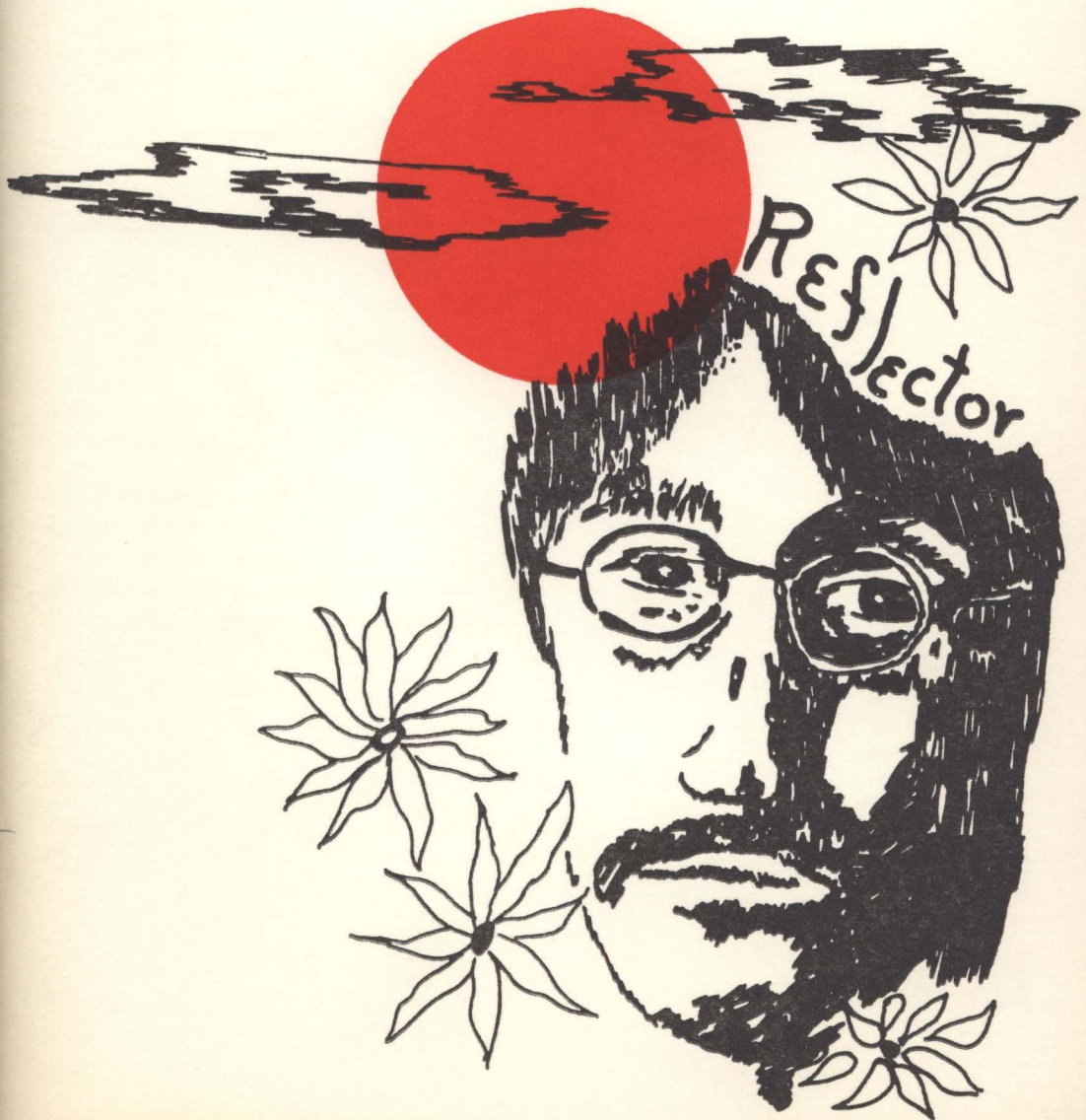
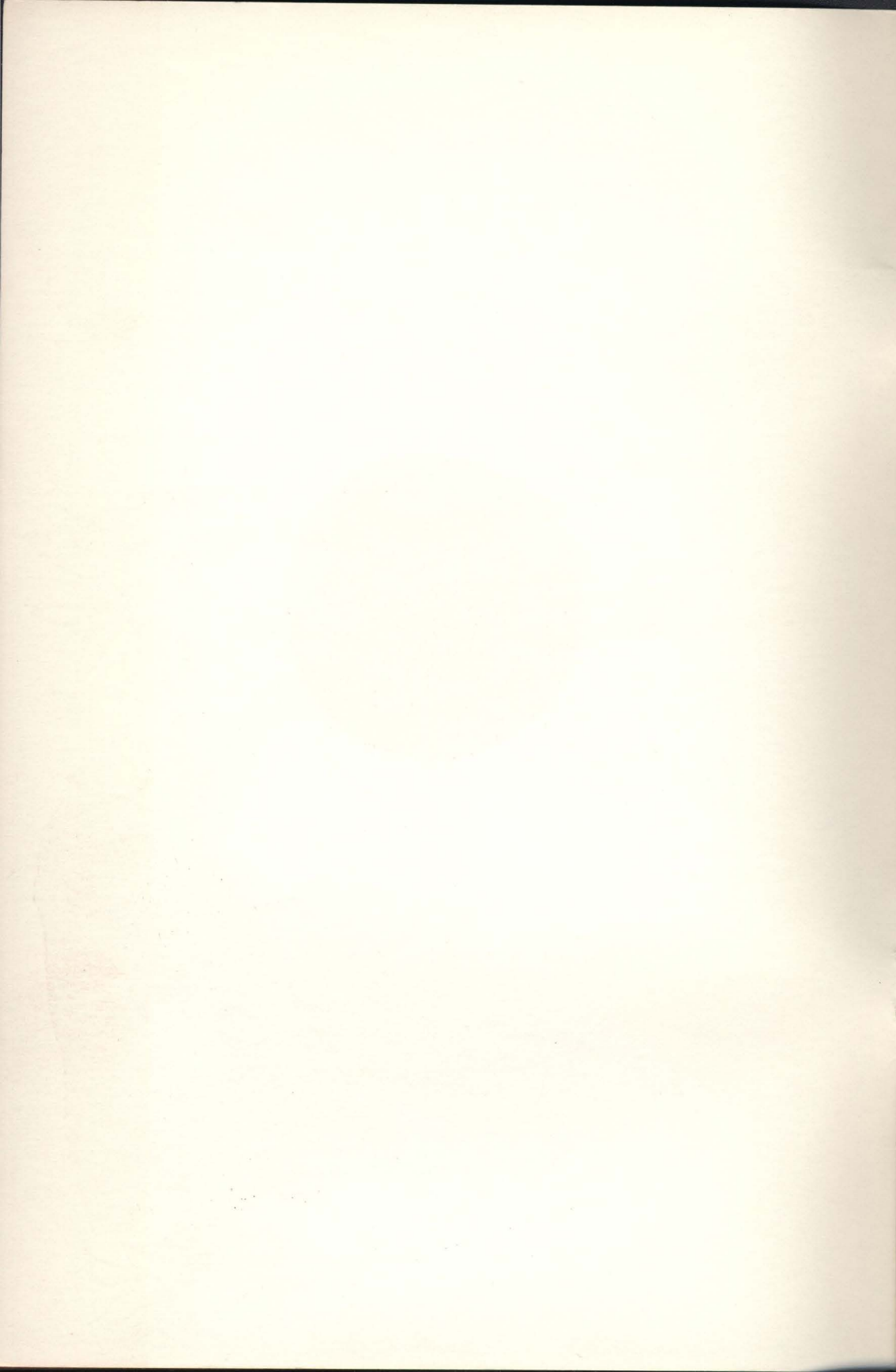


Fall 1968





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FALL — 1968

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The Reflector

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**FIRST PLACE AWARD**

**to**

**THE REFLECTOR**

Shippensburg State College

March 15, 1968

Columbia Scholastic Press Association

College and University Division



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Julius Caesar,  
The Roman geezer,  
Squashed his wife with a lemon squeezer.

anonymous twentieth century

English verse.

## *Silence*

. . . DEBBIE GLESSNER

I sat alone  
Upon a hill,  
My chin resting upon my knees,  
And listened to silence.  
It seemed to rustle through the trees.  
I attempted to answer,  
But as soon as I spoke . . .  
The silence  
Into tiny pieces  
Broke.

## *The Sea*

. . . EDWARD SADTLER

I know the sea.  
Water lapping 'round a wharf,  
I feel it.  
A mother caressing her child is not  
gentler.  
The baby's hair is no softer than those  
liquid ripples.  
The baby's tongue does not make sounds  
softer than the murmur of the water.  
No, no softer  
And no more spiritual.  
The water's sound haunts anyone who  
listens long enough.  
The slow slosh of my blood becomes  
the slew of ripples under  
a wharf, over the sand where the  
wharf buries its nose.  
My heart pumps time to the murmur of  
the water.  
My soul is soothed, as if the rise of  
each little ripple, no matter how small,  
Engulfs my troubles,  
Loosens their roots,  
Then recedes,  
Carrying my troubles out of me,  
Out to sea,  
Where they will sink into the  
silence of the forever shadow.



## *Western Hospitality*

. . . SARAH D. MOORE

Mrs. O'Toole, a typical western ranch-woman, lived alone in a one-room shack on a small ranch. She derived her livelihood from the horses she raised and sold.

"Well Mrs. O'Toole, how are you and all your ponies?" I asked as my companion, Major Smith, and I entered the stable where we found her halter breaking a colt.

"We're all right, I guess," she answered breathlessly, but this here colt is about got me down. He's terrible wild! You'd think he never saw a human before. He's out of old Nellie and he's got a disposition just like that old hussy."

She tied the colt to its dam's halter ring and closed the stall door.

"How are your neighbors up on the hill getting along this winter?" I inquired as we turned to leave the stable.

"Them are funny people, poor as a church mouse and triflin' as hell," she said. "Guess we better go up to the shack and get some chow."

We accepted her invitation and started to walk toward the unpainted shack that she called home.

"You know them kids up there didn't have a thing for Christmas except the things you fellers brought up for um?" she asked, looking toward her only neighbor's house. "The oldest boy is coming down this way now. Bet he wants to borrow somethin'—they've borrowed about everything I got except my toothbrush."

The boy met us at the door of the shack. He was smiling and seemed very glad to see us.

"Say!" he blurted, without any salutation of any kind, "Paw says its too late for you fellers to go home and if you want to stay here tonight you kin sleep in our new barn with the cows. There's a lot of hay in there."

"Thanks a lot," replied Major Smith in all seriousness. "Tell your father that we appreciate his hospitality and that we will go over and look at the cows. We will decide later whether or not we will sleep in the barn with them."

"O.K.!" retorted the youngster as he turned and started for the mail box.

Major Smith and I started to laugh but the expression on Mrs. O'Toole's face told us that she was somewhat angry.

"Damn, if that ain't somethin'," ventured Mrs. O'Toole angrily. "Them people is plenty poor but they got plenty of room in that old house to put you up."

"That is western hospitality," cried Major Smith, still in the throes of hysterical laughter. "I have heard about western hospitality all my life—"

"The old timers ain't that way," snapped Mrs. O'Toole caustically. "These damn dry farmers ain't nothin' like the real old timers."

Mrs. O'Toole started dinner; Major Smith and I walked out in the pasture. Before returning we both decided that it would be to the best interest of tactfulness not to mention western hospitality to Mrs. O'Toole again that evening.

## Haiku

GINI OLDHAM

If the world were to cease  
at this very moment,  
how would we appear?



## *The Point*

. . . GERALD PINKERTON

Why the hell did he have to stay behind? Up to now everything had gone just as planned, but how do you plan having to kill some kid who is probably no older than your own son? Before, the killing had been done by others, men who had had to follow orders, allowing nothing to stand in their way . . . not even women and children. But where in the manual did it say that a 47-year-old colonel would someday have to put a .45 caliber bullet through a boy's head and then forget that it ever happened? The Point had not prepared him to deal with this kind of situation, and as he stood towering over the lifeless heap that had only moments before tried to kill him, he could feel the sweat escaping from his mud-caked pores.

He longed for the comfort and regimented motonony that had been his as commanding officer at Fort Meade, Maryland. There he had thrived on the predictable efficiency that was the constant denominator of every move he made. His men had respected and admired his dedication to duty and were proud to be under his command. In the ranks he was referred to as a "cocky S.O.B." but seldom, if ever, was there any trace of disrespect to be found in the voice that uttered this platitudinous remark. His superiors had nothing but praise for the way he handled himself, and scuttlebutt had it that he would soon be called upon to assume the rank of Brigadier General.

War, unfortunately, had halted his rapid ascent and he was, without fanfare, dispatched to the rotting jungles of Viet Nam. It had been a rude awakening for one drilled in the theoretical aspects of war. The order and neatness to which he had become accustomed were replaced by disorder and neglect, with more emphasis placed on survival than appearance. More than once he had ruefully glanced at his tarnished belt buckle only to lapse into sleep before he could give the matter further consideration.

Direct contact with the enemy was slow in coming and he had spent his first months plotting strategy that others would employ. Death rose to the occasion, however, and he was placed in charge of a fallen comrade's platoon. He began to sense the confrontation that he knew every soldier inevitably must make: stress under fire.

It began simply enough as a search-and-destroy mission. His platoon was to cover an area of about three miles, surrounded on two sides by rice fields and extending as far as the Han River. The platoon met with relatively light fire and the river was easily reached. As he was advancing to the main part of his platoon, it happened. Out of the dense jungle sprang an enemy soldier clumsily wielding a rifle with a bayonet, menacingly peering from the belly of the barrel. There was a moment's hesitation, then a thunderous roar, ignited by his deftly trained finger, joining the other noises which, when scored, compose the sounds of war. He had made his first kill. The charging figure collapsed as if his spine had tired of its job and had now decided to transfer its support-

ing function to the unsuspecting muscles surrounding it. What had been a living organism was now only a memory which, from time to time, would stir the emotions of loved ones left behind.

The colonel, too, would remember. For an instant he had dared to challenge God's supremacy and for the rest of his life he would be subjected to sleepless nights of wondering if he had made the right decision. He had done his duty, but he felt the guilt that a murderer must feel after taking a life, no matter what the reason. He fell to his knees, and now not even all his rigid military training could stop the tears . . . gaining momentum as they negotiated the stretched, dry skin of his gaunt face.

## *The Mortal, Wounded*

. . . DIANNE E. MOWRY

They say that time  
Can heal all wounds  
Why wait on time?  
There's the light  
Of the moon.



## *The Intruders*

. . . DAVID TORZILLO

Mr. Sprout walked briskly in the warm sunshine. The municipal park, with all its lush green shrubbery and majestic, swaying trees was only one block away now. He could actually smell the freshness of the park in the gentle breeze. Spending Sunday afternoons in the park had become almost a ritual in his life. For the past twenty years the park had provided a respite from his hectic life in the city. He yearned for the solitude and quiet that could be found there on almost any Sunday. This thought made him now quicken his pace as the entrance loomed in the distance.

Just as he entered the park, Mr. Sprout pondered over something that had been in the back of his mind all week. He wondered if the boys on their motorcycles would pass through the park today. It had been twelve Sundays ago since he first noticed them. All three of them had roared past his bench on their motorcycles and glared at him. Mr. Sprout remembered how he had felt the first time this happened. He had been seized with fear and disgust at the same time. But now he tried to forget about it because he was in the park. Even the boys with their black jackets and heavy boots could not keep him away from the tranquil park.

He settled down on his favorite bench and immediately was surrounded by pigeons. The birds knew that he would have some food for them.

It was while he was feeding the pigeons that Mr. Sprout heard the drone of motorcycles in the distance. Instantly his heart leaped up into his throat. Across the green grass he could see them coming. All three of them were here again.

As the cycles roared up to his bench, the pigeons scattered in all direction, and left feathers floating in the air. Mr. Sprout was startled to see the cycles come to an abrupt halt. The deafening engines were shut off and the riders dismounted.

The three riders walked towards him. The first one took off his black aviation cap and the sun glinted off his clean blond hair. Mr. Sprout could see a gleam in the youth's clear blue eyes.

No one said a word. The three boys each had crackers and popcorn for the pigeons. They started throwing popcorn on the grass and the pigeons swarmed over the grass and the pavement in front of the bench.

Mr. Sprout reached into his pocket and pulled out his bag of bread crumbs. With a wide grin on his face, he threw crumbs to the birds. All four of them stood there throwing food to the birds and laughing like children at a zoo.

## *And We Prayed For The Sea To Give Water*

. . . PAUL POLITIS

Mouths that had eaten dirt  
And spit it up again,  
The tired mouths  
That had talked themselves into the dust.  
Minds worn into despair  
Through repeated failure,  
And the bodies grown weak  
And hopeless  
From their long journey  
Through a life whose summit  
Never rose to sea level,  
Finally reached the sea,  
And they gathered on the beach  
And rejoiced,  
But they could not drink  
The water.

## *Unnamed*

. . . EDWARD SADTLER

One sun rising  
In the sky  
Is enough.  
Two suns rising  
Would make it tough  
To quench a thirst  
Or hide in shadows.



## *A Tunneled Vision*

. . . BARRY ROSS MARTIN

Think, if you will my blind  
A race of humans or such  
A reasonable facsimile of rot  
With but one eye to see  
The world which treachers  
Upon every feasible site  
Which would be somewhat  
Like a fat political fop  
Sitting at the bottom  
Of a countryman's well  
Who can merely visualize  
One minute retrospect of truth  
Passing by his limited world  
Which is all he is able to do  
With any account for himself  
In his triangular world  
And a stepping stone life of nothing;  
For although there are problems  
Found everywhere about him  
He does not want to see them  
Behind his mahogany desk  
Filled with disregarded mail  
And a bustful and very lustful  
Secretary of his daughter's age  
To sit upon his disappearing lap  
To jot down needless memoirs  
And a gold case used to carry  
His cigarettes which cost the same  
To any blue-collar man of common  
But does not change the taste at all  
Nor does his fanciful name plate  
Change anything about him  
Or his life for that matter  
At the bottom of his well.

## *Strange Friendship*

. . . DONNA HARPSTER

O island, bonequaked to peninsula  
resting on a bodily telestar  
push, remind, make gaudy,  
inflamed inside your bony cage.  
Impatient, crippled in every convolution, I raged  
once, before knowing, understanding; acceptive  
of your kind piercing geyser thrusts; perceptive  
of beauty as penitent sentinel synapses,  
circuit-riders of flesh and blood, repent  
harsh duty, report pole to pole your  
nonconformity. Ever-mindful they narrate pure  
pain, that I can listen and ignore  
you, attention-seeking line-deforming disc.



## *The Incident*

. . . JEANNE BOWERS

### "VISIT EXOTIC TAHITI . . . LEAVE YOUR CARES A WORLD AWAY."

The bright sign in the travel agency attracted Fran's attention as she hurried down the crowded street. Right this minute that was exactly what she wanted to do—leave all her cares a million miles away. The thought of hurrying home, rushing through another meal, tearing to work, and facing another Christmas-rush mob was overwhelming. She stopped and gazed at the poster which pictured a Tahitian sunset, golden azure water shimmering against the palm-green shore. Outlined against the tropical stillness was a grass-skirted girl, her mysterious smile beckoning to all who passed. The poster presented such a contrast to the gray, indifferent day and the withdrawn anonymity of the passing throngs.

Some day, I want to go there, Fran thought. There, or any place far away. For a moment she remembered the scores of books that she had read as a child, books about strange and exciting people and places. She remembered promising herself that when she grew up she would visit those places, that she would be the detective in London or the lover in Venice. But here she was grown up; and those dreams were as far away as if she were still sitting in the old porch swing, reading and watching the summer evenings pass.

Through her reflections, Fran suddenly noticed the time on the big, bank clock. Almost five. Oh my gosh . . . I have to be at work at six; and I still haven't bought my Christmas cards, she thought—feeling disgusted with herself as she started away. After all these years, she was still day-dreaming, still expecting the world to transform magically into a fairy land.

Fran hurried into the card shop. In only a few minutes she picked up enough cards to complete her Christmas list. She quickly handed the cards to the clerk at the counter.

"Good afternoon, Miss," his voice sounded pleasantly from behind the cash register. "You know, you've picked out my favorite Christmas cards."

For the first time Fran really looked at the cards she had grabbed. They pictured a tiny, white village nestled on blue foil paper; but the striking thing about them was the glittering, silver star which seemed to glisten out at all who looked.

"They give kind of a special message, I think," the voice continued earnestly.

Fran shifted her attention to the sound behind the counter. The voice belonged to a little man almost bald, with warm, kitten-gray eyes and an enthusiastic smile that looked vaguely familiar.

"Why yes, they are rather pretty," she replied with a hesitant answering smile.

"Merry Christmas, Miss," he called as she started through the door.

Only after Fran had reached her car and was driving home did she realize where she had seen the little man's smile before. It was the same smile that had been on the girl in the travel poster . . . a sparkling, spontaneous smile of satisfaction.

## *Uncensored Loneliness*

. . . BARRY ROSS MARTIN

By the black you are gone.  
I am lost in light  
For night sensed your song.  
Now I measure my plight  
And its ghostly lone;  
As the nymphs parade  
I comprehend the tone  
Of their sunken serenade.  
A tweak of the skin  
Will pain my right  
Perhaps it's a sin  
Experienced by night.  
My green sea has swept  
And my meadows are bare  
As I leer from whence I crept  
At my shadow I must tear  
For you are the sea  
And I the ship.  
Live it free  
Short be your trip.



## *Air Conditioning*

. . . DAVID TORZILLO

Mr. Nagler had always been my favorite teacher. He had a way with people. He made the history class interesting, and most of the students respected him for this. I noticed how civilized and cultivated he looked as he walked towards me in the hall now. As usual, he was dressed rather elaborately, with a navy blue blazer, tapered khaki pants and a white ascot. His shoes always looked expensive. They had ornate drawings on the tips and little buckles on the sides.

All of this passed through my mind as I saw him approaching me. As his face lit up with its usual broad smile, his eyes brightened as if they were a prelude to some speech.

"Good morning, how are you today, Mr. Shanley?" he said.

"O.K, I guess," I smiled and said. He always called me Mr. Shanley in a sort of mock businesslike way. Mr. Nagler had the ability to look very professional, yet still be able to converse with and understand the students. Most of the students admired him for this.

"I was just looking for you," I said. "I wanted to pick up my term paper, if you have it corrected."

"Oh yes! I corrected it last night," replied Mr. Nagler. "I'd like to discuss it with you before I give it back, though. Do you have a class now?" he said.

"No, I'm just coming from lunch and I have a break before my 3:30 class."

"Why don't we go to the conference room in the library so I can ask you some questions about this paper," said Mr. Nagler.

"O.K." As I said this, I wondered if he didn't like my term paper. The paper had been an excellent one, I thought.

As we walked towards the library, Mr. Nagler seemed to say hello to every student. This was surprising to me because there were 6,000 students on campus. But of course, Mr. Nagler always made it a point to remember students.

Since he didn't say anything on the way over, my mind wandered. I thought how wonderful it would be to teach if I were as well-liked as Mr. Nagler. It would be a pleasure coming to work with an atmosphere like this. I often wondered why Mr. Nagler never married anyone. One of my friends told me that he had seen Mr. Nagler with some very intelligent and attractive women in the past couple of years.

As we pushed open the door to the library and felt the change from the torrid heat of the day to the cool air-conditioned library, Mr. Nagler said, "Ah, isn't this great, Steve. There should be air conditioning in every building on this campus."

We walked to the empty room on the right side of the circulation desk, behind the microfilm files. As he closed the door, I expected to see a serious look on his face, but he was smiling. Maybe he did like my paper.

"Well, you might as well sit down, Steve," he said lightly. "I gave you a B+ on this paper, but I wanted you to explain a couple things about it."

As I eased down in the hard-backed chair, I wondered why he wanted to talk to me if I got a B+ on it. "What did you want to ask me," I said.

Mr. Nagler walked over behind me and put his hands on my shoulders. "I just wanted to talk to you," he said. Then he said, "Do you have a girl friend, Steve?"

"Yes," was my reply. "Why do you ask?"

His hands tightened into my shoulders and I could feel his breath on my neck. As the scent of a spicy shave lotion hit my nose, I turned to see him with his eyes closed, trembling. Then it dawned on me.

I jumped up, opened the door, and quickly walked out of the library.

## *Of Smoke and Ivory Fires*

. . . PAUL POLITIS

I saw the world in motion last night  
At a place where it stops making headlines  
For a time,  
And becomes a world of individuals  
Shrinking snugly together  
Into a big round room  
Of song and dance;  
A melting room  
Where futures cross on their journey to tomorrow,  
Futures of highs and lows  
And goods and bads,  
and neithers;  
Futures which, after all,  
Did not begin together  
And will no doubt end apart.  
The meeting place of dreams and plans and people,  
Where raw materials begin to work  
Together toward the end.  
I spent last night  
In the half-united world of a melting pot,  
Dreaming and planning  
And melting.



## *I Am The Rain*

. . . P. B. FRANK

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.

I am the rain.

I have fallen through yesterday

And beaten the blue grass and the wool of last summer.

It was I, last week, who smacked your windshield,

Spoke to your tires to rise

And slide.

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.

I am the rain.

Last year, I fell to great jungle leaves,

To the dark rainforest floor.

It was I who spoke to your helmet.

It was I, who, with your other, fell through another

Rain

Of horizontal pain.

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.

I am the rain.

I am age itself (wandering not to find

Its origin,

For that I knew before my being).

I fell on Lincoln standing

In his stovepipe hat

In frosty station, warming,

While I dripped and filled the brim

Of his eyes I knew little more than he was.

I knew Napoleon in me

When he returned from Russia not crying

But frozen,

Solid.

I am the rain.

I knew Charlemagne when, in the summer before,

He stood shouting in a green garden,

Trying his power before Christmas.

I spoke to his tongue:

I am the rain.

I knew Christ and his dirty locks

In the desert where I spoke

To his crusty feet.

No; I did not cry in sorrow

Or in rage

When he crawled upon the hill.

When pinned, I spoke:

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.

I am the rain.

Noah knew me,

And all the kinds of beasts that now exist

Have inklings of the words I spoke to Noah

And his bark and smelly crew:

I am the rain.

I was the first to speak to Adam and Eve

When they raced from the garden;

First who spoke to homo sapiens, homo erectus,

The long lines of -pithecus back through

Oligocene, miocene, eocene;

The tarsoids were not the first to whom I said:

I am the rain.

First I spoke not to the dinosaur,

Though his hide and I have touched;

First I spoke not to falling trees,

Though long I spoke to them:

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.

I am the rain.

I am age itself.

Long before I spoke to sliding rocks and folding mountains,

Long before I spoke to brothing seas concocted of a rusty landslide,

soupy jells and boiling sulphurs,

Long before a single cell emerged complete, dissolved as fast,

and re-emerged again,

Long before all this, I was speaking:

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.

I am the rain.

Long before my being, I was there.

When all was dissolute, when chance and I

Formed one from two, then I began:

I am the rain.

I spoke through half eternity;

When all had rained, (and I was not),

One from all unformed.

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.

I am the rain.

I am alpha and omega,

The beginning and the end.

I am the rain.

Hear my words; be silent.



EDITOR'S CHOICE

P. B. Frank



## *The Shirt*

. . . JUDITH ANN FRANK

The letter was in the box when Ola went out to get the mail. She hesitated a long while, examining it, because it was addressed to Jess and she didn't like to open Jess' mail unless she had to.

Today Jess was up at Frank's, helping with the corn. She looked at the letter again, trying to think whether or not to open it. It looked pretty official. It might be important, and she decided to open it.

The letter was from the Selective Service, it said. The Selective Service was notifying Jess he was drafted. Tomorrow he was to go to Destin and board a bus.

She thought about the letter while she walked back to the plank house. There wasn't anything new there, of course. She'd known before, when Jess had gotten the other letter and taken the physical and everything, that this would happen.

But it had been far away. "Tomorrow" she'd always said, thinking about all the things she wanted to get done before Jess left. And now it was tomorrow, almost, and nothing was done.

"Well," Ola said, "I'd better get busy," and she went into the house and settled down to work.

The cloth was there, right where she'd left it, by the sewing machine her grandma had used.

The sewing machine was old now and wouldn't work but she kept it anyway. A man from way off had come through once, looking for antiques he was, and he'd wanted to give her fifty dollars for the machine. She'd asked Jess and Jess said no, the machine was in the family. She'd felt relieved.

Now she lifted the cloth from the machine and touched it, feeling the softness against her reddened hands.

It was good cloth, dear, but she'd insisted, even when Jess asked wasn't it too much to pay. She'd given the clerk the money, not regretting the exchange like she usually did. The cloth was for Jess' new shirt.

She had no patience with shirts you bought in stores. Either they cost too much or they were poorly made. She bought her dresses off a rack but she made Jess' shirts by hand, just like her ma had made her pa's. Her ma was a seamstress and a good teacher, and Ola had the knack. Jess' shirts were perfect.

The material was blue and soft but strong, the kind a man should wear. Jess needed it; all of his shirts were old and worked out. She wasn't letting him go in a ragged shirt, she wasn't about to.

Right away, letting the dirty dishes sit in the dry sink, she went to work. She laid the material on the floor, smoothing it as she went, and then she started to cut.

Her hands as she moved the scissors were firm and knowing, cutting the cloth with quick certain strokes. The material parted before her and she pushed

the scraps to one side. She'd worry with them later.

The cutting was easy. The stitching was another story. All day long she worked, her firm little stitches moving along the blue cloth. The thread was perfect, the same color as the cloth. She'd looked in three different stores to find it.

Her needle flashed, but still she was not finished when Jess came home, not nearly finished, and there was a meal to be cooked.

Jess read the letter while she peeled the potatoes, his brows knit together. Then he got up and came over to her. "You read this, didn't you Ola?"

"Yes," she answered. She was washing the potatoes, feeling their firm white bodies in her hands. Potatoes were Jess' food, man's food he said, and she had them often. He liked that.

Jess stood in the center of the room, his hands plunged in his pockets. "Well," he said, "we were expecting this, I guess."

She nodded. "Yes, I guess we were." The potatoes were finished now, and she covered them with water and set them on the stove to cook.

She fixed the meat and some corn to go with the potatoes and then they ate. Jess told her about the work at Frank's, they'd had a good day, and she told him about the shirt. It wasn't done yet but it would be before he left, she'd see to that.

All evening, while Jess talked and laughed and sat and thought, she sewed. She had the sleeves in, perfectly, every gather exactly right, when it was time to go to bed.

"Ola," Jess said, getting up from the chair where he always sat in the evenings, "Ola, it's time to go to bed."

"I can't go," she answered. "I'm not near finished. It's a fine shirt, it's turning out fine, but it's slow."

"You can do it tomorrow," Jess said, "early, before I leave."

"I can't," she said. "There won't be enough time. You have to be there at eleven."

"Well, then," he suggested, "you could let it go. You could finish it later, after I'm gone."

But Ola said no. "The shirt's for you to wear tomorrow, when you go on the bus. I want it to be finished for you."

"I'd rather wait for the shirt," Jess answered, "and have you come in to bed with me now. It's the last night we'll be together for a while, Ola."

"No," she said, her cheeks flushed. "No. No man of mine is going away wearing a raggedy shirt, I won't have it. I won't have it," she finished, and her hands were still moving, darting over the blue cloth.

Jess stood still for a minute, watching her, and then he moved to the door and left the room.

Ola's hands moved quickly, making Jess' shirt. The shirt was blue and soft and would be perfect. It would flow over the muscles in Jess' straight back and arms, moving down to his strong tanned hands he held her with in the night.



She could hear him in the bedroom, moving around. There was no reason for him to be mad, Ola thought, the shirt was a gift for him. It would be made by her hands, stitched with her fingers, conceived in her heart. It was all for him.

She rubbed the back of her hand against her eyes, wiping away the glare that kept blinding her. The stitches kept moving, making tracks across the clean blue material she held in her lap.

The first shirt she'd made for Jess she'd had plenty of time. She had bought the material with money she'd saved and then hid it. She'd done all the sewing during the day, when Jess was gone and her other work was done, so he wouldn't guess.

At the end of a month the shirt was finished and Jess was so surprised. He'd looked at it and put it on and that night he took her to town and they saw a movie.

Jess loved her. That night, after the movie he'd held her and kissed her and she loved him so much she cried.

Tomorrow he was going away.

She put the shirt down on the stand beside her chair and got up. She stuck the needle in the material, carefully, and then she went into the bedroom.

Jess was spread out on the big quilt she'd made, watching the ceiling. He looked at her when she came in. "Well," he said, "I guess I've got a new shirt."

"The shirt's not finished," she said, but her voice wouldn't talk loud enough. She cleared her throat. "I didn't finish it. The shirt's not finished."

For a minute Jess just looked at her. Then he got up and came to her and she sank into his arms.

"I can wear one of my old ones," Jess said.

He left at ten the next morning, so he'd be sure and get there on time. She didn't go along, there was no good reason to. The goodbyes were said.

"You write," she called, and he turned and looked at her and smiled.

"I will," he promised. "You write to me, too."

"Yes," she answered. "I will. I'll send you the shirt."

"Fine," he said. "I'll wear it every chance I get." He crawled into the car with Frank, who was driving him, and they rode away.

She went into the house, closing the door behind her, and did yesterday's dishes.



## *Melancholy*

. . . MARCIA MURAFKA

Turn around slowly, summer.  
Sing loudly and walk away with care.  
Leave me green, summer:  
For I have counted autumn's leaves  
And wrapped their brittle beauty around  
My emptiness.

## *The Dancer*

. . . DEBBIE GLESSNER

Twirling

On tippy-toe,

The dancer is like

A dainty piece of fluff

Floating through

Rhythmical space.



## Silly Boy

. . . DONNA SMITH

"Why do you do it?" he demanded, his eyes flashing the message of hurt pride. She thought his eyes were beautiful, but boys should have brown eyes. Blue eyes were meant for girls.

"I don't know why."

She shrugged her shoulders as she answered him, appearing to be very tired and very unhappy, but her voice revealed a touch of annoyance.

"I've always been this way," she stated flatly.

He considered her attitude, then became very determined once again that he couldn't let her get away with it this time.

"Well then, something must be done. You can't just go on doing things like this." The young man was rapidly losing his patience. "I still can't believe I'm taking this from you. What do you think I am, anyway—the world's biggest fool? Yes, I'll bet that's exactly what you think. I can just see you now, laughing at me when—."

She broke into his exclamations with a quiet, straightforward "I'm not laughing at you," then paused and added in the same tone, "I love you," as if it were obvious enough.

"Sure, you love me," he mimicked her scornfully, "you really love me. I suppose that's why I found you with another guy when I got home. That just proves it, doesn't it? Oh yes, you really do love me. That's plain enough."

"Oh Ron," she explained, "I've told you and told you there is nothing to get upset about. We were just, well, just sort of joking around. Nothing serious. I swear to you, it was all just teasing." She paused. "He's just a friend."

"Just a friend." He repeated her words slowly, then added sarcastically, "I think I'll get a few friends in that case. A few pretty friends, with long hair and nice legs. What would you say then? How would you like me to practice your cozy concept of friendship? How would you feel if—"

"I wouldn't like it. You know I wouldn't."

"Oh, but it's fair for you."

"No, I admit it was wrong."

"Sure, you'll admit it was wrong. But will you care? No, you'll turn right around and do the same thing over again the moment I'm out of your sight, won't you? Twice you've done this to me. Twice I've come home to see you, driven three hours just to be with you, anxious to give you that first good kiss—and twice I've come back to find out you've been messing around. The last time I had no real proof, but this time I saw you with my own eyes. You can't deny it this time. I saw you myself, and you can't lie your way out of it."

"I'm not denying it," she declared. "You saw it. I admit it. Phil kissed me. So what? He is only a friend to me. I tell you, it meant nothing."

She was becoming upset with him now, seeming to feel that he had no right to be angry with her. So she turned slightly away from him and hung



her head a little, just to let him know that she really was sorry for what she had done, then repeated in a slightly trembling voice, "It didn't mean a thing."

She looked up at him and saw that he seemed confused. Although he was trying to avoid looking at her, she managed to catch his eyes with her own when he glanced at her for a second, then turned away.

"What can I do?" she finally asked. "I'm sorry for what I did. I do love you, and I want to make it all up to you. Just please tell me what I can do."

He was barely listening to her. Her pouting, pleading expression was beginning to make him weaken, and he couldn't let that happen. He wouldn't give in—not this time. This time she had gone too far. He had to find some way to keep his pride, but for a long time all he did was stare at her.

"I'll kill him," he finally declared, "He's got no right messing with my girl and I'm going to tell him so. I'll show that punk that nobody messes with my girl. He must really have a lot of nerve—well, I'll show him what happens when a guy comes near my property. He'll get the message."

"Don't be silly." She tried to sound calm, but an edge of panic in her voice broke through a little. She hoped he hadn't noticed. "I'm the one who was at fault. If you have anything to say, say it to me. Leave Phil out of this."

Above all, she didn't want another scene. The memory of when Jack had come home to find her with Ron was still too fresh in her mind. It had been quite unpleasant when they had stood there arguing about who had the real claim to her, but the most dreadful moment had been when they both turned to her and said that it was she who must choose which one she wanted. As they stood there waiting for her choice, she had felt trapped. Trapped like an animal, and whatever she did would lead to disaster.

Due to deceit, fast talking, and a tremendous amount of plain good luck, she had managed to get out of the incident unscathed—and with both boys in tow, each one somehow miraculously believing that he was the chosen one. But a person couldn't always be so fortunate, and since then she had tried to avoid such scenes whenever possible.

"Leave Phil alone," she begged. "Look—what do you want me to do? This is our problem—yours and mine—why do you have to drag Phil into it?"

"Because Phil was the one who was kissing my girl, that's why. And I'm going to convince him that it was the biggest mistake of his life. When I'm finished with him he'll stay away from you; don't doubt that."

"Is that what you want? If all you want is for him to stay away from me," she tried to sound matter-of-fact, "I'll simply stop seeing him."

"Oh no! Oh no. What do you think I am? Do you expect me to believe that?" He laughed knowingly. "You'd never tell him that. I know you that well, at least. I'll have to tell him, and I'm going to. I'm going to tell him right now, and you're coming along. I want you to hear this, too."

He started the car and began driving towards Phil's house.

"Please stop," she begged, "this is really silly. Just stop and think." She spoke rapidly, not knowing what to say or do. She only knew that she didn't

want those two to get together. What would Phil say? He might let something slip—some secret that Ron shouldn't know—something that would make him even more angry.

"Just think," she pleaded, "why must you tell him? Why do you think he'll listen to you? Wouldn't it be better if I told him myself? That would really give him the message—if he heard it from me. That would show him that I don't care about him. Why not make me be the one to tell him?"

She stared at Ron and when he glanced over at her, she threw him the most pleading, pitiful expression that she could force into her eyes.

"I don't know." He finally broke the silence.

"Please, Ron."

"I don't know. It doesn't sound right to me."

"You'd be right there. You would hear me tell him. You'll hear me say that I never want to see him again. Please, Ron. There's no need for you to make a scene with him. It will be better if I tell him," she persuaded, "more effective. He'll really get the message then."

"He'd really get the message if I told him. He'd get more than a message, he'd—"

"Don't be childish," she interrupted with just the right combination of a soothing and a reprimanding tone.

Maybe she had a point there. He wouldn't want to be considered childish.

"All right. You tell him. But I'm going to be right there. I'm going to hear you tell him, and I'm going to be sure that he understands that you mean it."

They drove the rest of the way in silence, and when they pulled up in front of the house all the lights were on.

"I thought you said he was hitch-hiking to Pittsburgh this week-end."

"Maybe he changed his mind."

The scene was not nearly as bad as she anticipated. True to his promise, Ron said nothing. He just listened as she calmly told Phil that she never wanted to see him again and good-bye. Phil took it nicely, she thought, judging from his startled expression. He would call her up later to verify that Ron had forced her into the whole thing.

"See—I told you he meant nothing to me," she reminded Ron as they stopped in front of her house. "I told you I didn't care about him. Now will you believe me?"

Ron still seemed slightly troubled, but he seemed to have lost all desire to argue with her about it anymore. He slowly turned, looked at her, and said, "O.K., then, where's my welcome-home kiss?"

She thought he had recovered completely, but as he walked her to the door he began all over again.

"I must really be a fool."

"Hush," she soothed "you are not a fool. You are wonderful, and I love you. Please don't be angry. I don't deserve you, I know, but please believe



that I do love you."

"It had better never happen again. I mean it. Do you understand? One more time and we are through. I won't put up with it again."

"I know that, and it won't happen again. I promise you." She fumbled with the button on his coat, pressed her head against his chest, sighed reluctantly, and suggested, "Listen, you've done a lot of driving today and you must be awfully tired. Why don't you go home now and get some sleep so you'll be full of energy for me tomorrow? Call me first thing in the morning, O.K.?"

As she watched him walk away she noticed that he did look tired, extremely tired. She felt exhausted too, and didn't even have time to think about all that had happened before she fell soundly asleep. She wouldn't have wanted to think about it anyway.

He did call her the next morning. But as soon as he said "hello" she knew that something was wrong. She wondered impatiently what in the world it could be now.

Finally he interrupted her description of a new dress to declare, "I went to visit Phil last night," and his voice sounded very strange.

"Ron—you promised me!" She halted, wondering just how much of a mess she had gotten into now and which method would be best to use to get out of it. "And what did Phil have to say?" she inquired, trying to sound only slightly interested and as if she had absolutely nothing to fear.

"Oh, we had a nice talk. He told me some very interesting things." Through the strangeness of his voice she could sense increasing anger as he continued, "Yes, I picked up all sorts of interesting information from our conversation."

She took a deep breath, then began, "Silly boy," trying to sound confident, "don't you see what he tried to do? He obviously tried to get revenge. Can't you see that? I guess he figured that if he made some things up an—"

"He told me that you never did stop seeing Jack."

"Like I said, of course he'd try to tell you things to make you—"

Ron seemed unsure. "He didn't tell me on purpose that way. He just sort of mentioned it—like he thought I already knew about it."

Once again she felt trapped. This is ridiculous, she thought, absolutely absurd. Well, certainly I can convince him that Phil was just trying to cause trouble. He hardly even sounds angry anymore. I surely can persuade him with no trouble at all.

She hesitated only a second before she said, "Good-bye, Ron," and hung up the phone.



## *Detour*

. . . GINI OLDHAM

In about five more minutes I should be in Pittsburgh where I can prove to my parents that I am old enough to start riding trains—alone. In spite of my success in persuading my parents, I had failed to convince myself that I could do it. Term break was the perfect chance to visit my brother and his wife in St. Louis, and, after all, I am a sophomore in college. But the thought of a ten-minute layover between trains in Pittsburgh and with the picture of my parents' anxious and doubtful faces seeing me off from Harrisburg still fresh in my mind, was enough to make me quite nervous—even if this weren't my first train trip alone.

Getting off the Harrisburg train hadn't been too bad; I had managed to hold on to my luggage. It disturbed me to watch the people in the terminal either rushing for a train or calmly waiting for one to arrive; all of them seemed to know exactly where they were going, just as if they did this sort of thing every . . . "LeavingPittsburghforClevelandToledoChicagoontrackfive, LeavingPittsburghforCincinnatiNashville . . ." Why do they always have some drunk with a speech defect announcing departures and . . . "... St.Louisboardingon trackthree." I jumped almost shouting. Good Grief—that's me! I picked up my bags and started to sweat in the cold damp terminal. I was staggering under the weight of my two over-packed suitcases. This was a great way to prove my independence—miss hearing my train announced. Then I practically fell up the steps to the train.

"Uh—excuse me, but are you the—uh—conductor? Could you tell me where my—uh—compartment is?" I stammered like a two-year old.

The conductor turned and quickly sized up the situation, "Certainly Miss. Let me see your ticket." Then smiling gently he added, "I'm sorry Miss, but you want the St. Louis Limited; this is the Chicago Express. Wait a minute, Porter. Take this young lady to track three and make sure she gets settled all right. Have a pleasant trip now!"

Like a faithful dog I followed the porter. Well, I did it again. Not only do I make a fool of myself, I let the entire world know about it. Ginny-you-stupid-jerk, can't you do anything by yourself? At least Mom and Dad will never know what an . . .

"Here you are Miss. A home away from home. If you get hungry, the dining car is only three cars up the line—that would be to your right as you leave the compartment. Everything all right?" he asked quietly.

"Yeah, sure, thanks a lot." I tipped him, and he left smiling reassuringly. Even HE was trying to calm me down. Did I look THAT bad? I opened my train case to freshen my make-up and didn't recognize myself; I was pale, perspiring, and looking like Little Orphan Annie after a rough night. I cleaned myself up and tried to get some sleep. That wasn't any good.; I was still too keyed up. I sat with my eyes closed thinkin' of all my near misses and of



what a seasoned traveller I really made. After a while I realized that I wasn't going to drop off to sleep; I glanced at my watch—2:37.

A conductor passed by: "Toledo—twenty minutes."

In the afternoon light I saw a sign flash by—Perrysburg. Maybe if I had something to drink. . . Well, the dining car should be open, and a coke might calm my nerves a little. For a second I hesitated to leave the safety of my compartment; knowing myself, I might not find the dining car. Oh, Ginny! You can't be that stupid! As I turned right down the hallway, I laughed nervously to myself and tried to shake the feeling that I was completely alone. Sure, how can anyone be alone on a train that's full of people? But as I passed through the passenger car the feeling persisted. A few passengers had magazines on their laps, others were sleeping, and the rest were just staring at nothing in particular. No one seemed to notice me as I walked through. I felt detached and distant from them. When I stepped into the smoking car my spirits lifted a little; at the other end of the car were four sailors just sitting. Not that I expected to be accosted; but if I knew anything about sailors, I would at least be noticed. When I left the car I really was puzzled—Nothing! Not even a glance! I sat down at a table in the dining car and decided to change that coke to a tea with no sugar. Something like that can really shake a girl's confidence; maybe I had been having just one snack too many?

The dining car was empty except for a lone man with a cup of coffee and a newspaper. Of course, he didn't notice me come in either. I picked up the menu to skim the contents; the railroads must make money on their food service. When I looked around for the steward, I realized that he wasn't even in the car. For their prices, you would think there would be better service! I was beginning to feel very impatient. I glanced down at my watch—2:37? I tapped the face a couple of times, but the second hand would not move. Damn it! I had only gotten the watch four months ago, but had never sent in the free year's guarantee. I was beginning to have strong regrets about this trip. I leaned out into the aisle to try to catch the attention of the man with the cup of coffee. "Uh—pardon me, but—uh—could you tell me the correct time?" I waited. He never batted an eyelash! "Uh—Sir? Sir, excuse me, but . . ." NOTHING! Nervous and puzzled I picked up the menu and began to fiddle with it. Suddenly I stopped and read the cover: "Chicago Express." Awh, you've got to be kidding! "Hey, Mister! Oh? That's right, you're not speaking to me." Okay, what's coming off here? I know I'm not particularly bright at times, but I'm not crazy. Crazy? Aw, forget it! I tried to laugh it off, but suddenly I wanted to get out of that car and back into my compartment. I wanted to check my ticket; what was the name of the town on that sign? What was the last station the conductor called out? Toledo? But isn't that NORTH of Pittsburgh?

The sailors were still in the smoking car; they hadn't moved since I saw them last. The Navy can go hang! What were they doing in the smoking car if they weren't even smoking? Just goes to show that all sailors are SMACKED! I opened the door to the passenger car and stopped dead. It suddenly dawned on me what had made me feel so uneasy before—except for the rhythmic clicking of the train wheels going over the joints in the rails, it was quiet. Silent.

There wasn't any noise, shuffling, or talking. That's it, no one was TALKING! Everyone was sitting there, not moving, not talking. They're all crazy, nuts, every last one of them! I ran from the car. Finding my compartment, I ran in, slammed the door and leaned up against it panting. Where's my ticket? THIS WHOLE PLACE IS SCREWY! I stopped short again—WHERE'S MY LUGGAGE? What's the matter with this place? Ten more seconds of this and I'm going to start screaming! I looked down at my watch again—DAMN! 2:37! Then I felt the train slowing down slightly. I went to look out the window. We were going around a wide curve or something, and I could see the front half of the train in the rain. Leaning against the glass in dumb horror I watched the train as if it were a toy moving in slow motion. One by one the cars rammed the ones ahead of them, tilted, and then slid off the rails and down a bank. My compartment lurched, and I knocked my head against the window frame. I saw a flash of red. As I slipped down to the floor, I felt something wet and warm run down the side of my temple.

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A sharp jabbing pain over my right eye brought me to. I was lying on the floor of my compartment. Dazed, I staggered to my feet, and reached into my train case for a hankie to dab the blood on my forehead. I looked into the mirror in the lid; there wasn't any cut! No blood! The MIRROR? My LUGGAGE! I looked at my watch—9:45? The train was moving—the car was vibrating—country was flying past in the dark outside my window? There was a knock on my door. "Yeah?"

"It's the porter, Miss."

"Yeah, come on in."

"St. Louis in thirty minutes Miss. I brought you an evening paper from the last stop. I'll call you again when we're closer. Is that all right?"

"Oh yeah, sure, fine. Thanks a lot." My head was throbbing; I sat down on my berth with the paper in my lap. I looked down, and the print stared up at me:

"CHICAGO EXPRESS DERAILS"



## *Haiku*

. . . GINI OLDHAM

Though some may seem  
to stroll in the sunshine,  
they squint and frown from the glare.

## *Thanks*

. . . JOHN McLEAN

a museum of whispers fold out  
memories,  
as the darkness crowds the two  
in armchairs a little closer.  
the once gold day  
grows cold with gray-haired light  
that throws the pattern of their hands  
on the floor distorted.  
and they smile.

## *Transformation Of Existence*

. . . BARRY ROSS MARTIN

Once while walking through a misty forest  
I chanced upon a black-cloaked maiden  
Who professed to be a vestal virgin  
Locked between a life and not  
Though seemed to me a sort of fantasy  
And that mayhaps I was aslumber;  
But her pale cheeks and hollow eyes  
Indeed did thus seem somewhat true—  
Her words, that is, for I was lost  
In a mournful mean of meditation.  
She asked by which trickery had I thus passed  
And chilled my spine with a shocking state  
That I too was doomed to live as such  
Among fog and mire and bog and fire  
Until I chanced an intercourse  
With one whose unbeing remained the same  
As mine.  
"No, no," said she, with a tear in her eye,  
"This cannot be, I mean, with you and I,  
For our relation cannot be seen, but thought."  
To this I seemed worse than before,  
Although I still failed to comprehend  
Her words or master or why 'twas I,  
So a question of mingling doubt and fear  
Gave I.  
"Where, oh maiden, did whence thou come,  
And why 'tis I who frees yourself;  
Overmore, from whom and to do I thus go,  
And why our intercourse that remains unknown?"  
"Your eyes are gone and your brain is dying,  
For you and I remain the must  
Of a dead being who needs no lust.  
Think the same as I, oh common one,  
Then we shall be richly rewarded  
And exist as bodies and not as souls.  
Now think of something near and dear,



For you are trapped like I."  
Although confused, I attempted this,  
This mental intercourse for what  
I did not know, so I thought of love,  
Of nature, of flowers and fields,  
Of laughing children and a walk  
At dawn with fleeting breath;  
Thus her cheeks received a color of love  
And her eyes like flowers and fields  
And her mouth like a laughing child.  
Suddenly she flew, no 'tis inaccurate—  
She drifted quickly through the woods  
Like the fleeting morning breath.  
I stood for God knows how long  
Until my warped thoughts could then return,  
But as I attempted to walk away  
My legs were unable to function.  
Here I remain, awaiting another virgin.

## *Something More*

. . . DONNA HARPSTER

THE STRANGENESS OF IT IS PERCEPTIBLE.

AT THE FIRST BEGINNING OF LIGHT  
BEFORE THIS NOW BEGINNING OF LIGHT  
I WAS TORN SUDDENLY FROM MY COLD DAMP HOME,  
TRAVELING CLOTHES FASTENED SNUGLY AROUND ME, AND  
IN THE DARK, I SENSED SOMETHING MORE ADDED.

I FLEW SUSPENDED, THEN FELT A TINY SLAP.  
THIS NEW PLACE COLDER THAN MY HOME, BUMPED BASELY,  
JOSTLING ME. A PERIOD OF TIME—AND I LAY STILL  
FOR A MOMENT, THEN ONCE MORE FLEW SUSPENDED.  
SUDDENLY I WAS WARM, WARMER THAN I HAD EVER BEEN.  
THE SOMETHING MORE WAS NOW SOMETHING LESS AND—TOO SOON,  
A NEW BEGINNING OF LIGHT, A DIFFERENT COLD DAMP HOME.  
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, TRYING TO UNDERSTAND, UNTIL THE ENDING  
OF THE TOO SOON BEGINNING OF LIGHT; IN THE BEGINNING  
OF DARK, A STRANGE STIRRING SHOOK ME GENTLY.  
A ROSY SENSE SPREAD LAZILY THROUGH, FOLLOWED BY A  
PREMONITION,  
HAZY AND DARK.

BRUSHING THE LAST ASIDE, I WONDERED AT THE FIRST—  
GROWN STRONGER. A READINESS BUDDED—TO BURST, TO BLOOM,  
TO OPEN: A MOMENT IN ETERNITY ABOUT TO LIVE. AGAIN I PUSHED  
ASIDE THE PREMONITION. IT WAS OUTSIDE THE NEW  
FEELING OF WONDER ATTAINED.  
IN THIS NEW BEGINNING OF LIGHT, A NEW  
SOMETHING MORE REMAINS, FULLY AWAKENED.  
AND THE DARK IS NO LONGER HAZY.



## *From Space Walled In*

. . . DONNA HARPSTER

Cocoon womb-like warm  
it exists from space walled in  
time-lost tent-like intimacy  
poled, peak-sweep dichotomizing clouds.  
I enter naked with dread  
of leaving, knowing the blessing  
carried in departure: painful  
separation from self forcing return.  
Never ending lunar cycles,  
wave crests held aloft by an invisible  
intangible silken umbilical cord  
of passion and rapport.  
Nursing solitude on breasts of tenderness  
pink tipped pillows of serenity,  
resting for uncounted minutes, soon past,  
on their softness, the soul  
battered by the storm raging outside.

## *Returning*

. . . . DIANNE POTCHAK

It was just a little thing. Funny though, once you get a crazy idea like that you just can't put it out of your head. You try and try, but you still keep wondering.

I glanced at my watch and began to get excited, although somewhat nervous. It was 1:30; I would probably reach town by 2:00 and I hadn't yet any idea of what I should say. Maybe there really wasn't anything to it at all. I'd just knock on the door, introduce myself to whoever answered, and tell him that I had lived there once. I'd say I had just been passing through and thought I'd like to look around the house and yard again.

That wasn't exactly the truth, but I guessed it would do. I was born and raised there and I had to come back; I wanted to come home again.

I wasn't even sure who owned the house now. Perhaps it was an old woman, a grandmother with a large family and lots of grandchildren. Then the house would be alive again with children and shouting and babies and singing and laughing. She would come to the door in a big apron covered with flour, and she would invite me in, and we'd all have coffee and kloski, golden brown from the oven. I could tell them how the house was when I lived there.

I'd tell them how it was, before, when we were all together, before Dad died and Stush went away to war. All eight of us children were home then, we seven girls, Momma, Dad, and Stan.

I'd tell them about baking days in the big kitchen. I can still imagine Momma in her big apron, with the heavy rolling pin, and the yeasty smell of dough rising, and the pot of soup on the stove cooking for Sunday dinner.

I remember the parlor Sunday afternoons where our whole family would meet after mass. Uncle Frank would pour drinks, and Uncle Yaunk would play his harmonica, and we would all sing in Polish. Gramma's face would light and her eyes would fill with tears, and she would clasp her paralyzed hand and think of the old country, and cry.

I remember Aunt Ann cutting and drying home-made noodles and making halupki. We children sat near the stove in winter evenings with our feet propped near the oven door, stringing beans and mushrooms on long threads and hanging them near the stove to dry. Winter nights the weather would get so cold Momma had to pile heavy coats on us to keep us warm; then she and Stush would tie the pipes downstairs with strips of rags to keep them from freezing.

How many times Agnes and I waited along the railroad tracks for Dad to come home from the mines. Each day he kissed us and threw us high in the air and called us his "little popchicki."

I missed holidays at home: Good Friday when we covered the mirrors with black cloth and we all worked extra hard because we knew that on this day God suffered, Saturday when the priest blessed the baskets, and Easter Sunday and



all the relatives again, and dancing and singing and drinking.

I remember kneeling at my father's lap at night and being taught my prayers, and evenings when we children sat on the parlor floor and listened to the big radio.

I recall happy christenings and weddings, and, unhappily, Uncle Steve's funeral at home. I can still see the dark heavy casket in the parlor and the confusion of relatives, the mass, praying, and crying. I remember the priest in his white and golden robes and the heavy stifling smell of flowers and burning incense. Again I wanted to see the upstairs hallway where we hung the dark oaken crucifix with the blessed palms and willows behind it.

I can remember work days and helping Momma with the all-day jobs of washing and cleaning the twelve-room house.

And I can remember playing house, and picking berries, and swimming in the creek the entire day, and playing "Kick the Can" in the alley at night, and telling ghost stories, and making home-made ice cream, and singing in the front porch swing in cool summer nights. And the big garden and fresh vegetables, and the back yard and digging for fishing baits in the early morning hours. And fishing in the creek, and the cool, shaded grape arbor where I sat, alone, and thought, or the big maple tree where I read, hidden in its leafy branches. And Katie's golden braids, and home-made clothes, and rag dolls, and nuts and oranges at Christmas.

I wanted to go back. I wanted to go home to the house filled with love and understanding.

I reached the street, and I froze when I saw the house. The walk was gone; broken glass and beer cans covered the yard. The overgrown weeds choked the roses Momma had so tenderly grown along the path. The door was pulled from its hinges; the broken green shutters upstairs banged and re-echoed from the empty house in the slight breeze. The house was deserted.

I turned slowly and walked to my car.

## *Light*

. . . EDWARD SADTLER

Linger in puddles long enough  
And you are bound to see a worm.  
Watch the worm long enough,  
Watch it expanding, contracting,  
Squirming through mudding water into wet dirt,  
Working in and out of the wet dirt,  
Watch it long enough,  
And the worm will be beautiful.

## *The Long Ranger*

. . . CHARLES ULMER

I don't like rodeos or circuses. Even as a kid I never really became enthusiastic about going to one when my dad or uncle would suggest taking me. But some kids are different. My cousin is, or should I say was, one of those who liked them.

It was two or maybe three summers ago that I left my home in Pittsburgh and came here to college. I have an uncle and aunt living in Harrisburg, so when I came here for a tour of the college, I decided to visit them.

I called in advance to tell them that I was coming. They told me that they'd meet me at the bus terminal. My bus got in somewhere around five. Just as I was stepping from the bus I heard a high-pitched cry, "There's Tommy." I turned my head in the direction of the call. Running down the loading platform was my cousin Jeff, closely followed by his mother and father. I gritted my teeth and tried to produce a smile. In a matter of seconds, Jeff was climbing all over my back, tearing at my hair. I felt like ripping him off and giving him a swift kick on his backside. Instead, I just stood there with my cheesy smile.

No sooner were we in the car when my cousin Jeff cried out, "Tommy, you're taking me to the rodeo tomorrow."

"Oh God," I thought, "why did I have to come."

My aunt turned around from the front seat and said, "Oh yes, Tom, I meant to ask you if you would take Jeff to the rodeo tomorrow. Uncle Paul has to work, and I just won't have the time."

"Oh sure," I said, trying to sound sincere, "I'll be glad to."

We arrived at their home around five. My aunt had already prepared supper, so we sat down and ate. Jeff took a few bites in a hurried manner and then asked to be excused. Uncle Paul looked at him and frowned, "Well, I guess so. I guess the Lone Ranger's on television now."

"Yea," Jeff said with both eyes glittering. Then he rushed off into the living room.

My aunt turned to me and smiled, "That boy's just crazy about that show. He idolizes that Lone Ranger. That's why he's so anxious to go to the rodeo tomorrow; the Lone Ranger's going to be there."

All night long the only words I heard were those of Jeff's. "Tommy, me and you are goin' to see the Long Ranger," and "Tommy, you know who we're goin' to see tomorrow—the Long Ranger." He never did learn how to say his name.

Morning arrived and we all sat down to breakfast. Jeff was in his cowboy get-up. On his shirt was a patch with a picture of the Lone Ranger and his horse.

After eating, my aunt suggested that Jeff and I start to the rodeo before the crowd began to gather. I reluctantly agreed.



Jeff and I went out to the car and got in. It was an unusually hot morning. The steering wheel almost burnt my hand when I touched it.

As soon as we pulled out of the drive-way, Jeff began his monotonous dialogue. "Tommy, I can't wait to see the Long Ranger."

I looked at him and the words came rushing out, "Keep your damn mouth shut or I won't take you to see anybody. Just sit there and be quiet."

Jeff looked at me with his eyes bulging out. "You swore. I'm goin' to tell mommy when I get home. You swore. I don't like you."

Well, we sat through the whole lousy rodeo, and finally the Lone Ranger made his appearance. He rode around the arena once or twice and then he left. Jeff was all excited. "Let's go and get his 'autogram'," he cried.

I consented. We fought our way through the sweaty crowd and found our way to his dressing room under the grandstands. There must have been a hundred kids outside his door. We stood and waited.

Finally his door opened and out he came with his manager. The kids swarmed all over him. The heat and all must have affected him. "Gus," he cried to his manager, "get these damn brats off of me. I'm suffocating."

Jeff looked up at me. "Tommy, he swore. He's not a good man. He's just like you."

## *Train—With Words As Sounds*

. . . JEAN ETTER

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clack

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clack

Mystery train roll on the tracks

Let me ride upon your back

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clack

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clack

Carry me up the winding track

And I will sing your Clackity Clack

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clack

And I will sing your Clackity Clack

Faster Faster moving near

Let me board when you appear!

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clack

Nearer! Nearer! Clackity Clack

Louder! Louder! Clackity Clack

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clack

Clackity Clackity Clackity Clackity—

Woo Wooo Woooooooooooo!



## *Hymn To The Universe*

. . . P. B. FRANK

Someday—when the axis of the earth  
Has edged away from what we now call north and south  
And brought a winter more bitter  
Than that which some now know;  
When the hurtling sun and solar system  
Is drawn by clouds of sub-atomic particles,  
Remnants of a supernova's burst,  
Through a spray of cosmic rays;  
When some gentle wind upon the earth  
Has bent a billion trillion seeds at such an angle  
To permit those rays to strike unnumbered strings of DNA;  
When chance has left what lives and dies to live and die alone;  
When strength has succored and has given up in vain—  
Man will be a lichen once again.





