









Poem No. 5  
(About Old Men)

Old men sitting in the park,  
Old men sitting, smiling, scowling,  
Old men going home before dark;  
Living from death,  
Dying from life,  
Old men trudging slowly down sundown streets.  
Old men going home before dark.

J. F. Wehler







hurt-----emotional or physical  
distressful or slight  
misery  
everyday wants  
terrifying experience

the friend of evil, with a touch of love thrown in

am in pain often  
words cause pain,

not only the meaning but the unmeaning  
obviously pain can never be successfully eradicated because of man  
it seems to be ones duty to try to live with and make the best of  
his various pain  
can't do it though,

the more tries the more pain

paradox

right is pain,

wrong is pain

none are same.

pain: what's that? oh, how well we all know! he's right-  
words are inadequate-hears that last semester from different prof-  
back to pain-

hurts-

sometimes physical-

sometimes mental

i think i'd rather physical-maybe not-not quite sure which is  
worse-everyone must experience it--part of human life-good  
part of human life-

good part, in a way-

mental makes you realize things

misunderstanding

emotions great at the moment, but later, doubt

knowing one (who means much to one) is doing something to harm themselves  
can't help or guide them

falling.....

pain to me is the constant thinking

of what my fiance is doing when i'm not with her.

hurt,

help me,

unbearable,

cry out,

would rather die than live with such suffering

why me?

(b)



pain is anticipation of suffering,  
being hurt,  
something unbearable,  
penetrating the heart  
possibly like this course

my lungs are a pain  
pain is pain.....pain  
plain  
pain has no saine  
boundaries marat sade--his letter to his wife  
i'll bet she was one

HELLAVA PAIN  
the worst pain anyone can suffer is caused by friends

pain can be a bad grade or a hurt  
knee. pain can be embarrassment, it can be weak or strong. pain  
is saying something degrading about a friend and finding him right  
behind you, pain can be life, birth, and death. it is world-wide.  
everyone at sometime or another has experienced some form of pain.

Composed by an L.H.S. World Literature Class

(c)



## IMPRESSIONS OF A BEACH

The wind blew across the beach  
flinging sand into my eyes,  
The air was cold and salty  
as I walked by the water.

The gulls soared rhythmically  
riding the cool air currents.  
The sand pipers scuttled past,  
fleeing an onrushing wave.

Herring broke the sea-surface.  
Scales mirrored the dying sun.  
Shells lay scattered at my feet  
like leaves on a forest floor.

Without a sign, gulls took wing.  
The piper darted away.  
The herring swam to rocky coves.  
The shells broke beneath my feet.

The sun diffused into red,  
dropping off the darkened edge.  
The wind blew salty and cold  
as I walked among the shells.

--Howard Kligerman



Fire

The energy of fear  
whittled us to panting  
listening to fire sirens whining  
like dogs on full mooned nights  
delicate to ear and space of body,

sent us tacking towards smoke  
our thin shirts in that summer  
light as sails brushed in wind,  
across the glow of vellum fields  
to the house stoked by a lady  
her hands torches that seared  
each hall and room,  
followed each thick wall  
in soft childhood touch,

her grim motley of colors  
like autumn mornings  
only the colors defined  
until the sun burns off.

We the laconic gathering  
stamped our feet from chill  
stood and shivered.

--Steven Roth



Upon Returning

many years have passed since i was here  
many things have come and gone  
there are buildings where there were fields  
highways where there were homes  
war where there was peace  
death where there was life  
i am leaving and i will not be back again  
far too many years have passed and too many things have gone

--linda rhodes



Spring Shower

Rain--

Soft, hard.

Caressing, driving, tearing.

Knife and balm--

memories.

--Nancy Neitz



POEM NO. 4  
(About Fatherly Advice)

My father,  
Not much for wasted words,  
Not much for wasted worry,  
Lost his temper at the temper of the times  
And turning against the churning tide  
Of disorder and dismay,  
Of reorder and decay of reason,  
Advised me in his advising voice,  
"Son,  
A man must reach out and embrace life;  
A man must run out and race life;  
A man must think out and trace life."  
And feeling slightly foolish by the loud conclusion  
Of his angered conclusions, he softly concluded,  
"A man must walk out and grace life."

My father,  
My workman father,  
Living in the clang and clash of metal machines,  
Struggling in the "Damn!" and dash of warring worlds  
Learning his lessons in the lackluster lyceum  
Of labored inhalation and expiration;  
My father,  
My wiseman workman father,  
Fury fading, teaching done,  
Wisdom giving to an admonished son  
Laughed a laugh in cooling rage,  
Gave up his place at center stage,  
And settled back in weary age.

--J. F. Wehler



deep, dark, murky, blacks,  
racing with a shadow's shadow,  
each step being flushed again with india ink,  
the earth is spinning, up and down,  
the sky is where the sea should be,  
the sea it is green, and now blue-black,  
murky mess, deep murky bog,  
my feet are marching,  
each time i step down, i bring myself further into it,  
sliding down, and around i go, my head is up, and down,  
the world is spinning round,  
the sky is where the sea should be,  
and the sea, it is green.

--jmk







Child of Light

Child of Light.  
I am Darkness.  
Do not touch me  
I will dim your glow.  
I will rape your brilliance  
And make you falter.  
I will kill your current  
And stop its flow.  
I'd like to touch you  
But I'd destroy your sun.  
But before you leave  
There's one thing you should know:  
I don't often stop  
To think of another;  
If I didn't love you,  
I wouldn't let you go.

Marjorie Wilson



## Drowning Season

The shark mouthed waves  
thin in razor smoothness  
the prints of fallow bones  
    followed as roads,  
dragged from oil and coal  
to settle as reefs, inlets  
for seers, lights, moans of deathwatch  
    gulls and curlews  
as the boats, grapple hooks anchoring  
stretch the bay bottom taut,  
pull it to bog of marsh,  
of clay, coal, mastadon;  
whittled bone raking  
the thin veined substance  
    of arms and legs  
the support and bind of leap.

And only those young,  
    intent when drowning sirens  
    through clenched metal teeth burst,  
heed and diminish into the reeds,  
their steel cars crouching  
    on firm, glossless patches astray from the road  
hidden like clams half-burrowed on beach,  
    rock with the slow pelt of motion  
    in dread and cradle of stasis.

Steven Roth



Comfort

Let me curl in your lap  
and sleep unknown  
to sun and moon alike  
tranquilize my mind with youth.  
It will not mean so much to die  
if I could be buried  
on my side-  
if a common plant should grow  
from this bloodless  
swollen palm  
that like a knot of sod  
gives rise to the strength of a flower.  
I shall live  
past the thought of doubt.

Ethel Mae Strunk



Ritual

A thousand bugs  
Dance madly on the screen,  
Groping, searching,  
Struggling to reach the light  
On the other side.  
For hours the hundreds try  
To reach the god-like glow.  
Only a few succeed  
In reaching the shining Death.

Nancy Neitz



## One Corner of Heaven

I laughed.

"So this is the smouldering, smoking hell that all those goody-goody sin shouters have been trying to save me from! 'Repent, love, live!' they said, and then they always stuck out their hands for a contribution. 'Charity,' they said, 'we must love our brothers; we must care for the Master's vineyard.' Fools! The world is a place where you take care of yourself and the devil takes care of the rest of the world.

"Oh, it's not that I don't believe in Christianity, or anything. When I was young I used to go to Sunday School every week--I even won an attendance ribbon one year. My mother used to tell us..... My mother--she was quite a lady. She was one of those giving, trusting people--she was even better than the best of them. She had four of us kids to take care of and not much money to do it on, but she always found time to do something for somebody else. If it wasn't taking care of one of the neighbor's kids while the mother went to the hairdresser, it was cooking for some charity dinner, or a hundred other things. And trusting! I remember one time I came home and found her looking at a vacuum cleaner which was lying in pieces on the kitchen floor. When I asked her where she had gotten it, she told me that some boy had come to the door selling them, and she had bought it from him. He had told her he was a college student working his way through school and he really needed that sale. So mother had bought it--she never looked at the guarantee or



the price tag or even turned it on to see if it worked. It never did work. When Dad came home and heard about that thing, I thought he would never stop cursing. Finally, though, he just stood there and looked at it and at Mother and shook his head, thinking of all the things we would have to give up to pay for that worthless vacuum. Charity, trust--what did they ever get my mother? She died living in the same dinky apartment she had always lived in, still scratching and saving to make ends meet.

"I kept going to church, though, even after my mother died and I had gotten married and moved into my own home. (I never really loved my wife, but, well, you know, it was the thing to do.) I even taught a Sunday School class one year. But then our church got a new preacher. Boy, he was the world's number one sin shouter. He was always after us for something--we were sending money to the starving Indians, and wrapping bandages for the missionaries in Africa, and paying for a new addition to the church. He just never could get through with give, give, give. And what did we ever get out of it? The damned Communists probably just got all that stuff we sent anyway. And besides, those starving people belong to the Communists, so let them take care of them. We've got our own problems. But the worst of that preacher was his sermons. Why can't some people leave well enough alone? He would get up there and talk to us like we were the worst sinners in the world. He'd tell us we had to change our selfish ways, and he even tried to make us feel guilty for what that bunch of Jews did two thousand years ago. Oh, but some of the people in the congregation used to really eat that up. There was



one woman who spent almost every Sunday crying--for her sins, I guess.

"Well, one Sunday I simply decided that I had had enough. Oh, I still went to church with my wife once in a while, but I was never taken in again. The preacher and some of his parishioners came around as I was dying of a kidney disease, and started crying over me and asking me to repent. I could almost see them counting the money they hoped I would leave to them and their church. Well, they might as well have saved their breath. I may not have been the most perfect person, but at least I wasn't hypocritical enough to pretend that I was a saint like them, when inside they were always looking for an angle. Actually, they all envied me if they would have admitted it. Sure they had their religion, but I was the one with the money and respect, while they were still living in their fifty-dollar-a-month apartments. Well if only those saints could see me now--in heaven while they are still back on earth singing and praying and wondering where their next buck is coming from."

I stood in a long, slightly curving corridor which was surprisingly modern in its design. It was in fact very beautiful--not exactly the golden highway I had expected, but nice. The passage was brightly lighted and was lined with many very expensive looking paintings and statues. The floor was covered with a thick blue carpet which was so soft that I could hardly feel my feet touch it as I walked. The air was filled with a very fresh, very enticing fragrance of flowers and grass like that of a cool spring day. From down the hall and around the bend I heard the sound of music and of people laughing and talking.



It came as a rather welcome sound, and I'll have to admit that without my saintly friends, heaven was beginning to get a little lonely. So I went ahead feeling a sort of excitement as I looked forward to an eternity of happiness in heaven.

I guess I was rather amazed as I turned the corner and found myself in a large ballroom filled with people laughing and dancing and drinking. The whole thing didn't look very "heavenly," but it sure looked like a lot of fun. The room was beautiful and was given a bluish glow by the light from a large chandelier hanging overhead. And the people-- well there were no forty-dollar-a-week sinshouters here. The men were all dressed in the very finest evening clothes and the ladies were some of the most beautiful I had ever seen. It seemed to be just the beginning of the evening, for people were still entering, and all seemed immediately to be initiated into the group. So I decided to introduce myself and start my social life in heaven. I walked up to a nearby group of people who were gathered in a sort of circle carrying on a very lively and apparently very jolly conversation.

"Hi," I said, "I'm George Simpson from Akron, Ohio. I just got here and I....." But no one was listening. It wasn't as if they were consciously ignoring me, but they didn't hear me again. They just kept on talking and laughing as if I weren't there. "Well, perhaps they are just a bunch of snobs or maybe they're playing some kind of initiation prank." So I moved on to another group, but this time I decided to just listen for a while. A short, heavy man was telling a joke which I had heard once before, but I remembered to be hilarious. He soon came to the punch line and everyone just broke up laughing.



That is, everyone except me. I knew the joke had been funny and I knew that I wanted to laugh, but somehow I just couldn't. It was as if the muscles of my face and throat had suddenly frozen, and even by straining I found I couldn't change the set expression on my face.

I was embarrassed and strangely frightened by my inability to even smile, and so I left the ballroom and reentered the corridor which had brought me there. I wandered on down the hall wondering at what had just happened and feeling a strange surge of loneliness within me. I guess I had never really felt loneliness before--it had always seemed that I had been trying to get away from people rather than looking for them. I walked on through the beautiful passageway, so wrapped in my thoughts that I almost overlooked the entrance to a small, dim room on my left. But from the doorway I heard a sound much like that of a woman crying. So I turned to the entrance and went in. I found myself in a small funeral parlor which was arranged with about fifty folding chairs. In the front of the room stood a casket with a deep blue lining in which lay the body of a small boy. Before the boy's body sat a middle-aged woman wearing a black dress and crying silently. Ordinarily, I would have just walked on, but somehow I felt irresistably drawn toward this woman, who I was sure had been the boy's mother. I sat down beside her and when she didn't notice me, I tried to tell her how sorry I was about her loss. I offered her my handkerchief to dry her tears, but she neither heard nor saw me beside her. She just sat there and silently cried. I suddenly felt almost overcome with pity for her, and I felt that I myself was going to cry. But no tears



would come, and so with a feeling of utter helplessness, I rose and left the room.

Blindly I walked again through the corridor unable to understand myself or this damnable corner of heaven in which I found myself. Finally I arrived at a room, this time a softly lighted living room. It was a small room containing only two chairs, several light stands, a coffee table, and a large couch in the middle of the room. Sitting on that couch was the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. I had never actually seen her before, but I felt that I knew her, as if she was the girl that I had always pictured the perfect woman to be. She was turned toward me and her haunting blue eyes were looking at mine--except that somehow they didn't seem to be looking at me, but through me to something beyond. But the eyes also seemed to sparkle with love and passion, and they drew me to her as if in a trance. As I neared her I could even more clearly see her flawless face, her dark, shining hair, her full, perfect figure, and I could smell her lovely fragrance. I tried to speak to her; to tell her the words of love that seemed to be bursting from my heart, but they would not pass my throat. I reached for her and touched her but her face, her body held only the cold hard feel of death. Her eyes only stared and her beautiful lips now seemed to be the lips of a department store manikin.

I ran from the room and down the corridor again, this time searching for something or someone unknown. But now I found only a dark wall which marked the end of my "heaven." I was to spend the remainder of time with laughter, tears, and love--the greatest gifts that man can give, and my eternal curse.

Anonymous







Blackbirds

Spring, when birds blacken  
the still branches  
of the forest

and the sun  
does not penetrate the  
damp compost of winter.

I went there  
and shed my clothes  
like a snake sheds old skin.

Cold rain  
drenched my pale shoulders,  
my bony ribs and I

Crouched in thorns  
until the blood stopped  
and numbness denounced pain.

I left that dead carcass  
and took a blackbird's  
for my own.

Shuey



### The Dog

Poor dog, commanding but unwilling hands  
push you back and out of the way.  
The silent morning watches them pack the car,  
trying not to forget anything, except you--  
you stay behind.  
Smiling faces pressed on cold glass.  
Now hands wave good-bye.  
Dogs vainly chase cars but shy  
and fade in rear-view mirrors.

Shuey



## SUMMER NIGHT

Do you know out there, somewhere,  
In a world concealed by this moonless evening;  
Do you know  
How pleasurable and peaceful  
It is to be sitting here, just simply sitting alone,  
On a dark front porch,  
On a dark summer night,  
Contented...nerveless...calm as the soundless air,  
Wet hands loosely folded on a gently gurgling stomach,  
Head back, eyelids closed,  
Mind caressing a brown-haired girl?  
Do you feel  
The earth revolving beneath you slowly,  
Conveying this house, this porch, this chair, this body  
To some place, to some time, to some other life,  
But not knowing where,  
And not knowing when,  
And not knowing what,  
And not really caring  
Because the porch and the night and the self  
Are suffused with a present peace?  
Do you know peace out there?  
Can you feel the earth moving somewhere?

--J. F. Wehler



## Failure

When I was but a tiny lass,  
I had a dream all made of glass,  
A real live dog with talking fur,  
A pure white horse, and a golden spur.

A woman's body--no more a lass-  
And what fell on my dream of glass?  
A man replaces the talking fur;  
The horse turns red and needs no spur.

Shattered glass lay at my feet;  
Bloody black must be my wreath.  
Things today and things long gone  
Make me sing my mortal song:

Come my children. Now come to me;  
Sit here and there and on my knee.  
We'll sing of life and mark our time  
A life without reason, a poem without rhyme.

Now dead a woman, once a lass  
Lying there 'midst the shattered glass,  
A dog, a horse, a golden spur  
Cannot be seen 'neath the crying fur.

--Kathryn Saupp



## THE CHASE

Always, before the dawn crept into the valley,  
you would sing softly  
under the low eaves  
an alien and restless song...  
beckoning me...  
Then without waiting you would run barefoot  
across the pasture--  
fresh droplets soaking your feet so that  
the severed grass would cling.  
And, always, you knew and I knew that  
I would immediately leave my straw mattress in the loft  
and slip outside to follow you in the half-night--  
never able to catch up but never really far behind.  
Your body would appear half-hidden  
as you dodged among the ancient trees  
but in the emerging light, parts of your pale skin  
would cast strange reflections from the bending rays.  
Then as you would reach the open meadow,  
your entire body would reflect the strange glows.  
Single file we would race across the field  
like a parade to herald the early dawn--  
a simple affair with little pomp--  
I, dressed in my coarse sleeping garment  
that whipped about my calves,  
and you, naked and free.  
I would envy you and so run faster faster.  
Joy was to be free.  
We would run until reaching the gray thicket  
of the west pasture.  
Then we would walk into its depths--  
our toes sinking into its cool, damp floor;  
we would walk to the tiny pool  
together.  
It was there by that pool that you would step aside  
and allow me to pass in front of you,  
and you would wait--  
always a glint of hope in your eye--  
as I gazed into the clear water  
but, always, I would turn away  
and walk slowly back to my cabin,  
and, always, you would go and sit  
under the willow tree to await another dawn.

--Linda Viard



NO REASON

Spenser walks the midnight highway home  
where few, then many cars pull on  
as by a string a broken ducky toy is led.  
Where was it once he saw  
the stoned frog  
in thought a spell bound lily dog?  
It doesn't count for anything this night  
all the trees are fruited with the blight  
Patches of tar, smells from round the bend  
are to him now as messages he will not send.

Come, let him there  
looking to no place everywhere

See the drunk hand picking up a flower  
see how with the eyes  
it is brought to the face  
Come, let us murmur,  
give you a wide moment of grace  
retrace the flower  
my eye to your face.

No, no, never hesitate  
an ugly thing you might create

Let us find it never  
where, when the moon has searched her fill  
we might in the early morning grass  
spread our crowded fingers over the piece  
and push away the film of it all  
to find it lying close and tight  
on the earth knowing its being so.

--Ethel Mae Strunk



I Come

Apathy tear drops  
wound tight nearly touching.  
Like a muscular finger joint  
that gives and takes of itself  
to span his sweaty neck  
to be warmed  
by his earth smudged chest  
fine slivers of curled hair  
show silver at his throat.  
Somewhere a greenness  
wears hard inside.  
I am to see this man again  
to touch glad tear drops one by one  
and call him chief  
and go warring for another drop  
to fasten there, to touch  
and war again.  
It is with praise alone  
he summons me.

--Ethel Mae Strunk



Please, Bill,

I know this will sound silly  
and you won't understand (though that doesn't  
really matter)

but let's make a baby.

The day's too hot to do  
anything else,

and you like the way our bodies

sticky and slippery-wet  
contentedly slide into a position of surrender  
to each other.

Besides, I read in a book somewhere  
that it's

the consummation of

I wish I could remember  
the rest of it--

I'm sure it was

beautiful and poetic  
and I know it described

us

and this emotion that is

ours alone.

And if it's a girl, we may even  
name it

after

your wife.

--Juanita M. Siple



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