

**THE  
CRUCIBLE**

**a collection of original poetry and prose**

## THE CRUCIBLE

Spring 1980

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"The Crucible" sponsored a poetry contest with any aspect of Spring as its theme.

The winners are:

First Place -Stephen Hickoff

Second Place -Dan Andrews

Third Place -Jonathan Bravard

*By Stephen Hickoff  
First Place*

*Upon this March field  
the mischief of snow has wandered:  
an auburn flash of winter fox scribbles  
evidence inside chilled air:  
long the silver agony of wind teases  
these oak and aspen: evening  
swallows a cold notion of darkness.  
Fences droop under the suffering  
of late snow. Trees numb the logic  
of dimensional space.*

*Within mud and stream the note is struck:  
The drowsy voice of cattle lifts  
from the barnyard:  
rain enters like a slow animal  
yawning the chorus of sleep.  
The numbered sadness of death is comic  
and cannot understand this sky and earth.*

*Writhe and groan O mandolin of April.  
The fragile contemplation of birds  
amid brass chords of drooling mountains  
remarks electric shadows:  
Spring has entered and caressed the torn edge  
of winter. The accurate pulse of flesh  
and flower carves a silent moon:  
The abstract syllable of a crocus yawns.*

*Spring's Woman*

*By Dan Andrews*  
*Second Place*

*Could you come over?  
My cupboard is bare  
but for two chipped glasses  
and a bottle of California wine.  
Spring is rubbery in my knees  
flowers tingling grow beside the walk.  
I have sat with old men on the bench  
watching skirts swishing in the wind.  
Could you come over  
to lace my checkered table cloth  
and sprinkle daisies on my dusty floor?*

*By Jonathan Bravard*  
*Third Place*

*daybreaks*

*The sun smiles,  
over the long mountains.  
A fluttering of birds,  
breaks the silence.  
Harsh light,  
softens in mist.  
Trees strain in growth.  
Day  
Break*

*morning dance*

*The sunlight dances,  
between crooked trees.  
Bouncing off  
new fences.  
Fresh cut grass.  
Its watermelon smell.  
Jeweled by dew.  
Grandma's farm.  
the memories found*

*time smiles*

*The black and white of Winter,  
fades to the color of Spring.  
The white melts with the snows,  
the green catches the sun.  
Moments of soft review,  
the once harsh time.*

*Spring Happiness*

*By Marcie Peters*

*Happiness in Spring  
is robbins in the field in early morning  
before the sun is high.*

*Happiness in Spring  
is a tottering calf  
warm beside its mother's body.*

*Happiness in Spring  
is a garden full of the heads of colorful flowers  
poking up through winter's rotted leaves.*

*Happiness is Spring.*

*Spring*

*By John Scarlatti*

*Now the flowers blossom red,  
In the shadow of the dark;  
Now the snow has all been shed,  
In the flight of meadowlark.*

*Mommie's Birthday*

*By Daryl Bixler*

*The unclothed trees strain,  
veining through weighty sky,  
woeing with a sigh,  
The cleansing of the rain.*

*Behold! yonder comes the Spring,  
the lady's time of year.  
Away with the aging tear,  
Happy Birthday! hear us sing.*

*Sung out the words,  
while lights eclipse.  
The wish cast from your lips;  
No discord of the cords.*

*Rain offers up the worm;  
the robin bounds in glee  
off to her nest in flee,  
She offers up the worm.*

*The young fly from her nest,  
return for celebrated birth.  
Unable to offer Myrrh,  
Only Love and all their best.*

*Hear the geese returning home,  
sharing songs of ecstasy.  
Like the rivers to the sea,  
Home is far greater than Rome.*

*Happy Birthday! is what's meant.  
Receive the spirit of  
all my unbounded love,  
Through the system that it's sent.*

**By Joan McKay**

*Winter was a long sigh of January wind  
and icicle tears  
but now in sunlight with breezes you've come.*

*Freed from the cold of heavy snows  
your warmth gives blossoms to my love.  
For you are here with a smile of roses  
and eyes of green meadows*

**For Losers**

**By Thomas Ott**

*Hektor  
I bet my last dollar  
that you would win  
the fight that day  
But Achilles  
in the anger  
and the dust  
aimed his sword  
and cut you down.*

*I lost a dollar and now  
have only pennies  
and wonder who will win  
the games  
and will it really matter?*

*P.S. For a good time  
call Zeus 569-7438*

**By Allen Rabert**

*Happy Days and moonlit nights,  
Walking along the riverlit mirror,  
Following transparent ambitions,  
As I catch a breeze in my hair;  
With this I continue on my journey,  
Searching for the rainbow ahead,  
Which is beyond the yellow brick road,  
And all of the wizard's creations;  
Just within reach of a butterfly,  
Born out of yesterday into today,  
Myself being born into the travesty of life  
Like the butterfly, my counterpart, and mirror.*

**By Edith W. Durham**

*Because Worm could not keep checking  
baggage from bus to bus,  
she got off alone  
on a wide empty apple orchard road  
late in yellow jacket summer,  
fallen squashed open hot juice  
moistening the field.  
Tinted faces head shaking peered back  
at her uncramped freedom  
walking slowly*

## *The Baby*

*for Erin McElroy, my niece*

**By David Martin**

*They drove on in anger and silence a few miles, both intense in their thoughts. The husband gripped the steering wheel with earnest. The wife sat with her arms crossed. Both glared at the road ahead as they rode on through the night.*

*Sleeping in a carrier on the back seat was their infant daughter. Their son sat quietly by the window and watched the darkness pass by. He had been listening. Now the tires hummed in the parents' silence.*

*Then: "Carol, you didn't need to tell your mother! She doesn't have to know this, and she'll only worry."*

*"John, I needed to tell her. I needed to tell her!"*

*Everything should just be quiet about it," he said. "Everything. It will be just like it didn't happen, anyhow. No one should know."*

*He looked over at her unforgettingly. Her arms remained crossed, and her stare remained fixed ahead.*

*They went on further without speaking. The son laid his arms against the inside of the window*

*In some minutes she tried to ease him: "This will be okay, John. After all, this will be what's best for us." She uncrossed her arms and looked over at him. "John. It is best and we both know it. I just didn't think I'd be pregnant again so fast. I mean....it's really a thing of inconvenience. And it's just not good for us now."*

*He considered her words, and then he nodded slightly. "I know," he said. "I guess it's just a hard thing, that's all." For a moment he still watched the road ahead and thought. He smiled then and relaxed. He looked over at his wife and said, "Hey, we already have what we want, right?"*

*She looked at him and smiled softly back. "We do," she whispered. Her eyes, though, seemed somewhat uncertain. She turned her head back to the road.*

*The baby stirred a trifle in its sleep. The son scratched his arm and thought on his parents' fight. He watched the night fly past his window. He knew something of what would occur next week, before his mother was pregnant too long.*

*He thought about his baby sister -- how vital she seemed to him.*

*The son woke first in the morning, as he usually did on Saturdays. Before he even got out of bed he began to think about what would happen.*

*He didn't watch TV. He left his room and went to the room his sister was in. He pushed open the door and went in, making no noise.*

*There was a wooden chair in the corner and he moved it to beside her crib and sat in it for a very long time watching her sleep. He sat there patiently and listened to the baby's soft quick breaths.*

*By Edith W. Durham*

*Walking through flash flood  
swift run-off,  
mud and water cold oozing shoeless tingle  
with sneeze and shiver  
becomes epsom salt embasined.  
Pitter, long faced at the steamed window cries.  
Thunder, gun shy head hidden in the eve moans.*

*Shelved dry high above galoshes' tears  
and rain coat's hung limp bodies,  
a jig saw puzzle's lonely members  
as stones swept from a hillside,  
lie scattered in a brown rumped paper bag.  
Strewn in grey rough mounds,  
what green clump tufts of grass  
once upon them smooth grew?  
No picture upon a box hints frame  
or fitting edge,  
guessed shapes move fumbling hands.  
Fingers bend and pound fragments into place  
worrying pieces to again be pulled apart.  
Pieces color up lie scattered on the table.*

*No frame  
outside in  
inside out?  
Head weary rests,  
rocks dance wet drip's glisten,  
trees in lighted moss toss.  
Thunder, gun shy peers out,  
sunlight's rays slip together  
grey edges scarred and frayed.  
Grass breathes in dampness shaking off the cold.  
Pieces lay scattered on the table.*

## *Sinking Ship*

*By Scott Greenlee*

*Crystal ships and airplanes,  
Closing doors and starships.  
Four dimensional windowpanes,  
Turning into one-way trips.  
Janis rode too high on the horse.  
Jimi swooped too low to return.  
Airplanes sometimes go off course.  
Free birds never do return.  
Silver spoons and needles,  
Replace our daily papers.  
Accupuncture of our morals-  
Radicalism tapers.*

*Well the times sure are a changin' to conformity  
of style.  
Fifty million faces, with fifty million smiles.*

*Our grass replaced with snow,  
Our windows closed with zippers.  
The snow just blows and blows.  
The crystal ship has lost its skipper.  
Zappa lost his mothers,  
But tries to carry on,  
By fighting all the others,  
Who dress and dance like clowns.  
People will step on beatles.  
Sgt. Pepper lost in action.  
Children rock in cradles,  
To that disco-death passion.*

*Well the times sure are a changin' to conformity  
of style.  
Fifty million faces, with fifty million  
disgusting smiles.*

**Keeps**

**By Jonathan Bravard**

*The static of disrobing,  
Keeps us apart.  
The electricity of holding,  
Keeps us together.  
The mystery,  
keeps us.*

**He Sleeps, She Weeps**

**By John Scarlatti**

*This old man is my father  
who works in the lumber yard;  
six days he is gone,*

*on the seventh he sleeps.*

*This old woman is my mother  
who waits near the stove;  
she is always there-*

*only she weeps.*

**New Horizons**

**By Allen Rabert**

*The sun rising in the distance begins new horizons*

*Now to be walked upon and experienced by all;*

*When this happens our tomorrows will become today's*

*As our today's become the yesterday's;*

*Then new friends will become old*

*And friends already known will become memories;*

*As the passage of time continues onward*

*Into the near, but yet far away future;*

*That always seems so still and silent*

*Except when the sun rises in the distance*

*Once again beginning new horizons.*



*Keeps*

*By Jonathan Bravard*

*The static of diamonds,  
Keeps us apart.*

*The electricity of nothing,  
Keeps us together.*

*The mystery.*

**By Edith W. Durham**

*Heart suddenly light  
free from tent's pegged down billowing,  
into the cool blue night  
he slipped as a silencing word.*

*Worm did not flee from Ur,  
but quietly  
violet robes in a sweeping whisper  
erased smooth the furrow of his departure.*

*No longer captive of morning's opened tent sobs,  
rustles in the wind forgot his name.  
A crimson flaming dawn shot crystalline rays  
betwixt mountain jagged peaks  
and claimed his love without chains.*

## Glass

**By Jonathan Bravard**

*The edge of Winter.  
The slope of Spring.  
From black and white,  
to color.  
Broken glass on the floor,  
reflects the chill,  
mirrors the warmth.*

**By Bobbi Schutz**

*To hang glide is...  
to soar  
float  
...fly...  
in the blue sky...  
above the ocean swells,  
among free seagulls  
drifting with the wind...  
forever.*

**On the River**

**By Joan McKay**

*Sunbaking warm my cold skin  
beer cans empty in the raft  
I float children's pinwheels  
sky reeling white balloons  
trailing hand slipped strings  
down the running river.*

## *The Beauty of Spring*

*By Mary V. Carr*

*Within the last remaining moments  
of a cold and harsh winter,  
spring emerges in it's warmth and softness.*

*Although man nor animal can perceive  
it's true beauty at first,  
it is felt deep within the soul.*

*Then upon the winds of hope, life, and love.  
spring comes forth,  
in all it's magnificent beauty.*

*The birds,  
who were once caged by winter's hands,  
now are set free.  
In song and laughter,  
they announce their rejoice of freedom*

*The rivers,  
who were once held in frozen suspension by winter cold,  
now flow strong and mighty.  
In a beating rhythm against the land,  
they proclaim their renewed power and strength.*

*The trees and flowers,  
who were once stripped of their color by winter's bleakness  
now blossom forth.  
Cheering in color,  
they declare their happiness of growth.*

*The animals,  
who's infertility was caused by winter's need of death,  
now are fertile.  
With swollen bellies,  
they display the meaning of everlasting life.*

*And at last, the humans,  
who were once deprived of hope, love and beauty  
by all of winter's selfish needs,  
now experience fully the essence of spring.  
In grand celebration they all come together,  
giving great praise and thanks for the return of the spring*

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