the night  
Is now still, white, unbroken —  
Where love has spoken  
Or been misspoken.

# The Supreme Solution

William Tell

ONCE there was a great and powerful king who had a problem. The king, realizing that he would never be able to solve the problem himself, called together his court so that he could hear some other opinions on the matter. When the court, the guards, the advisers, the wise men, the prophets, and the jester had gathered, the king spoke.

"Woe is me!" he said.

Upon hearing these words, the entire assemblage began whispering among themselves. Never, never before in the history of the kingdom had the king spoken such words.

"What did he say? What did he say?" said the Minister of Finance.

"Oh my goodness!" said the Minister of Finance, and his eyes rolled in their sockets.

When the courtroom had quieted down, the king continued. "Woe is me!" he said. "Oh, woe is me!" And he wrung his hands.

Immediately the Royal Doctor picked up his small, black bag and pushed his way through the crowd. "Doctor here! Doctor here!" he said, stepping on the toe of the Minister of Commerce. He rushed up to the throne, made a cursory bow, and said, "Corns. Your Majesty?"

"No," said the king.

"Backache, Your Majesty? Sore throat, boils, or heartburn, Your Majesty?"

"No, No, No!" said the king.

The Royal Doctor took his stethoscope out of his bag and was about

to make an examination when the king threw his hands up in the air, looked despondently about the room and said, "Babies!"

"Babies?" said the Royal Doctor, looking at the king out of the corner of his eye.

"Babies?" said the Minister of Finance to the Minister of Agriculture.

"Babies?" said the Minister of Agriculture to the Minister of Finance.

And soon the word of the king was being spoken by everyone. "Babies! Babies! Babies!"

Near the back of the room stood the seven wisest men in the kingdom. The wisest of them all stroked his long white beard, nodded once or twice and, smiling shrewdly, turned to the second wisest of them all. "The Queen," he said, "is going to have a baby."

Soon the words of the wisest wise man were spread throughout the throne room. "The Queen is going to have a baby," said the Minister of Finance to the Minister of Agriculture.

The Royal Doctor, upon hearing these words, snatched up his black bag and, without even removing his stethoscope from his ears, ran out of the room.

"Oh no!" said the king when he heard the news. "The Queen is not going to have a baby. There are already too many babies." And he pointed to the window. "Look!"

Everyone rushed toward the window. The Minister of Commerce got

there first and looked out. It was just as the king said. There were babies everywhere. Babies crawled along the sidewalks and played in the streets. Babies climbed in the trees and dripped from the rooftops. Babies climbed out of windows and doors and chimneys. Everywhere there were soft, pink, cuddly, cooing babies.

"Woe is me!" said the Minister of Commerce and turned sadly from the window.

And everyone who looked said in turn, "Woe is me!"

The king, who was beginning to regain his composure, waited until everyone had looked (He was a polite king) and then in a very determined voice said, "Woe is me!"

Then he looked about the courtroom and said, "Something must be done. Something extraordinary must be done. Something extraordinary must be done immediately. There are too many babies in the kingdom. There are not enough houses for all these babies; there are not enough doctors or teachers. If we don't do something, we will no longer be the most powerful kingdom in the world."

A shudder passed through the throne room at these words. For several minutes no one spoke. At last the Minister of Commerce came forward and made a low bow. "Your Majesty," he said, "I have a suggestion. The problem as I see it is this: we have too many babies."

"Yes," said the king, "that is correct."

"Then," said the Minister of Commerce, "we must reduce the number of babies in some way and in this way

return to normal. As Minister of Commerce I have knowledge of all means and methods of transportation in this country and knowledge of all exports and imports and, in light of this knowledge, I can guarantee that it would be entirely feasible to ship a large number of babies out of the country by horse-dray, as many as three thousand per day. In this way the problem might be solved."

And the king, who had a mind of his own and was never unduly influenced by others, said, "Wonderful! An excellent suggestion!"

"But Your Majesty!" said the court jester.

"Silence!" said the king. "I have reached a decision. Issue a proclamation!" And the court, impressed by the wisdom of their king, shouted, "Hurrah!"

The king dismissed the court. The proclamation was issued and carried out.

The next day the king called his court together once again. "Woe is me!" he said.

An air of dismay and then gloom spread over the throne room. Everyone grew silent. From the courtyard outside came the sounds of the Minister of Commerce being shot. "Woe is me!" said everyone but the Minister of Commerce.

The king looked about the throne room, and said, "There are still too many babies in the kingdom. The plan of that scoundrel, the Minister of Commerce, has failed. Three thousand babies were shipped by horse-dray to the land of Chindovia yesterday. This morning a shipment of six thousand babies arrived by water from Chindovia. They too

have too many babies. And," he said as a tear formed in the corner of his right eye, "they are not even the right color."

No one spoke for a very long time; then, at last, someone pushed his way through the crowd. He was a powerful man, honored and revered throughout the land and everyone stepped back to make a path to the throne for him. He wore a gold cross suspended from a ring through his nose. He did not bow before the king.

"Your Majesty," he said, "I have a plan which cannot fail because it is the right plan, the only plan. The problem is not that there are too many babies. That is ridiculous. Everyone knows that babies are a joy, that babies are good, and to fail to want babies is a terrible thing. The problem is that, at present, in our ignorance, we have failed to find a way to feed these babies. I have a plan to solve this problem.

"As Your Majesty undoubtedly knows, there is a certain faction in this kingdom which has failed to discover truth, has failed to see the light. This faction (and I truly pity them) insists on passing-on preposterous, barbaric, and even hideous beliefs to helpless younger members of their families, to unwitting natives of the outlying districts and, God help us, to some few erring followers of the true faith. This doomed faction insists on the worship of cats, which they call sacred, while, as everyone with a speck of intelligence knows, cats are an ordinary animal and are not sacred. Only dogs are sacred.

"I also point out that a cat is a very greedy animal, an animal capable of and quite willing to consume

twice, three times as much food as an ordinary baby. And do you realize, Your Majesty, that there are ten thousand of these evil creatures roaming, scavenging about the country? These cats are responsible for our present food shortage and must be eliminated! With the elimination of cats the problem will be solved. That is my plan, Your Majesty."

The king, who had a mind of his own and was never unduly influenced by others, looked at the man with the ring, who was sweating profusely and obviously entirely in earnest, and suddenly saw the light and said, "Wonderful! An excellent suggestion."

"But Your Majesty!" said the court jester.

"Silence!" said the king. "I have reached a decision. Issue a proclamation!"

The court was dismissed. The proclamation was issued and carried out and everyone went to bed happy.

The next day when the king called the court together, everyone observed how green was the face of the religious man as he hung suspended from a pole outside by the ring through his nose.

"Woe is me," the king said when all was quiet. "The baby problem is still not solved. Last night all the cats in the kingdom were shot. There were not ten thousand, but only two thousand and most of them were very skinny. The food that was thus saved was, alas, of no use because babies do not like fish heads and scraps. The cat-worshippers are up in arms. The rat population has doubled. And this morning," said the king as a large tear formed in

the corner of each eye, "we received a shipment of six thousand more babies from Chindovia, and none of them are the right color either."

"Woe is me," said everyone in the throne room. The Minister of Finance pulled out a large red handkerchief and blew his nose.

For a long time nothing could be heard but an occasional snuffle. Then the wisest of the wise men and his followers walked slowly toward the throne. When they had got there and had properly bowed, the wisest wise man began stroking his long white beard and, because it was a beard of immense length, seven assistants began stroking it also so that no part of it should remain unstroked. When the entire beard had been properly stroked the wisest wise man turned to the second wisest wise man and whispered something to him. Then the second wisest wise man turned to the third wisest, and so on to the seventh, who walked forward to the king and whispered something in his ear. The king nodded and said, "Would all the women present please leave the room?" And since no women were present, no one had to leave.

Then the wisest wise man came forward. "Your Majesty," he said, "I have a suggestion. The problem is that we have too many babies. We cannot solve the problem by growing more food because the amount of food that can be grown is limited while the number of new babies that can be produced is not limited. We cannot ship the excess babies out of the country because there is no where to send them. We must, Your Majesty, get closer to the problem than this. We must reduce the number of

new babies being produced and reduce it drastically. Now, why do we have so many babies? What is the cause of the excess?"

The face of the king grew red. The face of the wisest wise man grew red. The face of everyone in the court grew red.

"Your Majesty," said the wisest wise man, "I can tell you why there are so many babies. It is because people fall in love. When they fall in love, they marry; and when they marry, they have babies. And more babies. The time has come for immediate and drastic action. I propose that, for a period of one year, beginning today, falling-in-love be outlawed in this kingdom and, furthermore, that all people in love shall straightway fall out of love."

Then the king, who had a mind of his own and was never unduly influenced by others, said, "Wonderful! An excellent suggestion!" He heard a slight sound and turned to look at the jester, who was sitting on the top step of the throne. He was hugging his knees and shaking with laughter. The king gave him a push with his foot and the jester rolled down the throne steps — still shaking with laughter.

"Silence!" said the king. "I have reached a decision. Issue a proclamation!" and the proclamation was issued.

There was some grumbling in the court, but everyone went home without argument when the king dismissed them.

That night the king had a terrible fight with his wife, and in the morning he tore the proclamation down from the Royal Bulletin Board with

his own hands. A loud cheer was audible throughout the kingdom.

When the court had convened the king said, "Woe is me!" He looked about the court but said nothing. He waited for a long time for another suggestion. The court, remembering seeing the wisest wise man, minus his beard, pushing a broom down the corridors of the palace, were reluctant to speak.

Finally a short, chubby little man came forward. He made a bow to the king and said, "Hrumph! Hrumph!"

The king, who had a mind of his own and was never unduly influenced by others, said, "Wonderful! An excellent suggestion."

"Hrumph!" said the little man. "Your Majesty, I have given the so-called baby problem a great deal of consideration. It seems to me that the problem is not just a baby problem dealing with the entire population. You see, Your Majesty, there are not merely too many babies; there are too many adults, and each baby that exists now will someday become an adult. Somehow, somehow we must eliminate excess. All plans thus far have failed. My plan cannot fail. I propose that we eliminate in some way the weakest portion of our population, those who consume but do not produce, those who undermine the strength of our glorious kingdom. I propose, Your Majesty, that a piece of chalk be taken and that a line be drawn across the kingdom and that in the morning the people on one side of the line and the people on the other side of the line engage in a glorious war!"

The king was so excited at this idea that he jumped up and down on his throne and his crown fell to the floor. "Wonderful! An excellent suggestion!" Someone handed him his crown.

The jester said nothing, but there were tears in his eyes and he was sniffing a little.

"Silence!" said the king. "I have reached a decision. Issue a proclamation!"

The throne room went wild with cheering. "Hurrah! Hurrah!"

"I'll cut out your liver!" said the Minister of Agriculture to the Minister of Finance.

"I'll run you through!" said the Minister of Finance to the Minister of Agriculture.

The king made the chubby little man a general and then dismissed the court and everyone hurried home.

The battle began early the next morning. Guns, knives, clubs, stones, swords, chains, cannons, slingshots, and fists were all employed. People punched, kicked, scratched, bit, gouged, cut, slashed, and shot each other. Curses and screams of agony filled the air. Blood flowed six inches deep in all the main streets. Bodies and pieces of bodies were everywhere. Down in the cellars and dungeons men tortured other men. They pulled them apart with machines. They stuck pins in them. They cut out their eyes.

Everyone was happy.

The battle lasted one week. At the end of that time half the population had been killed and another quarter maimed. The king called to-

gether what was left of his court.

"Gentlemen," said the king, "the war has been a complete success. The baby problem is solved. And I believe that if this problem ever arises again, it will be a very simple thing to have another war. In fact, I recommend it."

Then he promoted the chubby little general to Super-General in Command of His Majesty's Armies, Navies, and Other Forces and also made him head of the new War Department.

The court was dismissed and went home.

The king was so satisfied with the outcome of the battle that he had a special monument erected in the public square in honor of the Super-

General and another, a smaller one, beside it commemorating the war dead. And on the reverse side of the special monument a new Royal Bulletin Board was erected upon which was fastened a proclamation declaring war to be the supreme solution of the baby problem and making known the intention of the king to have frequent wars in the future. The king, desiring the proclamation to remain permanently in the public eye, securely fastened it with his own hands, using four gold-plated screws of great length, 159 solid gold nails, and a whole box of solid gold thumb-tacks.

And under the scepter of this wise and benevolent ruler, the people of the kingdom lived happily ever after.

**George  
Harrison Hamlin**

My dog George  
Had only three legs.  
Formerly he had four, of course,  
But the vet had to amputate one.

I felt sorry for him at first  
Because he had lost so many of his old proficiencies:  
He couldn't run, jump, or scratch.  
He just limped around the house  
Accustoming himself to his new way of life.

When friends visited,  
George was always the topic of conversation.  
Once someone made a mistake and called him a one-legged dog,  
And I laughed.  
It really was not too funny, though.

George finally adjusted:  
He became very sturdy on his three legs,  
He began to run and jump and scratch again.  
Then, when friends visited, I would say,  
Look, my dog is a tripod.

**The Trip Home**

**Wild Geese**

**Roger Test**

Just before night  
Five flying geese in a high slim line  
Swept across the sky.  
Sharp shreds of sound split from their throats,  
Echoed above the hills.

From far below I watched their wide wings  
Stroking them into the night.  
I watched and listened.  
I will their return, for with their passing  
Goes autumn and comes winter.

Even while I watched,  
Winter was coming.

Five flying geese in a high slim line  
Sweeping across the night,  
And in their wake comes winter.



## Haiku

Ernest Rebstock

A bird in the sky?  
Oh no, how stupid I am!  
It's mighty Batman.

## Cinquain

Ernest Rebstock

CUCKOO,  
CUCKOO, CUCKOO  
Clangs from the noisy clock  
Whenever we want most to hear  
T.V.

## The Trip Home

William Roy Price

ALL THE SILENCE that ever was or could be, enveloped the silver and blue ship as it sped through the grayness of empty space. *Starship Galileo*, they had named it, and it carried all the uncharted hopes and fears of man to . . . what?

Inside the control room three men, relaxed in the free-fall state, occupied themselves with instruments and kept a radar and advanced radio check on their supposed destination and on their point of departure — Earth.

Colonel Alexi Rashevski, the commander from Russia, lean, tall, and sharp-featured, with bushy eyebrows and a startling shock of hair, leaned back in his contoured gravity seat and yawned enormously.

"Bob," he said in his Oxford-perfect English, "radio Earth and tell them our E.T.A. is now twenty-two hours, forty-three minutes."

"Yes, Sir," replied Captain Robert Guinness. Guinness, of medium build, floated up from his chair and pushed himself cautiously towards the radio control panel. His chiseled Negro features showed their usual surprise as he twisted in mid-air, rationalizing the continuously exhilarating feeling of being a free-floating object.

The third member of the group, Tushuro Shukuro, the Japanese, slept quietly in his form-fitting bunk along the port wall. He was the Astro-Navigator of this, the first star-expedition, and his job was the most important of all — to keep them on an unwavering path towards the star

Sirius, and then, if possible, back home again.

"Calling Earth Station! Calling Earth Station! This is *Galileo*! This is *Galileo*! Present co-ordinates: stand by. Mark! One-Five-Seven-Four-Two . . . Four-Eight . . . Four-Three-Four-Five! Speed: one, seven, nine, eight, six, five. All systems normal. I repeat: all systems are normal! Our E.T.A. is now twenty-two hours, forty-one minutes. I repeat; E.T.A. is now twenty-two hours, forty-one minutes. We will contact you again in twelve hours. That is all! *Galileo-out!*"

The message would take approximately twenty-five minutes to reach Earth on their faster-than-light radio frequency, and by the time the reply would reach them, the ship would be many light miles farther along on its journey.

The *Galileo* had been traveling at nearly the speed of light for two years, and the three men were hopefully anticipating an ultimate achievement — the stars!

Ever since the world government had been formed one hundred and eight years before, the objective of the concerted efforts of all space scientists had been this trip.

Each man on board had been exhaustively studied, trained, and educated from the time of their respective childhoods. And the tests they had undergone before setting out on this flight had made the tests for the mid-twentieth century astronaut

seem like childish games in comparison.

Rashevski had the ultimate leadership capabilities, Guinness was the ultimate in all fields of communication, and Shukuro had had no equal on Earth for facility in mathematics and utter comprehension of every theory since Einstein's thought-provoking but now elementary propositions.

Twelve hours seemed like an eternity to the three men and to Earth waiting for word, but they were passing, and with achievement only ten hours away, Rashevski spoke.

"Bob, Tushuro, this has been, to borrow an archaic American term, one hell of a blast!" He paused then, as if he had caught himself in some sort of embarrassing irreverence. Then with a slight air of face-saving braggadocio, he went on, "Soon we'll see whether we win the brass ring — I'm sure glad it's nearly over!"

"Colonel," the Japanese spoke, "there is something strange about this star up ahead — it's not giving off definite radio patterns — according to Bob's last reading. It's as though the waves were coming from around the star — instead of directly from it. Not only that, but its appearance has been vastly altered since our last fix at twelve hours out. It's very strange!"

"Yes, Tushuro. Perhaps the mysteries we'll see will repay us amply for all this —" He made a halting sort of gesture that seemed to include the ship, the men, the long flight, the years of preparation.

"Something else has happened, Colonel," Bob said turning from the radio panel, his usually smiling face perplexed, "I've lost all radio fre-

quency now — it is as though there were no star there at all. It just doesn't make sense!"

"Switch on the forward viewer," Rashevski ordered.

Tushuro touched a button and heavy panels drew back from the forward wall to reveal a screen very much like that of a TV. Another button activated it, and then they were looking down into the fiery depth of the star in front of them.

"Colonel," Bob spoke again, "there doesn't seem to be any evidence of planets in our present path, and the star itself seems to lack density at this range. Also, there is no evidence of any heat effects on our shield — this just goes against all laws of nature! Something is wrong — very wrong!"

"But, Bob," Tushuro spoke quickly, "all our indicator systems show all detection systems normal. This may be a phenomenon outside our normal Earth laws. Remember, all applied science is simply that — applied science. This is outside of our region of application!"

"Perhaps," Rashevski said, "but we must be extremely careful — recheck all equipment for any irregularities. Continue to make your calculations, Tushuro — we must find out what's going on out there!"

The minutes continued to pass, and then Tushuro spoke with a strange hint of fear that filled his whole voice.

"Bob, Colonel, this star, it... it seems as though we could drive this ship right through it. There is no density. No heat. Nothing. It's as though it is a hole in space instead of a star!"

Rashevski, his brow furrowed, fixed

the other two with his deep gaze, and then, after what seemed a great pause, said:

"Mankind has striven towards this goal for thousands of years, and here we sit. Maybe the mystery of space is not for us, and then, maybe it is. Either way, we've got to make a decision now!"

"Tushuro, you say there is no density or heat at all. Bob, you say there are no radio waves. What is our decision? If conditions stay the same as now, we must alter our course and go directly towards the star... and into it!"

Gasps from both the other men served only to heighten the tension in the cabin.

"But, Colonel," Tushuro nearly screamed, "that would be ridiculous! We would be an atomic cinder in two seconds." With a visible effort, the Japanese managed to regain some of his composure, and then began speaking again.

"As close as we are now, our heat shields should be white hot, but they're not. I can't understand it. Our equipment *must* be fouled up!"

"I don't think so," Rashevski said.

"We will alter course for collision!"

The other two men stared at him for a moment, glanced quickly at each other, then turned again to their duties.

Rashevski computed the course change co-ordinates, called them to their acceleration couches, and fed the information into the master computer. After two minutes, the computer automatically fired the stern and bow rockets for three short blasts. Then one stern booster fired for three

seconds and cut off. Silence filled the cabin once again, but they were now traveling in another direction... towards the star!

The ship sped on in silence, and the silence was broken only by the voice of the Colonel calling for heat and density and radio readings — of which there were none.

An hour passed, twenty minutes more, then Rashevski said, "We're there!"

They braced themselves for a physical shock, a blow, but none came, and they were inside the star!

"Open the viewers quickly, all of them," Rashevski ordered.

All viewing screens were switched on, and they showed the very substance of the star, which was intensely bright, even though the outer surface of the screens were nearly opaque.

It was... *flimsy*, was the word, white, flimsy, and sparkling.

"It's... it's beautiful," Bob gasped.

"Don't take your eyes off your instruments," Rashevski shouted sternly. "We've got to find out if this is all there is to Sirius!!"

After some minutes the light seemed to get brighter, but there were still no changes in the instrument readings. It continued to get brighter—then began to fade slightly.

"It looks... it looks as though we are coming to... to some sort of opening," Rashevski nearly yelled, as he stared intently at the front screen.

Suddenly, almost imperceptibly, the men were conscious of a sound pervading the silence of the ship—a sound like that of a strange music heard from a great distance.

"It sounds almost like singing, like

many voices singing together," Bob said, "and it's getting louder. Louder and clearer."

An endless minute hung in the air, and the music rose and fell, surging like the ocean. Then the ship floated through the star; the men looked at

the screens and knew . . . knew what lay beyond the stars.

As if they were one, they bowed their heads together . . . it was the first time that man had ever looked on the face of God.

## New Buildings Rise

David Parks

New buildings rise where old ones tumble down.  
Young massive walls obliterate all clue  
Of canceled cornices and bright renown,  
Prelude another generation's view.  
Fresh recent glinting glass reflects the scene  
Of countless students swiftly streaming by;  
They come and go, a feeling of routine  
Pervades the atmosphere they glorify.  
I wonder at this sight wherein I see  
Unwitting traitors faithless to a trust,  
Oblivious of any memory  
That crumbled here in broken stone and dust.  
Old walls fall down, and new ones take their place  
Forewarned—foredoomed all hope of final grace.

## Statement

Mary Kay Hunter

I like simple things . . .  
I like the wind —  
It fluffs my hair  
And gently pushes me along.  
I like the snowflakes that fall on my coatsleeve —  
They're shaped like stars and diamonds;  
As one dies out, it is replaced daintily by another.  
I like beach sand —  
It bundles my feet and keeps them warm  
As evening comes on.  
I like a country pond  
And the waterskippers that caper over it.  
I like Sunday morning church bells  
And the mahogany gleam of the pew.  
And I like you.

## Chicago

Mary Kay Hunter

## Image

Mary Ann Eckert

Icicles, suspended  
Like frosted daggers  
Above my head,  
Lucent, glistening, melting.

## On An Old Superstition

Juanita Sprenkle

Once upon a time of goodness and light  
Lived Vickie.  
She was the beautiful fairy of trusting innocence.

Each fairy is assigned a special person  
To watch over, comfort, advise, and so forth —  
Vickie was assigned to Jerry.

When someone says, "I don't believe in fairies,"  
A fairy drops dead — everyone knows that.  
Why doesn't Jerry believe anymore?

## Chicago

Mary Grimm

CHICAGO! Why can't I remember more? Of course, I was only six, but that was the first real part of my life, the beginning of my consciousness. I should remember! Fleeting images... always. Little pictures flash by, like the view from a speeding train — a glimpse and gone.

I see my street, a dingy street with run-down houses on both sides against a flat gray sky. My house was shingle, dirty dark-red shingle with a sooty dark-green shingle roof. It was squat and ugly, and the house nextdoor was of stone, maybe brick, with concrete ledges on either side of the steps. All of the houses had steps — no porches, just steps and ledges.

There was an empty lot next to the house nextdoor, heaped with tires and rubbish and broken bottles. The boys used to play ball there when they weren't playing in the street, and they'd fall down and cut themselves, but no one ever bothered to clean it up. It was part of the block, part of the whole dirty miserable Chicago when I was six years old.

The grocery store was up from the lot, a dimly-lit gray frame building with flashy advertising all over the grimy store-front windows. They were big windows, but I couldn't see in because it always looked yellow and smoky inside, as it was. There was a big wooden counter facing the door with shelves of cans behind it and wilted lettuce leaves and carrot tops hanging down over the edge. I never got any farther than that groc-

ery store in that direction, never got past the corner lot — because the colored people lived two blocks away and my parents were afraid of them. I wasn't, but I don't know why I wasn't. I didn't know anything about them, except that they were black and I was white and that was supposed to make them bad. So all I ever saw was my part of the street and the strange black people moving around past the corner lot.

Mine was a long street. I walked it every day with my Mother, my hand in hers, past the sagging houses. I was afraid of the people in those houses on my street, afraid of the kids on the block because they picked on me. I was younger than any of them and a sissy, and they thought it was smart to be tough. I learned fear from them; I learned fear in Chicago — dirty, dreary, rainy-day Chicago.

They used to wait for me to come out; and then they'd jump on me and hold me down, pin my arms and legs to the ground so I couldn't move, and they'd hit me and hit me and grind my face in the snow and lie all over me so I could feel their bodies crushing mine and I'd be scared — so scared I couldn't scream, so weak I couldn't move.

I spent most of my time in the house playing blocks or dolls or listening to the radio. I used to listen to the FBI stories and the Green Hornet and Buster Brown — things like that. We had a big radio, you know, one of those big wooden ones

with velvety material over the speaker part. It was all rotting and I used to poke my fingers through it when my mother wasn't looking. I knew that radio, every inch of it. It was my friend, maybe my only friend in that house.

Mine was a dark gloomy house, the kind you want to tiptoe around in and whisper in. All of the lights were dim except one big one over the dining room table. We never used that table, though; we always used the kitchen table with its sticky oil-cloth cover and the cold linoleum on the floor beneath it. There was a naked lightbulb over it and I had to stand tiptoe on a chair to reach it.

I'd turn the little knob, let go, and it would swing back and forth, back and forth. And the light would go on and off, on and off, and it would cast scary shadows on the scaling wooden cabinets.

Chicago was gray, all gray — always. Not even in spring did color come, for the houses were so close together that there wasn't any room for color — no room for trees or flowers — just room for houses and people. Chicago was cold and gray and stark, a city of lines and edges and fear, the place where I was born. I opened my eyes and cried unto the world to give me light, and it gave me human misery — it gave me life.

## Christ Slipped Down

Mark Underwood

Christ slipped down  
from His high cross  
this Easter morning  
and was dismayed  
at all displayed before His eyes

Christ slipped down  
from His high cross  
this Easter morning  
and walked away to where  
there were no chocolate covered Easter eggs  
and no cocoanut cream Easter eggs  
and no peanut butter Easter eggs  
and no pink and fluffy Easter eggs  
and no tinfoil covered Easter eggs  
and no white as milk Easter eggs  
and no large pound Easter eggs  
half-buried in a bed of shredded paper Easter grass  
inside a pink and and purple woven basket  
for \$.98 at Neighart and Nixon's or \$.88 at Uncle Joe's

Christ slipped down  
from His high cross  
this Easter morning  
and walked away to where  
there was no Sunrise Service  
quickly followed by an Easter egg hunt  
from 9:00 to 10:00 or in case of rain  
on Monday from 4:00 to 5:00  
and where there was no clandestine  
Easter bonnet contest among the ladies  
of higher social distinction among mortals

Christ slipped down  
from His high cross  
this Easter morning  
and walked away to where  
there were no drowsy human beings  
slipping into their Easter finery  
with formal repeated ritual

Christ slipped down  
from His high cross  
and walked away to where  
no happy dude dressed  
in fluffy cotton fur  
was handing out lollipops  
to trusting kiddies  
in Macy and Gimble's first floor toy department  
and indicating with happy, happy paw  
tempting plastic cars trucks tractors  
and bikes with shining  
wheels and spinnerets

Christ slipped down  
from His high cross  
this year  
and entered the stone tomb  
to await the three  
dark days for resurrection  
consecration and separation  
of the soul and body  
from this despised world

## Field Trial

Roger Test

"Now we'll find out if it was worth all the trouble," the Old Man said, getting started. "Turn that cat-chasing, land-scaping, shoe-chewing mutt loose."

I slipped the collar from the eight-month-old English Setter and waved him toward the cornfield. The pup, at the moment, wanted to inspect Mother's shrubs. The Old Man and I waited.

"That pup's like you were when you were about six or seven," the Old Man said. I knew what was coming. I had spent two months away from the Old Man's tutelage, and he was eager to take up where he had left off. I knew better than to give him a start, but I was too slow for him.

"I wasn't that clumsy," I said, noticing the trouble the pup had balancing on three legs.

"Clumsy ain't what I meant, though you might have touched on something," he said. "I was thinking about how you used to get out of sight and think you didn't have to listen if I couldn't see you. Pup's the same way. Try to keep an eye on him."

The Old Man was edging toward the "clumsy" topic, but the pup finished his inspecting before the Old Man quite made it. He waved the pup into the cornfield and slipped two fat, red shells into his shotgun. I loaded my double and swung it on an imaginary pheasant. The stock felt smooth and cold against my cheek. The early morning sun was

just burning the haze off the creek below the cornfield and high-lighting the rusty yellow of the stubble where we walked. I thought of my friends who would be spending the day in classes at college. Mother had raised some objections to my taking a few days off, but the Old Man had come to my aid.

"As the fellow says, you can't let college interfere with his education," he explained. "You can't learn everything from books. Maybe his ignorant Old Man knows some things his professors don't."

He was "started," as Mother and I called it.

"Some of them educated people ain't decent company even for themselves. You have to catch a boy young and teach him enough manners so he doesn't get ruined no matter what kind of people he's with."

"Manners," to the Old Man, signified what "courtesy," "honesty," and "industry" signify to others.

The pup galloped clumsily back and forth, his skinny tail whipping. I watched him crash across the crackling stubble of the rows the Old Man and I were walking. We walked half the length of the field and the pup sat down to scratch an ear.

"Doesn't look like he's interested in pheasants," I said, as the Old Man stooped to pull the bur from the squirming dog's ear.

"It ain't the dog's fault you don't have a bushel of dead birds," the Old Man retorted.

He was "laying for me," I was sure.

"He can't make pheasants, he can only point them. If you'd open your eyes you'd see that this part of the field is cut right down to the stubble. Any fool could figure that ring-necks hang out where there's some cover and maybe a little corn to eat. Like up ahead where I left some rows standing and spilled a few ears off the wagon for good measure. It ain't surprising you're flunking 'Logic 101.'"

The pup moved on. We followed, the Old Man chuckling gleefully, I properly abashed. The dog moved back and forth, back and forth, in a clumsy but regular arc. I looked at my watch and thought of my nine-o'clock lit. class and of the dark-haired girl who would be settling next to my vacant seat. The pup stopped. His tail had a ridiculous kink in it.

"He's pointing!" I shouted, quickening my pace.

"Let's try not to scare him out of it," the Old Man said from behind me.

I stopped and waited for him.

He walked to the pup, talking quietly to keep him steady. He pushed on the dog's rear and explained; as much to the pup as to me, that the pup would brace against the pressure and hold a solid point.

"They probably call that "reverse psychology" or some such fancy name at that college of yours," he said. He straightened the kink from the skinny tail. When he was satisfied with the pup's form he said, "that ringneck ain't going to wait for us

all day. I'd say he's getting pretty nervous in that patch of weeds. Try to bust him so the pup won't get disgusted with us and quit."

I walked toward the weeds, with the Old Man's eyes in my back. "Hit the damned thing," I said to myself. "Hit the damned thing for a clumsy pup on his first point of the season and for the old man who trained us. Take it smooth and easy—just swing through and touch it off," I thought.

The pheasant leaped into the air cackling his crazy-laugh cackle, and I knew when I jerked off the shot that I had missed.

"The Old Man's probably chuckling his head off," I thought as the double swung itself back toward the bird. "He'll never let me live this down," . . . as I watched the front bead swing through the bird. "I should be back in lit class," . . . as I heard the second blast.

The pheasant crumpled in a burst of iridescent feathers and tumbled down and down to thump on the earth. The pup got there a second later and grabbed one wing and tried to carry the bird back to the Old Man. He kept stumbling over the wing that hung down between his front feet. Then he turned his skinny tail to us and dragged the bird on the ground.

"That ain't exactly what you'd call classy shooting or retrieving," the Old Man said, trying to hide a grin. He accepted the bird from the pup and smoothed the feathers. He looked at the pup, then at me. Then the Old Man said, "Maybe it was worth the trouble after all."



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