

# *The Reflector*

*Autumn 1965*





# THE REFLECTOR

## *Literary Magazine*

Shippensburg State College

Shippensburg, Pennsylvania

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AUTUMN, 1965

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# THE REFLECTOR

## Literary Magazine

AUTUMN 1965

FIRST PLACE AWARD

to

THE REFLECTOR

Shippensburg State College

March 12, 1965

Columbia Scholastic Press Association:  
College and University Division

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Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;  
 To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
 With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
 Until they think warm days will never cease,  
 For Summer has o'er brimm'd their clammy cells.

From "To Autumn" by John Keats

## *The Hall*

. . . MICHAEL J. KEOUGH

When I was very small we lived in a three-story row house with a large store-window and two entrances on Susquehanna Avenue. It had probably been a small shop of some kind before my Grandmother moved there, and after we moved away someone made a candy store of it. The neighborhood was not the best but it was far from bad, although recently it has become rather bad. Next door was Mr. Lepp's barber shop. As small as I was, five or six at most, and only about three and a half feet high, Mr. Lepp used to let me sweep the floor once in a while, paying me a few pennies and some laughs in his Italian accent. Next to the barber shop was a Veteran's post. My Grandfather used to take care of the place in his spare time. We called it "The Hall," and in my mind those words have special meaning. (My aunt Geraldine, who is three years older than I, used to call it "the hole," or maybe "whole," not because she thought it was a mess or anything, but because she had difficulty pronouncing things then.) My uncle Frank was about sixteen at the time and we both helped my Grandfather clean the place sometimes.

It was a three- or four-story building and had several large meeting rooms. The rooms were often rented for weddings and large parties; we had a party for my Uncle John there before he went into the service, or when he first came home, I've forgotten which. Every Sunday a group of "Holy Rollers" rented one of the rooms on the ground floor for services. We used to stand outside and listen to the screaming and shouting and rolling going on inside; it sounded as though they were having a good time, or at least were getting saved.

Since I was so small, my eyes were small and everything looked large. Those halls looked like hardwood fields to me, big enough for a baseball game. On a quiet Sunday afternoon when the place was empty, my long-handled pushbroom would echo through the entire building when I knocked it against the woodwork. My little footsteps even echoed. Then sometimes I would hear slow footfalls on the stairs and down the corridor coming toward the room; I would stop silent and listen, and, I admit sometimes I was frightened. It was either uncle Frank or my Grandfather and they would take every possible chance to scare me.

There were pictures of Washington and Lincoln on the walls and people I didn't know, yellowing group shots of soldiers from the First World War, dusty medals in glass cases, faded flags on poles with spearheads or eagles on the end. The musty odor and all those old pictures and medals and flags made the place seem very old and dead. There was a player piano in one of the rooms, and I remember Frank once played a roll called "Always" and we sang:

"I'll remember you, always, with a love that's true, always,

Not for just an hour, not for just a day,

Not for just a year, but always, always . . ."

The song echoed through the whole place and a chill went through me as I thought the hall was singing "Always" to the people who used to meet and dance and even worship here, whose pictures and medals and flags were on the walls, and who were now dead.

## *Children of a Thousand Dreams*

. . . THOMAS WORK

Children of a thousand dreams —

Why do you walk so softly?

And sit on your perch

In your golden glass cage

And sneer

And bellow

At the crows and hawks outside.

Children of a thousand dreams —

Why do you contemplate nightly?

Of knights in armor

And fair maidens resplendent

And wish

And hope

For all things to be sweet and pure.

Children of a thousand dreams —

Whose benevolence is false

And whose honesty is a front

For other children to be misled

By phoniness

And lies

Never realizing how tarnished your  
golden glass cage actually is.

Children of a thousand dreams —

Dream, no more.

## *On the Death of A Young Child*

. . . JAMES HUMMER

### **The Questions; The Replies**

A child of six has died, they cried.  
(Or a child of seven or eight.)  
And they rubbed their hands  
And they rubbed their eyes  
And they moaned like a dog about Fate.  
The child has died. How cruel, they drool,  
And speak of its horrible fate.  
It might have been wealthy,  
(Precocious tycoon)  
Or governor (of a large state.)  
The child has died. Oh, why, they sigh,  
To never grow up or to mate—  
To never quite know of the beauty of life  
Because of a non-benign fate.  
Yes, the poor little parcel of baggage  
Has lost quite a lot, it is true.  
But why all the weeping and wailing?  
Have they nothing better to do?  
'Tis better to think of the heartaches  
That that morsel of flesh is no longer heir to.

### **The Accounting**

It won't know the hollowness of victory  
Or the aching relief that's defeat.  
It won't sip the cup of deceiving  
Or choke on the dregs of deceit.  
It won't know the fears  
That swell through the years,  
Fears of death, and still worse,  
Fears of life.  
It won't dissolve years  
In gallons of tears.  
It won't send prayers above  
To circumscribe fate.  
It won't learn how to love  
Or be taught how to hate.  
It won't learn what is just  
Or be taught what is lust.  
It won't know the pain of going unheeded,  
Of living a life that's completely unneeded.  
It won't know the glory of living a story-  
Book life in a world free from pain and fatigue.  
No one has; no one will.  
Do you weep for it still?  
Dry your eyes,  
Or weep for yourselves.

## *The Day*

. . . DEAN KOONTZ

For over a billion years, Gravity has held us in her iron claws, tortured us with winds and clouds, mosquitoes, flies, and overweight problems. We were first amoebas that, defying Gravity, crawled onto the shore and tried out our new equipment, our spine. We crawled on our bellies; we stood and walked; we ran; and on this special day, we turned our faces to Gravity and mocked her.

On February 20, 1962, I stood with hundreds of other people in Grand Central Station. On three sides, high, gray walls towered almost out of sight, with the fourth partition containing a huge television screen which had recently been installed by the Columbia Broadcasting Company. My cousin had suggested we watch the launching of Colonel John Glenn from here, one of the most crowded yet lonely rooms in the world. It was packed with nearly two thousand commuters, but still it was lonely. Each person seemed to live in a different, private world as everyone stared at the over-sized screen.

"Why," said a woman to a friend, "it's like waiting for the fireworks at Coney Island every year."

"Bigger crowd today," the friend replied. "I keep thinking, —a hundred million people are watching this thing."

After a while, the announcer said, "Six minutes until Friendship Seven gets a chance to make history." Friendship Seven was the nickname Colonel Glenn had given his capsule. "Five minutes."

The announcer made some comment about this being the end of an age, the end of the beginning. He said something about the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age; from now on, we'll stick them all together with all their contributions to life and call them the Earth Age, or maybe the Space Age. Not many of the congregation listened to him. Men talked with other men, other men they did not even know, and talked as if they were close friends whose wives borrowed sugar and eggs from one another. There was a closeness of hearts that the tension of the event seemed to bring about, a feeling that the man in the rocket was a part of all men, and that all men should feel and react the way he did.

"If they fail, do you think they will try again?" A nun standing next to me looked anxiously from the black cave of her habit.

"I don't think we have to worry about that," I replied. "They aren't going to fail."

"Oh, I hope not," she said in a tone that was almost a prayer. "But if they do, I hope they try again."

"Three minutes," said the announcer. Above the viewer, in large, white letters were the words: "John Glenn: First American in Orbit." This sign boasted an air of optimism that was prevalent throughout the room. Everyone talked

about how far ahead of the Russians this would put us and of how truly monumental it all was. But no one was completely sure of the safety of the astronaut. Everyone tried to draw confidence from his fellow watchers.

"If only I could help," said the nun in a quiet voice. That seemed to be a thought on everyone's mind. If only they could help in some way, check a valve on the capsule, give him a word of encouragement, then it would all be so much better, so much safer.

"One minute," said the commentator in grave, whispered tones.

"Oh!" gasped the nun.

"He'll be all right," said another sister standing next to her.

"God take care," said the first nun. Seeming to remember something very important, she bowed her head and crossed herself. I felt slightly ashamed that I had not thought to say a prayer for this courageous man, and I bowed my head.

"Thirty seconds." The voice was now that of the communications officer in the blockhouse at Cape Canaveral. A momentous silence fell over the hundreds of human beings. This was the moment man would try to break the leash that Gravity had chained about his neck. The group appeared to freeze, forming a Polaroid color picture.

"Fifteen, ten, five . . ."

"Watch now," said the man in front of me as he boosted his young son onto his shoulders.

"Four, three, two . . ."

"Watch!"

The rocket fired into brilliant whiteness about its base and slowly lifted into the Florida sky. Everyone was perfectly quiet. The announcer rambled on in his mile-a-minute commentary. "It's rising well. Looks like it's going to make it. Almost out of sight now." There was a pause. The announcer continued, "Shorty Powers, the head of public relations for NASA, has just informed us that the launching is proceeding exactly according to the planned projectory." The rest of his words were drowned out in the ensuing cacophony of cheers, laughter, and happy crying. Men hugged men; men hugged women; and it looked like one, big family reunion.

"He's up there," cried the nun. "At least he's up there."

I looked at my watch. I had been there only twenty minutes, but I would have sworn to anyone that many hours had passed since I first walked through the big, iron gates into the room. But what is time, space, eternity, or anything now that man has looked into the universe with questing minds and hearts. Man looks back on Gravity, calls her an old woman, and steps boldly into the unknown to assume a new spouse, a new woman who never ceases to amaze, delight, and frighten. He has divorced Gravity and married the Universe.

## *And Laugh*

. . . PATRICIA DAVIS

Laugh at me,  
For I am eager.  
I do things that I wouldn't "have" to do.

Laugh at me  
For I am alone.  
I do things in my own way and on my own time.  
Because I don't know the boss or the boss's daughter.  
I don't happen to be the boss's son or nephew or brother-in-law.

Laugh at me,  
For I make mistakes.  
But I make them in the honest pursuit of a worthy goal.  
And I learn something through making those mistakes—  
Something you couldn't possibly know.

So . . . laugh at me  
And laugh at me  
And laugh at  
And laugh  
And—

When you stop laughing  
I'll look down  
And laugh—  
At you.

## Lines

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

### A TIME, A PLACE

Beethoven on a cheap transistor  
Down from Montreal in the rain  
Strange how the Canadians  
Love good music more than we . . .

turn the volume down  
sitting selfish in the dark  
easily distracted

Chopin tonight, "Fantasy Impromptu"  
Chicago sends me music by night  
We love good music too . . .

an asterisk called humanity  
lying staggered in my bed  
by the distractions of a time  
a place  
adolescent drunk . . .  
with maturity

### TORTURE

grimace on a trash can  
wry distortion  
ashes sift  
denote the rift  
spiral falling  
floating  
calling  
vapors obscuring  
the half-smile  
shame  
am I the only one who notices  
worthlessness

## *Monday Afternoon in a Stairwell*

ANDREW BUSHMAN

Off to my right  
A spirit is dying  
Crying  
Whispers of sighing  
In the rising  
Night of learning  
To be still  
Trying to make up  
Excuses for living

A broken swing  
Is a thing to  
Watch . . .  
Dangling in the  
Late winter wind  
the only child  
who cares for  
a broken swing  
is the wind . . .

Here comes a cloud  
Past the window  
In the stairwell  
what are clouds  
thoughts of the weather  
all things together  
are clouds

See what happens  
When you are quietly thinking  
Of clouds and swings  
And broken things  
Never-to-be-again  
Things

## *Some Nonsense*

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

### I

knocking on a very big door  
 man with the axe  
 cutting down the ivy  
 chopping out the bricks from the wall  
 then we got hungry  
 so we were eating raw potatoes  
 like in the gone wind movie  
 white pigeons' wings are rusty from  
 nesting on old fire escapes  
 so don't eat them  
 little kittens only play with balls of yarn  
                   it is innocence later changed  
                   to the killer instinct  
                   when they have to be nimble-quick  
                   to catch mice

### II

now friend  
 if I were in your situation  
 lying half mashed on a blue blotter  
 waving my antennae dragging  
 crippled legs across the table  
 I'd look to the causer of my pain  
 and ask "why?" but being arthropoda insectivorous  
 your simple ganglion don't  
 wonder only pain so I can put you  
 out of your misery that is easy and  
 doesn't disturb the conscience  
 but as I haven't too much to mix trauma  
 and moral psych at the moment I'll take the  
 risk and put you out of your "misery?"  
 could be the height of esoteric pleasure in  
 insects is an exotic death at the hands of  
 neurotic poets so out you go to the tune of  
 Dylan followed by Ochs maybe these topical songsters  
 can make us both famous  
 dammit you bled all over the blotter

## *The Rise and Fall of the Rabbit Empire*

ANDREW BUSHMAN . . . JOHN HOFFMAN

Once upon a time all the thinking rabbits of the day were greatly shocked and insulted by an incredible story being circulated among the intellectual set. Absurd as it may seem, it was rumored that a lowly tortoise had defeated one of their vastly superior number in a race. Being very high-strung and sensitive, the rabbits simply could not take this slander lying down. The turtles must be taught a lesson, they reasoned. A statement was prepared and an ultimatum offered to the enemy.

"It has been suggested that a tortoise has somehow, by some under-handed means no doubt, proved victorious over a hare," the statement began.

"This may be so," they admitted with their usual tactfulness.

"However, we are of the opinion that our best rabbit can beat your best turtle in any race, at any time, under proper supervision. Therefore, we hereby challenge you to a formal contest to prove beyond a doubt our overwhelming superiority."

Much to the rabbits' surprise, the turtles quickly and cheerfully accepted the challenge. Not having expected such rapid response, the rabbits became suspicious. They must have some trick in mind, they thought. They decided to select their finest and most powerful runner, just in case.

The field of Representatives was swiftly narrowed down. Soon only a handful remained, but these were so equally gifted that any one of them would do. It soon bogged down to nothing more than a popularity contest, in which the standing of each finalist changed from day to day.

Dissension became more and more prominent among the rabbits and the gaps in their ranks widened considerably. It was generally conceded that the fastest of the runners was Rocky Rabbit, and his friends pointed to his large hoard of carrots as proof of his speed and agility in getting to and from the garden. But this very excess turned many of the slower and less fortunate rabbits against him, because he could eat better than they. A few even objected to his private life, which was of no concern to them at all, and wouldn't affect his running ability, at any rate.

The more level-headed among them preferred a straightaway runner, one who hopped less and had proved his ability on the well-worn paths through the woods, with which they were more familiar, and there was no chance of their getting lost. "Barry Bunny is our only hope," they said.

The sentimental favorite was Ricky Rabbit. He was very popular, although he had the unfortunate reputation of losing the important races. It was also rumored that on occasion he was subjected to fits of temper when the going got rough, which he later regretted, but which undoubtedly cost him much support.

Billy Bunny had his share of support, though it was pretty local. Once a virtual unknown, he was now considered an up-and-coming young racer, mainly through the efforts of his enthusiastic friends. However, he seemed quite content to remain noisily munching away in his own little cabbage patch. Recently though, the constant badgering and persuasion of his admirers had provoked

Billy into vehement demonstrations in which he loudly denied his willingness to race. For some unaccountable reason though, at the same time that he shouted his protests, he also threw out cabbages to his supporters, which he had never done before.

As will often happen in deadlocks of this sort, competition came from an unexpected source. Soon after the challenge had been made, Henry Hare was sent into the very midst of the enemy to spy on them and report on their intended plans for the race, if any. Many of the rabbits, thoroughly disgusted by now with the indecision of the others, decided to use him to display their contempt for the situation. Besides, they reasoned, if he was able to escape detection this long, he must be at least as cunning and well-equipped as the rest. Therefore, as if in protest of the continuous squabbling, his following grew daily.

Many of the rabbits thought that they themselves were as good as any, and humbly offered their services in order to restore the dignity of the rabbit kingdom. Hardly worth mentioning was the toothless old relic named Harold Hare, who, in the distant past had won a race or two, and just wouldn't quit trying. Miraculously, he had gained a few supporters, old has-beens like himself, now degenerated to walking with a cane and drinking carrot juice.

And this sad state of affairs prevailed even to the very day of the race. In the last few weeks, the feeling had become unanimous that a suitable agreement was next to impossible, and that a choice could not be made from the available racers that would satisfy everybody. Then one wise old bunny asked to be heard.

"You're all forgetting one thing," he said, "and that's the fact that even the slowest of us can beat easily anything the turtles have to offer. I suggest that, to maintain harmony among us, we allow Harold Hare to be our representative."

It was quickly agreed that the old bunny had spoken wisely. No one could begrudge old Harold his last fling in life, and they would still have something to argue about after the race.

It was a very hot, humid day, and Harold had to be helped up to the starting point by several of his friends. One of them, meaning well, offered Harold a mixture of carrot juice, in hope of fortifying him. Harold, grateful for the opportunity to soothe his dry, parched throat, drank rapidly. The opponents were lined up side by side, and the gun sounded, signifying the start of the race. Harold jumped into the lead, probably more startled by the loud report of the starter's gun than anything else. He was shouted encouragement by the spectators, but alas, his proud hopping soon turned into a crawl, and then he lay still, never to hop again. Evidently the carrot and cabbage juice, combined with the great physical exertion of his hopping, had proved too much for his old fuzzy body. The turtle, observing his collapse, bided his time, not wanting to strain himself, and in three weeks, four days, twelve hours, and seventeen minutes, was declared the winner. After all this time, naturally, the rabbits had forgotten what the race was all about in the first place, and went back to their first love, eating carrots.

Moral: If you drink, don't hop, or you'll drop. Or,  
If you want to hop, don't drink, or you'll sink. Or,  
Wait 'til '68.

## *To Death*

. . . CAROL BERINGER

The leaves are gold and brown outside,  
     Hurry — don't look.  
 I think I'd like to walk in the rain,  
     No time — keep going,  
 I often wonder what life really means,  
     No time to wonder — just hurry,  
 The stars are lovely at this time of year,  
     Don't look up — keep running,  
 Someday I'm going to take a trip,  
     Not now — later — hurry,  
 I'd love to visit an old friend of mine,  
     Tomorrow — too busy now,  
 I remember my first Christmas tree,  
     No time for memories — plan — work,  
 I wish I had time to live,  
     No time — hurry — to die.

## *For e j*

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

like a leaf  
 kept for a long time on my closet door  
 when it withered  
 it fell  
     down  
 I tossed it  
     away

but it's a long time come lonely  
 when the shutters clatter soft  
 in midsummer afternoon  
 rain comes down

whose scorio  
 but another lonely  
 yes dear  
 let's try what they are doing

## *Some Notes: Collected*

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

the Byzantine walks small in the ruin now  
of his fortress town  
gone the din of battle  
and the victor's loud return  
the laughter of passionate girls  
and lusty men  
the pouring of much wine  
gone . . .  
lost in the dusts of time

genuine old codger man  
walking: stump stump  
down the street

the southerly winds have set in  
passed the threshold of the machine  
a man who has done his duty  
(hartebeestes, waterbucks, sables, etc.)  
so many months before  
time to express his doubt  
we walked the migration trails  
to come in from above  
but we needed meat badly  
now standing face to face  
if by some miracle  
in these last days

## *The Changing Times*

. . . CAROL McGEE

Times change and people change and things change, too.

The scenes have changed. Beaches are quiet and peaceful on their journey out to sea. The sea has changed, too. It is no more broken on its journey to the shore by boats or people. It is lonely, destitute, restless, as if searching for something to break the monotony of time.

The land has changed, too. It is empty, silent, except for the wind as it roars through the trees and swoops across the earth causing leaves to fall from changing trees, waves rise in a changing sea, and people to move on in the changing times.

The colors have changed, too. The peaceful greens of Summer have changed to the burning reds, russet browns, and glowing oranges signifying Fall.

Smells have changed. The summery smells of sunshine, flowers, and air have changed to smells of cloudiness, dampness, frost, windiness, and dew. It is no longer a fresh smell; it has become pungent and penetrating like the smell of death and decay.

And people have changed, too. The fool-hearty, carefree days of Summer have ended. There are the tasks postponed for the Summer waiting for them now before the approach of Winter. Schools, which patiently awaited the end of summer, have now reclaimed their children. Jobs have reclaimed their workers and their bosses. And the earth is waiting, ready, to reclaim those she has set free for a short time.

Times change and things change and people change, too, just as October will change to November and Fall will change to Winter.

## *Empathy*

. . . CAROL BERINGER

She walks slowly, head bowed, through the drizzling rain. Her damp hair is hanging in long, lonely strands. All around her people are laughing, bustling along, but she is alone, untouched.

I see her, and I sense her life. I am in her, and she is in me. I have walked with her during the long, lonely hours of darkness, watching, waiting. I have stood with her on a cold bridge, gazing at the swirling waters below. I have stood on a high mountain peak with her and shouted to the dark clouds above, "Why?" I, too, have been alone.

He was tall, handsome, and so charming. She saw him first in a lonely cafe, Quentin's Place on Seventh Street.

"Hi, beautiful. What is a gorgeous creature like you doing alone . . . Oh, taught not to talk to strangers, hm? I'm not really the big, bad wolf, you know. Mind if I sit down? . . . You have blue eyes — lonely blue. You are alone, aren't you? Don't be ashamed: in a sense we're all alone. I know a very good cure. There's a little place . . ."

A whirlwind courtship: flowers every Friday (sweetheart roses) . . . dances . . . parties . . . sticks of red licorice wrapped gaily in gold paper and pink ribbon . . . a flight to New Orleans for the Mardi Gras . . . sailboats . . . telephone calls from Paris at midnight . . . a Christmas tree trimmed in rosebuds . . . a sudden, unexpected business trip.

"I'll call you as soon as I get home. I won't be gone more than a few days."

The painful stab in the pit of her stomach as he walked out the door. The awful knowledge that it was over, faded as a tender rose during the night . . . The frantic attempt to crawl away from reality . . . refusal to accept finality.

She is standing in the rain now, still and alone. Her eyes are searching the heavens for an answer. Wait . . . Wait . . . I am coming to you . . . I am with you . . . I too am alone.

## **Facts**

. . . JAMES W. HUMMER, JR.

### I

The sun shines bright because of atom fusion.  
The sky is blue because of scattered light.  
The moon's a world of barrenness and dust.  
The sun shines bright because of atom fusion.  
What mortal men call love is mere illusion.

I thought those four alike in tone and hue.  
But now since I have known the joy of you,  
I find that only three of them are true.

### II

She whispered words of love so soft and sweet  
I thought I'd never felt such lyric joy.  
I listened more, and begged her to repeat  
Those ancient words of love of girl and boy.  
'Twas summer in the fields and in my heart  
As we wandered on, I knew not where.  
I was so sure that we would never part  
That to her I did lay my soul down bare.  
I thought that we were all that we did need  
As we drifted under skies of blue.  
I thought her inner thoughts I could well read  
I thought she would not look for someone new.  
I should have known the days were much too mild,  
For when she went away, she merely smiled.

### III

My love  
Must burn itself  
Into embers cold  
Or else I know that I will be  
Consumed

## *Metamorphosis*

. . . MARY KOSEK

The evening is hushed. The shutters are closed, and the room is almost dark. The stars give small light as they shine peacefully in my windows. I have waited long — until the house was still and motionless — to share my secrets with myself. Now, I may recall the sweetness of that last kiss. Now, my memories are my thoughts. Nothing will disturb me.

But the room is whispering. It has waited many years and now it steals my time to speak of its remembrances . . . The sheets are calm, but they have known sighs of happiness and tears of sorrow. The windows remember the steam of winter air when the snow separated beauty from mundane cares. The books of Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Synge line my walls; but hidden away, now used simply to occupy space, are **Cinderella**, **Smoky**, and **Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs**. Two small dolls are the sole remainders of the child's room, replaced by the rustic, "artistic" chamber.

Rocks and driftwood fill the void where puzzles and doll houses used to reside. Nursery pictures have become abstracts. The scent of perfume hides long years of ivory soap and baby powder. The desk is arrayed with letters from silly young men, and the paper money has been discarded. Crayons and coloring books have been transformed into scrapbooks and signed photographs — stuffed animals are dates to the movies. Cigarettes used to be Turkish taffy. The unfingerprinted closet holds shoes and hats that are the right size; dresses have lost their sash ties.

The room shares its secrets of the past only when one listens specifically to its quiet tones. All must be serene to hear the voices of memories. The room knows what has passed; is it conscious of the future? But how hushed must it be to distinguish those sounds? Perhaps, only the dead are silent enough.

## Winter Comes

. . . MOLLIE BASLER

Above the hills Spring's silent voice

Whispers to me . . .

It beckons me forth from my lethargy.

My spirit exalts in the wonder of the sun.

Spring calls me and

I follow . . .

Through green meadows and over untrodden paths

I run—

To bathe my face in the coolness

of a trickling mountain stream

meandering . . .

down the side of eternity.

The warmth of the sun

beats down on my back

as I kneel

to caress . . .

petals . . .

harbingers of Spring . . .

a moment's beauty.

Contentment enshrouds me.

Life . . .

Is a series of springs . . .

each one different,

yet all the same.

Life is the transient spring

of intensity

and

exaltation in

the glories of

nature.

It is the fountain at which we rest and  
gain strength  
to face  
the murky coldness of  
Winter's black  
envelopment.

To run carelessly  
through the meadow . . .  
to become  
anesthetized  
by springlike  
loveliness . . .  
How simple . . .  
when you are young.

Spring . . .  
with its short-lived beauty  
its hypnotic spell  
passes . . .  
vanishes . . .  
all too soon  
within a gossamer cloud . . .  
into the uncertainty of fall  
and  
the cold resignation of  
Winter.

Winter comes . . .  
leaving  
an insignificant dream of what once was.  
and  
a vision  
of what is to be.

## *Further Random Thoughts*

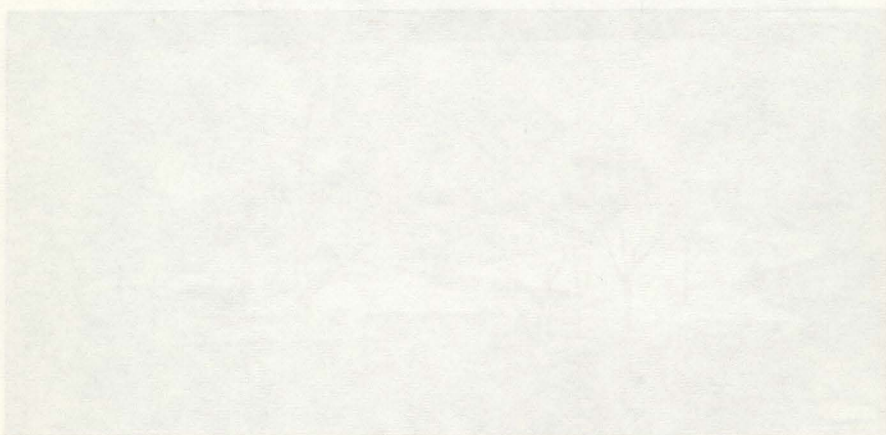
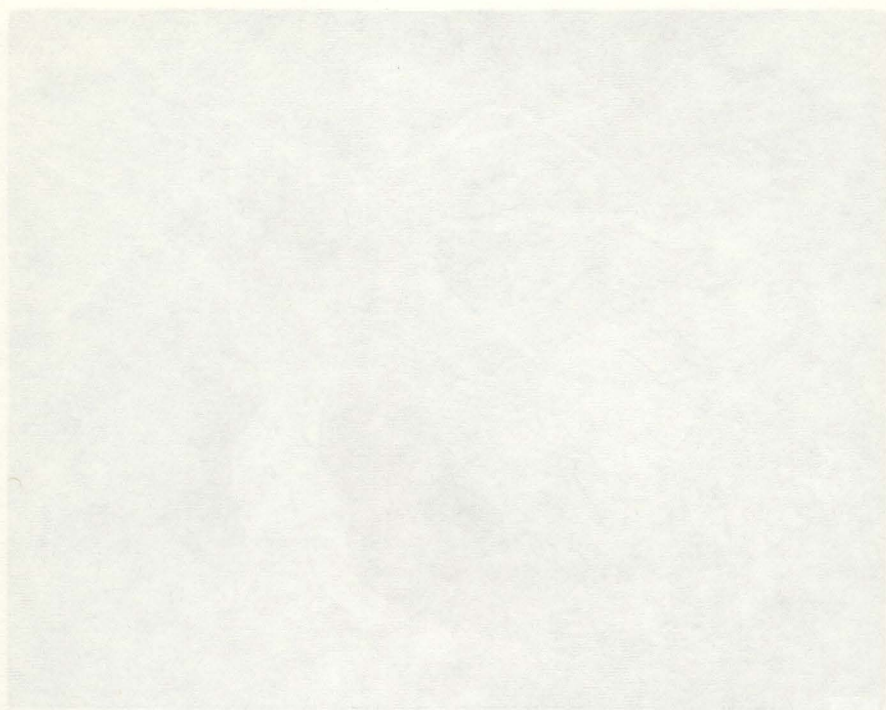
. . . ANDREW D. BUSHMAN

there is something common  
in the air tonight  
this cool wind has blown  
across many towns  
by people who are talking  
in the evening on their porches  
by lovers on the river bank  
holding hands  
watching the night be born  
across the poet's page  
a blank  
memory of happenings  
at night

if you or I lived in Boston  
we could walk to a park  
or some quiet lover's lane  
and watch some satellite  
echo across the sky  
or fall asleep in someone's arms

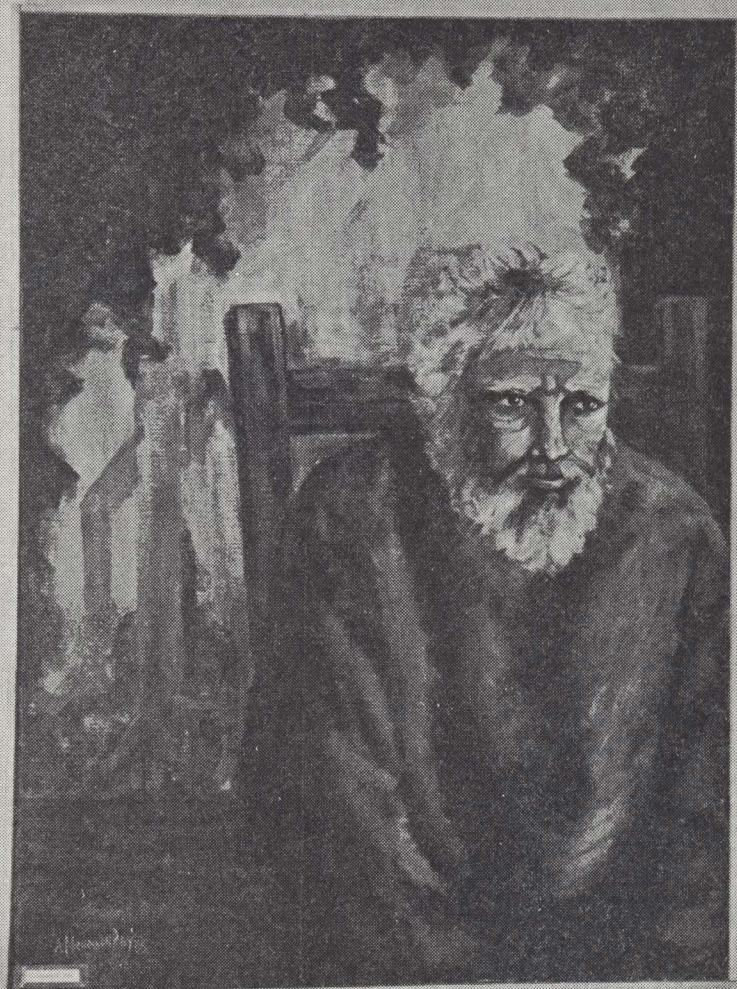
that's when the day is done  
for Wordsworth's  
humbler poet

two bars  
a pane  
shadow  
interspersed  
half y  
cut and clear  
circle



A poem should be palpable and mute  
As a globed fruit,  
Dumb  
As old medallions to the thumb,  
Silent as the sleeve-worn stone  
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown —  
A poem should be wordless  
As the flight of birds

From "Ars Poetica"  
by Archibald MacLeish





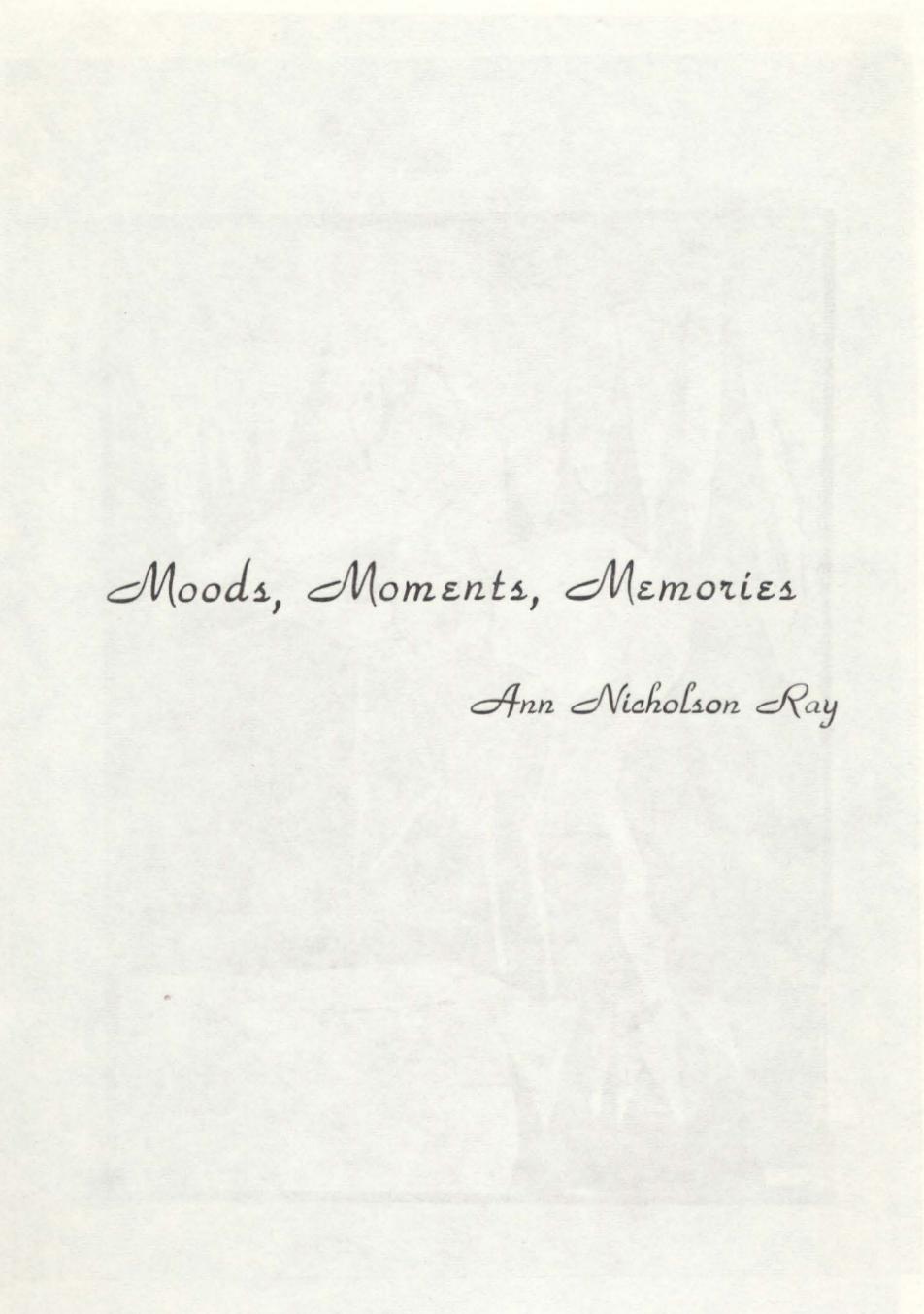
It was the first time I had seen  
the old tree in a park  
in some quiet hour, and  
the world was empty.





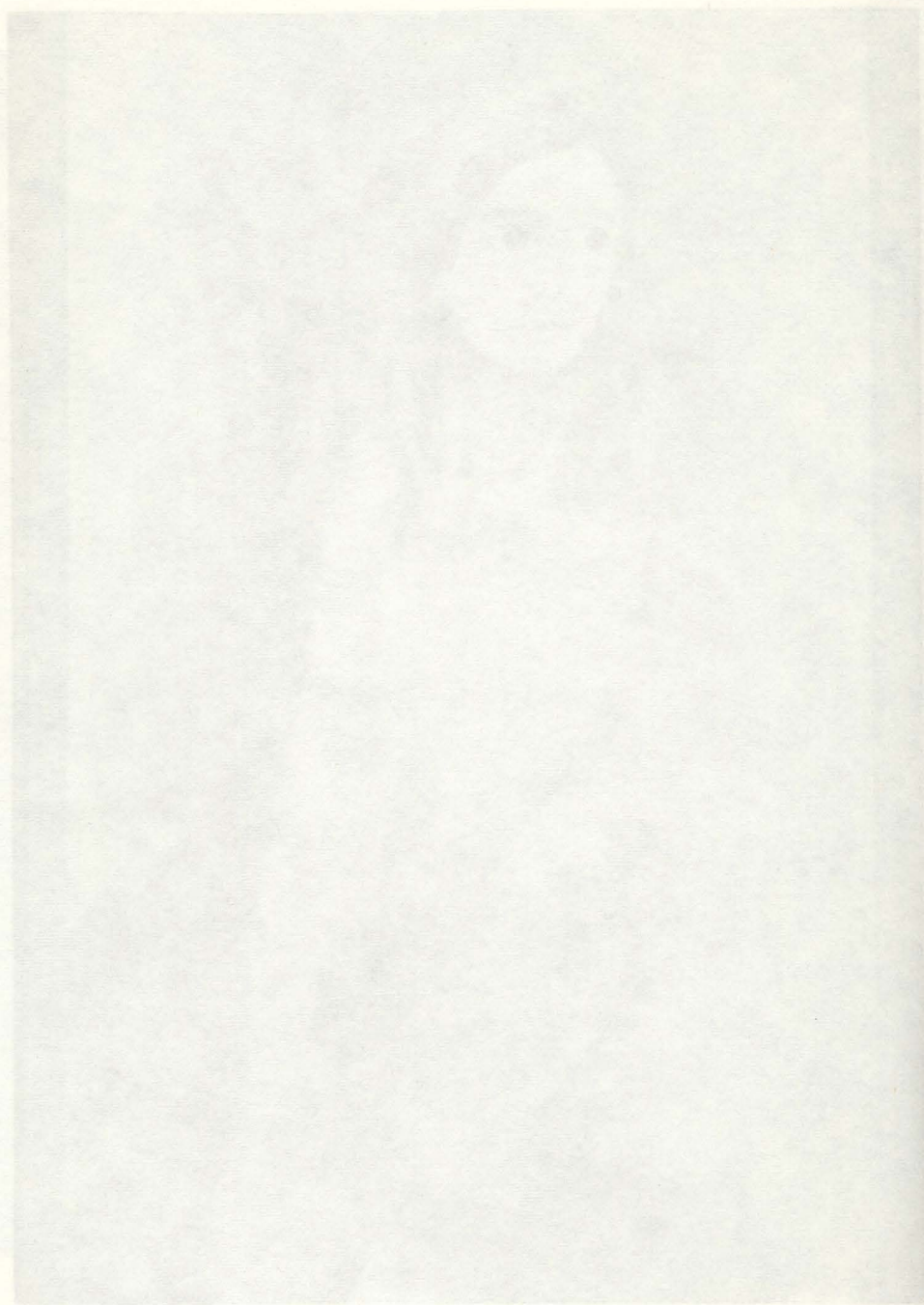
Portrait of a young woman, 1925. Oil on canvas. The artist's signature is visible in the lower right corner.





*Moods, Moments, Memories*

*Ann Nicholson Ray*



## *Growing Pains*

. . . DEAN KOONTZ

It was two hours past midnight, and the big, white-faced clock on the courthouse struck a pair of low, frog-like tones in the cool, morning air. The peals of the giant timepiece shattered the stillness of the ethereal waves, shaking the dust off the leaves of tall elm trees, sending the birds of the night into flight, and rattling the windows of all the bedrooms where young boys slept.

Jack heard it, and he heard what followed.

Muffled by the miles, drowned by the oceans of distance, the puffing of an engine, the laboring of a large locomotive broke upon his ears.

Jack listened a moment more, then sat up in bed.

Across the room, in the other bed, Jeff sat up too. Each was like the other's shadow, feeling the same, moving the same, and talking the same. Maybe it was because they were twin brothers: maybe it was because they were more than just brothers, for they were also friends.

The train was closer now, and it was slowing down. The air hissed from its compressors as the brakes were applied. Somewhere, from across the prairie that lay just outside of town, came the soft humming of a calliope, sounding like a part of the night, like an integral part of Nature.

"You hear that?" asked Jack.

"A train and music," Jeff affirmed.

Together, in one move, as if their actions had been organized by a choreographer, the two boys leaped from bed and ran to the window. Their room was on the third floor of the house, a converted attic, far above everything, just where boys' rooms should be. From their own, private crow's nest, they could see over the houses and churches, past the stores and the elm trees of Main Street, beyond the post office and railway station to the open fields outside of town.

There, pulled off on a spur line in an open area just before the prairie dipped over the horizon, was a tiny string of black dots. The first pinpoint of substance was belching out great clouds of white smoke. The smoke rose, encircling the field, adding an air of mystery, a touch of the unknown, two things that attract all boys.

"A train at two A. M.?"

"Sure," said Jeff. "Sure, the carnival!"

Jim bounded across the room.

Jeff was caught up in the magic of the hour and the importance of the event. The carnival was coming! There would be all the rides,—the ferris wheel, the dipper, the cyclone,—all the swirling, lunging, flailing, shooting, laughing, screaming rides. There would be food stands with cotton candy, popcorn, candy apples, and carnival hot dogs. There were just no hot dogs in the world like carnival hot dogs. And best of all, by far the best of all, there would be sideshows. There would be four headed dogs and horses with five legs and fat men and bearded ladies and the Indian Rubber Man. In the sideshow, they had

a section of specimens that they kept in bottles, big, ugly snakes, eighty-pound snails, and a hundred other frightening, wonderful things.

"Stop dreaming and get dressed," hollered Jack. He already had his pants on, and he was busy tucking his shirt inside.

"What for?"

"We're going to go and watch them set up."

"At this time of the morning? What will the folks say?"

"We aren't going to tell them," answered Jack.

They dropped to the roof of the front porch and crouched there for a moment, waiting to see if they had wakened anyone. They hadn't. In another few seconds, they were out on the street, padding across the dead concrete and racing full speed over the sleeping lawns. When they reached the meadow where the carnival was setting up, they fell to the ground, breathing hard, resting from their journey. Jack and Jeff looked at each other and grinned. It was very good to be both brothers and friends.

There were three dozen men in work clothes, tending to the animals and staking off the grounds for the big tents. There were growls and roars like whole forests being felled at once, pop bottles clanking against one another, horses straining at their harnesses, trying to move big loads of painted flats for the sideshows.

"Little late for you boys, ain't it?" A withered man of about forty who looked nearly sixty leaned toward them. He was wearing faded, blue work clothes, and the sweat of hard labor stood out in dark circles under his arms and in a big, irregular splotch on his broad back.

"We don't aim to cause any trouble, Mister."

"No, I know you don't."

"All right if we just sit and watch?"

"Sure, fine with me."

So they did watch. They watched while the lions were unloaded from the train, dust billowing from their matted coats as their cages hit the ground with loud crashes. In time, the zebras had been led to their stakes, neighing and snorting indignantly all the way; the elephants had been coddled and bribed until they finally sauntered over to where their puny masters desired them to be; and after much flapping, fluttering, and cackling, the exotic birds had been shepherded into their cages in the wildlife tent.

"Look," said Jack, "over there." He pointed through the maze of rides and concession stands to the far side of the midway. The withered man of forty was directing the unloading of several wooden crates from a boxcar. Above his head, on a big piece of black canvas were the words: **KLAGEN BROTHERS SIDESHOWS: THE WEIRDEST ENIGMAS IN THE WORLD.**

They picked their way through the clutter of electric cables and empty boxes to where the man stood.

"Oh, you boys still here?"

"Yes, Sir. We came to watch you set up the sideshow."

"Sure you won't be scared by all of these enigmas?" asked the withered man. He laughed as he pointed to the crates. The two brothers didn't know what the joke was, but they laughed too.

He lifted a large, glass tank from the first crate and filled it with water. "There's a bicycle pump inside that tent. Will one of you fellows get it for me?" In a short ten seconds, Jeff was back with the pump. The carnival man pulled a long, green length of plastic from the box and began to pump it up.

"What's that?" queried Jack.

The man laughed again. "This here is the great, thirty-foot snake we caught in the Amazon. We lost ten men getting it." He laughed some more. And this tank isn't filled with water; it's filled with formaldehyde."

"You mean it isn't real?" Jeff looked from the inflating snake to the withered man.

"Doesn't look too real, does it?" he asked.

"Nothing but plastic," mumbled Jack.

He lifted a gallon specimen jug from the crate and pushed it in front of the carnival man's face. "This is real enough, isn't it?"

"That?" laughed the man. "Why, that ain't nothin' but plaster of paris, rubber tubing, cotton, a little wire . . ."

"Then you mean that none of this stuff is real?" The two boys asked the same questions. "All of this is a fake? None of these strange things ever, really were?"

The carnival man dropped the smile from his face. "You mean you didn't know?" He looked from one boy to the other. "You mean you really still believe in things like this?"

Jeff and Jack turned, not quite at the same time, and they ran across the midway, not quite in step like before.

The carnival man called after them. "Wait, wait. I'm sorry. I didn't know. —I didn't . . ."

They ran quietly over the dew-covered fields, leaving their footprints in the thin, white film. They didn't talk. It was wonderful to be fifteen. It was even more wonderful to be both brothers and friends. They weren't quite shadows like before; no, they were more like echoes. They were not in perfect timing like before. But still, even though they had lost something, they were friends. No matter what the world was really like, they would never change. There were still the hills in the summer with the green grass and the little, yellow flowers that peep up between the smaller blades; no one could ever take away the woods or their tree-house or the caves out by Connan Lake; nothing could split them up, nothing, ever.

Suddenly, they were pounding the concrete of Main Street. The courthouse clock struck eight, clear tones, still frog-like, but fresher after a night of rest. It was hard to believe that eight hours had gone by. Mr. Parkins was just opening the grocery store.

"Peppermints?" asked Jack.

"Check and roger," answered Jeff.

The palms of their hands hit the door of the grocery at the same instant. They looked at each other and grinned. It didn't matter what the world was really like, for nothing could separate them, nothing at all.

"Hello, boys," said Mary Lou Snyder. "Going to the school dance Friday night?"

## *Ode to the Ocean*

. . . JEAN WILLIAMSON

The frothy, white-capped waves  
Dance in on the  
Stage of the shore  
And then they roll  
Back out to sea  
In a thunderous roar of applause.

I sat on the beach alone for a while,  
And watched the moon rise for a while  
And thought deeply for a while.  
I considered life itself for a while,  
And moon beams danced on waves for a while,  
And shone brightly for a while.  
I watched a cloud drift by for a while,  
And was sad when it hid the moon for a while,  
And sat in darkness for a while.  
I knew the cloud would drift for a while.  
And remembered trouble only lasts for a while  
And was happy again, for a while.

## *Perhaps*

. . . ANNETTE McALISTER

Perhaps I tried too hard to do  
The things you liked the best.  
Perhaps the heart you left so marked  
Will heal again with rest.  
Perhaps some day I'll look at you  
And feel no touch of pain.  
But yet I fear my hope of peace  
Will not be soon attained.

## *The Cycle*

. . . MICHAEL KEOUGH

I knew it had to come, just as I know death will come, someday. I had been in the seminary a year and a half, and one day it came, my turn to slaughter chickens. Everyone had his turn at slaughtering chickens and one day Lady Unluck caught up with me.

There had been a heaviness in the air all day, a summer day, and I was uneasy. During afternoon recreation, immediately after lunch, someone came up to me in the music room (I was usually in the music room during recreation, if not out walking and drinking in the beauty of the seminary grounds). I was listening to classical music; since we had only classical or semiclassical music to listen to in the seminary, I developed a real taste for classical music there. So, that someone informed me of the rumor that it was my turn to slaughter chickens. It was simply deduction, really: everyone had to have a turn, and everyone had had his turn except me. I tried to laugh off this revelation or smile as though it really had been expected and really did not make any difference. It was considered quite a thing for me to have to slaughter chickens because I was the librarian and rarely had to work outside. The librarian job was light work and clean, which suited me, if I had to work at all. So, when I was told that I would be slaughtering chickens, I pretended that it did not annoy me at all, because the other fellows were waiting to see how it would annoy me.

At the end of recreation the Novice Master would tell us what our jobs were for the afternoon. Then I was often in the library. On that afternoon, however, rumor had proved reliable and I was told to help slaughter chickens. Everyone laughed. It was funny, because I was something of a "priss," in a way; that is, I did not like to get dirty. I suppose that is why I was librarian. Even when I was small I remember everyone saying that I liked to play cowboys and Indians but I did not like to get my holsters dirty.

Anyway, I accepted the awful decree, but with something of Gethsemane in my acceptance. I faced the issue and planned my strategy. What does one wear to a chicken slaughter? That's one for Emily Post! Old clothes, of course; but I did not have any clothes old enough for a chicken slaughter. I remembered pictures of executioners, black-hooded men with axes or guillotines. I decided on khakis, a sweat shirt and sneaks, everything washable.

By the time I reached the chicken house the others had already begun. The chicken house always was nauseating, but on that afternoon, in the heat, it was especially irritating. I heard the clucking of many chickens and one clucking louder than the others. Suddenly that one loud clucking screamed and screamed, then stopped. I walked closer and asked what I was supposed to do. One of the Brothers pointed bloody fingers at a small coop beside the chicken house.

There were about twenty hens there; ten others had already been martyred. I was supposed to catch one of the hens and carry it to that Brother who was standing at an oil drum in the sun. The empty oil drum was a little coliseum that day. The chickens were reluctant but I did catch one. I held her so she could not flap her wings. I took her to the blood-painted oil drum and she screamed madly as we drew closer, as though she knew what was about to happen to her. Her whole body shook and she tried to get away but I held her tight. I could feel her heart beating and could hear it through my fingers; it sounded as though someone were pounding on the oil drum, part of a pagan ceremony.

The Brother grabbed the hen's head with one bloody hand while I held her body. He had a large bloody butcher knife in the other hand and lifted it slightly, then brought it down quickly. One quick cut. One clean slice, through feathers, through muscles which we would eat, through blood vessels, through bone and out the other side. The hen let out one piercing "yawp" and her whole body tensed, shivered, quivered in my hands. Her blood spurted into the oil drum and the Brother dropped in her head: it was still screaming. Her body quivered a few seconds longer until I dropped her onto a pile of other bodies waiting for the plucking machine. I turned and went for another.

After the chickens had been plucked they were split up the middle and we gutted them. The innards were still warm and with my own bloody hands I wrenched out the hen's heart, exposed all the entrails to the sun as though the whole bloody slaughter were part of some pagan ritual. All this was done in the hot summer sun. We were priests sacrificing life to some mysterious god—our bellies—and tearing out the heart and throwing it toward the sun, the giver of life.

A few days later we had chicken for dinner. The cycle goes on: life feeds on life, life feeds on death, life feeds on the earth and the earth on death. The cycle goes on.

lad on a mountain

does perspective in your art of  
the child's imaginings  
make bright the reachings  
of the heart

when the spires of buildings  
reaching to skies that seem  
somewhat not so fathomless  
crumble into fantasy  
do all poor cryings  
of expression seem to fail

in the simple darkening  
of day to night  
the mountains of reason  
take refuge in the caves of self  
knowing all in beauty

## Poets

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

Poet,  
you know  
the dreamy blur  
of the never open  
artist's eye

The translucence  
of a lid  
grown shut  
over dimness  
and reflection

Yes,  
I know the world  
—bright and clear—  
but I prefer  
. . . the blur  
the tear . . .

## *Wishing*

. . . GLENN BYERLY

If I could but unleash the power  
Hidden in that stately tower  
Man doth call the mind,

I would be forever free.  
Hate and prejudice to me  
Would all be left behind.

I'd know the unknown truths now sought  
By men of highest power and thought:  
But would I ever find

Riches, honor, wealth untold,  
Lying in the tower's hold,  
Forever there confined?

## *Thoughts on Gmnopedies 1 and 2*

(SOTIE 1866 - 1925)

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

Poured out upon the stones of humanity  
A sallow pool of non-entity  
Seeping away into the ground

The land . . . solitude of mind  
Where shall it find me?  
I dare not seek it

This music thinks to me  
What could have been  
What may somewhere be  
But not here  
What waiting does to wanting is unbearable

And the moon rose on the traveler  
He gathers up his ragged cares  
To walk the darkness  
The silent walk  
The quiet talk  
Of moonbeams

The lights then began  
To flicker out  
Here and there across the city  
Desert-self

Dimming of the wind thoughts  
Glazing eyes shimmering  
Passing from here to . . .  
As the silent companion to each snuffing  
Out of light

## *Sing A Song of Sixpence*

. . . DEAN R. KOONTZ

Sing a song of sixpence, pocket full of rye.  
Push a computer button, blast away the sky.

Sing a song of sixpence, sing it joyfully.  
Level every building, splinter every tree.

Sing a song of sixpence, war is so much fun.  
Atom bombs and laser beams, we've given up the gun.

Scorch a billion people, char a billion more.  
Blood upon the ceiling, blood upon the floor.

Sing a song of sixpence, the battle rages on—  
'Til everything that man has made is forever gone.

Sing a song of sixpence, we have won the war.  
rivers full of blood and oceans thick with gore.

Sing a song of sixpence, a hero you will be.  
Your general's absolution — as if God cannot see.

## *The Stopover*

. . . . RON FREED

The bar was still not filling up. Only a handful of people sat around the tables and stools. A Johnny Mathis record on the juke box supplied the music score for the quiet scene. It was a sad place to be on a Friday night, but I had no other place to go, and was satisfied.

Drinking my fifth beer of the evening, I looked at myself and decided that I would need a new pair of shoes soon. Hitch-hiking can be rough on shoes at times. But new ones would have to wait. I had twenty-five miles to go to cross the state line into New York. These would last till then.

As it grew darker outside, more people came in. The huge clock with "Schlitz" on it said eight o'clock. I wondered if I could stay in the bar all night and rest, but decided that bars don't usually stay open all night. I ordered another beer and decided to slow down a little. Drinking too fast could ruin my hiking tonight.

I lit a cigarette and listened to Ray Charles wail out a blues number. People around me talked louder, trying to hear each other over the loud music. Turning around, I saw a girl in the corner booth. She was pretty, but her hair looked messed up and I could see tears in her eyes. She wasn't really crying, just staring with watery eyes.

Nobody seemed to care about her or anyone else, so I got up, walked to the bar, and ordered two "Millers." Carrying them back across the room, I saw that she had her head down. I put the glasses and bottles on her table and asked if she minded. She said she didn't mind anything any more, so I sat down. She sipped her beer, then drank half the glass.

"Take it easy honey, there's no hurry."

"I guess not."

"What's your name?"

"Jackie. Yours?"

"Mine's Mike. Mike Henry. Cigarette?"

"Yeah, thanks."

We lit up and sat quietly, listening to the music. When the record was over, I called the waitress for two more; gave her a twenty.

"Hey, man, you're loaded!"

"Yeah, for awhile anyway. Hey listen, Jackie, how come you were cry— Holy hell, I gotta go!"

Two cops were standing at the bar. One of them turned and bellowed over the music, "Anybody here seen a kid by the name of Mike Henry around? He's wanted for robbery . . ."

I walked to the back of the bar, toward the men's room. I was dizzy. Too much beer. Everything looked funny. I reached the door and slammed it open. It had a lock. My numb, shaking fingers fixed the lock. I looked at

myself in the mirror. I was afraid of my own face. My hair looked long and knotted. A beard was forming. My eyes looked black and empty. My head was pounding. Someone tried the door!

"Open up in there!"

Something in my throat made me gag. My head kept spinning. I started reading some scribbling on the wall, but fell forward. I reached for the sink to catch myself; missed. My head hit the wall just as the door was broken open. Through watery, unfocusing eyes I saw the two cops. One had a gun on me.

"O. K., kid, it's over. Your long walk is over."

I tried to get up but fell again. My eyes closed slowly. My God, my head hurt!

## *The Rustic Lover*

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

and I'll wander as I ramble  
 kickin stones upon the road  
 kickin stones along down yonder  
 as I walk the shady road  
 in the morning I'll be goin  
 when the cricket song is done  
 kickin stones along down yonder  
 along down yonder shady road  
 as I take the mountain path  
 crossing over to the valley  
 and you've seen me go at last  
 never again will I come whistling  
 cross the shady valley road  
 up to your back door  
 up to your back door

## Tides

. . . LETITIA CLEVER

I am so far apart from

Man,

Love,

Companionship

that I feel almost invisible:

without an emulating warmth from my heart

I stand alone, without

Love . . .

And I stand, my web-like fingers pressed to my face

Blotting out the sun's revealing rays.

I look,

I stare

blankly in to my convention-filled hands,

And I cry:

but how?

How can this be?

I've split from all society . . .

But still its hateful spell overcasts me,

And I stand:

bewitched . . .

And yet, somehow I remain still despairingly alone, untouched

through my heart . . .

Alone,

Afraid . . .

"No man is an island" —

then what is this flood of water  
about me?

## *The Red Cushions*

. . . JOHN MORRIS

The church council had met as usual on the third Sunday of the month following the evening service. Brother Johnson, chairman of the Worship Committee, had the floor and was addressing the group.

"Gentlemen, lest you think the suggestion I am about to make is a hasty conclusion, I wish to begin by stating that after much thought and deliberation I have arrived at the following solution for a problem of which we are all aware, but a problem which one refrains from discussing."

Someone cleared his throat during the pause, and the pastor shifted uneasily. But all eyes were fastened on the speaker.

"I know you are all asking yourselves what this problem is. Well, perhaps problem is not the best word for it; possibly inconvenience or discomfort might better describe the situation. Gentlemen I'm sure you'll all agree with me when I say quite frankly that the worship services of this church are miserable if not downright painful!"

Gasps and excited whispers filled the study, and the pastor looked stricken. Brother Johnson realizing the double interpretation of his statement blushed and hastened to clarify.

"Oh I say! In no way did I mean to imply that quality on the part of our esteemed pastor is lacking." (The pastor relaxed his death-grip on the arms of his chair somewhat.) Rather I was referring to the almost intolerable firmness of our beautiful though sadly impractical hand-rubbed oak pews."

Again a buzzing swept around the table; Brother Johnson continued:

"I personally have been aware of the problem for quite some time, but tonight was the *coup de grace*, if you will. Gentlemen, I swear my posterior nearly screamed from the torture this evening, and I resolved right there on the spot, painful as it was, that something had to be done!"

He paused dramatically to allow his point to sink home and was pleased to note the general look of sympathy and the somber nodding, up and down, of several heads.

"Gentlemen, look at it this way, if you please. How can a pastor ever hope to spiritually uplift a congregation that is concentrating entirely on the blessed relief to be gained from a mere physical uplifting! Gone are the days of ascetic self-torture when the only way to salvation was brutal self-deprivation of all comfort; on the contrary, it seems to me that it would be efficacious to keep a congregation as comfortable as possible so they may be able to concentrate the whole of their attention on the message being presented."

He knew at a glance he had the support of the majority though the pastor looked openly skeptical.

"It is with this in mind that I make the following suggestion. I believe this church should provide some sort of cushions in the rear for any and all who

desire to use them during services. They should be simple but adequate."

With that he sat down.

The pastor opened his mouth as if he were going to say something, but he looked around him and remained silent. He waited a few seconds; then he said, "You have all heard the suggestion of Brother Johnson. Is there any further discussion?"

There wasn't and the council appointed Brother Johnson to take care of the details.

Two weeks later the cushions appeared piled neatly in the rear of the sanctuary; they were smallish but, as Brother Johnson insisted, adequate, and they were covered with a blood-red velveteen with a cross design woven into the fabric. Of course every member of the congregation took one and seemingly enjoyed it. However the pastor from his pulpit noted that a large number of heads remained bowed even after the prayers were finished.

In the following weeks everyone told everyone else how much they enjoyed their new-found comfort and how much more they benefited from the services. (The pastor was said to have remarked that the main benefit seemed to be sleep.) The cushions were used faithfully with no misgivings until the week when Nettie Taylor's little boy, wrestling with one, flipped off the pew right in the middle of the anthem and broke his arm. From then on it was suggested in the bulletin that pre-school-age children be forbidden the use of a cushion. This meddling was, of course, resented by most parents, but for the safety of their children most agreed to the ban.

As the cushions became broken-in and somewhat threadbare from hard use, the incidence of puncture wounds from protruding springs became greater and greater. One new church member even threatened to sue when infection set in. However he dropped his charges when it was pointed out to him that no one had forced him to use a cushion.

Indeed, cushion use was assumed to be entirely voluntary until the week when, for some reason or another, Mabel Hunter chose to forget her cushion. By now the cushions had become such a part of services that when the absence of one between Mabel and the pew was noticed, rumors and comments were rampant.

"Who's she think she is, not using a pillow!"

"Just trying to show off her piousness, that's all."

"She's too good for the rest of us; wants to show her virtue by sufferin' a little."

"Hrrumph! That proper front might fool you, but between you and me, I happen to know . . ."

After that incident no one dared not to pick up a cushion as he filed into the sanctuary. Too many people had too many skeletons that they could not afford to have let out: the very ones who had ruined poor Mabel would turn on each other if one of them seemed to be doing a symbolic penance by neglecting cushion use. Survival of congregational status soon came to rest on the unwritten law that every member must use a cushion voluntarily — or else.

The red cushions became less and less comfortable.

The third Sunday of the month finally arrived; the red cushions had been in use for over a year and a half and were practically beyond repair, but still everyone dutifully took and used one. After the final service of the evening a crowd gathered anxiously outside the pastor's study. Everyone chatted nervously about the budget to be adopted, not daring to mention the real reason each was there—would the red cushions be replaced with new ones? Secretly each hoped they would not; the red cushions had definitely become an uncomfortable liability, though to mention that aloud would verge on blasphemy. Thus they deftly skirted the issue and awkwardly discussed the budget.

Inside the council was gathered around the oval table. Since the burden of responsibility rested clearly on the council's shoulders, each in here, too, was wondering how he could tactfully move that the cushions not be replaced. The detailed treasurer's report fell on deaf ears as it droned on, though every member appeared enthralled with every decimal point. Finally, the treasurer closed his notebook and sat down. Then, to the amazement of all, though carefully concealed, Brother Johnson was on his feet.

"Gentlemen, I suggest the scope of the new budget unfortunately does not allow for the purchase of cushion replacements."

He then took his seat and examined his fingernails with downcast eyes. Stunned, the members tried to appear as nonchalant as possible, but the pastor's lower jaw dropped in surprise. Of all people to propose the elimination of the cushions, though the more the others thought about it, the more fitting it seemed.

With a speed and efficiency that would have unnerved even a veteran parliamentarian, the motion was seconded and passed without one word of further discussion; the strange hold of the red cushions had been broken.

The next Sunday as Brother Johnson and his wife sat listening to the sermon in their regular pew, he was fascinated by the firm, familiar feel of the polished wood, and, to his own astonishment, he truthfully had to admit that the pew didn't feel **nearly** so hard as he had remembered!

## *Time Past*

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

How far from yesterday?  
the day before  
time past

A smiling face  
A wave of your hand  
Through the window

How near you were  
It would have been easy  
To stop and wait  
just when you waved

But I . . . too sure that you would follow  
forgetting that you always take your time  
rushing on  
smiling only once  
turned the corner and  
was gone

Words not spoken  
Words well thought of many times  
But not spoken

## *Memories*

. . . ZELDA PETERS

She sat with folded hands,  
    rocking and remembering  
Yesterday. — yes, it was yesterday:  
    It couldn't have been years ago  
They were here playing around her feet.  
    and now they were gone.

Gone where? Couldn't she somehow  
    persuade them to come back?  
Today she would have time to play with them;  
    there were no little shirts to mend.  
But they were gone a long way  
    down a pathway called "time."

They could not return to her  
    even if they heard her call.  
Somewhere deep inside, something hurt  
    remembering the pleading voices:  
"Please play with us, Mama,  
    just for a little while."

A tear dropped on the folded hands  
    as she sat rocking and remembering.

## *The Accident*

. . . SUSAN HILEMAN

The truck breezed down the highway. It was loaded with new 1965 Ford cars shining brightly in the morning sunlight. The driver, a huge man, looked as though he had been squeezed into the seat behind the steering wheel. He had a short, fat neck which seemed even shorter because of his double chin. His arms were covered with excess fat and flab with no apparent muscles. The ugly hands grasped the steering wheel easily from years of experience. They were not large, but were extremely small with short, stubby fingers.

Howard Jenson had been driving a truck for the Metson Line for ten years. Before that time, he had held several jobs in local factories but could not stand being cooped up inside four walls with those loud, dirty machines. By driving a truck at least he wasn't chained to one place but could travel. Not that he enjoyed truck driving, but it was a way to make a few bucks. God knows, he hardly made enough in the factories to pay the bills and buy a few beers.

Then there was the kids screamin' and hollerin' all the time. He was damned glad to escape that house after his days off work. Sometimes his irritation became too much for him, but, damn it anyway, a few slaps on the rear never hurt nobody. He sealed from his mind the other times; he didn't really know why he hit them so hard. Just a loss of good sense he guessed. He was always sorry afterward.

He'd been driving this same route for the past five, no six, years. God, had it been that long? What a life. He reached for another cigarette and turned the radio volume up. Forget that for a while. The trip's bad enough without makin' it worse. A man could go nutty thinkin' like that.

The road ahead was familiar, too familiar to him. He thought of the roadside stand about two miles ahead with the bleached blond waitress, her face covered with make-up and her hips swingin' as she served the customers. Yeah. Then there was that big intersection just ahead. Dumps a whole shebang of cars on the highway. The thought irritated him more than he would admit.

Just then a small foreign car swung around him, and raced up the highway. Hope the coppers squeeze him; them racecars think they run the roads.

The truck rounded a curve, and a steep hill came into view. The thought of the slow climb with his heavy load annoyed him, and he felt himself becoming fidgety. The road he was traveling was old. It had been patched here and there, but the state had neglected somehow to widen it. Two-lane highways were death traps anyway. The truck slowed down quickly as the hill steepened. Should lean back and relax. No worry about traffic. Travelin' slow so no trouble about keepin' the crate on the road.

But a chill seemed to start at the base of his spine and slowly run up his back until he actually began to feel himself shake. Quickly looking into the rear-view mirror, he knew why he had suddenly felt uneasy. The same old story—a car with a driver who desperately wanted to pass him and race on to his destination. His eyes involuntarily moved to the mirror many times during the following minutes. The sportscar, riding the tail of the truck, nosed from behind him several times. He wants to pass so bad it's killin' him. He gave a short loud laugh that ended in a coughing spasm. Damn those sportscars.

The sportscar impatiently continued to follow him up the hill. Howard Jensen didn't feel like a 'good-deed fellow' this morning. Let him wait. Let him crawl a while.

The day was nice. A shining sun; the new leaves of spring; now and then a pheasant or a rabbit by the road. Funny, the sun was so red this morning.

The crest of the hill was in sight. A blue convertible was breezing down the highway toward him. Howard Jensen looked into his mirror once more. One of his short ugly hands reached out from the steering wheel and grasped the tiny statue of Jesus sitting on the dashboard. He turned the face of Jesus away from him. At the same time his left hand went out the window, and with it he waved the sportscar around him. Looking straight ahead, he turned the statue of Jesus toward him once again.

## *Alone and in Love*

. . . CYNTHIA SMITH

And there I hung, suspended between

Reality and insanity,

Trapped among the street lights and the stars,

Tortured by voices of lovers' silly quarrels

And babies crying,

Longing for a voice that would never

Again be heard,

For a face lost forever from my sight,

For a kiss obscured by another's lips . . .

## Not Far from Here

ANDREW BUSHMAN

not far from here  
not far at all  
she is sleeping

burnished copper cast adrift  
on her pillow

bright-soft eyes of  
bright-soft waters  
closed in silent tearless crying  
hidden by the shade of clouds  
by day demur  
by night perplexed

voice of laughter—too sad for laughing  
thoughts of life—too short for thinking

tired heart  
searching for the meaning  
from each hour moment gleaning  
little chards of life  
splinters of joy and sorrow

I too am gladdened  
saddened

just in knowing  
not far from here  
not far at all  
she is sleeping

## *Seven Sighs*

. . . JAMES HUMMER

I

A time ago, I had a glow  
Of universal Intuition.  
It came not loud,  
There was no great and cosmic  
Exhibition.  
It came within a conversation  
(Private—no immense oration)  
With the only girl in the world.

II

What I said and what I heard  
Is naught to what I felt.  
What did I say and hear?  
She and I and God know that—  
None else knows and none else will.  
What did I sense; what did I feel?  
I felt primordial majesty,  
I felt majestic faculty,  
Adamantine tenderness,  
Universal happiness—  
And mortals call it love.

III

I might go on, and pile a word  
Upon another word  
And build a great cathedral  
Out of words.  
But I will not, for I can not—  
I know that no one can.

## IV

Words can sell a car  
And build a bridge.  
But words can never resurrect a smile,  
Or bring to life a touch of eyes,  
Gently interred in the mind of a lover,  
There  
And only there  
To live forever..

## V

All wish to live, but what is life?  
Life is living, what is living?

## VI

Living is loving, what is loving?  
Loving is living for someone else.

## VII

That is love, but why is love?  
Love is because hate hurts too much.  
Love is because life hurts too much.  
Love is because the world is too big  
To cherish it alone.

I am no more than you;  
You are no more than me.  
But you and I,  
Together we,  
Are greater than eternity.

## *Thoughts on Wakening*

. . . ANDREW BUSHMAN

and it was a long time  
before they found me

peeping down a well  
dropping pebbles down a well  
splashing not too well  
in the dark

then it was an old wet bird  
that comforted me

perching on a stone  
chirping all alone  
sitting on his throne  
in the dark

now it is a green locust tree

growing up at dawn  
moving slowly on  
timid like a fawn  
in the dark

