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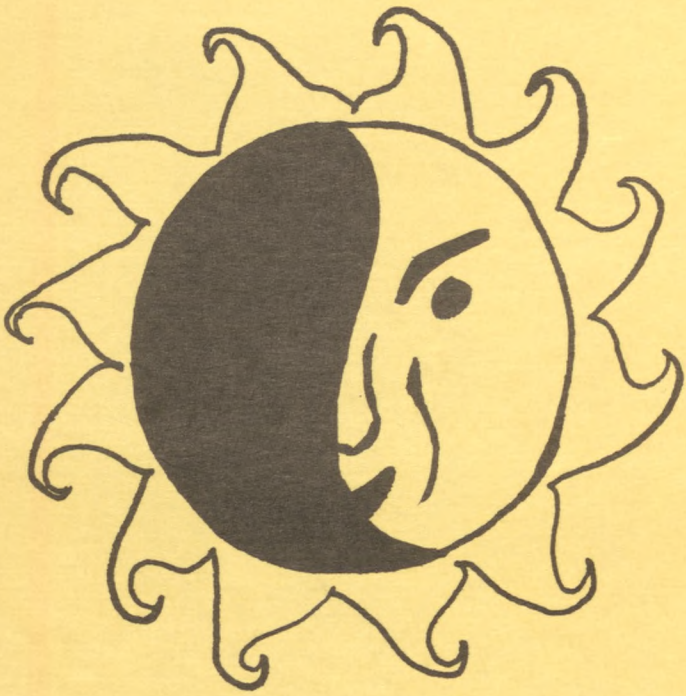


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Quiz & Quill

Quiz and Quill

Combined Issue

for

1974-75 and 1975-76

**Published at Otterbein College
Westerville, Ohio**

Summer 1976

Founded 1919

Preface

All the platitudes about changes in fads and fashions from one generation to the next are surely as true as they are trite. Among these truisms is possible a gem to give us hope about the odd fact that although many collegians like to indulge in the solitary vice of writing, few seem eager to be involved in clubs and societies for the purpose of sharing writings and literary ideas. Is there an inevitability about change that will lead again to a time when Quiz and Quill can be an active literary organization as well as a sponsor to publish student writings? The Quiz and Quill Club – or whatever name it may assume in its evolutionary course – awaits a generation of student writers animated by the spirit of inquiry and sharing as well as that of creativity. The literary club is dead! Long live the literary club!

This issue of *Quiz and Quill* is a combined one of selections from the contests held in the springs of 1975 and 1976. Reasons for a combined issue are economic – printing even a slim magazine is quite expensive – and the exigencies of time – finding student and faculty time for the task of editing is ever difficult. The magazine is composed of two sections, each with its list of winners and table of contents. Among the poetry and prose is ample evidence that today's student writers are reading, thinking, and working at their craft.

Quiz and Quill

1974-75

**LITERARY AWARDS
1974-75**

Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

First Prize Tony Tarantelli
Second Prize Patricia Shambaugh
Third Prize Mary Anne White
Honorable Mention Julie Kinney
Honorable Mention Ethel Milne
Honorable Mention Darci Birmingham

Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

First Prize, Co-winners Darci Birmingham
John Riley

Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

First Prize Patricia Shambaugh
Third Prize Mary Anne White

Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

First Prize Darci Birmingham
Third Prize Sarah Weinrich

Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

First Prize John Riley
Second Prize Patricia Shambaugh

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FREE

First Prize, Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

I told a flower
To be anything it wished;
It stayed a flower.

John Riley

THE BROTHERS

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

A lone rider on a tired grey mare rode through the dark Kentucky forest. He, like many others, was going home. He had left his home four years before as a young boy and he returned now as a hard, embittered man.

The war was over. The surrender of General Robert E. Lee to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, a month before marked an end to the great and bloody Civil War. Now the weary warriors, the conquered and the victors, were finally returning home to live side by side once more and attempt to forgive and forget.

Nat Glover's low spirits rose bit by bit as he started seeing familiar landmarks which awoke childhood memories in his weary mind.

His old horse carefully picked its way across a deep, cold mountain stream. Nat and his twin brother Nick had spent many summer days fishing along this stream's banks. A suggestion of a smile touched Nat's lips as he saw the big willow tree on the far bank . . .

"Nat, throw me a worm! That danged old snapper took my bait again!" the angry thirteen-year-old boy called sharply.

Nat, his identical twin, dug into his leather pouch and pulled out a fat, wiggly worm.

"Here, Nick. Why don't you move? This is the fourth time you've lost your bait to that turtle," Nat said, tossing the worm to his brother.

"No, siree! Either I'm going to catch that oversized pot of soup or he's going to catch me."

Nick stood up and cast his homemade fish line into the water. Nat grinned and concentrated on his own line. He felt a slight tug on the line then a hard pull that almost made him lose his grip on his rod. He gave a yell and dragged his line in, exhibiting a big bass. Nick watched him with envy, but grinned good naturedly.

"Boy howdy! That's a beaut! Hey - !!"

The big snapping turtle had taken the bait - hook, line, and Nick. The instant it felt the sharp hook cutting into its tender mouth, it dived straight for the bottom, pulling Nick after it into the cold mountain stream.

"Nat! Help me out of here! I'll get that snapper yet! Nat!"

Nat was rolling on the grass. He was laughing so hard his sides were aching.

"Who was going to catch who?" Nat roared.

Nick swam to the bank and climbed out. He was soaked to the skin, but his normal good humor was returning. He threw himself down by his brother and rolled over on his back.

"Have we got enough fish for supper, Nat?"

"Considering everything, yeah, I'd say we do." Nat looked up at the bright sun. "Are you done trying to catch that turtle for today, Nick?"

"Yeah, I guess so. My pole's gone now."

"Then I reckon we'd better be getting on back home. It'll be time for chores pretty soon."

"All right. But let's see how those new baby robins are first."

"Sure."

The boys grabbed their floppy, black felt hats and raced to the big willow tree.

"Be quiet so we don't scare them now," Nick whispered.

They swung up into the wide, low-hanging branches and climbed up high in the tree. Nat moved some branches and they looked down at the tiny nest and its occupants, a group of newly hatched baby birds.

Nat nudged his brother. "Let's go before their momma comes back and gets scared."

They climbed down to the low branches overhanging the stream. Both gazed at the fast-moving water and exchanged glances. With wild war whoops the two boys jumped into the water.

Their mother only smiled when the two bedraggled boys sloshed into their tiny cabin home and hung their dripping hats on pegs by the door.

"We're home, Ma!" the boys yelled, holding up their catch . . .

Nat pulled his horse to a stop by the big willow tree. For a few seconds, Nat fought the emotions coursing through his brain. Then he was off his horse and moments later he was high in the tree, standing by the nook where the nest had been. The baby birds were gone now and the nest was empty. Nat sighed deeply before climbing down and continuing on his way.

Nat rode thoughtfully for the next few minutes. His shoulders slumped with weariness, but his dark eyes were constantly searching, darting from object to object. He stopped next in front of a large, weatherbeaten oak tree. The partially dead tree bore the scars of numerous lightning bolts, but Nat considered it a sanctuary. He dismounted and walked around the tree, fingering old scars and gashes in the trunk, and remembering . . .

Nat and Nick had gotten Henry repeaters for their fourteenth birthday. The guns, 1860 models, were slightly used, a little over a year old, but were still like new. So early the next morning, the two boys had gone hunting. They spent most of their time wandering through the woods, waiting on the sure shot, since they only had a limited amount of ammunition and couldn't afford to waste any.

"I'm Daniel Boone!" Nick said suddenly. "And you're my pardner, Davy Crockett!"

“And we’re tracking down a Shawnee war party that’s kidnapped our sweethearts!” Nat added.

“Right! So peel your eyes now and watch out for them redskins.”

The boys stooped as if they were stalking prey and crept noiselessly through the dark woods.

“Come on, Nick! I’ll race you to that clearing!” Nat yelled, breaking into a run.

By the time Nick even got started, Nat had a ten yard lead on him. They went at a dead run along the narrow forest path, each boy trying his best to beat the other to the clearing. Nat reached the clearing first with a margin of at least twenty yards. His momentum carried him into the middle of the clearing before he could stop. As he swung around to yell at Nick, he suddenly froze.

Nick came up to the clearing at a slow trot, but stopped when he saw Nat’s strange actions.

“Nat, what’s wrong?” he called softly.

Nat’s lips barely moved. “O-over there.”

Nick felt his insides go cold. Not more than twenty-five feet away from Nat stood a huge black bear.

“It’s a she bear, Nat. Can you get a shot off to scare her away?”

“I don’t know. Maybe if I don’t move she’ll go away.”

“I hope so. I can’t get a clear shot.”

The minutes ticked by slowly as the facedown continued. Then the boys heard a rustling to their right and a bear cub ambled out of the bushes.

“Nat, run!” Nick screamed as the mother bear moved to protect her cub.

Nat needed no urging. He was running towards the nearest possible shelter, an old tree with low branches. He hoped he would have the time to reach the lighter branches before the bear could catch him. He dropped his rifle at the foot of the tree and swung up into the tree as fast as he could with the bear right behind him.

Nick quickly circled around the clearing until he had a clear shot at the bear. By this time the huge beast was climbing after his brother.

Over and over again, Nick nervously muttered to himself as he leveled the rifle. “Aim at the base of the brain. Pa always says aim at the base of the brain.” With a prayer on his lips, Nick pulled the trigger.

Nick heard the heavy bullet hit flesh, but at first it didn’t seem to slow the bear down. Nick waited a few more seconds and was ready to fire again when the bear groaned and released its hold on the tree before toppling heavily to the ground and lying there unmoving. To be certain the bear was dead, Nick reloaded and put two more bullets in the beast’s heart while Nat climbed down from the top of the tree.

Both boys were pale and shaking as they stared at the dead animal. Finally, Nat turned to his brother and held out his hand.

"I sure owe you one this time, brother."

"Yeah, I guess you do," Nick said with a slow grin, trying to hide his pent up emotions. He looked at the badly scarred tree. "You know, this tree is our 'Point of Victory.' What do you think?"

"Yeah. Our 'Point of Victory!' . . ."

Nat shook his head sadly. "This sure was our 'Point of Victory,' brother Nick. It sure was. Not so at Gettysburg, though."

Nat limped slightly as he walked to his old horse. He had been one of the thousands wounded at the battle of Gettysburg and had lived to tell of it.

He rode on. He was getting close to home, but first he had to make two more stops. Just two.

Nat was a half mile from home when he stopped next. A big, overhanging rock was above him, shading him from the sun. He stared at the rock. This had been one of their favorite spots, a mere five years ago . . .

They were fifteen and didn't have a care in the world. There was talk of the possibility of a civil war, but so far, that's all it was, just talk.

"Nat, you're dead! I shot you!" Nick yelled at his brother, who was standing up on the overhanging rock.

"You missed!" Nat whooped and he dived at his brother.

They wrestled and fought like two wild Indians until both were too tired to move. Then they stretched out in the tall grass and stared up at the cloudless, bright sky.

"Nick, some of the guys were talking at school yesterday."

"What about?"

"This slave question. They said if there's a war, they're going to join up and fight."

"On which side?"

"Both. Some want to stick with the Union and others want to jump with the South."

"It appears that Kentuck's caught in the middle of things."

"Yep. One of the fellows called her a border state. She can go either way or both ways." Nat lazily flicked at a slowly flying honey bee. "What about you, Nick?"

"What about me?" Nick yawned.

"Which side would you be on?"

Nick thought for a long moment. "The South, I reckon."

"How come?"

"I can't really say for certain. It just seems like the way to go. What about you?"

"If I had to choose, and nothing against you, Nick, I'd stay with the Union."

"It doesn't bother me which side you choose. We're brothers and always will be. Come on, let's go home. I'll race you!"

"Done!"

As the boys raced off, little did they know that the summer of '61 would radically change their lives. Their father died suddenly and the war did begin, forcing the two brothers to make their decisions.

Nat touched the old horse lightly in the ribs. The old log cabin was in sight when Nat pulled the animal to a stop by a tiny graveyard. Two graves were in the small, fenced off plot of land. One was his father's. The other - Nat swallowed hard and forced back the sudden tears - was his brother's. Nat clenched his fists and savagely thought, "Why him? Why not me? Why?"

He reached into his worn jacket and pulled out a crumpled, travel-stained letter. He didn't open it, he already knew every word by heart. He had gotten the letter two months after Gettysburg while he was still in the army hospital.

He had read the letter quickly skimming over most of it. Then -

"... I don't know how to tell you this," his mother had written. "I've been trying to find the words and it's very hard. All I can say is try to understand and trust in God. His ways are right. Nat, Nick was killed at Gettysburg. I got the official notification and his remaining effects last week. They said he fought bravely and was one of the last to fall. I get so scared when I think that I almost lost both of you on the same day, but I thank God that ..."

"Thank God for what?" Nat murmured quietly as the memory faded. "For taking the only brother I ever had when it should have been me?" Nat looked up at the sky and raised a fist. "God, for all I know, I could have been the one that put the bullet in Nick! There were so many on both sides that day, I'll never know! I haven't slept good since I get this letter, God. I'd wake up in the middle of the night, screaming, calling Nick's name."

Nat stopped and stared at the grave that held no body. "Is this Your punishment since we fought on different sides? An empty grave?" he whispered, tears streaming down his cheeks. "When will it be mine? Maybe Nick was the lucky one."

The crumpled letter slipped from his nerveless hand, falling to the ground. Nat dismounted and picked a handful of wild flowers and laid them on the grave. He took off his hat and stared at the mound of dirt for a long time. Finally, he shook his head. It was time to go home.

Sarah Weinrich

Rising above the rushing waters,
With wings thrashing,
Like the steady beat of a heart.
Climbing upward . . .
Moving,
Oh so gently,
As a ballet would perform across the stage.
The lone gull,
A beautifully amazing bird.

David A. Paul

TENNESSEE SYCAMORE

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

If you look closely
through the chickweed
and wild raspberries
and sassafras you
will find a friend
of mine overlooking
the muddy waters
of my childhood.

He stands there strong
against the wind and
erosion of a lifetime
absorbing the laughter
of small kids, the tears
of heartaches and the splashes
that people make when they
enter his life span on a warm
summer night.

During the July heat
he hears with ears
stretched out towards
the Tennessee river
and at night, after visitors
have left the dusk, he
talks to the quiet waters
when a breeze rustles his branches.

At dark's coming we would
walk the dusty road,
step our way through
the surrounding foliage
and watch the moon pitch
shadows of the trees across
the water's path beneath
the protection of his swaying limbs.

By winter our friend
had heard a summer time
and had shaken its memories
from his mind and
stood dormant in the warm
winter sun deserving the
time he took resting and
collecting his own thoughts.

When spring came
we were back again
watching the giant sycamore
grow wiser as the weeks
passed and greener as the
rain fell at his roots
and pelted the river with
thousands of little circles.

At sunset a mockingbird
would bid good day and the wind
would shake his leaves accommodatingly
and we both hoped that
some time far away from now
we could come back and hear
the thoughts and feel the
feelings that were shared
with our companion.

Tony Tarantelli

YOU

(1)

How is it you just happened along
At such a late-early time of my life?
You, a snow in Spring, a flower in late Fall.
A quartz stone on a brass-coated band,
A diamond mounted on a sterling ring.
The White Yes and the Black No.
The Here and There, the Ebb and Flow,
The Back and Gone, the Up and Down,
Why and Because, a smile and glance away.

(2)

It's best we part soon, as we will,
To know no more than business lets
And ask with eyes' scarce reaching hands
No less than what tongue must hold back.
'Tis Fate's lingering will to cause
Such quiet where butterflies rebel
And disease of nerves resisting gravity.
Two silent pleas to escape the magnet's call.
A morning glory and a moonflower.

Lyn Benua

CEREMONIES

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

Remembering my home eleven years ago, I'm still puzzled by what I experienced. I wonder if I will ever understand how that incident profoundly affected my life. I waited in my room until Father left. It was raining and he left without a coat or an umbrella. I knew where he was going. The same place he had gone every night for as long as I could remember. It was as if a tremendous restraint had been lifted when he left. I spent the first three hours romping through the house, playing games with my little brother. We shared these games with Mother who played them with greater intensity than either of us then understood. And our shenanigans always ended in fits of laughter.

Jason attacked me with a roar. I was not to be out-matched by his game. If he could wear socks on each ear and a black paper moustache, then I could certainly do better. I ran into Mother's room and stripped down to my underwear. Then, I scooped up every necklace and covered myself with beads including Mother's, as yet unpaid-for pearls. I found twelve rings, enough for each finger and two left over for my toes. And simulating the Indian lady from next door, I thrust a handful of bracelets up my arm. I was not to be outdone by my brother. He might look like a ferocious tiger but I was going to be a WILD woman.

I finished by knotting my hair on top of my head and plunging mother's teasing comb through the centre. With a bloodcurdling cry, I threw open the door and pounced on my brother, who had been spying on me through the keyhole. The tiger let out something less than a ferocious yelp and mother came flying back to investigate. Poor Jason was being assaulted by a savage woman. I heard Mother laugh all the way back to the kitchen.

She returned just as I was roping my prey. Now the hunter had become the hunted. She was after me. Hey wait! I was the good guy. I was harnessing the wild. Mother, in a Corning Ware helmet, lunged out at me. The hunter caught me with a treacherous pair of cooking tongs. Right on the nose. I was immobile. The lion under me untangled himself with his animal instinct and grabbed the wooden spoon from the hunter's cartridge belt. He began to stalk menacingly towards me. Confronted by a double menace, the hunter fired two rounds of Tootsie Roll bullets. Jason and I scuffled after the candy and wolfed it down while Mother entertained us with a demonstration of the weapons on her cartridge belt. I couldn't stop laughing when she took the cake decorator gun and shot Jason in the face with chocolate icing.

Then we knew it was time. This ceremony was over and another about to begin. I scrambled back to Mother's bedroom and replaced the jewelry. Jason and I returned to our own bed-

rooms and locked the doors. Mother had insisted on this action for two years. I was gazing out the window, out at the winter trees and planning tomorrow's excuses: then he entered. It would be no different than any other evening.

He stumbled inside, leaving the front door open. Normal. The refrigerator door flew open, something was removed. Normal. Mother said something in a soft, soothing voice.

"Don't worry . . ."

"Keep your nose out of my business . . ."

" . . . can I make you anything to . . ."

Then something fell and I heard a loud slap. Normal. I knew that Jason was hearing this injustice as clearly as I was. I knew, even though we had never discussed it, because he had always responded to my looks of terror at the supper table when father shouted. I wanted to run out and scream at him; call him all the names he had cursed at my mother. But she had forbidden us to leave our rooms after these incidents had started.

I cried a little. Not really tears but quiet noises. Mother never cried during any of this. She never raised her voice. After he came home, all I ever heard from her were gentle apologies.

Another slap and a hard thud against the wall. Again and again this thud repeated itself. Why did I listen so intensely to the brutalities my mother experienced at the hands of my father?

After a while, it was quiet. I opened the door and met my brother. We tiptoed down the stairs and found Mother covering Father with a blanket. He was snoring in a corner of the living room. Jason picked up the overturned furniture and threw away the empty bottles. I helped Mother to the bathroom where I ceremoniously withdrew the witch hazel from the closet and started to dabble around her face and elbows.

Tonight she did something that was not part of our normal ceremony. She reached up, caught my hand and squeezed it. I stopped what I was doing and looked at her. She was saying something. I was having problems understanding until I listened. For the first time she was spilling out her problems. It was her story of my father's injustices. I was suddenly given a responsibility I didn't know how to handle. For as long as I could remember, I had always administered the witch hazel in silence. Mother had never before told me anything about Father.

What was she trying to tell me now? It seemed that she had put up with my father because her own father had done the same things. Her mother had been bullied until she was sixty-five. Then, Grandfather hit her so hard that she fell and broke her hip and was unable to get out of bed after that incident. Mother told me that she didn't care what happened if only she was not as severely injured as her mother. In other words, she was planning to put up with these "rumblings" for the rest of her life.

"Your father was a good man when I met him. Your grandfather and grandmother introduced him to me. I used to see him

in the choir every Sunday and believe me, Annie, he was the best looking one of the bunch. Your grandparents wanted me to invite him home for supper. But I wanted to go to college, which Daddy disapproved of, and I knew that your father was looking for someone to settle down with. But I did finally invite him home. He was the most flattering man I'd ever met."

"Mother, did he ever say those things then that he tells you now?"

I realized immediately that I should never have asked that because she turned around and started to cry. I had never seen my mother cry and I was sure I didn't want to see it then. I got up very quietly and walked back to my room.

I've been sitting here by the brook for most of the night. The rain has stopped and the sky is beginning to lighten. I just don't understand how we three had ever let it happen. There's something irreversible about ceremonies. A ritual that is conceived in one generation and passed on to the minds of the offspring as if it is a dormant gene. I knew Mother would never finish her story and that I would never ask her to. But what hurts the most is the realization that Mother will never do anything about it.

Darci Birmingham

I DREAM . . .

I dream . . .
about clouds in the sky
and about the sun in the morning
and the small but brightly
shining stars of the night . . .
I see myself running
with happiness and joy . . . My
smile reaches upward to the sun
and my heart hears the sweet
songs of life singing . . . I feel
the coolness and the simplicity
of today ooze between my toes . . .
My nose tingles with the
sweetness of people around me . . .
I am free . . . I am in ecstasy . . .
I am a part of everything and
everything is a part of me . . .

Still I dream . . .

Patti Call

SECURITY MANOR

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

Chauffeured within the gate, escorted to the door,
A master of a manor could not desire more.
A uniformed butler waits to carry away a packet,
While a well-dressed servant fetches a candy-striped smoking
jacket.
Sir William J. Byrd smiles greetings to friends who share his
house,
And waves to "Birdman" Al Catraz, and Willard - his pet mouse.
When in the manor, Sir J. Byrd prefers a common name,
And all the men that live with him prefer the same.
Therefore, at home when he is spoken to
His title is 'Number one one six seven two.'
Sir J. Byrd yawns and decides he will retire.
He makes his way to his private room which all his friends
admire.
He sinks onto his water-bed, after turning his stereo on.
He drifts toward sleep while music plays. An alarm wakes him
at dawn.
After morning exercise of jogging around the estate grounds,
He shaves, showers, and breakfasts, then starts his daily rounds.
He visits his Uncle Warden and signs some legal forms
Which state Sir J. Byrd's amount of time to bring about reforms.
As days go by, the time grows near for Sir J. Byrd to leave again.
The hour arrives, and he bids farewell to all the gentlemen.
Sir William J. Byrd goes out the door and passes through the
gate.
He wonders where his escorts are, and why his chauffeur is late.
Finally, he realizes that he is being sent away
From the only life he knows. He arranges a prolonged stay.
The luxury of Security Manor was enough for him.
It satisfied his every desire and performed his every whim.
A forged check brought Sir J. Byrd five to twenty years
Room and board in the manor, while he dispels his social fears.

Mary Anne White

SOLIPSISTIC MARRIAGE

Co-winner of First Prize, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

Sexual whines, short cries, caused me to look up. I cannot ever remember seeing a happier forty-year-old child. The beginning of the William Tell overture was played over and over which caused the child's whines to increase in respective minuendo. The famous shrill trumpet entrance of the overture — a short interruption from the telephone causing distraction of the child's happy toy. Her reconciliations came by upping the damn volume. God, she must have placed the needle on the same entrance a hundred times. Once again safe, invulnerable, William Tell penetrates my forty-year-old child. There was no time to rationalize or understand her. I cannot understand when I break my gaze and look around to see a black sleuth drumming the top off the table. The librarian was embracing an old friend. It was ludicrous. His friend responded by nodding his head, bobbing like a simple marionette.

I cannot understand what I see. Lonely, crazy women spending their lives in a record. Ignored or forgotten by their early friends. I am self-conscious when I look at her — tired, dirty hair scraggled into a ponytail, tennis shoes beaten by constant wear and those glasses that pull the shade of protection over her eyes. I am conscious of my future. Why doesn't she talk with one of the beaten men that enter the library at nine and shuffle out at supper. (Probably devouring a brown bag meal in the park directly behind the library.) They color the library with their fuzzy faces. Brown, blond, black or gray stubbles contrast with the white walls of the library. These little men never smile, never talk among themselves. Only once did one of them speak to me. I was nibbling on a pear and a small man scurried over to my desk to ask if I had any more fruit. I didn't. He was not waiting for my verbal response. He turned away before I could speak as if he anticipated my answer to be — "Not for you."

There are at least twenty men available for the William Tell jouncer but I have yet to see her notice any of them. She has not yet perceived my stares. Why do I feel like the matchmaker? The black sleuth has given me the all-over for the fiftieth time and I have responded with her same protective pair of glasses.

I want to do something foolish for her. I want to run out and buy an armful of flowers to throw to the fruit man. He should present them to her. This might unalienate him-her — me. Just the thing I am afraid of happening. The record I want to destroy. The life I want to live among men and women. The tired, spectacted, alienated me who will never learn how to exchange my beat-up sneakers for a pair of wedding pumps.

For five hours I sat in absorption. Like a human-sized sponge I soaked, sopped every movement. After the William Tell

jouncer had left, my memory slowly began reabsorbing its substance – the record I had been listening to was skipping. I had placed Odetta's voice on the turntable five hours ago. Cautiously my hand managed to flip the record to side two. It must have taken me ten minutes. I slopped down into a seat of sponge and squeezed out gullibility . . .

Darci Birmingham

TRUTH

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

Truth
and I don't think
your game of hide and seek
honesty
and no one ever knows
or with what knives
it cuts your mind and soul
and leaves them
bleeding raw
of their slender self-illusion
if all that blood is really teardrops
then I don't think I want to play.

is a dangerous fuse
I want to play
round words and faces
because
is painful
just where the lines are drawn
and gaping pitiful parodies
of the truth

Patricia Lynn Shambaugh

MAY DAY

Co-winner of First Prize, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

On May Day the air was humid; it was motionless and it carried sounds well. Voices could be heard from a small crowd somewhere in the distance. The college band sat outside somewhere rehearsing portions of a few songs. A few campus couples could be seen here and there, and a few lonely individuals walked the sidewalks. But it was unreal – a fantasy or fairy tale – because the campus was so stagnant. There were no classes and the buildings were empty. Everyone wished to be anywhere except here.

(If he only had a gun . . .)

Mark unlocked the door to be sure he could get back inside and then stepped onto the graveled roof of the science building. He walked to the edge and stood by the wall and looked down on an empty tennis court. The roof felt so solid under his feet: it thumped quietly without vibrating as he walked on it, as if it were the ground itself. But this was different. When you walk on the ground you are caught between multi-floored buildings and you knit your way along among people who are alone.

Squatting behind the short wall around the roof, Mark could look over at Towers Hall and find it had shrunk to a fraction of its normal size. The trees, too, were almost shrubs from here. And the pattern formed by the angles, crossings, and curves of the clutter of sidewalks on lawns was much more obvious than it is on the ground.

The campus seemed empty, but Mark could see how the people look as they are sieved along the narrow pathways from building to building and from class to class. The tennis court was vacant, but he saw the small figures effortlessly tapping a green dot back and forth.

The empty buildings brimmed with life. People in each of the rooms . . .

(If he only had a gun . . .)

Mark could change the panorama as he pleased. He could aim his rifle anywhere and stop any single motion on the campus before him. The first target he chose was Towers Hall itself. He pulled the trigger and the bang, folding back on itself in an echo, shattered a top floor window. Other windows shattered with other bangs and then Mark shot the spire off one of the towers.

Crouching close to the roof, he moved to the other side of the roof and took aim at the library. But the larger, heavier windows would not shatter. He sought another target.

Mark saw the people filling the sidewalks and going to classes. He knew that in a few minutes they would all be inside the buildings. He looked for a target, but no one seemed appropriate. It seemed that the bang of a rifle wouldn't cause any of them to shatter. He stared into the street and began to

fear that no target would appear. He breathed heavily and fast; his pulse began pounding with his anxiousness.

The sidewalks were clearing as the people all disappeared through doorways.

But what could he shoot?

Now, only one couple walked past, holding each other in their arms. They cut across the sloped lawn beside the library and then walked west on the sidewalk, as if to leave the campus.

A bang —

Echoed.

And a bang — Echoed.

The crowd was scampering and screaming and was shouting about the sniper. Mark stood erect, his wide eyes absorbing his world. Then he heard a siren and knew he must run.

He entered the dark enclosure of the top of the stairwell and ran quickly down each flight of stairs. Flight after flight he ran, keeping one hand lightly on the banister to maintain his balance. Mark went down until there were no more steps and then he ran along the lower hall, not sure where . . . The boiler room door was open.

Mark went to the back of the room and removed a small wood panel leading to the tunnel system that interlinked the buildings of the campus. He crawled into the dark, tube-filled tunnel and sat on one of the fat pipes while he caught his breath.

(If he only had a gun . . .)

But there was no gun. And there was nobody. Mark stared at the dimly lit pipes cramped around him. He listened to their quiet murmurings and felt the heat they radiated. Mark felt himself being choked by an ache in the bottom of his throat and he wished he could remember how to cry. In the tunnel could be heard the sound of the band, somewhere, rehearsing fragments of their songs for May Day.

John Riley

LEAVES

Leaves – flying
so carefree on
a gust of wind,
reflecting the
beauty
of life –
in their
dance of
death

Lois Stevens

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

There seems to be
a solution to everything

Runny nose -
Kleenex tissues.
Watery eyes -
 Contac pills.
Constant cough -
Vick's 44.
Achey head -
Bayer aspirin.
Skinned knee -
Band-aids.
Infected skin -
Rubbing alcohol.
Tickly throat -
Luden's cough drops.
Broken heart -
Scotch tape.

Patricia Lynn Shambaugh

A FRIEND

A flower of radiance
universally known
and felt,
a crystal teardrop
delicate and fragile.

Something to cherish
always, as a gift
from the
sun.

Kathy Yohn

LIFE

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

In circles,
Like children's games we run.
A game of tag,
But never touching.
Songs of nonsense,
And frozen statues.
Resulting
In exhaustion,
Of a life seemingly endless.

Ethel Milne

vernal retreat

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

past experiences coming in like
memories of a distant life,
i ran desperately
through the crowd of faceless people
and the laughing voice forced its way
into my mind, asking
where are you going?
then i could see him again –
the way he would smile –
and i smiled back.
the laughing voice asked again
where are you going? and i followed
its mocking to the sunshine
of the woodlands,
remembering his strength
and especially his eyes and it was
only then that the tears
finally came
and very slowly the faceless crowd faded
into a misty obscurity.

Julie Kinney

I WAS GOD

Second Prize, Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

I created a world today,
In a chilly atmosphere
Made of blue and white snow.
I built homes and buildings,
I farrowed paths for streets.
The air was clear and clean,
My people were fat and jolly.
Black coal chunks for eyes,
Apple red lips,
With long skinny branch arms
And thin fingers reaching for truth.
I was God today,
I created a world.
I told them all how to act.
I clothed them in love,
I offered them innocence.
Yet I am an innocent God,
Void of any profound knowledge.
I can't make them listen.
When the sun appears tomorrow
He will smile from my world's love.
They will follow his light
And will be lost.
I will be left to stand alone,
In a blue cold atmosphere
Staring at chunks of coal
Pieces of apple
And thin finger branches
Reaching out, too late, for help.

I wonder if God cries?

Patricia Lynn Shambaugh

Quiz and Quill

1975-76

**LITERARY AWARDS
1975-76**

Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

First Prize Chris Nicely
Third Prize Lisa Durham
Fourth Prize Mary Anne White
Honorable Mention D. Lynn Shaw
Honorable Mention Sandy Gold

Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

Honorable Mention James Dooley
Honorable Mention Brad Manier

Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

Second Prize Mary Anne White
Third Prize Nora Minor
Honorable Mention Ethel Milne
Honorable Mention Reagan Whitmyer

Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

Second Prize Sarah Weinrich
Third Prize Ben Atwood
Honorable Mention James Dooley

Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

First Prize Chris Nicely
Second Prize Reagan Whitmyer
Honorable Mention Felipe Martinez

The Weinland Writing and Selling Contest

First Prize Mary Anne White

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GOLDILOCKS

(A Transformation dedicated to the late Anne Sexton)

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

There was once a little girl with yellow curls
that hung all over her head,
tempting little sausages that sprang like
jack-in-a-box screws when she ran.
The curly imp's name was Goldilocks,
which stands to reason.

One morning she had a violent temper tantrum
as spoiled golden apples tend to do,
packed a suitcase of comic books and underwear
and marched into the woods,
brave little Hummel soldier.
A little worm gnawed in her stomach
and the storybook house in the clearing was inviting.
Breaking in without conscience,
a mild psychopath,
she sampled three bowls of porridge,
devouring the smallest, bowl and all,
like a boa constrictor.

She bounded into the enormous
living room chair
but disgusted when it did not bounce,
strewed stuffing all over the floor.
She sank like the Titanic in the
middle-size chair
but rode the smallest one furiously,
another Rocking Horse Winner,
until it burst and she lay on the ground
like debris.

Upstairs she bed-hopped
until her body was embraced by the
littlest bed.
Awakened by a muted growl
she saw three furry shapes,
mama, papa, and her littlest self
all black and hairy
like a tarantula nightmare
and screamed as she was carried off,
tempting sausages and all.

Lisa Durham

**TRANSCRIPT OF DR. LARIMER'S SPEECH
BEFORE THE 123rd MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Honorable Mention Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the General Assembly, my distinguished colleagues, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I should like to take a few minutes of your time before the general session begins to discuss a matter of international concern. As you are all undoubtedly aware, last week the papers printed the recent discovery of Dr. Alex Whelan concerning the past existence of a tenth planet in our solar system. This planet, though no longer with us, may have been the hypothesized planet Vulcan which has been the subject of theory for the past half century. If this discovery is indeed correct, then the scientific value alone is enormous.

First, let us consider the consequences. For centuries, man has thought of our planet as being the third from the sun. Now, if Dr. Whelan is correct, there was once a planet located between us and Venus. Consider the cost to us. Why, the reprinting of the high school physics books alone will cost a small fortune. (*General laughter.*)

But seriously, ladies and gentlemen, this find could cost us more than a few terrestrial dollars – this find could change the entire scope of our scientific knowledge. To be sure, if Dr. Whelan is correct, this discovery could explain the theory of the relation of heavenly bodies that was discarded several years ago due to a lack of evidence. As you will recall, that theory suggested the existence of a tenth planet in our solar system. And, so widely believed was the theory, that several of our enthusiastic scientists even gave the planet a name, Vulcan. But, a lack of supportive scientific evidence and observation soon caused the theory to lose popularity.

However, this discovery could completely alter our thinking. For those of you not entirely familiar with the steps involved that guided Dr. Whelan to his amazing announcement, allow me a minute to recapitulate. Our scientists have long been aware of the existence of a meteor belt orbiting the sun between our planet and Venus. Because of the randomness of these scattered particles, little attention has been paid to them. After all, similar belts have been discovered before this. So, though studied, it was the subject of little discussion.

Now, in our latest interplanetary probe venture, a sample was obtained from this belt – a small meteor. The facts that it provided upon investigation were astonishing. As you know, a meteor was once the part of a larger body. Our universe is literally littered with such debris – it is not uncommon. The “residue” from the creation of our own planet could account for some of this.

However, this was a meteor with a difference. This particle, upon the close investigation of our scientists, was found to have been literally blasted away from its main body. Now, what does this mean? Upon examination, we find this particle to have been the result of a large explosion or several large explosions. I refer not to usual concepts of disintegration, but to the complete pulverization of a larger body.

Given this, it would not be unlikely to assume that most, if not all, of the meteors found in that belt came from the same source. If true, that source may have once been an enormous body — that is, a planet. But, not just a planet — but rather our mysterious, elusive Vulcan — the tenth planet of our sun.

All right, so what of it? Certainly the find is exciting, but what bearing can it have on us beyond being an interesting tidbit to drop at the dinner table? I believe that it could serve as a warning for us; a possible prediction of our future. I realize that such a statement requires some clarification, and allow me to do just that.

Remember that I stated this meteor was not a result of the disintegration of a planet, but of its pulverization. Had it been a “cast off” from a tremendous explosion occurring on the surface of the planet, then why does it have so many neighbors in the same vicinity? Why was it not shot into the far reaches of space, never to be detected by mankind? The answer is simple — because it is not the result of such an explosion.

We are left with but one alternative. And if the alternative is true, then how does a planet become pulverized? We can theorize some answers — such as, its sun could super-nova. However, if that were the case, we wouldn't be here. And, anyhow, it and its fellows were orbiting our sun. A more likely answer was that the planet destroyed itself. And since that is believed to be impossible, we could more likely say that a civilization destroyed itself.

That is correct, ladies and gentlemen, I said a civilization. A people, not unlike you and me. For years, our scientists have been searching for some proof of the existence of extraterrestrial life. Now, perhaps we find the answer sitting on our own doorstep. It would not be the first time.

And now, I would like to present you with a reminder of a startling fact — we now possess the power to destroy our own planet ten times over. I see that some of you are already drawing the correlation. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, though only a theory, it could be the explanation for our meteor belt. Think of it, a civilization that flourished long before ours. A civilization which, if it still existed, would possess a technology beyond our wildest imaginations. A civilization that, perhaps accidentally, destroyed itself.

This is a plea for peace, ladies and gentlemen. True, what I have said goes beyond any real scientific basis. But, suppose it were true? Suppose the Creator in His infinite wisdom was giving

us a warning. Look at our planet today. We are a people torn by war. Must we wait for another dictator in another great war before we will see the truth? And, if we do, will it be too late?

Yes, my friends, perhaps Dr. Whelan discovered more than just a scientific phenomenon. Perhaps he discovered a signpost guiding us toward either everlasting peace or our ultimate destruction. Can we risk my hypothesis being wrong? I beg of you, before you begin your debates and proceedings for the day, take a moment and consider what I have said. Do not allow our Martian beauty to become another bit of the spoils of the universe.

Thank you.

Dr. Larimer, MARTIAN STAR DATE 1263

James Dooley

DIARY OF A MAD SNITCH

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

I simply cannot, simply refuse to stand
Another pointing, accusing hand,
The horrendous slamming of warping doors;
Thunderous paws upon the floor
Predicate a jarring of my bones.
I want to be left alone, and undisturbed;
I've been perturbed.

And so passivity abdicates its reign,
Countenance mild I will not feign;
For I can be as ruthless as any fly
That bites and taunts before it dies.
But yet, a question haunts my brain;
Who is really more insane, of bitch
And snitch – which?

Reagan Whitmyer

LIVINGSTON STREET WINTER NIGHT

Late at night the snows stopped.
Bright world illumed by street
Lamps normally dim. Old and solid
Bases made of cement and sparkling
Sand. Ovoid covers protecting bulbs.

We went out, my dad and I, into that
Crystal world so fragile and ephemeral.

The porch and steps and walk lay ahead.
I had the broom, he the shovel. We started.

It was light and soft, the kind that drifts
And blows, the kind that powders the world,
Creates a mist, a life, a life so loved.

We finished and I brushed him off, then my
Turn. We went in and undressed. I slept
With my arm around him that night.

Brad B. Manier

DESERT HOPE

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

The wind blows through the silence
like an echo in a vacuum.
The ocean of sand swirls about filling the
air with the smell of dry dust;
The sun scorching all that dares to survive
with its fire heat and its hand of death.
This hand, its fingers reaching,
seems to have touched all . . .

 but wait
on a prickly stump of green,
a red glowing life
which seems to vibrate with
all the intensity of the death
which surrounds it,
a cactus flower
and in its blossom
the victory of survival.

Sandy Gold

ONE ROOM

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

"Pete, look out!" Terry Moore yelled, as two yellow headlights suddenly bore down on their car.

Pete Wilson slammed his foot on the brakes and jerked the steering wheel hard to the right in a desperate attempt to get away from the oncoming car. Their own car skidded off the narrow, snakelike highway into the depths of thick fog and darkness.

The car careened over a steep bank and finally stopped when it struck an unseen object. The two young men were thrown forward, Terry ramming into the window shield and Pete being thrown from the car.

* * * * *

Hours later, he wasn't sure how long it was, Pete came to. He slowly opened his eyes, trying to ignore his pounding head. This felt worse than any hangover! Pete's vision slowly cleared and he became aware of his surroundings.

He was in a small room with bare walls. The only furniture was the bed he was in and a wicker rocking chair. There was a door and a small window. The heavy woolen blanket covering him was worn and frayed from use.

Pete gingerly touched the thick bandage on his forehead. How had he gotten here? What had happened? And where was Terry? Pete moved restlessly, disturbing his injured arm that was bound in a sling. His head ached from the questions he couldn't answer.

The door opened slowly. A tiny, wrinkled, old man stood in the doorway, and he grinned toothlessly when Pete noticed him.

"Good morning, young man," he said in a voice that sounded like it was a hundred years old. "How are you feeling? Better I hope."

"Yeah, I guess you could say so," Pete said with some confusion.

"You didn't quite know what you were doing when I found you, but yes, I can see that you are better. Are you hungry? Do you want anything to eat? To drink?"

"I - I guess not. What about the other driver?" Pete asked.

"Driver? What driver? I don't drive!" the old man laughed to himself.

"My friend and I were driving home last night," Pete said, the memories of the accident returning. "It was foggy and bad driving. A car ran us off the road - where's Terry and the car?"

"No, lad, you don't know what you're talking about. There was no car, no friend, just you."

Pete struggled to sit up but the old man hurried over to him and pushed him back down on the bed.

"Here now, you aren't ready to get up. Rest easy."

"But I've got to find Terry! He needs help!"

The old man sat down in the chair and started rocking.

"You need to go back to sleep, lad. That knock on the head didn't do you any good. Don't worry. I'll be right here when you wake up."

"But . . ." Pete protested, in spite of his sudden, ever increasing drowsiness. He couldn't keep his eyes open, his eyelids were so heavy. Slowly his eyes closed and he was asleep.

* * * * *

Pete woke up in a cold sweat. His shoulder and head still ached, but his thoughts were much clearer and sharper.

He had to get out of here and find Terry. No matter what that crazy old man said, he knew what had happened the night before. Pete looked around the room. The old man was still there, rocking peacefully. He cast his beady little eyes in Pete's direction and grinned.

"Well, well, what do you think of my paradise now?"

"Sir?"

"There's no pain or ugliness here, just peace and quiet."

"I don't understand."

"Of course not!" the old man raged suddenly. "You're from out there! You're bringing the outside into my paradise! You'll destroy it!" he screamed, suddenly bursting into pitiful tears.

Pete sat up in bed and swung his feet to the floor.

"I'm sorry, mister. I'll be moving on. If Terry's still out there I've got to find him."

"No, don't go!" the old man pleaded. "Please, stay!"

Pete was starting to feel extremely dizzy and weak. He lay back down, sweating from the exertion.

"I guess I'm not ready to go yet. But do you have a phone?"

"Of course not!" the old man snapped. "What would I need a phone for?"

"I just thought I could at least call for some help or let my parents know I'm all right."

"Sorry." The old man jumped to his feet. "I've got to go."

Pete watched him leave. "He's cracked," he said out loud.

Pete closed his eyes and tried to get his thoughts straight. He thought back to the day before, if that was the day, when he and Terry Moore, his roommate, left college to go home for spring break. They'd been traveling for three hours when they hit the first of the fog. It was the thickest stuff Pete and Terry had ever seen. Added to that was that the road they were driving on was narrow and winding. Neither Pete nor Terry saw the other car coming until it was almost too late. Pete had no idea where Terry was, let alone how badly he might be hurt.

His next problem was getting out of here. Pete was beginning to feel that the old man was crazy. At least he was the strangest character Pete had ever met. In spite of the help he had given

Pete, Pete had an uneasy feeling that the old man would not let him leave even if he tried.

Pete hit the bed with his good hand. He had to try! Moving as fast as he dared, Pete slowly got out of bed. He steadied himself by leaning against the wall and slowly inched to the door and opened it. To his surprise, he was looking outside at a broad expanse of grass and trees.

"There's only one room in this place," he muttered. "Strange."

He started walking slowly, feeling stronger the farther he went. He had no idea where he was going; he just knew he had to find Terry. Pete kept walking until he noticed that the old man was walking beside him.

"How long have you been here?" Pete demanded.

The old man laughed soundlessly.

"Long enough. Where are you goin'?"

"To look for Terry. He needs help and I've got to find him."

"That knock on the head jarred some marbles loose. I keep telling you, there was no one else, but if you insist I'll just tag along behind and keep you out of trouble."

"I must be dreaming!" Pete groaned. "This can't be happening. I'm going to wake up and be home. I just know it!"

Pete walked on, following his instincts and hoping the way was right. The old man followed, not saying anything to Pete but humming a tuneless song to himself.

"What is he trying to prove?" Pete thought. That old kook was strange. Pete walked faster, trying to get farther ahead of the old man. Finally, Pete started to weaken — his head was hurting again and his dizziness had returned.

The old man caught up with Pete and put a grizzled hand on his shoulder. "Don't you think you've gone far enough, lad? Why don't you come on back in now?"

He gently turned Pete around and to Pete's horror, there was the little shack.

"How? What?" Pete murmured, his knees giving way and his vision fading into blackness.

* * * * *

Pete opened his eyes slowly. He felt much better. His head didn't hurt nearly as bad as it had before. He looked around, expecting to see the rocking chair and one window. Instead, to his surprise, he was in a spotless white room, a hospital room.

Now how did he get here? Pete reached up and pressed the call button by his head. A few minutes later a nurse came in.

"Well, hello, Mr. Wilson."

"Hi."

"How are you feeling today?"

"Pretty good."

"That's fine. Is there anything you need?"

"Uhh, no ma'am. Miss . . ."

"Yes?"

"Where am I?"

The nurse laughed pleasantly. "At the county hospital. You've been here for two days."

"Two days? I - I don't understand," Pete said.

"They brought you in two days ago."

"What about my friend?"

"Mr. Moore?"

"Yes."

"He's fine. He was released yesterday but he's been here waiting for you to wake up. You were two lucky young men."

"Could I see him?"

"I don't see why not."

Terry limped in a few minutes later. The two friends grinned and shook hands.

"I never thought I'd see you again," Pete said warmly.

"It was close."

"How are you?"

"A couple of broken ribs. I'll survive."

"Terry, who found us?"

"They told me a farmer and his family did."

"Were we still in the car?"

"You were thrown a few feet from the car but we were both there. What's wrong?"

"I - I don't know. Maybe it was only a bad dream."

"What are you talking about?"

"I - "

The door opened and a tiny, wrinkled old man dressed in an orderly's uniform shuffled in. He grinned toothlessly when he saw Pete staring at him.

"Good morning, young man," he said in a voice that sounded like it was a hundred years old. "How are you feeling? Better I hope."

Pete's mouth dropped open in disbelief and he broke out in a sudden cold sweat. "Uhh, fine. Just fine, I think," he said weakly, unable to take his eyes off the smiling old man.

Sarah Weinrich

THE ART OF DRINKING AT OTTERBEIN (or The Art of Drinking Discreetly)

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

First and foremost, drinking is a social skill which was never intended to be practiced discreetly. Drinking is more enjoyable when done in a social, indiscreet atmosphere; also, once you've tied one on, it's damned difficult to be discreet at all.

However, one must approach this dilemma with the idea in mind that college is an institution of learning, and that one vital lesson of survival that any sane student at a church-affiliated college must learn is the art of drinking discreetly.

Lesson one involves the process of purchasing alcoholic beverages. Westerville is indeed dry. However, the closest carry-out, Flint, can be reached in a matter of minutes. Lane's is not much further, and carries a wider selection of liquor. Directions to either carry-out can be obtained from any upper-classmen, and several selected members of the faculty or staff.

If you would like to purchase "high," but you are under twenty-one, some friendly adult student at any frat house and a few of the sorority houses will be pleased to oblige you. Warning: never ask this favor of a Bible-beater. They will bind and gag you while holding a special prayer meeting for your tainted soul. The Owls' house and the TEM house are both sure bets.

Lesson two concerns getting the liquor into the dorm. In the winter, this is no problem. Bottles fit nicely under bulky winter coats, although six-packs do pose a problem. If you live on the first floor, hand the booze in through the window, making as little commotion as possible.

The best ruse is always the simplest one. Simply throw your jacket over the six-pack, tuck it under your arm, and march proudly past your R.A.'s room. If the door is open, wave and say "hi," but don't dawdle. No sense in pushing your luck. Of course, if you live in Davis, it is customary to pay duty charges — one can out of every twelve goes to the head resident.

When drinking in your room, it is advisable to lock the door. Pulling the shades is purely optional. And be sure you know who is on the other side of the door before you open it. There is no feeling in the world that compares to the feeling in the pit of your stomach when you open the door, drink in hand, and find yourself face to face with your mother, who was in town and dropped in to surprise you. These are the kinds of surprises anyone can live without.

For the truly paranoid drinker, there is a way to drink a mixed drink that may set your mind at ease. For example, to create a fairly detection-proof seven and seven, simply take a few sips from a can of Seven-Up, and pour in a shot of Seagram's. Shake a little, and there you are — your favorite drink in an innocent-looking pop can. If your R.A. has a bad nose, you can even sip this in the TV lounge without detection.

For purely practical reasons, it is advisable, if you are the type that gets rowdy, obscene, obnoxious, loud, or in any other way *indiscreet* when inebriated, never to drink alone or with friends who get drunk in a similar fashion. Encourage a sober friend to monitor your drunken activities. It just doesn't make sense to take all the aforementioned precautions, and then blow it all by forgetting who and where you are. Never forget the cardinal rule: a drunk Otterbein student must be a discreet drunk Otterbein student, or he will not be an Otterbein student at all.

Nora Minor

harbor neophyte

Washing the sand
from my sides, I
watch the seagull
dip into the Atlantic
and steal a smelt
from its splashing sea.
The cold abrasive
water rewashes my
memory to brisk
Maine mornings
days spent playing
in the sea near
Michael's cottage.

Darci Birmingham

LOVE'S CHUCKLE

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

Love grasps you by the heart,
Your spirit by its wings,
Tears your mind apart,
And chuckles as it wrings!

Mary Anne White

Contemplation –
The mind is turmoiled.
Tension –
What will be moved next?
It seems endless,
A century long.
Battering over position.
Pieces are jumbled.
Who will win?
Then, your opponent firmly states –
Checkmate.

D. Lynn Shaw

I want to buy a purse
a large pouch that will
comfort last month's bills,
the eviction notice
dining divinely on spoiled
eggs and melba toast
everyone's left this place
but me and my cat Sophie
and frankly we don't like
it here anymore
do you need a toilet plunger
comb or curtain rod?
I'll trade square and fair
for a large mouthed pouch

Darci Birmingham

RAPTURE

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

Loneliness is like a dripping faucet. It doesn't bother you until you're aware of it; then it eats away at your very soul. For those who live alone, the world can be a very sad place to watch television, or fix a T.V. dinner, or take a walk in the park. The many silent moments when there's no one to talk to, no place to go and all day to get there, no friend to meet and no one to even write to can close around a body and become stifling as a whole world beneath a thick blanket.

But not so with Hiram Stantton. Hiram was an old retired iron worker who had lost his wife seven years ago. He lived by himself in a little frame house two blocks from our place down on Juice Avenue. Hiram, despite living all to his self, was not a lonely person. He claimed he really wasn't by himself. "I got Jesus livin' right here beside me all the time," he would tell us.

Most folks around the neighborhood thought that he was just another religious nut, but none of them could say that he was lonely. He'd go around singing those good old gospel songs that you hear your grandma sing while she's doing her dusting or changing the sheets on the beds. Hiram always wore a big, broad smile that he would offer to anything: a dog, a cloud, a person, even a rat sniffing around one of those tin boxes you see in the corners of buildings. Hiram would tell us, "They's all God's children, boys. We suppose to love them all."

On Sunday nights, the Neighborhood Church held a service in which the people all sang, and prayed and gave thanks to their God for granting them another week to live through. The Neighborhood Church wasn't very big, and it wasn't very prosperous, but it was the only church within six blocks of our place. The humble little building did a pretty darn good job of competing with the twenty-five bars in the same six-block district, too.

It wasn't any kind of certain faith; it was just called the Neighborhood Church. The group's preacher was John Bobb. Now, I never trusted anyone who had two first names for both his names, but John was different. No one had known his real name for a long time because he insisted on us calling him Servant. He said that was what he was, a servant for the Lord. He would work for us when we needed some common labor; he would give us money if he had any to give - not to spare, but to give - or he would come and pray for a friend even if this friend was passed out in Bulshertt's Bar. The Servant was everyone's truest friend, especially Hiram Stantton's.

One day when the city had just experienced a bit of sunshine after it had been swallowed alive in a blanket of smoke for three days, Hiram came running up our steps yelling, "The Lord is coming. He's coming back next Tuesday, that's right, next Tues-

day. He's coming again with all His Angels and all His glory!" He ran up to my ma and shook his finger at me. "You'd better prepare him, Mrs. Sojourn, I saw the Lord last night in a dream and He said He was coming back next Tuesday."

Ma shook her head and folded her arms across her heavy chest. She told him that the Bible says no one knows either the day or the hour of Christ's return; then she quoted some verses to him. But Hiram just ignored her and ran off to the next house. You could hear him all up and down Pump Street yelling and pleading for people to get right with their Maker. I couldn't help but feel a twinge of excitement and anxiety for next Tuesday. It gave a body a queer feeling to have someone running around setting the date of a happening no one thought would come about in his lifetime. I even vowed to stay away from Bulshertt's for a while.

Day after day, Hiram came to everyone's door within a three block radius of his house and reminded us that the Lord was coming next Tuesday. One time the Servant even came along with him. I asked him if he really believed what Hiram was telling everyone. "Skillet," he said, looking me straight in the eye, "yes, yes I do believe him." And that made me tingle all the more to see what would happen next Tuesday, for I had great faith in the wisdom of the Servant.

Hiram had come yelling his message up our steps on Monday, and before Thursday had poked its nose over the city's skyline, a band of reporters had gathered around Hiram's house to throw satirical jokes at the old man whom they dubbed as the Pump Street Prophet. They jeered at him, misquoted him (as only a reporter can), and tried to get him to admit being nothing but a publicity hound. One guy actually got rough with Hiram to the point of tearing his shirt. Well, just at this time, the Servant came walking up the sidewalk and saw what was happening. Rushing up to the reporter, he jerked Hiram free and introduced the reporter to a pile of garbage cans out by the street. You see, I forgot to mention, the Servant would fight for us too.

All the same, Hiram's comments and his smiling face were seen on T.V. that night, and he soon became the only tourist attraction this part of the city ever knew. More reporters came with their cameras and tape machines; preachers came to either ridicule or side in with; old ladies came to feel his pant legs in a desperate attempt to be healed of their crippling diseases; sick folks were carted in and even a special program was taped with Hiram telling everyone that God was coming back next Tuesday.

The city was so busy gawking at this funny little man, that some people didn't even stop to eat, or play, or go to the fights at the coliseum. Hiram's poor old four-room house was even repainted by a paint company to advertise their product while he was shown on television. He was asked to make commercials, sell Bibles, preach revivals, kiss babies, baptize children and even marry people, all because of his divine and highly honored revelation. Let's face it, our neighborhood had become a very important

place. Bulshertt had more business than he knew what to do with, and Palmer's store was making a bundle off "I BELIEVE HYRAM" T-shirts.

But you might be wondering, why all this fuss and commotion about a little man who claimed that Christ would return to this earth next Tuesday? I mean, probably three out of every four people who came to see Hiram didn't give a hoot for God or Hiram or anything either one of them stood for. Why did the news media spend hundreds of dollars on him; why did companies paint his house; fertilize his postage-stamp yard and even install a new roof in hopes their services might get some free advertising? Couldn't he be wrong?

Maybe it was just Hiram's convincing style, or his utterly believable belief in the dream himself. Even under the strongest of pressure he never once faltered. Even when I overheard the companies warn him that if it was a trick . . . he never backed down. Maybe the city just needed a little action to tie them over the hot summer. Some people will spend hundreds of dollars on some nonsensical entertainment, and when it's all over, they'll sit back and say, "That was well worth the money. We'll have to do it again sometime." Whatever the reason, if Hiram Stanton was looking for publicity, he got it.

On that next Sunday night, the Neighborhood Church held their usual services. The meeting was a little bit more electrified this night than at other times because in just one more day, everyone would either go on to heaven, or stay behind to see Hiram laughed at and sued for every cent he had.

All the regulars were there: Mrs. McDooggle, Sandy Cline and her new boyfriend, Ralph, Mr. and Mrs. Groves (they claimed they had no control over their boy, Shorty); a bunch of kids and the Servant. But there was one missing, Hiram Stanton. Hiram had called to tell Mrs. McDooggle that he wasn't feeling too well and that he couldn't make it, so she hadn't picked him up like she always did on Sunday nights.

After an organ solo by Sandy Cline and testimonies by Mr. Groves and one of the kids in the back row, the Servant got up to say his message. As long as I live, I'll never forget that sermon. He started out by reading the scripture in Matthew about the two people working and the one being taken while the other one was left. Then he closed his Bible and laid it aside.

"Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ. As you all know, our Brother Hiram is sick tonight and that is why he could not be with us. But I want you all to know that Hiram told me today that he was sorry."

We all nodded and smiled at each other for we knew no one would hold it against Hiram for not being there. There was no need for him to apologize. Then the Servant spread wide his hands and shook them back and forth, "No, no you don't understand. Hiram said he was sorry about all the trouble he had caused and he hoped that you all would forgive him." There stole

across each face the most shocked expression I have ever seen. We all sat very rigid and very silent, staring directly at the Servant.

"Hiram told me that he had just made up the story about the Lord's return Tuesday because he thought it would make us all more conscientious Christians. He said that he never dreamed anything in the night except about his wife, and he had no idea anyone would take him so serious. He said that he would be back with us Wednesday night if we would let him."

Well, that speech hit us like a steam roller and we didn't know quite what to say. We just sat with our heads bowed feeling very foolish and sorry for Hiram. Finally, Mrs. McDooggle spoke up and said that she would gladly welcome Hiram back. This brought on a chorus of "Ah-mens" and soon we had practically forgotten all about Hiram's little joke. Before we left, the Servant told us that he thought it would be a Christian gesture for us to drop over at Hiram's place Wednesday night and sort of bring the prayer meeting to him.

All through Monday we kept our little visit a secret, and as was expected, Tuesday dawned and dusked with no more than a couple of dog fights in the alley between Palmer's store and the Baskins' place. Old man Baskins' dog, Satan, got into a good one with Palmer's, Moses. Since Moses was a Great Dane used to guard Palmer's store at night, and Satan was just some hound with a loud bark, we found old Baskins huddled over a bleeding mass of torn flesh when we came to see what all the noise was about. I heard that old Baskins threw Satan into the Panther River Tuesday night.

Wednesday morning woke up and we all remembered our surprise for Hiram that evening. Mrs. McDooggle called Hiram up and let the phone ring four times, then hung up. This was their signal to each other to know if everything was all right with Hiram. She waited for his return two rings and sure enough, two rings came shortly after she hung up. Mrs. McDooggle said she wanted to talk to Hiram, but she was afraid she might spoil the surprise for that evening, (she never was too good at keeping secrets) so she didn't bother to call him back.

At 6:00 on Wednesday night, we gathered at the church, had a short prayer, and started out for Hiram's place some two blocks away. We had some snacks prepared, Sandy's boyfriend, Ralph, had brought along his clarinet to play "Rock of Ages" and the Servant said he had a real dandy Bible study prepared. We were all tingling with anticipation to see Hiram's embarrassed face light up when he was assured of everlasting friends.

When we arrived at his house with its newly painted siding and rich, green lawn, the Servant told us to wait outside while he was going to pretend a friendly visit on Hiram. He went up to the door and walked in because Hiram never locked his door and thought it an insult for anyone to knock.

Well, in about five minutes the Servant came out. His face was white, his eyes were red, but there was the most beautiful glow

about his whole person. He stood on the steps, spread his arms wide, and told us that the Lord had indeed come last Tuesday. Yes, at least for Hiram Stanton.

Ben Atwood

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

The dancing flowers bend and sway in the gentle breeze.
Their tall, slender stems reach for the world
With a hat of shimmering gold petals
And leaves bringing forth graceful circling arms.
The flowers intermingle with a sense of gaiety
As the sun forms a spotlight,
To enhance the performers.
Gradually, the wind dies down,
 The performance comes to an end.
 The flowers gracefully bow,
Bringing a close to the show.

D. Lynn Shaw

ELEGY: NOVEMBER

First Prize, Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

His meteor flamed down the falling sky
Where stalled wings hung and sank with
Heads turned 'round, and shook when the
Fireball ploughed to the ground. Embers out
And his spirit climbed up from the
Broken-down heap and flung into me
Who knew him and held him fast.

The sun arced and a sparrow shot
Long beneath the low, one-sided heaven
Singing loudly to her nest the worm.
Under-rhythms pushed through ribs of trees
And my ears rang. My eyes burnt
And the vision doubled. The whole turning
Day ticked wild out of its orbit.

Did Noah lose faith in the torrent
When friends went plunging down with a
Ship-sinking world that was his too?
Was he seasick to his heart that
He went on as others went dying,
Clutching at wives and children screaming to
Kingdom-come for the dream to stop?

All of brown and rusting November gave
Way and collapsed on me. My aching
Back hunched over: Death is only for
The living, and I was half dead.
My senses wove a sheet and slept
As the locked-out wind thumped and
Knocked, demanding to be let back in.

Then the sun broke in to dusk,
Straight through a God-forsaken, self-pity,
To my numb nerves and thrust them
Up into the red light like moths
Out of cocoons: green and still damp.
The bones of trees and grass ignited
And burnt like revelation in my eyes:

The brain's vision is black and white,
And blind where there is no light.
I walked through the rubble of spring
Wheat laid down by the cutting bar,
And up with a start a flock
Of birds whirled in to the twilight,
Singing to their nests. The engine turned

And the evening moved in to night.
After a round moon came sailing up
The high-tide of blue pouring in;
After the stars appeared and drove packs
Of clouds out over the world's edge,
I saw his spirit mount my faith
And ride out to a clearing heaven.

Chris Nicely

CONTINUATION

Cold body
Warm tears
Snuffled sniffles
No cheer.

Beautiful flowers
Guest book to sign
The ever-present water fountain
When tears start to blind.

Friends of the dead
Relatives, too
All came to visit
Everyone blue.

One last look
Never seems long
From now on
Practice being strong.

Elizabeth Baker

— a random thought while listening to a sad song

I rearranged every room in my life
When you came into my world.
Now that you are gone,
I find myself alone
In a strange house I do not like.

Nora Minor

LAST STOP AT HERRON'S VALLEY

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

The gentle rocking of the compartment accompanied by the constant, metered clacking of the junctions passed had begun their lulling effect. The car lights, dimmed to a soft yellow glow in intensity and further hazed by a veil of cigarette smoke, produced no uncomfortable glare to the eyes. The soiled cushions provided a strange, upright comfort that only time could accustom one to. And time, as always, had the upper hand.

Mr. Shelley was again riding in the compartment that he rode in twice a day, five days a week. He had been here for forty minutes, and he would be here for another forty. He half-glanced out of the window, not expecting to see anything, and indeed, not seeing anything. You couldn't see through the darkness. That was one of the added "plusses" to his commuting the long distance by rail — it was dark when he boarded the train for work, and it was dark as he rode the train back home. He actually saw very little sunlight — just on weekends — and the weekend hours always pass quickly.

The rocking and clacking continued. He wanted to fight it, but drowsiness was overcoming him. For Mr. Shelley was waiting for his stop, searching for a town, the exact locale of which he could not remember. If only that damn tiredness would ease up. If only he could remain awake for that stop. If only . . .

* * *

"Welcome to Herron's Valley." The sign stood out in bold letters the first time that he had seen it. He had been awakened by the change in light; the brightness had increased. He opened his eyes to find sunlight streaming in the compartment. Sunlight! Where was he? What time was it?

The train had now slowed to a stop. He could see a lazy town peacefully in the summer sun. And the people — they looked like something from the 1920's. Men in straw hats, girls in pink or white summer dresses, and barefoot boys with fishing poles. A warm breeze blew past the paved street onto the dirt road and into his car. A band could be heard playing in an unseen park. The buildings had to be new replicas of those of years gone by — they had to be! He glanced at his watch — noon! In the distance, a church bell rang the hour.

"Herron's Valley! All out for Herron's Valley!" The conductor was just moving through his car. He waved him down.

"Conductor." The man came over to him. Odd, he had never seen this conductor before.

"Yes, sir?"

"Could you tell me where we have stopped?"

The conductor eyed him with incredulous uncertainty. "Why, this stop is Herron's Valley, sir."

Mr. Shelley sat back, pondering what he had just heard. Herron's Valley? He didn't remember any such place.

"Are you all right, sir?" The conductor's query startled him back into wakefulness.

"Uh, yes, I'm fine. Pardon me for asking, but are you new here?"

The poor conductor looked almost insulted. "I have been with this line for the past thirty-five years. Are you sure that you are quite all right, sir?"

"Yes. Fine, thank you."

The older man shuffled off down the car. "Herron's Valley! All out for Herron's Valley!"

Mr. Shelley turned again to the window. The setting was unchanged, but the players were different as people went about their business. He was held fascinated as the train slowly began to move. He could not get over what was happening — he knew of no such stop.

"Sir!"

He looked out of the window to see a lovely, young, golden-haired girl in a tomboyish look of jeans and a white blouse running toward his compartment. And she had his hat in her hand. It must have fallen out when he leaned out the window.

"Sir. Sir."

* * *

"Sir. Sir."

Mr. Shelley opened his eyes to find the conductor standing beside him in the dim light. Outside, all was dark.

"Pardon me for disturbing you, sir, but your hat fell from your lap into the aisle. I didn't want you to lose it."

"Thank you. Thank you, very much."

"My pleasure, sir." Smiling, the youth turned and nearly strutted down the aisle.

— And that had been the first time. He had had subsequent stops since then, however not on a regular basis. Now, he couldn't get the place out of his mind. Herron's Valley even precluded thoughts of home.

* * *

"This is not a home anymore. It's a stopover," said the red-headed stranger. "I never see you anymore. You get up before I do and go to work. You get back after I have gone to bed. And on weekends, all you want to do is sit on the porch outside! You never want to go anywhere or do anything. And what kind of a father do you think you are being to the children?"

"Now, Honey, you know —"

"No. Wait a minute. Now, you hear me out." She paused and glared defiantly at him. He did not dare continue. "You don't think of us at all anymore. Well, it can't go on. It won't go on! I won't

permit it. Something has got to change. Why you think more of that job than you do of your own family!"

* * *

Mr. Shelley rested and thought as the train carried him home. It was a lie. He did not think more of his job than he did of his family. Sue had just been a little high-strung that evening. He loved his family. It was just that time was against him. There was always so little time.

Well, he would just have to find time somewhere. After all, if a man loses his family, what has he got left? He would just have to try harder. Sue had been wrong. Of course, he loved her. Imagine anyone loving a job more than his family.

* * *

"Pat. Pat, could you step into my office for a moment?" The voice from the intercom had spoken.

"Right away, Mr. Abbott."

The journey to Mr. Abbott's office was always an experience. A hall of eyes always surveyed your progress as you passed between the rows of desks to confront the oaken door. Even knocking on that barrier between two worlds took some courage.

"Come in."

Mr. Shelley opened the door. The scene confronting his eyes was the same as it had always been. Odd, how some places never seem to change. Mr. Abbott's office, for instance — it would always be the same.

"Ah, Pat, come in and sit down. Take a load off your feet." He absentmindedly motioned Mr. Shelley to the leather chair facing his desk. Again the king in his castle, Mr. Abbott took his place behind the desk.

"Pat, I'll come right to the point. I think it's about time that we had a little talk before this thing goes too far." He pulled out a matrix board from behind his desk. "Pat, this is one of the worst advertising campaign boards that I have seen in a long whioe. The slogan doesn't work, the gimmick isn't there — this is a sure disaster."

Mr. Shelley sat impassively in his chair. There was nothing to be said or done.

"Pat, this is your baby; and let me tell you, the quality is non-existent. In fact, the whole calibre of your work has been decreasing over the past motnh. I could cite several examples. Pat, is there anything that you would like to tell me about? You know that you can be frank with me."

How does one answer such a person? How can you define a problem that you are not even sure exists? "I really have nothing to say, Mr. Abbott."

The king paused. "I see. Well, I can't allow this sort of thing to continue. It's bad for business, and business keeps us going.

I'm giving this board back to you, Pat, and I expect to see a new one on my desk in the morning. And let's give it some thought, Pat. I can't afford to populate my staff with people who go off - "

* * *

Daydreaming. That is what he had said. No. Mr. Shelley was sure that he was not daydreaming. He was aware of what was going on around him. And Herron's Valley - the train had stopped there several times in the past few weeks. Perhaps it was not a regularly scheduled stop, but it was obviously there.

* * *

"Herron's Valley, sir? I don't recall the name. Let me check."

The man moved within his cage to his files. The station noises were so numerous that no one sound could be determined over another. Mr. Shelley had stood at the window only a few minutes before the man came back shaking his head.

"No, sir. There is no Herron's Valley stop on the line. And my route map doesn't list any such place anywhere along the line. Are you sure that you have the name right?"

* * *

No. This could be no dream. Mr. Shelley had stopped at Herron's Valley not once, but several times. He had read the sign - and it was always the same. Always the same . . . always the same . . . perhaps -

* * *

"You may put your shirt back on, Mr. Shelley." The doctor moved from the examining table across the room to his chair by a pigeon-hole desk. Mr. Shelley dressed and joined him at the desk in a vacant chair.

"Okay, Mr. Shelley, as far as I can tell, you are sound as a rock. Perhaps a bit tense, but nothing that, say, a good week's vacation couldn't cure. That's all that I could recommend. You're in good health for forty-eight, and with the proper care you'll live to be a hundred. I can find nothing wrong with you - physically."

* * *

"All right, Mr. Shelley, I want you to sit back and relax."

"Shouldn't I lie down?"

"If you are more comfortable that way, but it is not necessary."

A modern, palatial office — boy, these guys must be rich — housed the offices of this new doctor. No medical instruments cluttered this room. This was more of a private den, minus only the bearskin rug and fireplace, but with the added plus of degrees on the wall. The youthful, self-assured doctor fitted in well with these surroundings.

“Now, as I understand it, you are trying to prove to yourself that this ‘Herron’s Valley’ exists.”

Mr. Shelley squirmed uneasily in his chair. “That is correct.”

“Loosen up, Mr. Shelley. I’m not your inquisitor, I’m your friend. Now, shall we try a strictly logical approach?”

“Fine.”

“Okay, let us do so from the facts, Mr. Shelley. First of all, the town always appears to you in daylight. Your hour-and-twenty minute ride home occurs in the evening, after dark. Secondly, the townspeople and their town are definite anachronisms. Thirdly, by the admission of the railway, there is no such stop or even such a town along the route. Mr. Shelley, has anyone else ever seen this town besides yourself?”

“No.”

“You see. The town only exists in your mind. Your problem is that you are caught up in a routine. This is causing too much constant pressure. Your nerves cannot take that for long. There is no major problem with you., Mr. Shelley. You are simply being overworked to the point of exhaustion. I feel that the best thing that you could do right now is to take Dr. Stevens’ advice and get away for a week. You’ll be surprised at the change.”

Mr. Shelley thought about this for a moment. There seemed to be no other way. “But, what about the town?”

The doctor drew in a deep breath. “Have you ever tried getting off at Herron’s Valley?”

“No.”

“Try it. You won’t be able to. When you try to move the town from the mental into the physical, it will disappear. It will have to.”

* * *

And now, Mr. Shelley waited. He had resolved to find the truth within his own mind. He would have to find Herron’s Valley again and get off at the stop. He would have to.

The rocking and clacking had continued for over an hour. The constant rhythm was still struggling with his consciousness. He had to fight it, but still the tattoo continued.

Suddenly, he snapped into wakefulness — the kind of wakefulness that only a broken rhythm can cause. The train was decreasing its speed! He must have slumbered again, for the train must be coming into the station.

But, it was getting light out! What time was it anyhow? Noon.

“Welcome to Herron’s Valley.”

The sign! He was here! The people were moving along the

street the same as before. And the distant church bell was striking the hour.

"Herron's Valley! All out for Herron's Valley!"

Move! Move! He had to move!

"Herron's Valley! All out for Herron's Valley!"

He stood up and began walking. In the aisle, he bumped into the old conductor just entering the car. Mr. Shelley had to ask.

"Herron's Valley?"

"Yes, sir. But, you'd better get a move on. We're going to be pulling out soon." And the old conductor shuffled on down the aisle, still calling.

"Herron's Valley! All out for Herron's Valley!"

And the town was still there. He could still see it through the window. Herron's Valley stretching lazily and peacefully before his eyes. The doctor was wrong. Everybody was wrong. It was there!

Mr. Shelley made his way to the coupling connecting the compartments and the boarding stairs. He moved through the doorway. It was still there!

And with a deep breath, Mr. Shelley stepped into Herron's Valley.

* * *

The train had stopped several hundred yards from the scene. Apparently a passenger had seen the body fall from the moving train and pulled the emergency cord. But there was nothing that anyone on this train could do now. Now, it would be up to the railway inspectors.

* * *

Mr. Shelley had been walking for a few minutes down the dusty road. People greeted him with smiling faces and small gestures of friendship. And the sun — oh, that beautiful warm sun — streamed down on his face. The tinny tones of the band in the park emerged from the other side of the buildings.

He decided to head there.

He had walked but a short distance toward his goal when he heard a familiar voice calling. "Sir! Sir!"

He turned to find the girl that he had seen running toward the car earlier running over to him. She hadn't changed.

"Sir. Your hat. I've still got it. If you want it now, it's back at my house."

"That'll be fine. Do you live far from here?"

"Only a short walk through the park."

"Through the park? Okay, let's go."

They walked for a while, chatting mere pleasantries. That was the wonderful thing about this place — everyone was so pleasant. He could live here forever.

The girl looked at him sheepishly. "Are you going to be in

Herron's Valley long?"

"Yes. I imagine that I'll be here for quite some time," replied Mr. Shelley.

The girl smiled at him. "Good."

James Dooley

A COMING OF AGE

I

These voices sparking in off the wired air
Rattle my stirrups as the telegraph
Ghosting the express rider;
Register on my metered ears
That translate the electric code.
Rebounded from certain dreamers' heaven:
Technical starlight and a godhead
Orbiting horizon's altar,
I hear the giant choirs Babel chanting
Rumble up through the grounded cable.
But I cannot see them
To tell them I am frightened by their sound,
But cannot switch them off,
Nor mute my silence gilded instruments.

II

These glaciers dismounting from the ramrod pole
Groove the anvil-pounded clay
With a crystal tooth;
Ride the diaphragm to sound
Against the turntable spin.
Echoed from the ice shoveled mountains:
Scraping wind-drift skies
An age before Chicago,
I hear the cold descend on the equator
To drum-thudding sirens.
Yet I cannot drive them
Back through that Whaleswum sea,
Yet cannot hold their line,
Nor deafen my eyes to their driven cliffs.

III

These star-slung planets rocketing a course
Tear the hammered golden cord
Out of its socket;
Crack the hanging crystal ball
Rusting in the brain.
Written in the fortune telling heavens:
Ignited fuses burning down
To a trumpet blast,
I hear Saturn in the Ninth House gearing
To square the new Age.
And nothing I can do
Will break this overloading circuit.
And nothing I can do,
As the nerves cataract and the light fails.

Chris Nicely

THE HEAD

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

An odd group, odd merely because of the differences in ages, entered into a room filled with seemingly happy people, people drinking, smoking, touching, and playing childish games which momentarily shake free the fearful boredom. When the group entered, no one paid attention to the slightly corpulent, middle-aged man with a receding hairline, whose plain clothes hung upon him in a slovenly but clean manner. Nor did the buzzing mass care to see the fellow by his side, a young man not quite thirty, rather broad across the chest, wearing a shirt which plainly showed his pride in his massive arms and shoulders. His gait put one in mind of a duck crossing a road. The last member of this small band was under twenty. Nothing outstanding set him apart. He was dressed in Bermuda shorts, a T-shirt, and red tennis shoes.

The threesome went directly to a booth and waited expectantly to be served. As the fellows lounged, the youngest member eyed the surroundings with sharp, scrutinizing precision, searching each face, each group, every detail. He felt the slick shiny imitation-leather on which he sat. In the back of the room he watched three men and a boy playing a mechanical bowling game. After each toss the shabby, rough looking youngster would stride up to his partner, slap him vigorously on the palms and utter praise or encouragement. When this happened, the young man in red shoes would gaze more intently at the proceedings.

All the while the noise became more raucous. Each person in the room seemed to be squealing, growling, or making incomprehensible sounds, sounds which displayed all the human animalism. In this long, tragic-room, despondent, frightened people sat, gushing forth trivial patterns of sound, enjoying themselves to the utmost. And every person was occupied with another — except a man at the bar. From behind he appeared to sit crookedly, almost dangerously on the bar stool, his thin, sparsely hair-covered arms supporting the once virile but now emaciated body. The man's head was perched on a stiff, coarse neck from which protruded with frightening prominence huge tendons. The skull was protected by a matted and moist head of hair, not healthy looking.

The young man in tennis shoes had been watching, for a long time, this living skeleton. Now it was the skeleton's turn to gawk. The man's head turned slowly, almost ominously around and produced two steel gray irises rimmed with white and red. The eyes blinked and dropped to stare at the bright shoes. Every nerve in the sallow, wretched face seemed to twitch at once as if attempting to clear the disease-stricken countenance of forboding thoughts. Abruptly the face relaxed, became handsome, even glimpsed forth a nostalgic hope, and then settled back into

the melancholy, waxen expression. The head assumed its original position.

Brad B. Manier

SUFFERING

Honorable Mention, Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

Why do you afflict me?
Why do you hide from me?
It is enough for me to bear with the cross of living.
There are children in the oceans who run wildly and freely.
There are sunsets full of inspiring peace and immeasurable beauty.
There are limitless skies where the fowls abide.
The sounds of nature continue existing.
The noises from the artifacts of civilization are perceptible
along with the barkings of a dog in pain.

Thus I realize I am alive.
Yes, but I am suffering although I would like to be ever joyous.
Yet I cannot deny the sorrow of my soul.
The mask of the puppet cannot be maintained anymore.
The mask that hides the sorrow of the heart rebels against itself
and obliges me to acknowledge the feelings of the sacred chambers.
There is no one to relieve me but you, oh Lord.
Why do you afflict me if you are the only one who can relieve me?

I ponder and even cry.
The mask has been torn down.
The veil of the comedy has faded away.
The cosmetics of the puppet's face have melted in tears,
These tears of the soul that have washed away my forgetfulness.
Thus the Lord lives and reigns over me as long as I put the mask
away.

The puppet has to be sincere and honest with himself said the master,
and only so he will be a happy man.
Winter and Spring
suffering and joy
tears and smiles
Why do I have to cry and weep in my heart in order to know
you, oh Lord?
Why do I have to negate myself thoroughly and even hate my
life in this body in order to feel your redeeming presence?
Why do you humiliate me, Divine Teacher?
Perhaps you want me to know that you are the only absolute;
hence I shall not have other God than you.
I know what you are trying to teach me yet by my weakness
I do that which is unpleasant to you;
And then I think that I can make it by myself with a heart
full of pride.

But I always come back at night after the struggle and the
sorrow of my soul and bow to you.
The puppet has to be true to himself says the master.

The puppet has to learn to love no other God than the Lord;
and as long as the puppet maintains his proud mask
suffering will afflict him.

Why do you afflict me?
Why do you hide from me?
It is enough for me to bear with the cross of life.
Have mercy, oh Lord Jesus!

Felipe Martinez

WINTER

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

The winter winds aren't very kind,
For they send shivers up and down my spine.
They tickle my nose until it's red,
And leave a mist after everything I've said.

I have to bundle up very warm
To go out into the winter storm.
I bundle up to my nose,
In lots and lots and lots of clothes.
A scarf is wrapped around my head;
Its colors are purple, green and red.

I come in with my clothes sopping wet,
And what follows I regret.
The clothes that now weigh a ton,
Must come off one by one.

Ethel Milne

THE LAST DROP

Ernie stumbled over an old magazine which lay on the sidewalk and cursed it for being in his way. He picked it up, soaking wet and heavy from the rain of the day before. He leaped through it but what were once bright images of smiling teeth, sparkling eyes, and shiny cars were now just blurred splashes of color. He tried to make out some of the printing but that too was blurred from the wetness . . . or was it his eyes?

"What the hell," he said as he threw it down, angry at himself for having bothered with it. All he cared about was getting home and drinking his purchase for the day. Home. He liked to think of it as home. He'd slept there for over a month now and had kept dry and safe, that's all he asked of a home, to be kept from the rain and the cops.

He walked on into the alley, a fortress lined in dirty red brick, where he could drink in solitude. At the end of this alley was his home, an indentation in the brick wall of what used to be a bakery. At one time it had been a hole high enough for a man to bend at the waist to enter and wide enough for a wooden cart to get through. The baker's supplies had been delivered through it but now all it was good for was letting it cold air. So it had been bricked up leaving an indentation deep enough to sit under and be protected from the rain. Ernie had stolen two blankets from the Army-Navy surplus store down the street. One he had laid down on the cement so he had something on which to lie, the other he taped up over the entrance with some masking tape he had found on an unfinished roll in the trash can. This red brick cave was where he slept and drank: his only two activities besides eating every once in a while when he was lucky.

Ernie smiled as he opened the brown paper bag and twisted off the shiny silver cap. As he lifted the precious golden liquid to his lips he congratulated himself on not spending the money Joe had given him on food. He hadn't felt like eating anyway. Lately the sight of food repulsed him to the point of nausea. Ernie didn't like Joe, who owned the street's hot dog stand, but he had to admit he had a good heart . . . or maybe just a guilty conscience. He had once tried to have an intelligent conversation with him on the death of jazz in America but Joe had laughed at him.

"What the hell do you know about music, old man?"

Ernie was hurt, not only by the accusation that he knew nothing about the one thing around which his life used to center, but also the label, "old man." After all, he was only fifty-five. Did he actually look older? He hadn't looked in a mirror in tears; he hadn't had a mirror to look into. He remembered on that day, after talking to Joe, he had stopped in Woolworths. Consciously or unconsciously he went directly to the small self-photo booth in the back of the store. Two teenagers came out from behind the ragged curtain, laughing at their posed images on the small strip of black and white prints. He waited and

watched them disappear behind pots and pans in the housewares department.

Slowly, pulling back the curtain, he stepped in, thinking amusedly how much this dark box looked like home. There was a difference though and when he turned sideways he saw it — he came full front to a mirror and in the mirror was an old man. His hair was grey, dirty grey, as were his whiskers; in fact his whole face was a dirty grey, all but the eyes. The eyes were a bright red, half-hidden by heavy eyelids. Ernie had started to shake. He sat down on the bench behind him. Tears, he couldn't stop them. He hated tears but he hated the old man in the mirror more. What right did that man have to be crying too, mocking him, making him look pitiful? He stepped out of the booth. The fluorescent lights glared at him through blurs of water. He had gone home that night cursing himself for already drinking his daily purchase. It had been dark and too late to do any begging. The night was the playground for the delinquents to play their tricks on bums, winos, and old men.

Ernie shook his head to get the image in the photo booth out of his mind. That was not he, his memories were what he was. He took another long drink of the liquid which was his salvation, letting it fill up in his mouth and then slowly slide down the back of his throat. This bottle he was going to make last all night. His daily purchase was usually more than one bottle but his scrounging, begging, and stealing had not gone well today. Oh well, he thought, one bottle was better than none.

"Good old Joe," he said aloud, "don't like him but he's a good son-of-a-bitch."

He was feeling the effects of the whiskey for although he had started out slow he was now chugging it, gasping, hardly taking time to breathe....Music....Music....it was a jazz beat, it was always a jazz beat....Benny Goodman — "Don't Be That Way." Ernie hummed it, directing himself with his index finger jiggling in the air. A stupid smile plastered his face — portrait of a drunk. He began to play an imaginary trumpet.

Ernie had been good on the trumpet, damn good. Bernard Williams had played with the best of them — Ruby Braff, Urbie Green, once with Benny himself. He was best at playing his favorite — "After You've Gone." He played it at every party and there were plenty of parties. After every gig someone threw a party with much food and drink, especially drink. After a while Bernard didn't need to go to a party; he would have them by himself — him, his drink and his trumpet. Soon, however, his parties dwindled down to just him and his drink. His trumpet no longer worked for him; he somehow couldn't get enough air through. His gigs also dwindled and it seemed that all he was doing was partying. He still heard the music in his head and sometimes he fancied that it wasn't in his head, that he was really playing again. But Bernard Williams was dead and Ernie had replaced him silently playing his imaginary trumpet.

The music suddenly stopped and all was deathly quiet save

for the traffic noises from the street. Ernie started to shake and grabbed the bottle sitting next to him. One long swig and that wonderful numb feeling took over. The shaking stopped and Ernie felt at peace again . . . but this feeling didn't last long. Soon Ernie was guzzling down his salvation, the golden liquid diminishing quickly. He stopped and looked at the bottle holding it out in the light. The whiskey didn't even come up to the bottom of the label. He hadn't made it last....he hadn't made it last. Anger rose up inside him; anger at his greedy consumption, at his need for more and especially at the sick yellow poison lying not more than a third of an inch high in the bottle. With all his strength he threw the bottle across the alley and crashed it against the brick. The glass crinkled into shiny chips on the pavement while the liquid dripped down the crevices, forming a grotesque picture on the wall. The shaking . . . uncontrollable shaking. Ernie crawled across to the other side of the alley and reached out to the wall, his fingers sliding upward feeling for the moisture. Slowly his hands started scraping downward; pain had attacked him and Ernie crumbled down into unconsciousness....

The sun shone through and caught a large chip of glass creating a reflected image of Ernie's crushed silhouette while the wetness on the wall evaporated.

Sandy Gold

MIRROR IMAGE

Fourth Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

Your glass idol of me is broken:
No longer a mirror image
reflecting your dreams,
I am
body, mind, spirit –
alive!
Use caution:
this shattered image is likely to cut.

Mary Anne White

BLIND FAITH

Second Prize, Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

"Don't drink! Oh, no, don't ever drink,"
Mother would wag in her inevitable way; "Think
About your reputation. Your second cousin's uncle's father
Was an alcoholic and quite a bother.
They'd find him stumbling down dark church aisles
Mumbling unkind things, somethin' about blind leaps and denials,
And you know they'd always find him on Saturday afternoons;
He must have been a Jew; at least he could have had the courtesy
To refrain from indulging until after tea.
He was a strange, stupid man,
Asked us if Moses or whoever it was really ran
Across that sea. Why of course he did.
Every Christian who reads their Bible knows the bids
And commands of the Almighty, and every single miracle
That was ever wrought, or every lyrical
Melody sung in church by memory. He of course never thought
To go to church on Sunday in a Christian way, or sought
The grace of God. That's why it's so easy to tell
Who drinks; they always go to Hell."
Bothered, I asked, "But was his drinking ever proved?"
Mother chiding, replied, "My dear, it was assumed."

Reagan Whitmyer

GOOD-BY TO YOU

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

Though windshaped gulls glide down the seeturned air
On endless circles grooved in metaphor,
And ride long shadows slowly in to shore,
Their gliding is not love. The warping trawler
Finds them out, and they go in a hungered stir
That launches white wings up from the white wave's core,
And they go calling.

Good-by to you.

Though seashaped waters ride the windturned swells
On endless repetitions in to land,
And leave a seashell harvest on the sand,
Their riding is not love. Rusting bouy tells
Sound an alarm, and the lighthouse beacon tells
The ancient fear of the sundered sailor manned
Against the storming waves.

Good-by to you.

Though moonshaped currents slide in a fishturned space
On endless voyages 'round the listing coast,
And draw the long ships home from a distant post,
Their sliding is not love. Under a raging face
Knocks the ghosting hulks of a sunken place
And the voiceless shape of a sailor's ghost,
Or so they say.

Good-by to you.

Though fishshaped feelings hide in a moonturned heart
On endless hopes that they will be found out,
And move a secret thought in the hot vein's route,
Their hiding is not love. From the clouded start
When the body first shook from every part,
Love has been a dream I now must sleep without,
And so this is;

Good-by to you.

Chris Nicely

