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Spring 1984

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Quig &  
Quill  
Spring '84

Giovanni

## LITERARY AWARDS

### *Quiz & Quill Poetry Contest*

First Place .....	John Tetzloff "In the Fields"
Second Place .....	Beth Deiley "Schoolhouse at Night"
Third Place .....	Giovanni Moscardino "Tappin' The Tight Skid Rap"
Honorable Mention .....	Cathy Griffis "Playing With Fire"

### *Quiz & Quill Critical Essay Contest*

First Place .....	John Tetzloff "Light In August as Faulkner's 'New Testament'"
Second Place .....	David Kimmel "Wit and the Eighteenth Century"
Third Place .....	Julie Lynch "The Meaning Behind 'A Hunger Artist'"
Honorable Mention .....	David Kimmel "Mrs. Whipple is a Bitch: A Logical Look at 'He'"

### *Quiz & Quill Personal Essay Contest*

First Place .....	John Tetzloff "How to Succeed in School"
Second Place .....	Charlie Daruda "The Theatre People of Otterbein College"
Third Place .....	Brian Driver "The Drunken Fool"
Honorable Mention .....	John Tetzloff "The Fisherman"

### *Quiz & Quill Short Story Contest*

First Place .....	Brian Driver "The Elevator"
Second Place .....	John Tetzloff "Camp Agape"
Third Place .....	Fambai Katsidzira "Surrounded ... But Not Defeated ..."

### *Roy Burkhart Prize in Religious Poetry*

First Place .....	John Tetzloff "Encounter"
Second Place .....	John Tetzloff "Long Island Sound"
Third Place .....	Greg Grant "Suite for a Winter Night in Westerville"

### *Walter Barnes Short Story Award*

First Place .....	John Tetzloff "Iwo Jima"
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# QUIZ and QUILL

## Dedication

We of the *Quiz and Quill* staff dedicate this issue to the memory of Dr. John Coulter, who served as faculty sponsor of our magazine from 1965 to 1977. He was also elected an honorary faculty member of the Quiz and Quill club. He always remained an enthusiastic supporter of the *Quiz and Quill* magazine.

Otterbein students, teachers, and administrators who knew him or worked with him were always impressed by his love for literature. This devotion to literature is apparent in the following sentences, which he wrote in February 1983:

The interdependence of life in all forms is a wondrous thing. That's what makes poetry such a remarkable medium . . . The summer we wandered in Britain was one of our intense experiences . . . I wept in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, for all the years in English literature, for the outer reality so long just inner.

## Staff

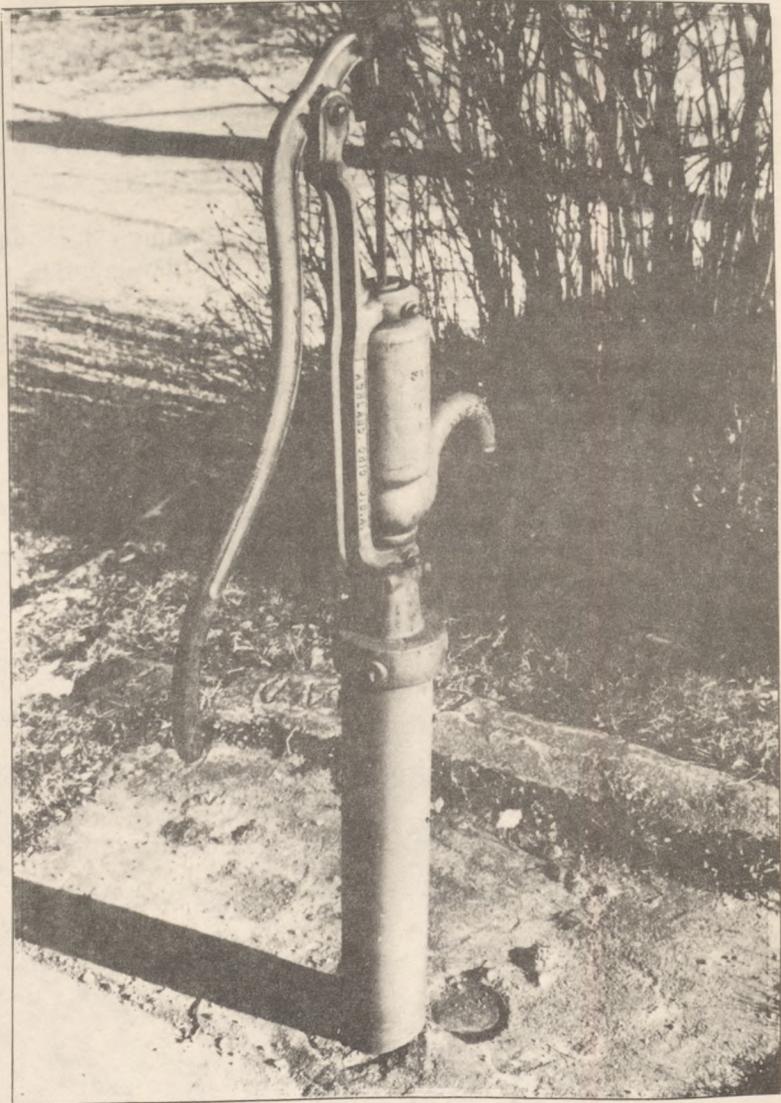
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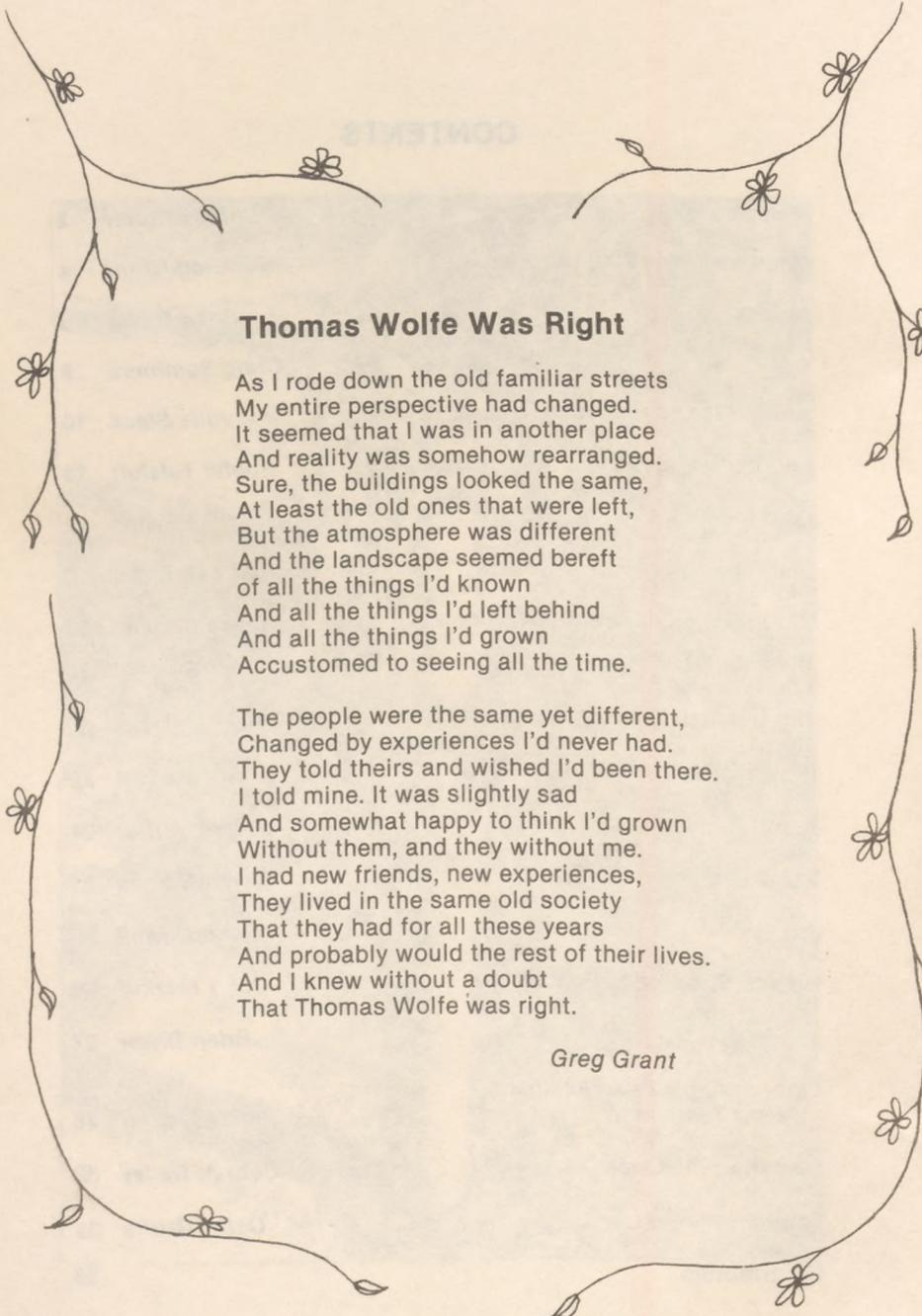
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## Thomas Wolfe Was Right

As I rode down the old familiar streets  
My entire perspective had changed.  
It seemed that I was in another place  
And reality was somehow rearranged.  
Sure, the buildings looked the same,  
At least the old ones that were left,  
But the atmosphere was different  
And the landscape seemed bereft  
of all the things I'd known  
And all the things I'd left behind  
And all the things I'd grown  
Accustomed to seeing all the time.

The people were the same yet different,  
Changed by experiences I'd never had.  
They told theirs and wished I'd been there.  
I told mine. It was slightly sad  
And somewhat happy to think I'd grown  
Without them, and they without me.  
I had new friends, new experiences,  
They lived in the same old society  
That they had for all these years  
And probably would the rest of their lives.  
And I knew without a doubt  
That Thomas Wolfe was right.

*Greg Grant*

# Moses

## Scene III

(Pharaoh's throne room. He is sitting with one leg draped over the arm of his throne as he hears the morning reports. He is resting his chin in his hand. Pharaoh smokes constantly throughout the scene. Aaron and Moses have come to ask Pharaoh to let the Israelites go from bondage.)

**ADVISOR:** . . . Finalized trading was reported with moderate bookings noted at minimum floor prices to move in the coming year. Offerings were short on normal running time. Canner pack product is generally clearing. Trade sentiment generally steady to occasionally uneasy. Supplies of large sizes were moderately burdensome.

**PHARAOH:** (Yawns.) Good . . . How many monuments are being constructed in my honor?

**ADVISOR:** Let me see . . . here it is. Only two, sire.

**PHARAOH:** Only two. Great. And with National Pharaoh Day coming up, too. (Rolls his eyes.) What's the problem now?

**ADVISOR:** It's the Israelites, sire. They want fewer hours and more benefits. Threatening to go on strike.

**PHARAOH:** Jews. Hmmph. My father never had these problems. I can remember seeing three or four monuments dedicated to my father in one week.

**ADVISOR:** What shall we do, sire?

**PHARAOH:** Double their hours and take away their corned beef rations.

**ADVISOR:** Very good, sire. (Makes a note.) Will that be all?

**PHARAOH:** Mmmm. (Notices the advisor's sandals.) Where did you get those?

**ADVISOR:** Oh, they're new. If you like them, sire, I can have them made for you. They're Jewish, you know.

**PHARAOH:** Jewish! What's wrong with Egyptian sandals?

**ADVISOR:** Oh, sire, these sandals are the latest fashion. Everyone in court is wearing them.

**PHARAOH:** Jews. Hmmph. I'm getting sick of hearing about the Jews. (Sulks.) I'm hungry. What's for lunch?

**ADVISOR:** Reuben sandwiches from the deli—

**PHARAOH:** Jewish sandwiches now. Everywhere I turn it's Jews this, Jews that. May the water of the Nile turn to blood before I see or hear of another Jew. Go get me some Egyptian food—how about a ham sandwich? That's something you'd never see a Jew eat. (Exit advisor.) Jews. Hmmph. (Enter Court Attendant.)

**COURT ATTENDANT:** An audience, sire.

**PHARAOH:** Send them in.

**COURT ATTENDANT:** (He leaves, then immediately returns with Moses and Aaron.) Sire: Moses and Aaron, representatives of . . .

**AARON:** Of a nation in bondage.

**COURT ATTENDANT:** (Looks back irritably at Aaron.) Of a nation in bondage. Namely, the Jews. They wish an audience with your lordship. (The attendant exits. Moses and Aaron wait. Pharaoh waits impatiently.)

**PHARAOH:** Jews. Hmmp. (To Moses and Aaron.) Well? (He gestures toward himself.) Come here and bow down before me. (Moses and Aaron move forward. Moses begins to bow, but Aaron stops him.)

**AARON:** (To Moses.) Get up, fool! (To Pharaoh. He clears his throat.) We bow down to no man, but only to the one true God. To the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, and the God of Israel alone do we bow. We kneel only before the divine heavenly soul, in whose image Adam was first made. The holiest of holies, the omnipotent creator, the greatest of the great, the . . .

**PHARAOH:** (To Moses.) Who?

**MOSES:** (Nodding.) God.

**AARON:** That's Yahweh!

**MOSES:** He spoke to me, in a bush. (Pharaoh pretends to be highly impressed.)

**AARON:** (To Moses.) Shh. I thought we agreed.

**PHARAOH:** (Drumming his fingers and rolling his eyes.) Jews. Hmmp. What is your purpose here?

**AARON:** Oh, yes. (Clears his throat.) We are representatives of a nation in bondage, a people in slavery, the chosen ones imprisoned. Too long has Yahweh heard the lamentations of his people in captivity, the wailings of a lost nation, the crying out in the wilderness, the moanings, the weepings, the gnashing of teeth, the . . .

**PHARAOH:** Sigh. (To Moses.) What do you want?

**MOSES:** (Importantly.) Let my people go!

**PHARAOH:** Ah. (Aside.) For this I'm missing lunch? (To Moses.) Well, I'll tell you, Moses. It seems we have a need for your people. We need that strong labor force. If I let the Jews leave, then our economy will deflate and possibly even collapse. You can understand that, can't you?

**MOSES:** Well, yes, but . . .

**PHARAOH:** Now, if it was up to me, I'd be more than eager to comply—boy, would I be eager—but I have my people to think of.

**MOSES:** I understand that, your excellency . . .

**AARON:** Moses . . .

**MOSES:** But God told me . . .

**AARON:** That's Yahweh!

**MOSES:** He told me to lead the Israelites out of captivity.

**PHARAOH:** I'm sorry, Mo, but I just can't do that. I've got all those monuments to build.

**AARON:** Now see here, Pharaoh. The Great Almighty One, God of our fathers and of our forefathers, has commanded us to tell you to free captive Israel. The spirit of the Lord is in Moses. He has the power to crush your monuments with one mighty stroke. He has the power to

conjure up many deadly and horrible evils against your people if you do not repent. Why, he even has the power to turn that staff into a snake.

**PHARAOH:** You're beginning to make me tired. Really, now, a snake from that staff?

**AARON:** Indeed. From that very staff.

**PHARAOH:** A snake?

**AARON:** The most poisonous.

**PHARAOH:** (Pauses.) Nyanh. Can't be done.

**AARON:** We shall soon make a believer out of you, O Skeptical One. (To Moses.) Brother, throw down the staff.

**MOSES:** Become a snake! (Moses throws down the staff, which does indeed become a snake. All the immediate company instinctively jump back. Pharaoh quickly puts his feet up on his throne and hugs his knees. He shows brief fright, but soon controls himself.)

**PHARAOH:** Whoa. Say, Moses, heh, heh, . . . that's a pretty good trick. What else can you do? (He picks up a cup.) Can you turn this into a penguin? (Points to a table.) How about an elephant? (Laughs nervously. Yells off stage.) Can somebody do something about this reptile?

**AARON:** Do you now repent your sinful ways, Pharaoh? (Attendants come in, kill the snake and remove it.)

**MOSES:** (Points after the attendants.) That was my staff . . . the one God gave me . . .

**PHARAOH:** (Watches removal of snake.) Are you kidding? That was nothing—that wasn't even a BIG snake.

**MOSES:** Nothing? That was a special snake from God. (To Aaron.) Tell him about the plagues now.

**AARON:** No, no. Not yet.

**PHARAOH:** Plagues? What plagues?

**AARON:** (Looks sternly at Moses.) Might as well. (Clears his throat.) Unless you free the repressed peoples of Israel, the Lord our God shall bring upon you such plagues that will cause much weeping and gnashing of teeth among the Egyptian people.

**PHARAOH:** What do you mean—a little pestilence, a couple of diseases? What?

**AARON:** I mean flies of such magnitude as one has never seen in this land. Moses, bring on the flies!

**MOSES:** Yahweh, so that Pharaoh's heart may not be hardened, we ask you for flies.

(The sound of many flies buzzing fills the room. Five or six court attendants run about with large fly swatters in an effort to control the flies. Pharaoh slaps at flies that have landed on his body. Moses and Aaron are not affected. Pharaoh thinks, calls in an advisor and whispers to him. The advisor leaves, then returns with an extra-large no-pest strip.)

**PHARAOH:** (Smiling) What harm are a few flies? Is this the best you can do?

**AARON:** (Glaring at Pharaoh.) That is only the beginning of the terrible troubles you will have! Moses, the frogs!

**MOSES:** Yahweh, Lord of all that roams the earth, we ask you for frogs.

(10-15 large frogs hop about on stage. More attendants come out and chase the frogs.)

**PHARAOH:** Frogs, huh. At least that'll take care of all these flies. (A frog jumps in Pharaoh's lap. He growls at it. The frog hops out of Pharaoh's lap.) Stupid frog.

**AARON:** Will you now repent, Oh Pharaoh?

**PHARAOH:** To tell you the truth, fellas, these frogs aren't so bad. (A frog lands on Pharaoh's head. Smiling, he reaches up and pats it.) Nice froggy. I'm beginning to like them. (He stops patting, and slowly the smile leaves his face. He grabs the frog and throws him off stage.) Yuuch! (He touches his head, brings his hand down and looks at it in disgust.) Kill all the frogs! (An attendant comes in with a wet cloth and begins to wipe Pharaoh's head.)

**AARON:** (Aside to Moses.) I don't think this is working so well.

**MOSES:** We can't stop now. Try the locusts.

**PHARAOH:** Oh, Pharaoh. You have not seen the worst of Yahweh's fury. Because you will not repent, Yahweh will send down on you terrible locusts.

**MOSES:** Yahweh?

(The sound of locusts begins low, then increases. One of the attendants, who is standing by a window, looks out and screams. The window breaks, and the locusts—small pieces of brown cardboard blown in with a large wind machine—blow in. More attendants appear, wearing bee-keeping masks and combating the locusts with bats and insect repellent spray guns. Pharaoh reaches behind the throne, puts on his mask, and lights another cigarette.)

**PHARAOH:** Will someone kindly repair that window?

**AARON:** Pharaoh, is your heart still hardened?

**PHARAOH:** I'm sorry guys, but I just haven't seen anything that my people haven't been able to handle. Are you sure that's the best you can do?

**AARON:** Well, there's not really . . .

**MOSES:** No, that's not the best we can do! The Lord can do anything! If you will not let the Israelites go, all Egypt will become pitch dark.

**PHARAOH:** Tell me another one.

(The throneroom becomes instantly dark. All is quiet. Suddenly, we see Pharaoh light a cigarette.)

**PHARAOH:** Moses.

**MOSES:** (He goes toward Pharaoh, stumbling over something in the dark.) Yes, Pharaoh.

**PHARAOH:** Let's talk, Moses. (Pause.) What are your terms?

**AARON:** (Clears his throat.) We demand absolute freedom for our people, that we may worship our Lord as we see fit.

**PHARAOH:** What about my monuments?

**AARON:** No one will see them in the dark.

**PHARAOH:** (Sighs.) True. All right. I let your people go.

(Moses and Aaron rejoice. The lights come back on.)

**PHARAOH:** The lights are back on.

**AARON:** Yes they are, aren't they? (They continue rejoicing.)

**PHARAOH:** Well, then, I shall not let your people go.

**MOSES:** What?

**PHARAOH:** I said, I shall not let your people go.

**MOSES:** But you just said . . .

**PHARAOH:** I said nothing.

**MOSES:** What? I don't believe it. You gave your word.

**PHARAOH:** Since when does my word mean anything?

**MOSES:** I just don't believe it. A man just does not go back on his word . . . What a scoundrel! (Pharaoh smiles smugly.) What a low-life! Why, I'm so mad I could swear.

**AARON:** Easy, brother . . .

**MOSES:** May the fleas of a thousand camels infest your armpits.

**PHARAOH:** I'm getting tired of you two. You can go now.

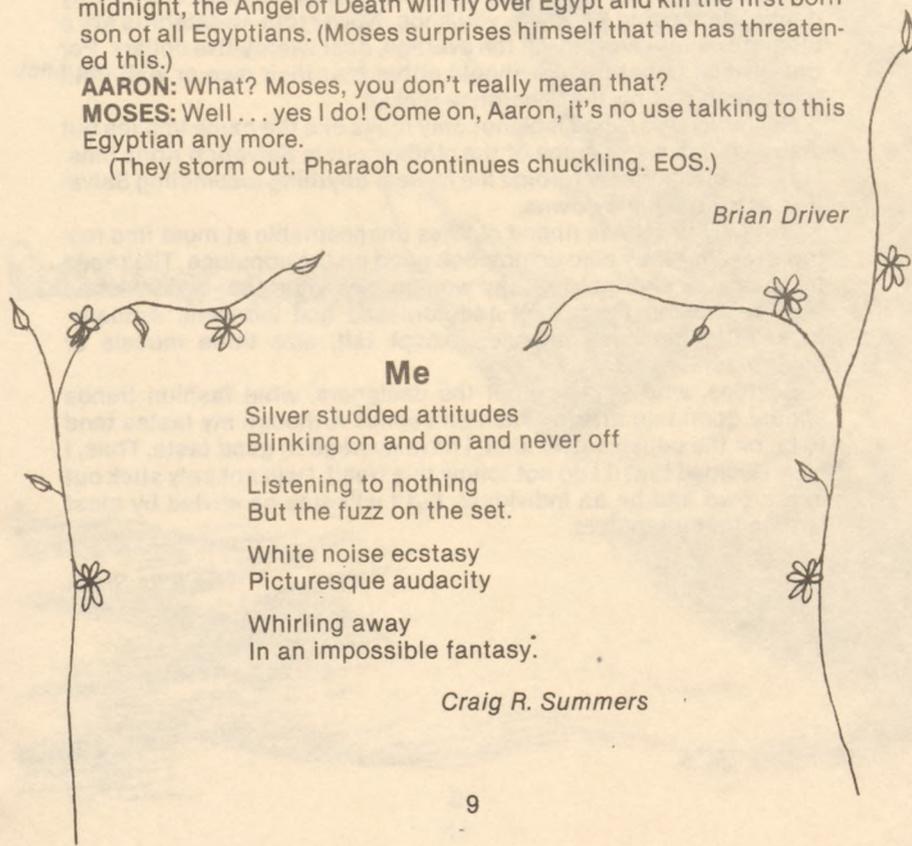
**MOSES:** Go! Yes, we will go! We, and all of Israel! Tomorrow night, at midnight, the Angel of Death will fly over Egypt and kill the first born son of all Egyptians. (Moses surprises himself that he has threatened this.)

**AARON:** What? Moses, you don't really mean that?

**MOSES:** Well . . . yes I do! Come on, Aaron, it's no use talking to this Egyptian any more.

(They storm out. Pharaoh continues chuckling. EOS.)

*Brian Driver*



## Me

Silver studded attitudes  
Blinking on and on and never off

Listening to nothing  
But the fuzz on the set.

White noise ecstasy  
Picturesque audacity

Whirling away  
In an impossible fantasy.

*Craig R. Summers*

## From Rags to Riches

As the movie "Flashdance" hit movie theaters all over the country, the raped look hit the streets of New York and Westerville.

This trend was introduced into the confines of Otterbein College when a few brave women, like the kind that went westward in Conestoga wagons, wore this fashion to dinner. After seeing it on these women as well as on mannekins in store window displays and on store racks, other students wore these clothes.

But, going against my trend-setting peers, I refuse to wear the raped look. Like H & R Block, I can give ninety reasons not to adopt this craze, but I only have time for four.

First of all, these clothes are too expensive. Simple tank tops, worn under torn sweatshirts, can cost between fifteen and twenty dollars depending on where you shop. Newly torn sweatshirts are a bit more expensive and, on the average, cost twenty-five dollars. For this reason, most people should either tear their own or wait until these fashions hit the Clearance racks.

Secondly, the raped look not only looks like the name implies but also reminds me of some of the clothes put in Salvation Army bins. My fashion snobbery forbids me to wear anything resembling Salvation Army hand-me-downs.

Not only are these ripped clothes unacceptable at most fine restaurants, but they also do not look good on the populace. The raped trend makes short and stocky women look shorter and stockier as well as making them look underdressed and indecent. Actually, these clothes make anyone, except tall, size three models or ballerinas, look heavy.

Besides, who says, except the designers, what fashion trends should dominate my own fashion sense? Although my tastes tend to be on the conservative side, I have average to good taste. Thus, I have decided that if I do not follow this trend, I will not only stick out in a crowd and be an individual, but I will also be envied by most female theater majors.

*Julia Slack*

## Long Island Sound

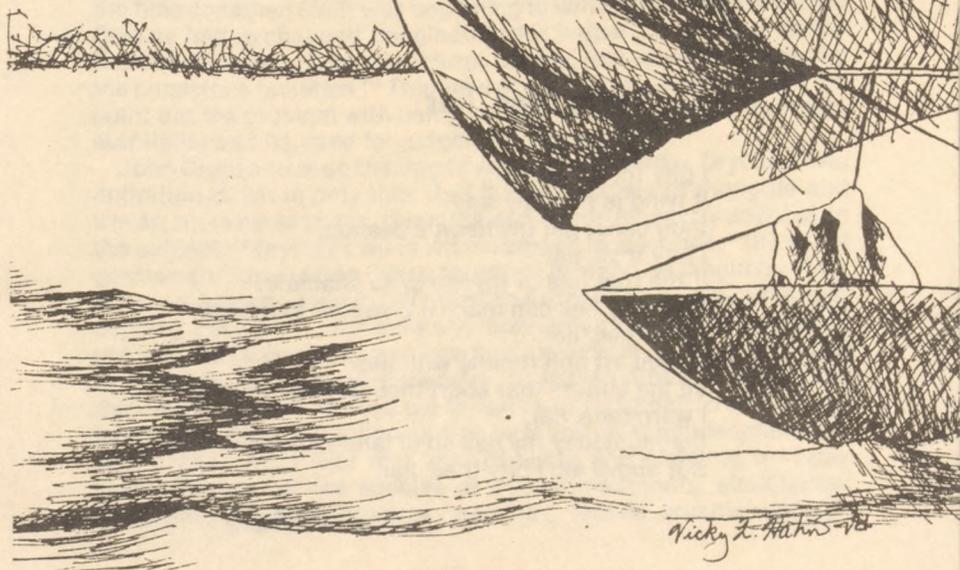
In the summer, I take my sailboat out alone  
In the open reaches off Long Island,  
Leaving behind the hordes of New York  
For the hordes of the past.

Out there I am alone,  
But take with me the memories of those  
Who have gone before—who searched.  
Out there I find my way.

Through the tangle of thought,  
Out there in the trembling winds  
I am finally cleansed of all lies  
And blown clear of the hordes.

Out there on the rising and falling  
Breast of the world  
I thrill to myself  
And the God within me.

*John Tetzloff*



## Lost Meanings

Surrounded by ideas, yet  
Trapped by words—  
Words that limit abstract thoughts  
by earthly boundaries.

Descriptions are inaccurate,  
Beyond mental grasp.  
Intended meanings are abandoned  
in attempts to communicate.  
Will true meaning ever be realized  
through verbal expression?

But where do these lost meanings reside?  
Once taking rest in my mind,  
They exist, I know.  
Will they be recaptured by another  
through interpretation  
as they float above us like invisible spirits?

Lost meanings—  
Misplaced.  
Maybe forgotten,  
But not gone.

*Julie Lynch*

## I pity thee, liar

I pity thee, liar,  
if lying is the only way  
thou canst get thy heart's desires.  
I pity thee, liar  
if the true tale of thy life is so shameful  
that only lies can make it pleasant to the ear.  
I pity thee, liar,  
if thou art still fooling with lies  
all the suitors that court thee through the wire.  
I warn thee, liar,  
that someday thy lies shall land thee into trouble;  
But above all: I pity thee, liar.

*Fambai Katsidzira*

## Wit and the Eighteenth Century

Mention wit to someone and he immediately thinks of the class clown (that prince of the clever come-back) or of the family punster (the self-crowned monarch of homophones). Such a notion of wit causes some confusion when applied to the literary tag for the eighteenth century in English literature: the Age of Wit. It is difficult to imagine a group of England's greatest writers devoting their entire careers to a form of entertainment now ruled by comedians and embarrassing relatives, so, obviously, our wit cannot be the same as that of the eighteenth century. In fact, rather than possessing a definitive definition, Neoclassical wit grew with each succeeding author, from a counterpoint for judgement, to a refined and controlled literary device, at hand for any writer intelligent enough to use it well.

Wit's early beginnings as a literary term were marked by the debate between imagination, or fancy, and judgement as the ruling force behind literature. As Maurice Johnson explains, in *The Sin of Wit*, "In Shakespeare's time the usual meaning of wit was a spacious, generalized one of 'wisdom,' 'sense,' or 'mind.' But toward the middle of the seventeenth century . . . it was the name for the poetic process itself . . . 'fancy.'"<sup>1</sup> As a reaction to equating wit with fancy or imagination, writers such as John Locke began crusading for equating wit with judgement.<sup>2</sup> Locke describes wit as "lying most in the assemblage of ideas, and putting those together with quickness and variety . . . to make up pleasant pictures in the fancy." Wit's opposite, judgement, is described by Locke as "separating carefully one from another, ideas, wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude."<sup>3</sup> By the time Jonathan Swift was beginning to write, writers like Abraham Cowley had exchanged imagination for judgement in their definitions of wit, seeing it as "structural, steady, and sober, nourished by the conscious faculties."<sup>4</sup> This view of wit did not last long, but it did point out the problem with using wit only as imagination: its insubstantiality and its need for judgement to temper it.

John Dryden took up the flag of wit as fancy. Writes Dryden, "The definition of wit is only this; that it is a propriety of thoughts and words; or, in other terms, thoughts and words elegantly adapted to the subject."<sup>5</sup> Dryden's wit is wit restrained by decorum, "the wit of gentlemen," presenting "deep thoughts in common language."<sup>6</sup> As Maurice Johnson puts it, "Wishing to exchange surface-glitter and dancing conceits . . . for a manly, 'boisterous English wit,' Dryden praised that lively faculty of imagination 'which . . . beats over and ranges through the field of memory.'"<sup>7</sup> Joseph Addison, too, in *The Spectator*, No. 62, defines wit in terms of imagination and fancy, adopting Locke's definition as "the best and most philosophical account that I have ever met with of wit,"<sup>8</sup> and claiming it "comprehends most of the species of wit, as metaphors, similitudes, allegories, enigmas, mottoes, parables, fables, dreams, visions,

dramatic writings, burlesque, and all the methods of allusion."<sup>9</sup> Addison also adds to Locke's definition, requiring surprise from wit: "Thus when a poet tells us, the bosom of his mistress is as white as snow, there is no wit in the comparison; but when he adds, with a sigh, that it is as cold too, it then grows into wit."<sup>10</sup> Reacting to the hordes of self-proclaimed "wits" running about London in his day, Addison makes a distinction between true wit, which "consists in the resemblance of ideas," and false wit, which deals "in the resemblance of words."<sup>11</sup> This distinction mirrors the difference between the wit of today, and that of the eighteenth century, so it becomes apparent to which track our modern punsters owe their allegiance.

Addison was not alone in his attempts to purify wit, for the greatest wits of the Neoclassical Period, Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope, also tried their hands at defining wit. According to Maurice Johnson, "Though [Swift] defined 'wit,' . . . he did not always remember his definition, writing at one time of wit and sense as a compatible pair, and elsewhere allying it with elegance, judgement, joke or virtue."<sup>12</sup> While other writers, concerned with style, used wit as an artistic tool, Swift, as a satirist concerned with point of view, with the "true wit" of Addison, used it as a weapon.<sup>13</sup> As a weapon, however, wit is not without its dangers. Swift warns that "wit is a quick-sighted faculty, which finds out allusions and resemblances of things, seemingly most distant and unlike: and when it hath found them out. . . can seldom resist the pride, and pleasure of [showing them], be the subject what it will, or the occasion never so improper."<sup>14</sup> Pope, like Swift, saw wit as differing from style: "Let a lord once but own the happy lines;/How the wit brightens and the style refines."<sup>15</sup> "True wit," says Pope, in *An Essay on Criticism*, is Nature to advantage dressed,/What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed."<sup>16</sup> Those looking for wit in a work should "Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find,"<sup>17</sup> advice smacking of Addison's distinctions between true wit and false wit. Pope's wit is imaginative, a searching for "apt comparisons"<sup>18</sup> also tempered by judgement, which he admits is often wit's enemy.<sup>19</sup> This judgement dictates Pope's wording, which strives for the right word for the right idea, leading Pope to write many memorable lines. One of these, "To err is human, to forgive divine,"<sup>20</sup> stresses the restraints a writer must place on his use of wit, especially when directed at those to whom Heaven has not been profuse in granting wit. Criticism and wit were, for Pope, the inseparable cornerstones of poetry,<sup>21</sup> and, as Patricia Ann Spacks puts it, in *An Argument of Images*, "wit, the faculty that produces criticism, is like the genius that makes art: mysterious, powerful, creative."<sup>22</sup> Wit, in the hands of Pope, is as deadly a weapon as in those of Swift, but Pope's wit is refined, so it "Clears and improves whatever it shines upon;/It gilds all objects, but it alters none."<sup>23</sup>

By the time Samuel Johnson published his *A Dictionary of the English Language*, in 1755, wit had grown from "the original signification" of "the powers of the mind; the mental faculties; the intel-

lect,"<sup>24</sup> into a complex term requiring eight separate definitions, and one hundred and five lines to fully define. While Johnson's second definition, after the original, is "Imagination; quickness of fancy,"<sup>25</sup> he looked for more in wit than quotable phrases. A. R. Humphreys, in *From Dryden to Johnson*, says Johnson criticizes Pope's definition of wit "for reducing wit from strength of thought to happiness of language."<sup>26</sup> Rather than a wit expressing "what oft was thought," Johnson wanted a wit which would illuminate "that which he that never found it wonders how he missed it."<sup>27</sup>

Wit, then, grew from a name for the mental processes into a synonym for imagination and fancy, and then a literary technique useful as a weapon and complete with high and low categories. Sometime after the death of Johnson, as the movement away from "witty" poetry toward the more personal poems of the Romantic era began, the high, or true form of wit lost its label "wit" and became other things: imagination and fancy, for two examples. What was left of wit, to be passed down to our "Weird Uncle Harry," was the low, or false, form of wit. The wit of the eighteenth century was not the wit of today: it was a growing, developing literary device which provided a whole century of writers with a workable writing tool.

Dave Kimmel

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>*The Sin of Wit: Jonathan Swift as a Poet* (n.p.: Syracuse University Press, 1950), p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Boris Ford, ed. *From Dryden to Johnson* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, Inc., 1968), p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1967), definition of wit.

<sup>4</sup>Maurice Johnson, p. 71.

<sup>5</sup>Samuel Johnson, definition of wit.

<sup>6</sup>Ford, pp. 54 and 159.

<sup>7</sup>Maurice Johnson, p. 71.

<sup>8</sup>*The Spectator*, No. 62, in M.H. Abrams, gen. ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. I (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1979). p. 2176; also Maurice Johnson, p. 72.

<sup>9</sup>*The Spectator*, No. 62, in Abrams, p. 2177.

<sup>10</sup>*The Spectator*, No. 62, in Abrams, p. 2176; also Maurice Johnson, p. 72.

<sup>11</sup>*The Spectator*, No. 62, in Abrams, p. 2177.

<sup>12</sup>Maurice Johnson, p. 74.

<sup>13</sup>Maurice Johnson, p. 73.

<sup>14</sup>Maurice Johnson, p. 75.

<sup>15</sup>Samuel Johnson, definition of wit.

<sup>16</sup>*An Essay on Criticism*, in Abrams, 11. 297-98.

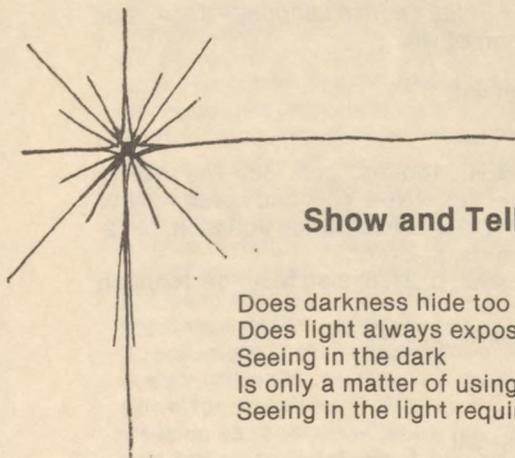
<sup>17</sup>*An Essay on Criticism*, in Abrams, 1. 235.

<sup>18</sup>Patricia Meyer Spacks, *An Argument of Images: The Poetry of Alexander Pope* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 18.

- <sup>19</sup>Alexander Pope, *An Essay in Criticism*, in Abrams, 11. 80-84; also Abrams, p. 1730.  
<sup>20</sup>*An Essay in Criticism*, in Abrams, 1. 525.  
<sup>21</sup>Maurice Johnson, p. 72.  
<sup>22</sup>Spacks, p. 20.  
<sup>23</sup>*An Essay in Criticism*, in Abrams, 11. 314-15.  
<sup>24</sup>Samuel Johnson, definition of wit.  
<sup>25</sup>Samuel Johnson, definition of wit.  
<sup>26</sup>Ford, p. 55.  
<sup>27</sup>Maurice Johnson, p. 72.

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### Show and Tell

Does darkness hide too well?  
 Does light always expose?  
 Seeing in the dark  
 Is only a matter of using four senses.  
 Seeing in the light requires six.

Greg Grant

## “Surrounded . . . but not defeated . . .”

The workers' compound at Mr. Dick Parker's farm was very small, only thirteen huts in all. Three of these were slightly isolated from the rest, because the three young bachelors who built them desired a somewhat private life so they had moved out of their mothers' huts and built their own quarters a short distance away. Yet soon these youngsters would marry and their sons, too, would move out and build an isolated bachelors' quarters of their own; thus the compound grew with the years.

One of the three young bachelors in the three huts was named Choto. At the beginning of this story Choto is in his hut. It is a Saturday, late in the afternoon, and the compound is deserted except for him and small children playing in their mothers' huts; the elders are at Mr. Dick Parker's house, half a mile away, lined up for pay. The news that Choto has just received from the village police (they were messengers as well as law enforcers) is what has made him sit alone in his hut, without even bothering to go to pick up his twelve-dollar monthly pay from Mr. Dick Parker.

An unfinished cigarette burned away in a chipped glass ashtray on a brown coffee table that his grandmother had left him when she died. The table had been one of her few and valued possessions. A dirty pair of blue overalls and a faded blue hat lay on his squeaky wooden bed beside where he sat. On each of the four walls of his hut newspaper clippings were hung, more for the reason to cover holes where the mud plaster had fallen off than for any other. In the open doorway crouched his dog, a tall and thin Alsatian puppy. In one corner of his room, neatly lifted off the cracked cement floor by a brick underneath each corner, was his battered brown suitcase, another inheritance from his grandmother. In another corner were carelessly piled cookware and several of his miscellaneous possessions. His bow and arrows, a symbol of manhood, hung above his bed which took up the whole length of one side of his room. And underneath the slowly drifting smoke from his cigarette sat an unfinished lunch meal of *sadza* and salty *biltong*.

Choto gazed past his dog into the deep, dark past of his life—painfully digesting the news of his mother's death. He remembered how she used to make him clothes out of her old dresses, how she used to work on European farms in order to send him to school, how she would sometimes sleep on an empty stomach so that he could eat the only handful of food that was available . . . and now when he had settled down and he was ready to do a little something for his mother, news had suddenly reached him of her death. In fact he had been planning in the short run to have her leave her work at the farm where she worked so that she could come and stay with him. Although the term is unknown to these unschooled farm people, Choto was intending to 'retire' his mother.

"Mama . . . mama . . . all those long and painful years . . . I thought maybe now I would look after you, do something to compensate for your numerous sacrifices for me . . . Mama, mama!"

He let out a child's plea that no one but his dog could hear, for Choto had no more relatives alive that were known to him or to his mother before she had died. His mother's relatives were there but he had never met them and he did not know where they lived; all he knew was that they were of the Ndebele tribe and they lived in Matebeleland, somewhere in the Matopo Hills region. That was three hundred kilometers away. So, should hardships strike and illness creep upon him, he had no one to turn to for advice or help.

His father was found as an infant, near death, abandoned by a river by an uncaring mother. He was an after-war-baby (the seven year Liberation War), rescued and raised and educated up to grade seven by a charity center in the city. He came to the village to find work and a wife. At age twenty he entered local politics and died a year later as an alleged rebel, at the hands of the police. His wife, Choto's mother, suffered a severe emotional disturbance and she did not marry again although she had been only nineteen when her husband was killed.

Choto never knew his father, for the fierce "Roaring Lion" (as he became known in the village and around in the neighborhood) was executed when Choto was a baby. As he now sat down on his bed Choto remembered some of the details which his mother had long ago and repeatedly thereafter told him about his father.

"He was a soft and loving man. When you were little he used to carry you around to almost everywhere he went. He would work on weekends at other farms in order to save and buy us clothes and enough food, while other young men his age lazily filled their bellies with beer in the village. Your father was very fond of us; I don't remember him ever saying an unkind word to me or to you, and he never raised his hand at me at any time.

"Yet when it came to something he strongly believed in he would cast away his softness to wear a fearful lion-hearted character. When made angry he was known to do some damage, and he never made a threat no matter how light it be unless he really meant to carry it out. An example that readily comes to mind took place when you were only several months old. The village police put your father under an unofficial house arrest, and he broke the order. Upon his return two armed policemen awaited him in fury.

"'Where have you been?' They demanded with the authority of a father asking his child.

"'I had to go to work so that I can feed my wife and child,' he spoke calmly.

"'You're under house arrest, and that means—'

"'I know what it means; don't insult my intelligence with a definition. I told you I have a wife and a child to feed, and to me they matter more than anything . . .'

"Seeing that they were getting nowhere, one of the two policemen threw his gun to the ground and seized your father by the throat and slapped him full in the face. Suddenly your father went dry with rage. He picked up the man, slammed him heavily to the ground, grabbed his gun and brought its butt hard onto the fallen man's back. The other threatened to shoot at your father, but your father charged at him anyway. The man started backing away quickly, threatening, 'I'll shoot you if you come any closer,' so when your father caught him with a fist on the chin the man went up and landed heavily on his back. I cried out begging him to stop but your father had to give both men good beatings before he could hear my plea. Then he confiscated their guns and chased the men off his premises. The same day he rode his bicycle to the District Commissioner's office to hand in the guns and to explain his story. He was detained for only three days, but from that day on the village police did not blink their eyes on him.

"Like all other young men of the village who resented the white settler's rule, Chamangiwiza (for that was his real name) was automatically listed as a rebel and his daily activities promptly came under magnified surveillance by the police. And then one day, as fate would have it, a bullet from the muzzle of a sniper's gun silenced him in the middle of a political speech to a local gathering..."

"I don't want to remember!" Choto brought down his clenched fist hard onto his own knees in desperation.

The police interrupted his thoughts when they came back to his hut. The same police that were accused of harassing villagers and of killing anti-government rebels came to Choto's hut to take him to the farm where his mother had died.

## II

He walked away from the cemetery (it was just a small clearing in the bush, clustered with graves of the local dead) with shame. His mother's funeral had drawn no more than nine or ten people, himself included. With his mother Choto buried away the past.

"I am only seventeen year old; why must I ruin my whole future by constantly leaning on the past?" He demanded an answer from no one.

To erase scattered shades of guilt that started to linger when he felt that he was forsaking his own dead parents, he read to himself a little poem he had written many years before when he was remembering his father whom he had never seen:

No matter how hard  
it be, cast away the past.  
Don't remain living in the shadow of winter  
When the sun shines and outside it's spring.  
Lively yourself up and don't wither:  
Let fresh buds come to bloom!

Pushing his will power beyond breaking point, which nearly killed his youthful mind, he finally succeeded in pushing his parents and his background to the very back of his mind and then without looking behind he painfully shut his door on them. Had his mother not said it herself before her own demise that "we should not worry about the dead as they are safe and happy in the hands of God now; instead, we should worry about ourselves—the living—it is we who still need salvation"? And had he not also heard it in church many years ago through the voice of their local preacher that "although our lives may be burdened with temptation, although we might relentlessly walk through trials and tribulations, we cannot lose hope for coming salvation. We might be surrounded . . . but not defeated . . ."?

He was not going to settle on misery as his gift from God; somehow he had to carry on as before his mother had died. Not far away from the farm there was a little place known as "Moyo School of Tailoring"; that could be a resumption point.

### III

For six years Jonah Moyo had enjoyed great success with his small tailoring school where he enrolled those young boys of the village who had failed their grade seven examinations or those who for financial or other reasons could not finish and go further with their academic studies. While Jonah prospered as an entrepreneur, he also was doing the village an invaluable service by bringing hope to the lives of many local and neighboring teenagers who would otherwise end up as cattle herders, underpaid labourers on European farms, or unemployed altogether and wandering from one beer party to another in the village. Jonah would give his students six months of training and then graduate them with diplomas acceptable in most fabric factories in the nearby city.

If Jonah had been a pompous man he would have easily named more than one hundred Moyo School of Tailoring graduates whose successes were tied to his masterful, renowned training and directing. But Jonah was a humble man who let other people boast on his behalf, and there were a lot of them good at that.

Choto had heard of the Moyo School of Tailoring a long time before and now he was seriously considering the alternative of going there. Or else he could go to the city, where he knew no one, and wander in search for work such as gardening, janitorial work, house-keeping; or he could take his mother's tin savings of forty dollars and sixty-eight cents to be exact, plus his own of fifteen dollars and take himself to a place in any other part of the country.

He finally resolved to retain his work at the farm and to enroll with the Moyo School of Tailoring. Unless he repeated, he could not go further with his academic studies. He had just completed grade seven but since he had attended a farm school, his grades, although they were clearly above average, could still not qualify for proper high school standards.

He would work at the farm from sunup until sundown, and then at night for two hours, five nights a week, he took tailoring. This allowed him very little time for a social life or proper rest, for that matter, but he endured his sufferings silently without a single complaint or plea to anyone.

"You have been working very hard lately, and you look sick; would you like me to give you some days off? Maybe you have problems to solve and you need time away from the job?" His employer made him an offer.

"No sir, thank you. I am quite all right."

However, the locked-up pain was reflected more and more by his body which was increasingly losing health and sending off the cry of a mute for help. He had always looked very thin but after shedding five more kilograms in weight he was left looking much like a tumbling blade of grass, and his big head made him resemble a starved lion.

For six long months he lived this way, in mental and physical agony until he completed his tailoring course. But he would not be granted his diploma until he had paid off some forty dollars which he still owed. He did several things to raise the money: he picked mangoes for sale in neighboring compounds, he fished and sold his catches, he caddied for European golfers on Sundays for a mere three dollars, and occasionally he tended his employer's gardens. But with winter approaching he was forced to take a painfully big bite into his mounting savings to buy two new warm blankets and a pair of tennis shoes (the only ones he had were starting to gather sand as he walked.) He was almost back to the start, saving over again.

#### IV

A few months before his eighteenth birthday Choto took forty dollars out of his net savings of sixty dollars and paid Moyo School of Tailoring. He received his diploma and left for the city where the two biggest miracles of his life awaited him. The first miracle was that he got a job that would pay him fifty dollars a month. The second miracle was that his new employer had accommodated Choto with a two-roomed building to live in: there was a double bed with a comfortable mattress, an old sofa, a limpy table and two chairs to match, and kitchen utensils.

But both miracles were not to be compared to the survival of an orphan in a world where there was no one to lean on or to turn to in times of need and illness.

*Fambai Katsidzira*

A Scene From  
**Between Here and The Clouds**

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

Grandpa, 65, a retired, eccentric old man.

Ed, 34, Grandpa's only son.

**SETTING:** Grandpa sits at a table in the living room building a card house out of a deck of cards. He is happily humming to himself. It is spring, and the sun is shining through the large, picture glass window. The living room is comfortably furnished and there is a large front door to the left of the window. Ed enters the room and watches Grandpa with a concerned look on his face. Grandpa begins to enjoy his humming, becoming louder and louder until he begins to whistle, which blows his card house down.

**GRANDPA:** (Throwing his hands up.) Ah, piffle!

**ED:** (Slowly.) Grandpa, I'm a little worried about you.

**GRANDPA:** Hm, oh yeah? How so?

**ED:** Well, Grandpa . . . You'll have to admit that your behavior has been really odd lately.

**GRANDPA:** (Walking to the window.) Odd? Hm, what do you mean, odd?

**ED:** Well, I mean . . .

**GRANDPA:** (Looking out the window) Isn't it beautiful, Oh, isn't it beautiful!

**ED:** What's beautiful?

**GRANDPA:** (Still looking out the window, he begins to hop as best he can.) The sun! The sun is beautiful! Ha-ha!

**ED:** That's what I mean by odd! Lately your behavior has been . . . It's been . . . Well, odd.

**GRANDPA:** (Turning to Ed.) You think it's odd to enjoy the sun? Oh, you poor thing.

**ED:** No, it's not just that; lately you've been so flighty, so fickle, so carefree. I'm beginning to worry about you. Being your age and all, I mean . . . (There is a knock at the door. Ed goes to answer it.)

**CHILDREN'S VOICES:** (From outside the door.) Can Grandpa come out and play?

**GRANDPA:** Oh, my friends are here! (He begins putting on his jacket.) Can this wait, Ed, we're going to watch ants today.

**ED:** Well, I don't know, Grandpa. This is important; I think we should talk about it now.

**GRANDPA:** Important, eh? Talk, talk, talk. Okay, we'll talk . . . Fascinating things ya' know.

**ED:** What?

**GRANDPA:** Why ants of course. They have their own little society, their own hierarchy. Hard workers, too.

**ED:** I don't want to talk about ants; I want to talk about you.

**GRANDPA:** (Not listening.) No purpose, though.

**ED:** What?

**GRANDPA:** Ants. Don't think they have a purpose.

**ED:** Of course they have a purpose. They probably . . . fertilize or loosen the ground or something.

**GRANDPA:** No, I mean no purpose. No meaning to life. They work and then they die. Kinda' tragic . . .

**ED:** (Looking at him strangely.) Grandpa, you really worry me. You're becoming like a little child. You're not becoming . . .

**GRANDPA:** Senile? That's what you mean, isn't it? You think I'm becoming senile.

**ED:** Well . . .

**GRANDPA:** Don't worry, I'm not becoming senile. My mind's as sharp as ever. And don't put down children, we can learn a lot from them . . . They have their own language, too, formic.

**ED:** Who?

**GRANDPA:** Formic language. That's how they communicate. It's very complicated.

**ED:** That's how the children communicate?

**GRANDPA:** My land, no! The ants!

**ED:** Grandpa, I don't want a lesson about ants. I want to talk about you, I'm worried.

**GRANDPA:** Listen here, my boy, you can use a lesson both by ants and by children. God knows they've taught me a lot lately.

**ED:** Grandpa. I don't think . . .

**GRANDPA:** Let me talk, boy. Don't you know it's not polite to interrupt your elders? Besides, I'm starting a roll. (Ed sits.) You see, boy, I've learned to live. To live like a child instead of an ant. That's what livin' is all about anyway. You see, living like an ant won't bring you any happiness or joy. You work and then you die . . . What's that? It ain't life. But it's the way we live. It's the way I lived. And it's the way you live . . . But livin' like a child, now that's livin'! They enjoy everything. They see things with fresh eyes. They don't let anything pass them by. They not only live life, they feel life. They taste it. They rub their hands in it and smear it on their faces. They run and skip through it. They fall and skin their knees on it. They climb on it, and hang from its limbs . . . That's life! That's livin'! And I think that before I die, I'd better learn how to live.

**ED:** (Softly.) I had no idea.

**GRANDPA:** I know . . . Now do you understand why I've been actin' . . . odd as you call it? I'm livin'. For the first time in my life I'm living! And it doesn't feel odd. It feels great . . . There must be a way to bridge the two worlds. Or maybe it's not a bridging but a separation.

**ED:** What worlds?

**GRANDPA:** The worlds of ant and children. We need them both, but somehow I only found one. Maybe Margaret can find the balance. I hope you do too . . . We can't just float free like the clouds the way Sam says; we have to be a little like ants . . . There has to be a balance, a place somewhere. Somewhere between here and the clouds.

(Ed is silent. He nods, unable to speak.)

**GRANDPA:** Let's go watch some ants.

(Ed and Grandpa walk out the door, arm in arm.)



## The Letter

I am your mother's sister.  
We played our games  
like all girls do.  
We were tossed about for awhile  
but somehow we managed.  
Then one day I got sick.  
The doctors said it was a burst appendix.  
All I remember was feeling terrible.  
I turned six in February,  
Your mother turned eight in May.  
That October I gave up.  
I had been in a coma most of the time.  
I remember how your mother hated going to bed—  
having to walk through the room  
where I lay in my casket.  
She would close her eyes and run—Fast.  
There were the funeral and burial services.  
I watched your mother grow up.  
She told you and her other children  
about me; things we did, my death, and all.  
You will tell your children,  
they will tell theirs.  
Someday we will meet.  
Until then, remember me.

—Marlene

*Karen Gibson*

## Joy

The black earth began to  
push and prod  
the sleeping pod  
and the pale little pod  
popped out into the darkness.

Yellow bees buzzed above, as  
tender breezes tickled.  
June bugs joined in  
July gibberish, their apple  
bodies rolling in the grass.

Twisting, turning towards the sun,  
the tiny plant body tumbled  
out onto the warm ground,  
greeted by the green garden . . .

Joy.

*Valerie Newell*

## How to Succeed in School

Throughout high school I was known as a bookworm because I always seemed to get good grades and make the honor roll. In fact, it sometimes seemed that I was considered by my peers to be some kind of superhuman genius who was different from the average person. It is true that I was different, but not in the ways that they thought.

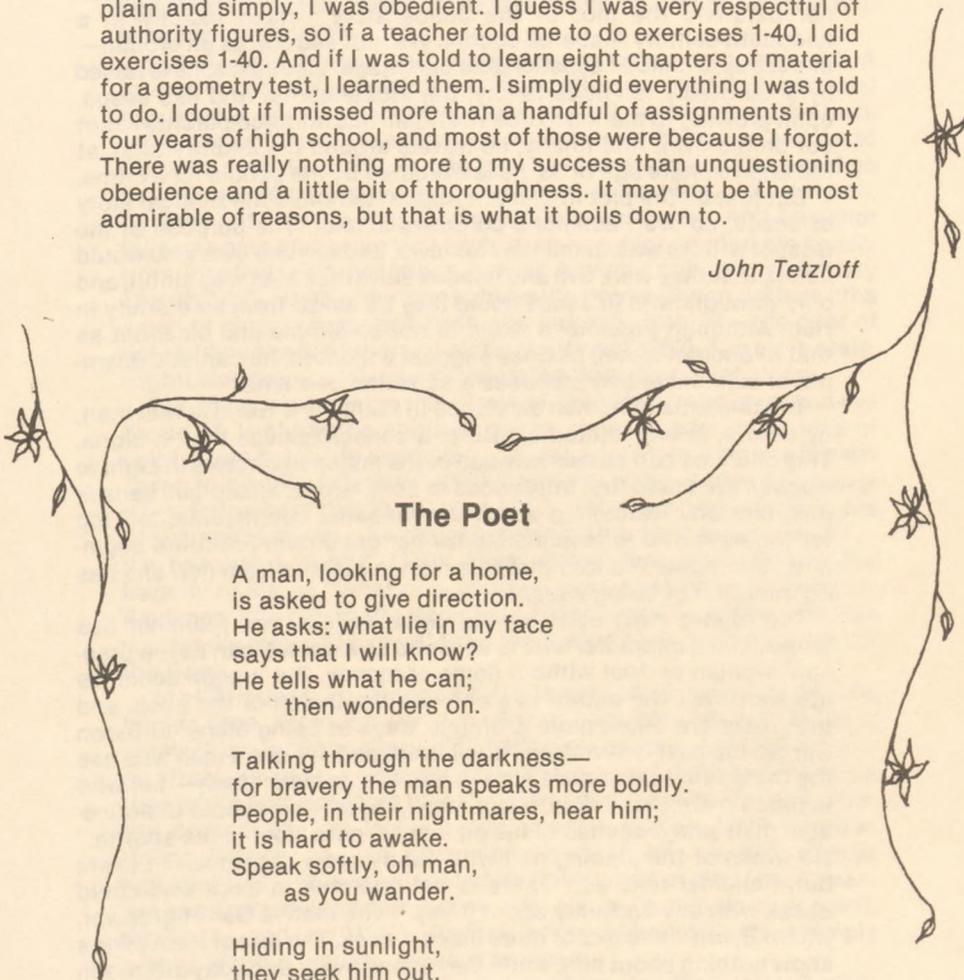
Many of my friends considered me to be inherently smarter than they. They believed that my good grades reflected some kind of genetic superiority of the brain. This always makes me laugh. If they could only have seen me last summer throwing an anchor—which was not at the time fastened in any way to our boat—into the middle of Lake Erie, I think their theory would be shaken. And then, mere minutes after losing the anchor, I lost a wash rag while bathing in the lake because I thought it would float—a mistake which, although not especially crucial or costly, still managed to make me look like a complete idiot. And then there was the time I had to fix a flat tire on the freeway and forgot to tighten the lug nuts, and nearly lost the whole tire and killed myself before I heard the loud rattling and stopped. The point is, I make as many dumb mistakes as everyone else, if not more: my brain is no more capable than the next guy's.

Nor were my grades the result of a tremendous work ethic. This vision of me with my head stuck in a book from the moment school let out was common—and completely false. If I had the choice between basketball, for instance, or working algebra problems, I would invariably be out on the courts. In fact, my tendency to put things off until the last moment was prodigious. I made a habit of doing homework in homeroom on the day it was due. I remember completing my senior term paper—on which my grade weighed heavily—at 4 a.m. the night before it was due. That was also the day I had to get up at six o'clock to compete in our tennis sectionals. Little did my schoolmates realize how I constantly tottered on the brink of disaster; no amount of urgency seemed capable of driving me to get done with work ahead of schedule. In short, my high school work ethic left much to be desired.

Still other kids thought that I had a perverse love of school, or of acquiring knowledge. This opinion, more than any other, left me feeling rejected and out of place. My friends would look at me as if I were an alien. I actually felt guilty for getting good grades. But this view of me, too, was a misconception. I was no more interested in the Monroe Doctrine or the number of U.S. Representatives from the state of Delaware than the average teenager. The truth of the matter was that I had just as much trouble keeping my eyes open in such classes as Ohio History and Principles of Democracy as everyone else. And on snowy mornings in the winter I had my ear to the radio along with my friends, hoping for a closing. I admit that I found certain classes challenging and interesting, and found school to be fun at times; but I had a healthy and normal "hatred" of school. I was *not* motivated by an odd love of school.

So why did I do so well in school? Well, it was really nothing so glorious as a superior intelligence, a strong work ethic, or a love and dedication for school. Rather it was simply that I did as I was told: plain and simply, I was obedient. I guess I was very respectful of authority figures, so if a teacher told me to do exercises 1-40, I did exercises 1-40. And if I was told to learn eight chapters of material for a geometry test, I learned them. I simply did everything I was told to do. I doubt if I missed more than a handful of assignments in my four years of high school, and most of those were because I forgot. There was really nothing more to my success than unquestioning obedience and a little bit of thoroughness. It may not be the most admirable of reasons, but that is what it boils down to.

*John Tetzloff*



### The Poet

A man, looking for a home,  
is asked to give direction.  
He asks: what lie in my face  
says that I will know?  
He tells what he can;  
then wonders on.

Talking through the darkness—  
for bravery the man speaks more boldly.  
People, in their nightmares, hear him;  
it is hard to awake.  
Speak softly, oh man,  
as you wander.

Hiding in sunlight,  
they seek him out.  
He is only a poet.  
But the lie is still there,  
and the truth, close behind it.  
He wonders, and they follow.

*Brian Driver*

## ***Light in August* as Faulkner's "New Testament"**

One could, if one wished, call *Light in August* William Faulkner's "New Testament." With Joe Christmas as his Christ-figure, Faulkner parallels the plot of the Jesus story almost exactly in a twentieth-century Alabama county. We first see Joe as an orphan—like Jesus, a child of questionable parentage. Like Jesus, he is raised by a devotedly religious family, the McEacherns. And like Jesus, upon growing to manhood Joe abandons his adopted parents to set out on his own. And finally, he travels around the country until, at the approximate age of 33, he is executed by the people for a crime.

But just as the plot in *Light in August* parallels the Biblical story of Jesus, so are Faulkner's purposes similar. The purpose of the Gospel writers was to tell the Hebrews, and anyone else who would listen, that they were evil and needed salvation: Man was sinful, and only through faith in Jesus could they be saved from an eternity in Hell. Although Faulkner's world is not so simple and clear-cut as that of ancient Israel, he does suggest a modern, humanistic dilemma of existence, and proposes a salvation of a kind.

The dilemma of human existence in Faulkner's world is that man, by nature, is an isolated creature, a consciousness that is alone. This dilemma can be seen in each of the major characters in *Light in August*. We are at first introduced to Lena Grove, an orphan. Lena is pregnant and wandering about the Alabama countryside, looking for the man who is responsible for her condition. From the beginning, the reader realizes that this man is running from her, and has no intention of being caught.

The reader may, upon seeing Lena, believe that Faulkner has introduced a character who is as alone as a person can be—a pregnant woman on foot without home or money. But it soon becomes apparent that the author has only set the theme of the book, and that there are other, more profound ways of being alone. In Byron Bunch, the next character who is introduced, we see a man who has the things that Lena does not—a home, a career, money—but who is much more alone. Byron is a small, meek, and almost unnoticeable man who, because of his plainness, gets "lost in the shuffle." He works at the planing mill with nearly every other man in town; but, Faulkner tells us, "There is but one man in town who could speak with any certainty about [him]." The man is Gail Hightower, whom Byron visits two or three times a week. The rest of the workers know nothing about him: while they spend every Saturday afternoon hanging around town, visiting and gossiping, Byron works overtime

<sup>1</sup>William Faulkner, *Light in August* (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 243. All other references are from this edition. The text in this edition was photocopied from the first (1932) printing, and is thus identical.

at the mill, alone. And nobody but Hightower knows that every Sunday Byron travels thirty miles to a country church, where he directs a choir. Hightower describes him as "a hermit who has lived for a long time in an empty place" (p.285). Although in every respect an average-looking citizen, Byron is, in fact, living in a world of isolation from his community.

But Byron's friend, Gail Hightower, is even more isolated. A former Presbyterian minister of the Jefferson church, Hightower has lived alone for twenty-five years in a house on one of the back streets of Jefferson. He spends his whole life in this house, insulated from the outside world. He sits by a window watching the world go by, and leaves only to get groceries or other supplies. Unlike Byron, he does not even go through the motions of society. And Faulkner tells us again and again that Hightower has degenerated physically from inactivity. He describes him as having "soft and sedentary obesity" (82). Upon entering Hightower's house, Byron notices "the smell of plump unwashed flesh and unfresh clothing—the odor of unfastidious sedentation, of static overflesh" (282). The air is stale. Hightower has completely deteriorated through his inactivity.

But, more importantly, this physical decay is symbolic of, and evidence of, Hightower's spiritual decay. He even admits his loss of spirit: "I am not in life anymore . . . That's why there is no use in even trying to meddle, interfere" (284). And he is content to live this way: when Byron asks him to step out of his isolated world—to lie in Joe Christmas' defense—he refuses, saying: "It's not because I can't . . . It's because I won't!" (370). Albert Schweitzer once defined the tragedy of life as "what dies inside a man while he lives": and for Faulkner, too, this is the tragedy of Hightower's existence. He has voluntarily removed himself from the human race, from the world of the living. ✓

Joe Christmas, Faulkner's Christ, is even more isolated from the human race. From the first time Byron sees him, he feels there is "something rootless about him, as though no town nor city was his, no street, no walls, no square of earth his home" (27). But it is more than just a home or roots that Christmas lacks. He has lacked a *life*: the orphanage, the McEacherns, Joanna Burden have all been things "which he had been conscious of all his life without knowing" (98). He is so alienated from the world of men that he cannot even experience his human life. He is "a phantom, a spirit, strayed . . . and lost" (106). His face is "masklike" (105). He is simply a body without identity, without purpose.

But as Hightower's isolation is voluntary, Joe Christmas' is definitely not. Rather, he is a product of society, of forces over which he had no control. But unlike with Byron Bunch, society has not been merely indifferent to Joe: it has been destructive. In Faulkner's parable, this deadly society is represented by Joe's adopted father, McEachern. McEachern is cold, strict, and unemotional, and he is responsible for Joe's failure to develop into a "normal" man. When

Joe was young, McEachern tried to force him to learn Biblical quotes and behave according to strict Christian doctrine. But far from instilling in Joe such Christian traits as kindness and love, he merely sets the stage for Joe's tremendous purposelessness; for he teaches Joe none of the meaning behind the Christian religion, only the forms. It is his insistence on form and obedience and prescribed behavior, along with his lack of emotion, that prevents Joe from learning to react at all with people who are, for the most part, emotional, vibrant, and often irrational. In the end, Joe does not even turn into a McEachern clone; rather, he rebels against McEachern's cold world by ceasing to experience life. Faulkner later describes his adult face: it was "as though the skull had been molded in a still and deadly regularity and then baked in a fierce oven" (30). Thus was he shaped by McEachern.

how do these traits parallel Christ's?

Joe Christmas is, of course, never to emerge from his "death in life." Finally driven to commit murder by forces that he cannot understand—cannot even experience consciously, for he knows only that "something is going to happen to me" (110)—he is hounded by the people of Jefferson, is eventually caught, and is put to death by Percy Grimm, a young soldier. Here again, Faulkner parallels the Bible story. Just as it was the people who put Jesus to death (they had a chance to give Him His freedom), so does the community of Jefferson put Joe to death. But while the Bible defines Man's plight in terms of transgressions against God, Faulkner is showing us our transgressions against our fellow man. Through McEachern, who represents the worst characteristics of society, Joe Christmas was created: and through Percy Grimm, who also represents society—they are both cold, impersonal, righteous, vengeful, and ruthless—Joe is destroyed. Ultimately, it is the McEacherns and the Percy Grimms who make the salvation of Joe impossible. It is the cold, impersonal, ruthless society that has led to his utter destruction. Joe probably did not even need love or compassion to be saved; he needed only some kind of positive interaction, some honest emotion to connect him to life. Instead, in the end he is castrated by Grimm and by society: his potential for life and vitality is, literally and symbolically, taken from him. And at the end of his existence he passes, like the sirens from town, "Out of the realm" of humanity (440). Thus does society commit the complete and total murder of a man.

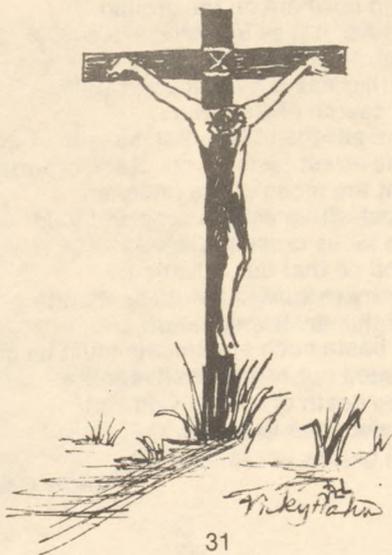
Jesus?

In the Bible, after society has committed the ultimate sin of killing the Son of God, Man is given salvation through the grace of God. Faulkner, too, is ready to give his solution, though it is not as idealistic and perfect as eternal life and happiness. Hightower—who, like Joe, has been cut off from life—succeeds in gaining a salvation, of sorts, when he is forced to deliver Lena's baby. Faced with the possibility that the baby might die without help, Hightower makes the fateful decision to leave his home and prison, and enter the world of the living. Afterwards, upon the successful delivery of the child, he feels a wave of emotion—"A glow, a wave, a surge of

something almost hot, almost triumphant" (446). And it is in triumph that he thinks: "Life comes to the old many yet." (446) Appropriately, his action—birthing a child—is one that brings life into the world, while he, too, has begun to live. This, then, is man's salvation from his individual loneliness and isolation: He must participate in life; he must interact with others; and he must be a creature of emotion. Unlike the Christian salvation, Faulkner's salvation is not immortality; man must, in the end, make peace in his one allotted life: to emphasize this, he has Hightower, upon finding his life, almost immediately die. But Faulkner does not mean for his death to diminish his victory, his salvation; for in his last moments, Hightower says that it seems as though death had "waited until he could find something to part with, to be reaffirmed in triumph and desire with, with this last left of honor and pride and life" (466). As much as anyone can hope, he has gained salvation. \*

Faulkner then leaves us with a last glimpse of the living. At this point in the book the reader has realized that Lena is not the isolated character in the story, but rather the life-giver: She gives life to her child, and through her child gives life to Hightower. Appropriately, she never meets Christmas, for Christmas is never given life. But as we leave the story, we see that she has given life to Byron Bunch, the social outcast, as well as Hightower. Byron, at the end, is doggedly following Lena, the life-giving, with an unfaltering stamina, trying to win her. We know, somehow, that whether he wins or loses he has gained a release from his isolation through the act of pursuit. For pursuit of life—the willingness to take part in the experience of life—is, in Faulkner's world, the winning of it.

*John Tetzloff*



## Smearing the Queer

The scrawny girl walks across the schoolyard  
watching the other children at play.  
While they skin the cat and smear the queer  
she rocks awkwardly from foot to foot,  
tugging at her sweater.  
They don't notice her standing there.  
She shrugs, and sits against the cold brick wall  
of the schoolhouse.  
Snuffling the glasses back up her nose,  
she opens a book.

*Beth A. Deiley*

## Camelot Renamed

Cry it in the streets, my friend,  
For Camelot is found,  
But not across a raging sea  
And nowhere on the ground.  
Above, it flies in gilded skies  
Catching heaven's tears;  
Arthur has left its sterling walls  
In search of Guinevere.  
The pavement is intact, as yet  
The street feels no cry of the crowd,  
Yet the moan of the prisoners  
Held within echoes long and loud.  
So let us cross to Camelot  
And be that our salvation,  
Or try to survive the present state  
Of this enslaving nation.  
In haste such statements must be made—  
Sound out or you shall regret—  
The death of mighty Camelot  
Is not soon to forget.

*Cathy Griffis*

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