



Fall 1983

The Lantern Vol. 50, No. 1, Fall 1983

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the Lantern

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Vol. L, No. 1

Fall 1983

A collection of poetry, prose, photography, and artwork composed for the Fall Term, 1983, by the students of Ursinus College.

The **Lantern**, the literary magazine of Ursinus College, symbolizes the light shed by creative work. It is named after the structure on Pfahler Hall, which has the architectural design not of a tower or spire, but of a lantern.

Reaching for My Dream

*What's wrong with reaching for my dream,
No matter how far it may seem?
All the world has such little hope
It's getting hard for us dreamers to cope.*

*I do the things I talk about,
Instead of hesitating in doubt.
I reach for the stars 'til I can take hold,
And bask in their rays, shingling silver and gold.*

*What's wrong with reaching for my dream,
No matter how far it may seem?
All the world has such little hope
It's getting hard for us dreamers to cope.*

*I set out to reach my lifetime goal
To satisfy the yearning in my soul.
I ignore all the words of "concern"
That say defeat is a lesson I must learn.*

*Defeat, to them, is reaching too far
Or clinging to a shooting star,
But, to dreamers, fools, and those who are smart,
Defeat is something perceived in the heart.*

D. Grace Fries

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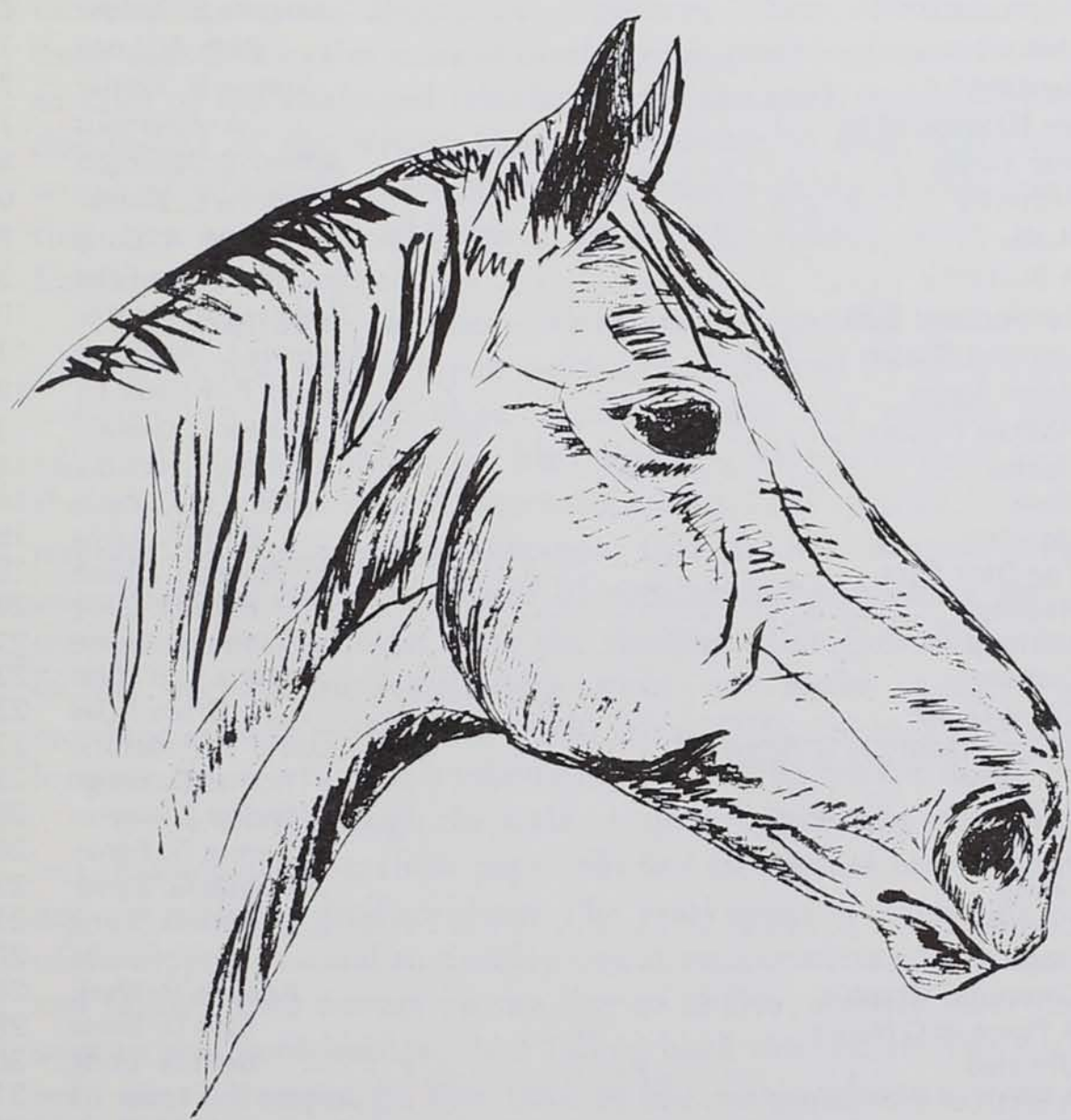


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Editorial

Those on campus last year will remember last semester's issue with the special section that traced this magazine's history over the past fifty years through the editorials of the past editors. Last year's staff felt that the Editor-in-Chief's editorial served a useful purpose and should be continued. These editorials ranged from diatribes to the campus on the poor quality of contributions, to tales of the trials and tribulations of the staff, to philosophical discussions of the writing process. However, in over thirty years' worth of editorials, there is one small, select group on this campus that has not been addressed: those who submit work to the **Lantern** and are rejected.

No one likes rejection. Contrary to popular belief, even editors do not like to reject works, as evidenced by their careful wording on rejection slips. Isaac Asimov has written many editorials on the subject for his magazine. An editor once coined the phrase, "We reject pieces of paper, not people," and so popular has this phrase become that it has become nearly impossible to enter the world of writing and publishing without seeing it quoted at least once per situation. But does all this intellectual preparation really help when one looks in the return envelope outside the Student Publications Office or sees that nasty, long envelope returning a manuscript? HA! The heck it does!

Oh, well. Although the staff would dearly love to print deathless masterpieces on these pages, the sad fact is that most of us are not yet ready to produce them. The years spent in college are ones of development—and to develop one must experience both success and failure. One wavers on the line of ability, sometimes crossing over to real competence, then falling back into mediocrity on the very next attempt. At this time in life, one's talents are not yet solidified; the probability of failure is not directly dependent on the result of previous outcomes, if one actively works toward improvement. There is a difference between laying aside something beyond one's range and developing one's potential in other areas and giving up. It is only through effort and practice, failure and success, that we can truly understand our capabilities and become the people we have the potential to become. Writing and artwork are not for everyone; but if one has only a shred of ability or merely enjoyment in these forms of expression, one should not feel that rejection now precludes any hope of mastery in the arts at another time.

All Hail

All hail to the arts and artists alike.

For those who more clearly define life
and may die in their attempt.

Honor go to those who suffer our anger
and hatred to later be glorified and loved.

Let us seek the strength and drink the
fluid of differences.

Grace us with inner wisdom and a flare to
be ourselves, individuals by and in expression.

That we may learn tolerance and acceptance,
dissolve the inner fear of who we are.

To those fated seperation and loneliness—
all hail. For you have paved the way, braved the
wilderness and sought new life.

May they rest in peace. Might we seek new life.

Timothy S. Weible

Appreciation

It pains my heart to know some men
Could look upon a wood or glen
And think the spot be better spent
With what man calls "development."
For what is best, the soul to please—
A paved lot, or grove of trees?

Joanne E. Kohler

*Enchanting horses
run freely in the sunshine
on the plains of peace.*

Beth A. Long

Egotism

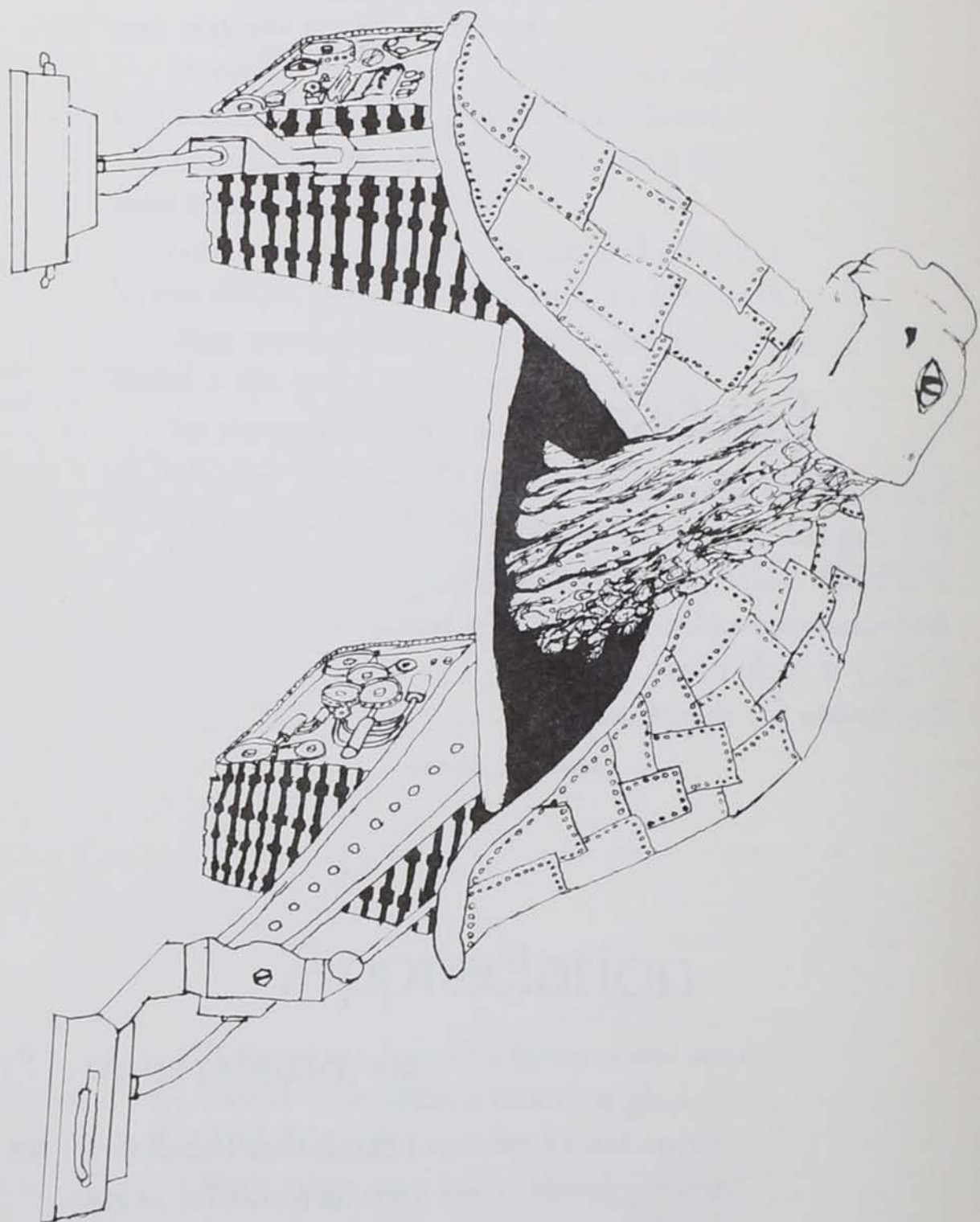
Man calls the beasts uncivilized,
But one thing needs be realized —
The black horse pulls beside the grey,
And works as well teamed with a bay —
O' pity it is that man can't see
The beasts for their humanity . . .

Joanne E. Kohler

ME (DEDICATED TO . . .)

I think that I shall never see
One as beautiful as me.

Anonymous
(Name will be revealed
upon request)



Butterfly

The butterfly, they say, is born from the cocoon.
And so did I believe –
Yet one cool day did such a butterfly come to me . . .
so merry and gay,
fluttering in the autumn breeze . . .
And cast upon me its captivating spell.
Joined did I this butterfly in his winged flight.
He warmed my heart, cheered my soul, and
set the world a'right.
Till autumn led to winter . . .
And then did I observe the creature spin itself
inside a ball –
but to become a worm.

Joanne E. Kohler

*When a flower blooms,
it opens up for the world
to see its beauty.*



Beth A. Long

A Butterfly

A butterfly beats against my windowpane.
Its efforts to enter are spent in vain,
Yet with each blow against the glass,
It redoubles its efforts at trying to pass.
Untiringly, it seems to persist,
Although the window always resists.
It yearns to get itself inside,
Although freedom appears to be outside.
This butterfly is much like me,
For we share a common plea.
No matter how much love I impart,
You won't let me inside your heart.

D. Grace Fries

Balloon and Bird

I live near the County Fair, and I like to watch it often. Once while I was there I saw a woman sitting in a booth filled with three-foot-wide balloons of every color. The lively way they bounced on their strings caught my attention, and I bought a bright red one. It danced in the breeze and tugged playfully on its string as I walked through the Fair.

I also bought a little, green bird. I hadn't meant to, but the way it had stared out of its cage at the sky, the ground, the people and the animals sent a spark of sympathy through me. The salesman caught the bird with a net and put it into a box with holes in the sides to let air in. When I peeked through the holes, I could see the bird sitting almost motionless, its chest barely moving with its quick, shallow breathing.

I brought my new possessions home. The balloon I tied by its string to a chair, and the bird I put in an old cage I found in the attic. (Everybody has an old bird cage lying around somewhere.)

After watching for a while, I noticed a sticker on the balloon saying MADE IN TAIWAN. I couldn't tell where the bird had been made. The balloon was filled, I have been told, with helium, a colorless, odorless, tasteless, non-toxic, non-nourishing gas. Helium is so unsubstantial that it is lighter than air. I don't know what the bird was filled with, but it must have been heavier than helium since the bird could stand on the ground or on its perch without floating away. It had to work hard to fly, as opposed to the balloon, which couldn't help but drift around.

After a few days the balloon started to lose its bounce—those who know have told me that the helium had seeped right through its walls. The bird didn't seem any happier now, despite my having saved it from the cage at the Fair.

I decided to let them both go. I caught the bird and held it gently in my left hand. I could feel a quick heartbeat through its warm feathers. I untied the balloon with my right hand, holding it between my left forearm and my chest. It felt cold and rubbery and made a disconcerting noise when I rubbed it.

I reached out of the window and let go of both. The balloon slowly rose straight up. The bird sat in my palm for a moment, then suddenly flew straight away.

When I have asked what became of them, I have been told that the balloon must have risen higher and higher, expanding as the air pressure decreased, until it burst and all the helium rushed out in a fraction of a second; and then it must have tumbled and fluttered back down to earth. No one knows what happened to the bird.

Jonathan A. Nigrine



Never Again

I never thought I would do it again. My friend and I gave the man our tickets and hopped into the last car. Nothing but tracks were behind us. The controller pulled back on the start/stop lever and we were off. Smoothly we exited the home-station. There was a jerk as we hit the up swing. Slowly we were dragged to the top of a huge artificial mountain. The sound of metal against metal made me nervous. Something must be malfunctioning! there was nothing stopping us now. The machine picked up speed as we headed for the ground. Everybody screamed with laughter! Except me.

“I think I left my stomach up at the top!”

A fraction of a second later, we were swooping upward. Finally at the top, I was going to catch my breath, BUT we were plunging downward again! I thought for sure this time the track was going to snap, and we were all going to die! The car seemed to have a mind of its own. It swung up to the left, and then dipped down and raced upward as we headed for the end. Those dips just about did it. I felt as though nothing was holding me in. Soon the rushing wind would lift me right out of the car!

“I’m never going to do this again! How did you sucker me into this?!”

“What do you mean? It’s great! Put your hands in the air!”

“Stop this thing!”

We pulled into the station, and jerked to a halt. I finally caught my breath.

“That was great; let’s do it again!”

“No way, I’ll **never** do that again!”

Jerome F. Frasier III



Mother

They bring it back to me, thank God for their grace.

They bring me back to them and I greet their open, warm welcome. The noises, simple noises, gently take me in, enfold me in arms of gentle wind and quenched trees.

Yes, it's been awhile, that compelling need to see you once again has drawn me back. And there you were with open arms as always, bathed in understanding, silent, unanimated and alive.

For you I give my soul, for you am I as a wild creature not to be controlled or, too often, understood. Prices need be paid for truth, life itself many times.

Vanity disappear, society lose thy sting, simplicity be throned king.

The young body in which I dwell be covered with scars, each a mark closer to unity with the wild.

I could feel your warmth this night as I lay with you, unseen by all save perhaps a jay or humble sparrow. You whispered in my ear and the soft, sweet music, song of beginning, flowed thru me, coursed in my blood.

No need fear you, I will always return. As the ink swears on the page, I am none but yours. You are my value system, you give me light in darkness, dark in times too bright.

The parting need come if I plan to exist yet. Last touch of a leaf before I go and silent smile of gratitude, understanding. Fair thee well 'til next, dear Mother.

Timothy S. Weible

An unsuspecting mother wakes up her daughter one fine Saturday.

Good morning, Mom—
No time to lose!
Must pick my dress,
Then buy some shoes.

This slit's too high,
That color's wrong;
I love this one,
But it's too long!

This collar makes
My face look fat;
That hem ripped
Last time I sat.

This waistline seems
Too high to please;
I love that neckline,
But not the sleeves!

I think I've found
The perfect one!
Good color, fit—
Just right for fun!

Onward, Mom—
No time to cower!
Drive me there—
Might take an hour.

Shoes are important—
Especially the height.
Tan would look nice,
Or maybe white.

No, Mom, no—
That pair's sick!
This color's off—
I just can't pick!

I won't wear those,
This fit is funny.
These simply cost
Too much money!

I'm sorry, Mom,
Just one more try.
(This next shoe store
Will be number five.)

Thank goodness! Here—
I've found the pair!
(Picking shoes means
Lots of care.)

This color matches,
The height is good.
They'll help to create
The perfect mood.

While we're here,
I'll buy a purse.
Come on, Mom—
Now please don't curse!

And here it is!
Now how 'bout that?
I like the style, but
Adjust the strap.

I'll use it tonight
When I go out.
It looks perfect—
Without doubt.

Later that day, as she begins to get ready for her date . . .

Mom! Come quick!
I've broken a nail!
It has to be fixed,
And without fail!

Where's the kit?
Please help me here.
I'm losing time—
Must do my hair!

Thanks, Mom,
You're just great!
Must hurry now,
Or I'll be late!

Mom! Come back!
My hose have torn!!
Ain't been so rushed
Since I was born.

They're my last pair—
Have you one more?
Please, Mom, please—
IS HE AT THE DOOR?

Oh, thank goodness—
It's just Dad.
Now hurry, Mom,
This tear's real bad.

Just one more thing—
Is my hair O.K.?
Did I manage to curl it
In just the right way?

They look great?
Oh, fantastic!
How 'bout these bracelets?
You know they're plastic.

And this perfume?
It smells so nice
I hope he'll like it—
It's called "Summer Spice."

My goodness, no—
I almost forgot!
Must put on my make-up,
But not a lot!

Do I look too young?
Are the colors right?
It must be perfect
For this special night.

So how do I look?
Everything O.K.?
Thanks for your help, Mom,
Throughout the day.

He's finally here,
And off we go!
We'll have fun—
Enjoy your show!

Please don't wait up—
But of course you will.
We'll be back by then,
Or poor Tom you'll kill!

I love you both—
Goodnight once more.
Now here we go,
Through the front door!

Beth A. Long

The Deaf Ears

Mother

Can you hear me?

Or rather do you want to hear me?

Will you listen just once?

Don't let the words fly by!

Listen to me please—I need you!

Don't laugh my problems away;

It's not just adolescent nonsense—

It's a pain that cuts much deeper

Help me, please; please, please help.

Turn your deaf ears toward me;

I need some of your love.

Destroy your wall—I'm reaching through mine.

Damn!

Your back is turned, your eyes closed.

You're never really here or there,

Only where I'm not.

Father

She won't listen, will you?

I'm hurting inside—I need love.

Hold me, your only son;

I'm not your flesh and blood—

I'm a chosen son.

You wanted me then—do you now?

Am I just a tax deduction?

Your answer is always money.

“Here's a buck—go forget!”

I don't need that!

DAMN!

Open yourself to me.

Big boys don't cry, but I do.

I'm crying with pain and loneliness.

I want to turn to you, and I can't.

You, too, listen with deaf ears.

I come home for love but find none.

It's time to hit the streets.

Someone
Please hear me.
I'm bad; I'm arrogant.
I can't care about anyone.
I use the lessons of home.
Brother, I won't lend you a dime.
I'll merely turn a deaf ear.
I pay for affection 'cause I can't find any for free.
But I'm still lonely.
Reach past my wall and set me free;
I'll give you all the love you ever need.
I'm hurt; I'm scared.
Can anyone care?
Will anyone care?
Touch me; love me!
Wash away the pain.
Caresses, kisses, warmth of heart—
I need you.
I need someone.

Nancy L. Allen

Healing

The sky seems to tremble
as the night quakes
and the ground quivers.

Yet nothing reaches my awareness
My mind hears your voice
instead of the thunder's bellow
My mind sees your face
rather than the lightning's visage
My heart feels not the violence of the storm,
but beats with my love.

Sitting here by the fireplace as the marauder attacks
My entire being longing for you
sorrow clouds all.

Morning dawns
the fire has long since died
The rays of the sun penetrate my
world of grief
as the tears finally fall.

Gradually my eyes focus on the view outside my window
on the broken, bleeding ground and earth,
trees and flowers.

The night's betrayal will take long to heal.
Yet already the crisp greenness of the fields
the sparkling blueness of the heavens
proclaim the coming health radiated by the sun.

The damage will not be soon forgotten
But eventually time will dull the sharpness of the pain
And life will resume
as familiar paths are trodden.

One day the land and I will again smile.

Beth A. Long

Stop.
Don't come any closer to me.
Don't approach any nearer
 Than arm's length.
I don't want you to get
 closer to me, or
 to get to know me,
For if you try,
 I'd have to expose myself
Let down my shield
 Let you peer behind the masque
 See through the costume.
I'd rather you didn't
 Rather you think me cool and calm
 cynical, a touch selfish,
Than to let you know how thin
 My defenses are, and
How brittle the shell
 that surrounds me.
I built that shell for a reason,
 you know –
because without it I must feel
 my own hurts, fears, and griefs,
 and feel other's hurts, too.
Don't you see, its easier
 To deny emotions
 Than to express them?
At least, it seems easier.
And rather than let you
 or anyone else, for that matter,
perceive my hurt,
I hide it.
I keep my feelings penciled up
 Penned up behind a high wall.
But if you come too close,
 you'll scale the wall.
Stop.
Stay away.
Don't come near me . . . please?

Sara D. Seese

Distress

A wounded soul like stone does fall,
Plummeting inward from its plight,
And 'bout the mind and heart doth crawl,
Recoiling from bitter bane and blight.

In wariness does it advise
The doors be locked, the gateways barred,
That none again may in disguise
Slip past an unsuspecting guard

And render that exalted force,
Through few, yet harsh and caustic word,
A victim; feeling no remorse—
While sobs and whimpers soft be heard.

Joanne E. Kohler

Silent Death

*I lie alone, without you here,
Yet feel your love very near.
And sometimes, as I hold my breath,
I die a very silent death—
A death of me, as me alone,
To live a part of us in a world of our own.*

D. Grace Fries

Whose Reality is it Anyway?

The door is closed
But there is one way out
The other door
In the mind
And more and more
I escape into
The world I have made
For myself

David T. Redstone

To Helen

never getting too close—
that's what it was
a fear of being turned down
rejected . . . not accepted

a young boy moving to a new town
not being the hero
acceptance was hard won
he never really was

never truly excelling
didn't like to fail
a close friend—
that's what he needed

he never found that friend
possibly never wanting one
he searched a great deal
never confiding in anyone

brief moments of glory were his
he took to the stage
strove for perfection
it was too late for a career

what else was there?
he ran
joined the team
he had his moments

he's seen many girls
he only truly loved one
she loved him, as a brother
he wanted more

he didn't handle it right
she got away
he regrets it . . . even today
he'd do anything for her

he went to college
fell in with a group
yet no one to call best friend
even now he wasn't ready

he rejected higher learning
for what it did
he saw his friends change and grow
he never changed

he's always been the same
moments of love, lust and hate
times of regret, pain and sorrow
he wonders how they do it

he'll get through
hiding the pain well enough
he knows there's something better
much better

he looks to the future
there doesn't seem to be hope—
it's summer now
time for the beach

the alarm sounds
ringing him into reality
he pulls the shade
another day . . . another day

he walks to the beach
puts his feet in the ocean—
the sun emerges once again
she appears for a moment and is gone

he works all day
he sees many faces of joy
wishing one was hers
he dreams and dreams

he'll never forget her
he tries to, but—
he's only fooling himself
he'll never be free

he saw her the other night
she was beautiful as always
they say time heals
that's not true

she'll always be a part of me
in my thoughts
in my dreams
I've looked to replace her
no one comes close
no one can

please forgive me
I was a child
I still am
I love you
and always will

Thomas G. Egner

Luna Llena y Soledad

Pobre de tí. ¿Que harás? ¿Que haré?
La vida no tiene ninguna importancia.
Tienes el mundo pero no tienes nada.
Ni amigos, ni amigos; luna llena y soledad.
Ve a ahogarte en la botella de la tristeza; luna negra y soledad.
Madre salvame del demonio que vive conmigo.
Tened piedád de mí; luna plateada y soledad.
Cuando venga la noche oscura; ¿estarás aquí?
Luna llena y soledad.

Translation—very loosely

Poor thing, what will you do, what will I do?
Life is not important.
You have the world, and yet you have nothing.
No friend, no friends—the full moon and loneliness
Go and drown yourself in the bottle of sorrows—
 black moon and loneliness
Mother, save me from the evil that lives with me.
Have pity/mercy on me—Silver moon and loneliness.
When the dark hour/night comes, will you be here?
The full moon and loneliness.

Walter S. Keehn

Saved

stay away! it's my life

– please, let's talk

no one cared before and . . . no one cares now

– life is worth living . . . don't waste it

why should i listen?

– I'm here

i don't know you . . . who are you?

– a Friend

get away or i'll jump

– I'm coming up there

no! stay away, stay away!

– here we are . . .

get away, go down

– if you are going I'm going also

why? . . . you can't . . .

– I want to and I am

please . . . you have no problems . . . save yourself

– goodbye David

no! . . . don't do it . . .

(there was no man with you –

i tell you i saw him . . . He knew my name)

where are you . . . why did you?

– I will never leave you because I care

– you are my child and I'm bringing you home.

Thomas G. Egner

Jenny

you left without notice
hiding the pain
to go to another
never to explain
your reason for leaving
a love that was true
for the man of your dreams
who never loved you
you came in and cried
for what you had done
and wished for the victory
that could never be won
the night was cold
and no one was there
but a gun with a bullet
and a forgotten prayer

Thomas G. Egner

I am one.
They are millions.
What will my say mean?

It's only one voice.

If I sing
if I yell
I whisper
laugh . . .

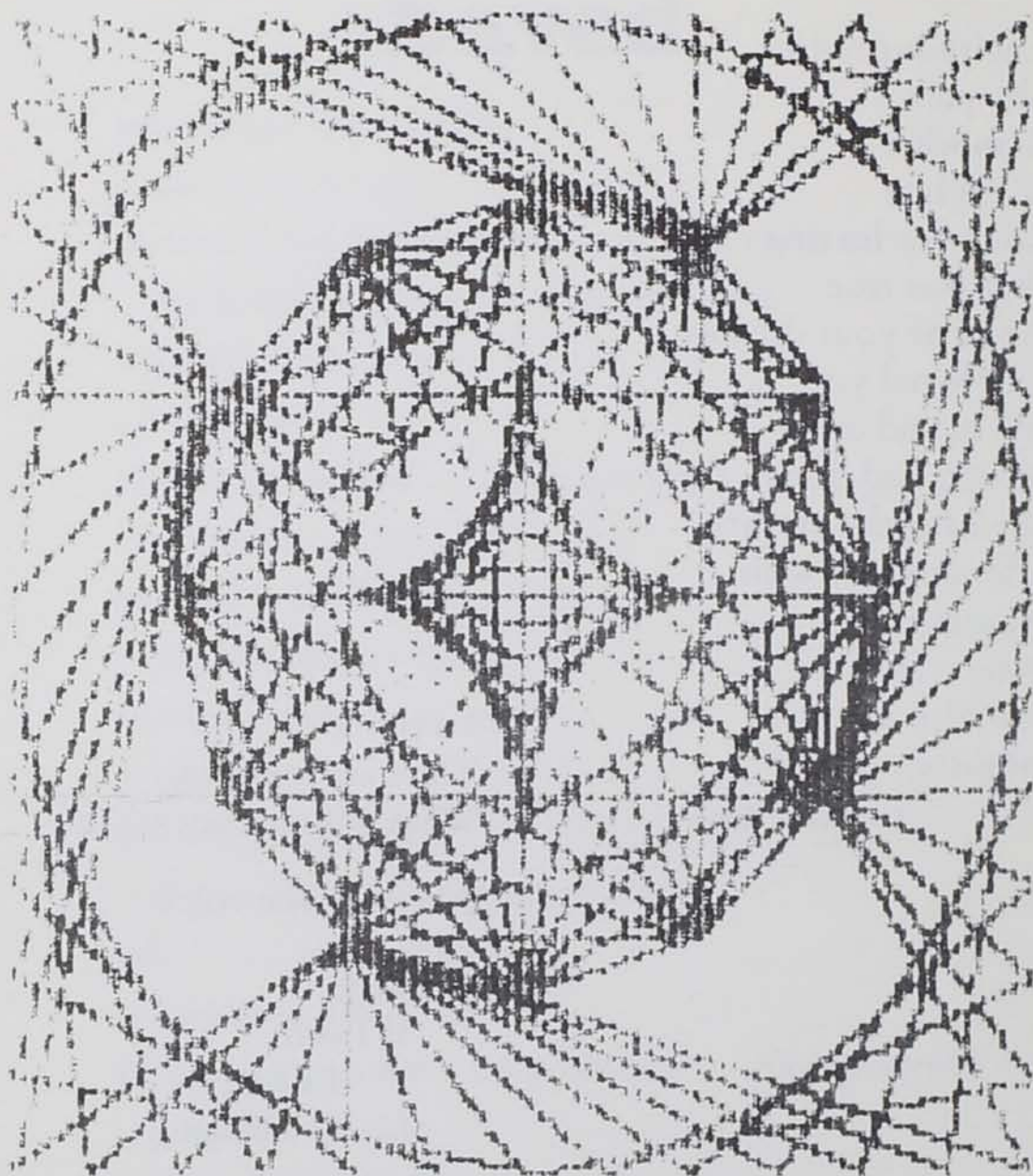
Will I be heard?

maybe.
If I am true
I will leave my mark.
They will know I was there
standing
laughing
dreaming
singing

with them.
Yet apart from them.

millions

Beth A. Long



54

slope
each part
depending on the
part below, which in
turn must depend on the
layer above and below to keep
it in place. interdependent, the bottom
can't exist without a top and the top can't
be without a bottom. thus we must observe life.

hs

A Poem in C Minor

The sounds of the piano
Filtered through my mind
The tones a ghostly shadow
Of dreams I've left behind.

One chord followed another
In harmony; in part
Then helping me to smother
The thoughts which now do start.

The notes built to a climax
A roaring crescendo aflame
With my own straining not to relax
With my yearnings and my aims.

The piano now is silent
The melodies have stilled
And my life is too quiet,
For with the song died my will.

Sara D. Seese

A Birth of Proficiency

Age eleven (Wheaton, Illinois):

"I will pour this milk into the girl's ear! Magically, the liquid will drain out her elbow!"

Jim held the pitcher close to the girl's ear, slowly tilted her head to the side, and proceeded to pour. Instead of the milk entering her ear, it ran all over the front of her new birthday dress. A rather large puddle collected on the freshly scrubbed floor.

"Oh . . . I'm sorry! It worked in practice. Here . . . I'll clean it up."

"Mom! Mom! Look what he did to my new dress!"

"I'll buy you another dress! I think. Just stop crying! Ouch!"

A swift kick in the shin ended the magic.

From that terrible beginning, Jim was determined to become successful. Wanting to learn all he could about magic, the boy went to the public and school libraries. He checked out every book available. Soon he had a large collection of magic books, catalogs, and magazines. His knowledge of magic increased. Jim began performing for church banquets, civic groups, and rest homes. Even grandstand audiences.

Age sixteen (Wheaton, Illinois):

"Camera one Linda . . . five . . . four . . . three . . . two . . . one . . ."

"Hello, and welcome to 'Town and Country'. Our guest today is a resident here in Wheaton. He is a young magician who has been performing for nearly five years. He's currently a student at Wheaton Senior High School. Please welcome Jim Byran."

"Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here."

"Jim, I guess I'll start with a question you have probably had to answer many times before. What got you interested in magic?"

"Well, I guess you could say magic has been passed down in my family. My cousin, Tommy Stroozas, was a magician. He gave me my first magic book about seven years ago. That's when he retired from magic. Like a typical nine year old, I looked at the book, and was interested, but I couldn't understand the technical words. Each trick seemed too complicated. I threw the book in my closet until two years later. It was one trick after another from then on."

"From what I understand, you brought some magic for us today?"

"Yes, I did. This is something I use to open my show. Maybe the camera can zoom in more. Good. I'm sure everybody at home knows what an illusion is; something we think is there, but really isn't I'd like to show you an illusion using this white handkerchief. Just by poking the cloth into my fist, the magic begins. Watch closely, until it's completely out of sight."

Jim brought his cupped hand to his mouth, and blew a small puff of air inside. Upon opening his hand, one finger at a time, the handkerchief was gone.

"It completely vanished. But wait . . ."

Jim reached over and pulled the handkerchief out of Linda's ear.

"There it is. Remember, that was only an illusion."

"I hope so, or I had better go home and clean out my ears! That was fantastic!"

"Linda, I think there's more!"

Jim cupped the handkerchief with both hands, and broke it down the middle. Out of the folds popped a head . . . then a wing . . . then another wing; a beautiful white dove.

"Sometimes you find the strangest things inside a handkerchief."

"That's marvelous! I suppose you wouldn't tell us how he got in there, would you?"

"No. It wouldn't be any fun if you knew!"

"You're right. He's so cute. Do you use him in school shows?"

"Yes, I do."

"What year are you in at Wheaton High?"

"I'm a sophomore."

"Tell us about some of the activities you're involved in."

"Well, I'm a member of the Forensic team. This deals with public speaking. It helps me with my performing . . ."

Two months later (Wheaton, Illinois):

" . . . What you need to do, is go out and grab the audience with your opening statement. It needs to be strong and powerful."

"OK. You mean similar to what I do at the beginning of a show?"

"Yes. It's crucial to whether people will listen to your speech, or fall asleep."

"I know what you mean. OK. Let's see . . ."

Jim stood up straight, faced forward, and started. He looked at his coach and gave him a charming grin, as he made the same handkerchief vanish that he had many times before.

"This, is magic! No, actually it is sleight of hand, and that is what I would like to talk to you about today. Some of you may already be magicians, and know the basics . . ."

Age eighteen (Wheaton, Illinois):

". . . James Alan Byran . . ."

Jim proudly stepped onto the stage, shook hands with the principal, and accepted his diploma. It was a big night for Jim. All the relatives were there.

"I present to you, the class of 1981!"

"Congratulations, son."

"Thanks, Dad."

"Congratulations!"

"Thanks, Mom! Oh, Mom, Dad, I didn't get a chance to tell you! I got the letter today, but then I had to run over here! I got accepted at Ursinus . . ."

Six months later (Ursinus College/Collegeville, Pennsylvania):

The now "experienced" magician called a female volunteer onto the stage. Positioned in the center of the performing area were a set of body stocks. As the music slowly emerged, Jim laid the volunteer onto the death bed. After locking her into the restraint, he took a giant, gleaming cutlass and tested its sharpness. The music steadily built up as Jim took the blade and with one stroke, severed half-way through the body. The audience gasped in terror, along with the girl in the stocks. Now all the way through. The blade was carefully lifted out. There was a little blood staining the steel. The volunteer looked pale. He opened the stocks. She was fully restored! The avid Ursinus crowd jumped from their seats to burst into a round of applause!

Jerome F. Frasier III

The Traveling Man

The traveling man, he has no home,
He has no place to call his own.

He walks the windy streets alone,
With no companion to share his road.

His constant footsteps tread the ground,
To no purpose are they bound.

Always forward, a direction found,
With never a time to turn around.

And sometimes when it's dark at night
He sees in the distance a soft yellow light.

A glow from a house at its quiet hour,
When the warmth and love of a family flower.

And the traveling man for a moment stops
To yearn for what he hasn't got.

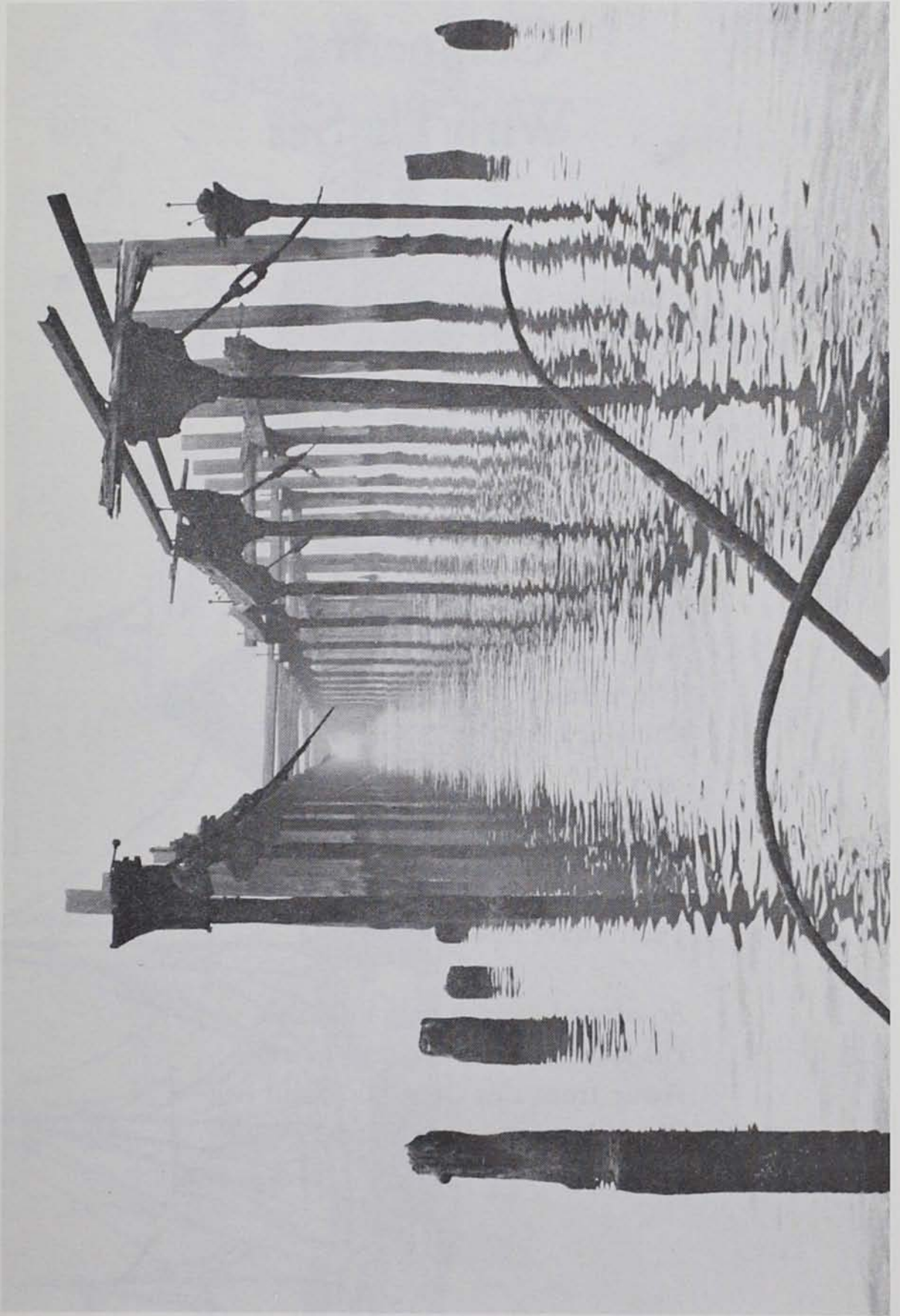
And there he stops to lay to sleep,
To the world of dreams he makes his retreat.

Then with the light of dawn he rises,
headed again for another horizon,

For the solemn sorrow of the night
Can never extinguish the promise of light.

And the traveling man—he has no home,
Only the sky above,
The earth below,
And all that lies between.

B. M. Cosh



Competing With The Sea

I know I'll never draw him away
From his beloved life at sea.
I know he'll never want to stay
And live his life with me.

I know I'll never mean very much
To this darling seafaring man.
His life is one I cannot touch,
'Though I'm his biggest fan.

I can't believe I've fallen in love
With a man who calls a ship home.
The ocean is his only love
On which he always roams.

I try to smile at him cheerfully
Each time he says that he must go.
Stern and masts and waves set him free.
I can't have him, I know.

So often I cannot help but wish
His affections would turn to me —
Away from ships and ports and fish —
But he's married to the sea.

D. Grace Fries



To R.

I fancy myself a collector;
I comb the antique shop of life.
I seek and I search with a well-seasoned eye
for those who were misplaced in time.

You,
I saw a year ago.
You struck me as one who has seen.
Your accent remarkable –
Your clothes perfect style,
wanting nothing to do with me.

Of late,
I've needed to smile –
Fate threw us together it seems.
So changed you are from last year –
I was more than a little intrigued.

Your wit and I smile –
Your jest – I convulse.
You share and the shallowness
falls fast away
I sense, I know there is more.

Most they see the tarnish,
That is what I'd seen too.
With my smile, I rub
With my touch, I polish.
Now and then,
There's a glimmer of you.

S. J. Galle

The Child

The angry Child comes home,
To a loveless shore.
Slapped by her sandy Mother,
And beaten by her stone-faced Father,
She cries a spray of salty tears.

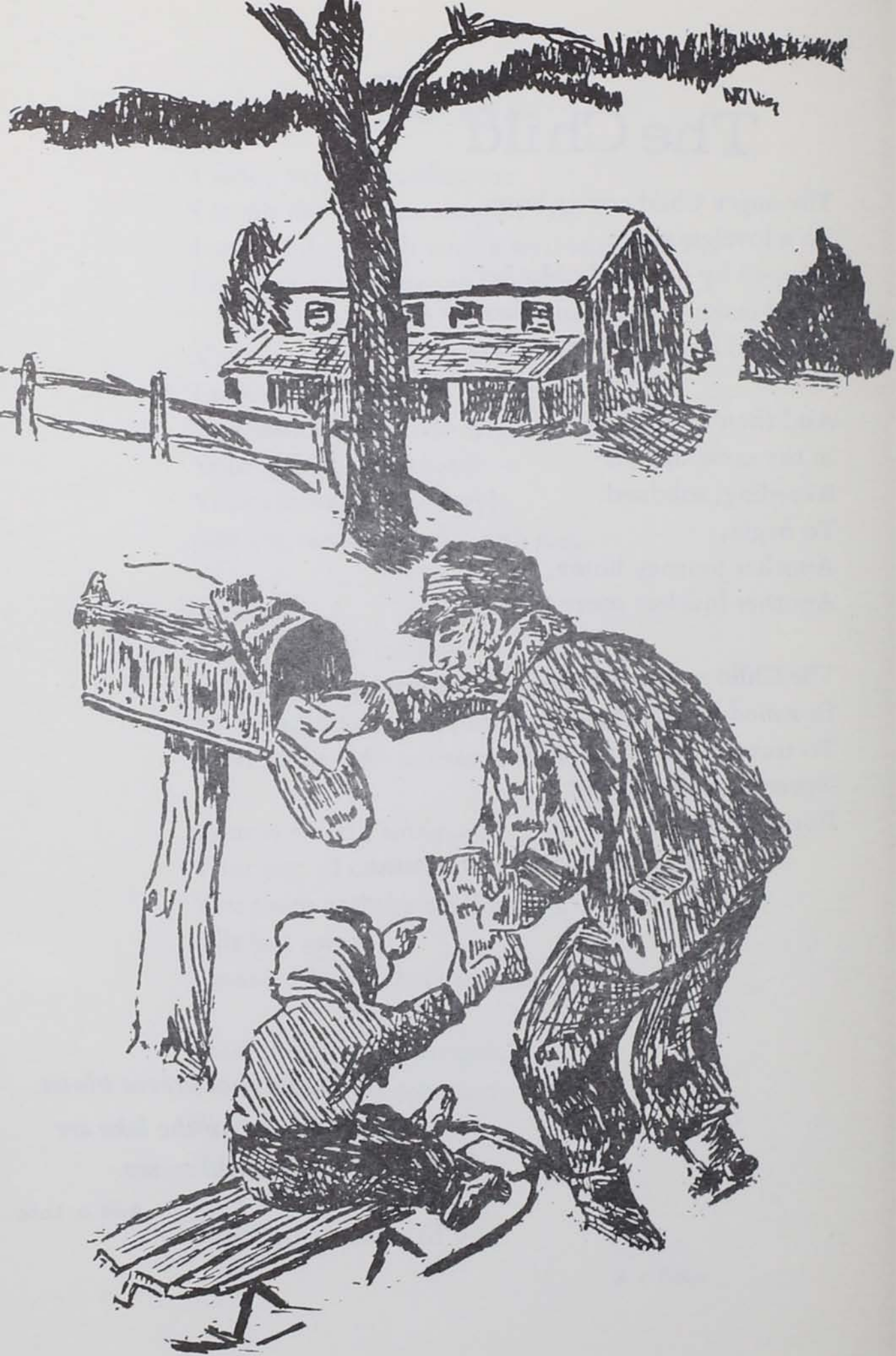
And then . . .
in the same instant
Receding, subdued.
To begin,
Another journey home,
Another loveless shore.

The Child never dies,
Destined by Nature
To travel for time infinite.
Never to stop and rest
For childish pleasures.

Catherine R. Benedict

*When the cool breeze blows,
the ripples on the lake are
beautiful to see.*

Beth A. Long



And Besides

The tall man in the white lab coat
Really wanted to say something
Assuring and reassuring
To the patient (and his family)

But, he said to himself,

“His condition’s unchanged
From yesterday . . . And besides,
I’ve another case to see,
That rich old guy in one-twelve
Who’s leaving money to the hospital
In his will . . . And besides,
I have paperwork to do . . . And besides,
There are the files of the post-ops
To look at . . . And besides,
I want to talk to the resident
Who is on duty tonight . . . And besides,
The patient just died.”

sds

AN ACTRESS' DEMISE

The audience forgot to clap when I bowed,
And my heart sank with the diminishing crowd.
Now I stand downstage in the faded light
Feeling that this couldn't possibly be right.

I stare at the now empty balcony
Remembering when it rang with shouts for me.
At that time, I was a "natural-born star,"
But instant success doesn't take you too far.

With the appearance of an actress' first wrinkle,
Her "shining star" image becomes a mere twinkle.
The director suggests to exit stage left,
For time commits an irrecoverable theft.

Society insists an actress becomes too old,
But an actor becomes sophisticated, we're told.
This double standard is not only unfair,
But causes people, like me, undue despair.

The audience forgot to clap when I bowed,
And my heart sank with the diminishing crowd.
Now I stand downstage in the faded light
Feeling that this couldn't possibly be right.

I stand alone on the empty stage,
Feeling at least twice my age.
The spotlight has faded, the applause has died,
And I'm trying to cope with this longing inside.

D. Grace Fries

A Loving Tribute to Francis

I can see what he used to be
Still shining in his eyes.
The lively spirit struggles to stay free
Of the body's steady demise.

I can picture him out on the floor
As the music picks up the beat,
But there are no more fast tempos in store
For this man's unwilling feet.

I can see him winning contests then,
'Though his God given talent in gone,
He takes us back to the ballroom again
Each time he whistles a song.

I can see his waltz in his limping step,
And feel his energy in his tapping hand.
He shall never lose his dancer's pep
As long as he hears the music of the band.

Now that his dancing is finished,
Now that his body is bent,
His smile won't let old age diminish
His joy in the way life was spent.

D. Grace Fries

Rapunzel

Mrs. Amanda Mulroy parked the electric wheelchair in its usual spot and sat blinking at the bright, early-morning sunlight that streamed through the curved windows of the stone tower. For years since she had been a very little girl she had dreamed of living in a great stone mansion with even just one tower and now, after years of scrimping and saving with Henry, and just plain luck, she had it, and with two whole towers instead of only one. She wasn't about to give it up for her children or her stroke.

Mrs. Mulroy frowned at the loud splashing in the sink downstairs that at her advanced age she was no longer supposed to be able to hear and carefully, consciously turned her head from the left side of the tower with its view of the lush green lawn and the bountiful garden in the yard next door, to look instead out over the long, busy street that ran beside the house outside the wrought-iron gate. The towers were constructed to give an almost unhindered circular view of the world. Most people preferred the view from the left side of this tower with the rich green lawn set with flowering trees that swept down the slope to the curb and complemented (How beautifully and how rarely *that* happens!) by the next-door neighbor's lovely, lush, and healthy garden of fresh crisp greens, red ripe tomatoes, golden corn, and other clean crunchy vegetables, all surrounded by a trim stone wall. Hattie had stood there, in that very spot and looked out through the left window over the trim stone wall at all those fresh, home-grown vegetables, and while her voice had raced on with plans and important reminders, her mouth watered.

She had paused for a moment and taken a deep breath. She had even turned her head, but it was no good. She was hooked. She had turned back to look again out the left window. It was almost, Mrs. Mulroy mused now over her daughter's odd behavior, as if she had been pulled by a magnet.

"Now, Mother," Hattie had begun again, as if nothing was happening, but she had still kept darting little glances out that blasted left window, Mrs. Mulroy remembered. "It's just too much after all that's happened to you, for you to stay here in this big, old house all by yourself. Heaven knows I have little enough free time as it is—which is all yours, such as it is, *of course*, Mother, but it's just so erratic and not at all dependable. Gerry and his wife can't be uprooted from all those kids often enough to see you as much as they would like and now, as becomes necessary. And you just can't expect Will or Jane or one of the others to just drop everything—their lives and their homes, and jobs and just *everything* to relocate here. And yet now I think it's necessary to have someone around here regularly." Her voice trailed off in thought as she glanced out that window again. "Karla Nelson is a registered nurse who is looking for some convenient work while she attends med school. And she lives right next door." Hattie was staring out the window again—Hattie who jumped rope, jogged, went to aerobics class three times a week and lived for racquetball, designer sweat suits, and wheat germ. "How convenient," she added, almost under her breath as she stared directly at the garden with all those vegetables ripening in the sun. "I wonder if for just a few extra dollars a week, I might be able to—" Abruptly, Mrs. Mulroy blocked the rest of the sentence from her memory.

So Karla, young, strong, capable Karla Nelson, who had soured on nursing and was seeking something more in an advanced degree had come to live with her. "Not one of the tower rooms for her!" Mrs. Mulroy had cried.

And that, at least, had been respected. But still Karla was there, and she made her presence known.

Mrs. Mulroy turned from the street side of the tower and sat overlooking the sparkling garden inside its snug stone wall. "Bah!" she said, making an impatient gesture. "I've been sold for a bowl of salad! And by my own daughter, no less! I'll never eat a radish again," she added in disgust. Which, she knew, would not be a hard thing for her to do since she hated them anyway.

Mrs. Mulroy activated the wheelchair and turned out of the tower. The motor whistled as she traveled down the long, dark hall. There were no windows here, only the heavy wooden doors that led to bright rooms within. She stopped short, suddenly, but expectedly before the very edge of the first step leading down the staircase. She laid a wrinkled hand on the fine wood of one of the spheres at the head of the staircase and watched the sun glint through the heavy textured glass of the vestibule doors far down below her. Since she had been brought home from the hospital, the first floor of her home was unreachable territory for her. Although it was not possible for her to come down from this height, she enjoyed the sight of the magnificent, hand-carved staircase rising up to her that had never failed to impress people when first they let the vestibule door close behind them, and the feel of fine wood under her hand, and the memories of the grand Christmas parties she and Henry had given here with the guests all gathered below and the fire flickering in the great fireplace in the main living room off to the right, while she had stood here at the very top of the stairs, preparing to make her entrance for the evening. The more recent memories of her grandchildren stripping off their shoes and sliding in their stocking feet on the main hall's slick floor were pleasant also, and she listened for a moment to their voices wafting up the stairs to her from an earlier day.

"Grandma, it's almost like the sidewalk after it's snowed!"

"No, better!" chirped another voice. There was the determined sound of a firm hand washing and replacing the breakfast dishes. Mrs. Mulroy sighed. That was Karla. She didn't belong here and she wasn't needed, she thought firmly. The doctor seemed to feel that Hattie was going to extremes. Karla was an intruder in her memories. And she wasn't very interesting to listen to either. Heaven knew she'd never so much as drop a cup! Mrs. Mulroy thought dryly.

Karla was capable. She discharged her duties and never mentioned her garden. Although there were some things that Mrs. Mulroy had done for herself even in the hospital, Karla insisted on doing everything that she felt she was getting paid to do. This included preparing meals, monitoring medications, watching her charge like a hawk when there wasn't studying to do, and washing Amanda Mulroy's hair.

This last item had caused more than a little friction between Mrs. Mulroy and Karla. Amanda Mulroy's hair when unbound fell below her waist as it had when she was young. Age had changed it to the color and consistency of a cloud, and Amanda would not hear of changing it. "Get it cut, get it permed, get *something!*" Karla said in a voice that would have been begging if it hadn't been hers, as she stared at the mass that had to be washed, rinsed, brushed, combed, and piled into a graceful knot onto Mrs. Mulroy's head every day. Amanda Mulroy offered to do it herself, as she had every day for most of her life, but Karla preferred to do it herself, hoping that her silent disapproval each day would gradually cause the older woman to change.

"I can't do that," thought Amanda each day as Karla frowned as she

took out the many pins that held the bun in place before the daily wash. "In my day, older women put up their hair, and I like it. And Henry always enjoyed it at night when it came down." She gave a small secret smile and felt her blood run warmer. Feeling safe behind the curtain of her hair, she gave a small chuckle and peered out to see if Karla had noticed. A seventy-eight year old woman was supposed to be beyond such things. Would Karla be shocked? she wondered. She rather hoped so.

She kept her hair then, in the face of Karla's displeasure and grumbling. It was heavy for there was quite a lot of it, but it was a comfortable, familiar feeling, not at all a burdensome weight.

It was a lovely day in late summer, and much as Mrs. Mulroy loved the old staircase, it was too beautiful a morning to spend in the dark hall. She pushed the lever on the wheelchair and headed back to the tower, stopping only for a moment beside a bookshelf to pick up a large green book.

It was pleasant in the tower. The sun streamed around her and the curved windows were raised to let the gentle breezes that riffled the tree branches flow through the small circular room. Mrs. Mulroy opened her book, *Scottish Airs and Other Tunes*, and began to page through the songs. Her son, Will, who had some knowledge of folklore did not find the book to be quite accurate and personally believed it to be merely a collection of someone's favorite songs that had the extraordinary good fortune of being published. Mrs. Mulroy did not care. The right words were with the right music, and most of *her* favorite songs had the good fortune to be between its two covers, and so she loved the book and used it often.

*You take the high road
And I'll take the low road . . .*

Her voice was not as clear or as strong as it had been, yet as she sang only for herself, she was not ashamed.

*For me and my true love
will never meet again . . .*

A robust bass voice sang out, then ended in a burst of coughing. Mrs. Mulroy almost dropped her book in surprise. She turned around and looked out the window. At the base of the tower beside a rhododendron bush stood a dapper old gentleman leaning on a wooden cane.

"Hello," she said, feeling rather flustered. He did not look at all familiar.

"How do you do, Ma'am," the old gentleman replied, raising his cap. "My name is Paul Whitney. I moved to the neighborhood during your illness. Your neighbors were quite concerned. If you will allow me to say so, you are looking quite well today. How soon may you have visitors?"

"Thank you," she said, recovering a little. "I do feel quite well today, and my doctor has said that I should slowly start to build a normal life again, but my daughter tells me to rest and the live-in nurse warns me of over-exertion. She is in my daughter's employ," she felt compelled to add. Suddenly, she realized how much she had missed having someone besides Karla or her children to talk to. She did not want this man to leave. "Hattie would like to delay my recovery until the first frost, and sometimes I think Karla wants to stay until she finishes med school. It is quite convenient for here here." Mrs. Mulroy heard steps on the inside stair. "Quick, she's coming!" she cried. "She must not see you—*she* hasn't given her permission

for me to have visitors yet." Mr. Paul Whitney nodded and raised his cap again. Once again, Amanda felt that she did not want to see him go. The footsteps were rising higher on the staircase. "Come back again," she called. "Around three. Karla studies then, and I am supposed to be taking a nap. When Karla studies, nothing can disturb her. We will be free of interruption." Mr. Whitney smiled and waved at her as he carefully closed the wrought iron gate.

Karla entered the room to find Mrs. Mulroy dozing in her wheelchair. She gave a quick sniff and quickly stalked out again.

Some time later Mrs. Mulroy edged out of the room, wishing that she had a muffler for the whistle of her wheelchair motor. They didn't seem to come any quieter than the one she had now, although she wouldn't put it past Hattie and Karla to get her a noisy one to keep track of her. Normally she found the thin whistle comforting, but now when she wished to sneak about the house, she wished it would hush.

Carefully, she inched her way along, listening carefully for any movements on the floor below. Maybe Karla was studying early today. She had a test sometime this week, Mrs. Mulroy thought. Not that she cared very much. She entered a room and took down an old blue vase. Inside was the front door key. Karla insisted on keeping the front door locked against possible intruders. Personally, Mrs. Mulroy did not think that the neighborhood was that dangerous in the daytime, and she liked air to move through the house. Karla seemed perfectly capable of defending herself with the butcher knife, which might, Mrs. Mulroy thought, be rather interesting to watch, but as Karla did not seem to want the ventilation of an open front door, and the second floor windows were kept wide open, she did not argue with her. However, now that she was expecting a gentleman caller, it had become necessary that the front door open. It seemed almost impolite to make the poor man stand and lean upon his cane on the sidewalk while she sat snug in her tower. But what to do with it now that she had it? Karla must never know that she had it. There were no pockets in her wheelchair. Suddenly glancing up at her reflection in the long mirror across the room, she smiled. Of course! Her hair! The bun was quite large and able to conceal almost anything! When she was younger, she had stuck pencils in it. Carefully, she reached up and tucked the key neatly inside, rearranging the pins to anchor it inside. She could hide it in her hand when Karla washed her hair.

Feeling fairly pleased with herself, she restarted the chair and went off to wait for three o'clock.

Karla was busy studying in the back room for her test when he arrived punctually beside the rhododendron bush. Mrs. Mulroy laughed and drew the key from her hair and tossed it down where it landed between his feet. He bent down, leaning heavily on his cane to pick it up. She waited to hear his slow, careful step on the staircase.

He was tired when he came in, as she had expected. He took the chair she offered him and sat there quietly for a few minutes, waiting for his breathing to return to normal.

"Why do you live on the second floor?" was the first thing he asked.

"Everyone asks me that," she sighed. "Karla, my children, everyone. They won't let me out anyway, but they tell me it would be so much easier to do so if I stayed on the first floor. There's stairs leading up to the house, quite steep ones as I'm sure you noticed, so I couldn't go out even if I was down there anyway. I won't have the house ruined just because I've been ill, and a ramp would just ruin the front. The servant's staircase down the back

of the house is too narrow and twisting for one of those moving chairs they install on staircases, and it would clutter the wooden staircase terribly. So as they won't let me out or take me out, I prefer the second floor with its wide windows and the tower rooms surrounded by tree branches. So here I will stay until they let me move around more. The day will come, I'm sure."

"Of course," Mr. Whitney agreed. "A stroke does not have to be the end of one's life. I, myself has a mild one just a few years ago. But you must get out, Mrs. Mulroy, if your doctor feels you are ready or life will slowly ebb away from you, and you may not be able to find it again."

"I know," Mrs. Mulroy said slowly. "I do what I can, Mr. Whitney. But . . ." She spread her hands in a gesture of resignation and despair.

"Ah, yes, children," said Mr. Whitney, leaning on his wooden cane. "But they too, some day, will grow old," his voice trailed off in thought. He looked out over the windowsill, then broke his reverie. "If this visit has not tired you, Mrs. Mulroy, and if I may, I would like to pay another visit sometime soon. It is a very pleasant room, here."

"Of course, Mr. Whitney. I would be delighted," she said and she was.

"Fine, then," he said, dropping the key into her hand. "Three days from now, at the same time. I shall let myself out, I believe. It wouldn't do for me to be discovered so early in the game."

Mrs. Mulroy smiled to herself as she replaced the key in her hair. She did not feel at all tired.

Mr. Whitney came often, but not too often, so that his visits could not possibly tire her. He would arrive punctually at three beside the rhododendron bush while Karla slapped her thick, heavy books on the table in the back room and muttered. Mrs. Mulroy would reach into her hair and draw out the key to toss it at his feet. Slowly, he would climb the many stairs, and they would sit in the tower together and talk or watch the wind blow through the trees and climbing roses. It was very pleasant to have a friend, and Mrs. Mulroy began to bloom with renewed health. Often she would be humming tunes found in her green book. Karla watched her with a narrow, practiced eye and noted the improvement, but said nothing. She could wait.

One day, several weeks after his first visit, Mr. Whitney seemed ill at ease. When pressed, he finally laid his cane at his feet and began to speak.

"Mrs. Mulroy, this is just not right. I've had a stroke, so I think I know at least a little bit about them. I've been watching you for the past few weeks, and you don't seem to be as delicate as your daughter and her nurse would have you think. Your mind is clear, and you don't tire any more easily than you should at your age. You need to get more involved in life, to do what you can. And when I talked to your doctor, a nice man, but a bit overworked, I'd say, he seemed to agree with me."

"So what do you suggest, Mr. Whitney?" she asked, folding her hands in her lap.

"Ah, yes, a suggestion," he said, taking a large brown envelope from inside his jacket. "I never make suggestions until I have a plan." Carefully, he smoothed the envelope out over his old knees and picked at the catch. From the envelope he drew out two neatly trimmed squares of thin plastic. He held them out to her, trembling slightly in his old hand. "Bread wrappers," he said. "The bottoms from the giant loaf size. With seven of these, the company is offering free general admission tickets to selected baseball games. Oh, they are terrible seats, and we'll have to take binoculars if we want to see any of the game, but hospital bills cost so much and Social Security can't be stretched forever, yet you really must get out, so I thought that we could

go see a baseball game."

"But . . ." she began, then stopped, looking back at the long stairs.

"No problem," said Mr. Whitney, with an airy wave of his hand. "One of my grand-nephews is driving a cab this summer. When he's not doing that, he's looking for bigger and better Nautilus machines to conquer, or he's eating. Most of our bread wrappers are probably going to come from him," he added. "He already has enough wrappers for himself, so he's working on the others. When we have enough, he'll bring the cab over, and we'll carry you off. Now don't you go planning to run off with him after the game and leave me all alone!" he teased.

Mrs. Mulroy smiled.

"Would you like to keep ours?" he asked.

Mrs. Mulroy looked at the thin sheets of plastic. "I can hardly keep so many in my hair!" she said. "And Karla snoops everywhere."

"I know," said Mr. Whitney. "We'll keep them in the envelope and glue it under the wheelchair. No one will ever think to find anything there."

Now when Mr. Whitney came, he usually brought along a thin sheet of plastic. Together, they would draw out the ones already collected and count them, figuring out which baseball games they would be able to see based on how many loaves of bread how quickly Mr. Whitney's grand-nephew could eat.

Finally they needed only one more plastic sheet. "Now then, according to this list," Mr. Whitney said, "these are good for the game on Wednesday, the game next Thursday, and then three games the following week. Alan has to work this week, but I think we can make it next week. I have a loaf of bread at home. If Alan doesn't give me another, I'll just clip it off before we go. Well, Mrs. Mulroy, will you be ready to go?"

Amanda Mulroy was ready to go that minute.

Time seemed to pass so slowly. Karla noticed the new impatience in her charge, but as always she kept her own counsel.

For the first time, the sunlight in the tower room did not relax Mrs. Mulroy. The tower itself was confining. The days slowly swung by.

It was Wednesday, and Mrs. Mulroy just could not stay still. She sat in the tower, but now it actually bored her, so she sat in another room, but that bored her, too. Finally, she sat next to the staircase and watched Karla run up and down on various errands. After a while the trips seemed to wear out even Karla's unbendable constitution, and she began to puff a little.

"I'm surprised the daily exercise on these stairs hasn't made them easier for you, Karla, as long as you've been here," Mrs. Mulroy said to her. "Mr. Whitney could hardly climb them when he first came, but now he practically jogs the whole way up without stopping once for breath."

"Who," said Karla, fixing her cold, narrowed eyes full upon her, "is Mr. Whitney?" There were tests this week, and Karla was not in a good mood.

Oh, God, let me be senile now, but remove it tomorrow, thought Mrs. Mulroy. How could I have done such a thing? I am getting old. Oh, I am old, old and a fool, she thought sadly.

She would not say another word. As usual, Karla said nothing more, but she would watch, and she would wait, and she would know.

Thursday was unbearable. Even though she had a test to study for, Karla did not seem to be so single-minded about it as she usually was at this time. She would pop in on Mrs. Mulroy at odd times and hardly seemed to stay in the back room with her books for fifteen minutes at a time. Mrs. Mulroy was very nervous and feared that she was not hiding it well which only made her

more nervous still and raised Karla's suspicions even higher.

Nothing happened all morning, and as Mrs. Mulroy declared she was taking a nap that afternoon, fear and guilt about her test began to overcome Karla's suspicions. She went into the back room and closed the door. Faint mutterings could be heard through the wood. Mrs. Mulroy gave a sigh of relief and parked her wheelchair in the tower to wait.

A bright yellow cab drove up to the house and two men, one old, one young, stepped out. Mrs. Mulroy felt for the envelope under her chair and smiled to feel it at her fingertips. She drew the key out from her hair and held it ready to toss, her ears straining for any sound from Karla.

The young man stepped briskly up to the rhododendron bush and held out his hand to catch the key. She let it fall. He caught it in mid-air, gave her a quick wink, and turned to help his great-uncle up the stairs.

With a surge of emotion, Mrs. Mulroy pushed the lever on the wheelchair and rushed for the staircase, hoping to be at her usual spot on the very edge of the top step before they arrived and hoping against hope that it would all happen so quickly that they would be gone before Karla ever noticed.

She turned the bend in the hall and had just about centered herself in the middle of the staircase between the spheres when the young man entered from the vestibule with the key dangling from his hand, and Karla's voice rang out "*Just what do you think you're doing in here?*"

"NO!" screamed Mrs. Mulroy, looking up from the floor where she was directing the chair. She stretched out her hand to stop the girl WITHOUT TAKING HER HAND FROM THE LEVER, and the chair rolled onto nothingness.

She was never sure just what happened, who screamed first, she, Karla, the young man, Mr. Whitney who was right behind his grand-nephew, but it seemed they all screamed sometime, and she heard them, and the envelope tore free and opened and the air was filled with squares of thin plastic, and she saw Karla's incredulous face and heard her voice say "*Just what are those things?*" just before something rose and struck her and there was nothingness.

Once again in the hospital she heard the beeps and blips of electronic life-saving equipment.

"It's been days," said one of the nurses. "Do you really think she'll pull out of it?"

"Her doctor seems to think she's a tough old bird. She's lucky to be alive."

"What about that old coot in the waiting room with the wooden cane? He just wanders and wanders around down there, and you can't throw him out. I find him in the corridors all the time, trying to find out which room is hers. But the family specified only family and medical personnel are to see her, so I send him back whenever I see him around."

"How old is he? He looks at least a hundred. And the way he walks around! With that cane, even though it's wood and not white, I thought he was blind, the way he pokes around with it and hardly seems to know or care where he is or where he's going. I asked the doctor, and he says he's as fit as a fiddle, but I'm not so sure."

"Oh, you know these old people. Fine one day, senile the next. Maybe he's getting cataracts. He looked a bit fuzzy. Want some coffee?"

The blips and bleeps were the only sounds in the room.

Slowly, Mrs. Mulroy opened her eyes, then just as quickly shut them again. It was a hospital room, as cold and sterile and white-lighted as any other. She missed her lovely tower with clean, bright golden sunlight stream-

ing in the windows. Tears crept out of her eyes. She hurt.

Slowly, she grew stronger and more and more of the strange black boxes with patterns of green light that bleeped and bliped were moved from her room. Hattie stopped in occasionally, and even Will and Jane with their spouses made an appearance. Karla arrived one day.

"You're looking much better. The perm did wonders. I always said it would. That old codger is still wandering around trying to find you."

Mrs. Mulroy fixed her with a cold, enduring stare of one who has suffered all that one will bear.

"Your hair was caught in the wheelchair when you hit the floor. They couldn't free you from the wreckage, so I wound the hair around my hand and cut it right off next to your head," Karla declared with ill-concealed satisfaction. "I have to study." So she left.

Henry wouldn't like it, she thought as her fingers touched the close curled ends under her ear. But he had been gone for so many years that his opinion really didn't count anymore, although she hated to disappoint him. What would Paul Whitney say? Her head felt so light and insubstantial that she feared it would fly off. She didn't know which made her feel more dizzy, the drugs or the unaccustomed absence of weight. And they had used that awful rinse on it, too, she thought. Instead of the natural cloud color, her hair was tinged blue. She looked like any other old woman.

She closed her eyes in pain. She did not want to be here, and she did not want to feel her hair. Slowly, she remembered the nurses' words and then Karla's. Was Paul Whitney really here, really looking for her? It was an almost hopeless task to find someone in this great hospital. Almost easier it would be to find a single honeybee in a teeming hive. Keeping her eyes closed she remembered that first day that she had met Paul Whitney, the sunlight, the curved glass, the green book in her lap.

*You take the high road
And I'll take the low . . .*

Her voice was thin and creaky, and she was hardly aware of it.

For me and my true love . . .

At the same time a bass voice took up the words and choked, an old, wrinkled, yet still firm hand took up hers.

"Amanda . . ."

"Paul?" she said shakily, her eyes opening through the tears, which fell onto his hand, tightly clutching hers. There was a loud crash as his old wooden cane fell to the floor which neither of them ever heard, so intently were they looking into each other's eyes.

Dorene M. Pasekoff

Memories

A memory –
Reflections on the past:
A laugh, a cry
A time of happiness and joy
A time of sadness and pain.

A memory –
Times shared together:
A smile, a song
A warm embrace, an encouraging word
Dreaming together, working together,
Sharing hopes of the future.

A memory –
Reflections on the past:
God has brought us together,
Time draws us apart.
But our love and friendship is enduring,
And I will treasure that forever.

CJ

What memories are inspired on a cool autumn day
With just a hint of dampness in the air!
I pause, and in that solitude do I recall
Such times and cherished moments. And I dare
To think outright on days gone by, and comrades lost
Forever to that greedy bandit, Time . . .
Who, selfish as he is, steals our joys for his content,
And fills life with naught but riddle and rhyme.

Joanne E. Kohler

<12/12/82>