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Dakotah Poesy (1987)

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DAKOTA

Poesy



DAKOTA STATE
COLLEGE

Madison, South Dakota 57042-1799

DAKOTA

Poesy

1986/1987

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GRANDMOTHER

Long ago, you rambled on your merry way,
Picking spring flowers,
Your ears attentive to the birds in May
And I, not even born.

You lived each day of your life
As though there were a thousand more,
Overcoming whatever the strife
And I, not even born.

Oh, how you remember the time
You were so late for school,
Because you loved nature so fine
And I, not even born.

Now you can only remember
Those carefree moments of the past,
They'll be here to cherish forever
Because, with me they'll certainly last.

Now, although your bones are weary,
And disease has caused you pain,
Your heart is still as cheery
As, that day you skipped down the lane.

You've given me so much
Grandmother, and I love you in every way.
Someday I'll be without you such
That I, will weep and say,

"Live on forever more!"

-- PAM LEWIS

"COUNTRY"

Have you ever walked along a quiet country road?
Your burdens ease and fresh air lightens the load;
As you stop in a ditch of tall grass to lay,
Your mind can wander a million miles away;
All the world's problems just seem to disappear.
The gentle sounds of nature are all that you hear;
An eagle soars through the air with great ease,
His screeching call carries in the light summer breeze;
Squirrels climb and jump from tree to tree,
Trained acrobats they all seem to be.
Peace of mind can surely be found
If you open your ears to nature's beautiful sound.

-- DRPatrick

GENERAL GRANT AND THE GROCERY STORE

They pulled into the grocery line behind a big woman who had two pink curlers sitting on the back of her head. One of the woman's bulky arms rested on the tobacco stand, causing her brightly striped shirt to strain across her back. She looked like she could wait all day if she had to. Not Jacky.

His eyes flickered to the deli where he and his dad would stop for an ice cream cone before they left the store. He turned the nickel in his pocket impatiently, sometimes gripping it tightly to reassure himself that it was still there. When his dad ordered the two chocolate cones, he would slide it onto the counter and ask for another dip.

He would smile at the lady as she was dipping up the cones and then at his dad who would be thinking about the bottle resting under the seat of the pickup and wouldn't notice the second dip if Jacky kept his voice just right.

The big woman lowered her arm to swat at a girl whose curly brown hair was pulled back into pigtails.

"Put those back where you found them," she ordered the girl who was clutching a jumprope, jacks, play high heels and a coloring book. The girl began to cry.

"Right now," the woman advised sternly. The girl stood still, tears streaming down her face. She was making hiccupping sounds.

"Keep one, put the rest back," the woman said resignedly and again rested her arm on the tobacco stand. The girl bolted from the line. Jacky nearly lost his balance trying to get out of her way.

There was now a space between their cart and the big woman's back and an old man squeezed himself into it. Jacky looked at his dad, who he was certain, would tell the old man to wait his turn like everybody else. But his dad just pulled the cart back a little further to give the old man more room and kept talking to the man in the next aisle about the prices cattle were bringing. Jacky was tempted to say something himself.

The old man wore a baggy gray coat that looked like it had once been nice and there were brown stains on the front of it. His face had more wrinkles than Grandma Gordon's, who always called Jacky by every name but his own. He couldn't understand why she never recognized him when he didn't think he looked all that much like Frank or Pete. Sometimes she called him Benny, and Jacky had no idea who that might be. He only knew it didn't do any good to correct her because she always called him whatever she wanted to anyway.

The old man had a package of cheese in one hand and a loaf of bread in the other. As Jacky stood there studying him, the old man was ripping the bread open. The hand that held the loaf of bread was hanging down at his side and his fingers were jerkily digging into the soft, white contents. Little pieces of bread crust were falling on the floor and soon the plastic would be so torn that whole slices of bread

would go. Jacky couldn't believe the old man was actually doing this, and he glanced at the lady who was now ringing up the big woman's groceries. The old man was going to be in trouble when she saw what he was doing to the bread. He stared hard at the old man, but he seemed not to notice though he was turned just enough that he could have seen Jacky's face. His eyes had a faraway look, and it was like he wasn't in a grocery store but somewhere else and seeing something else. He looked like a soldier wearing a big hat and sitting on a horse Jacky had seen once in a picture. He wondered if it might have been him.

And then Jacky realized that the old man didn't know what he was doing to the bread and that the hand around the cheese was moving in the same way. He felt his stomach tightening into a knot and he remembered how he had gotten into trouble when he thought he was big enough to carry a pail of milk up from the barn even though his dad told him to leave it alone.

He had tripped on a rotting board sticking out from some weeds. The pail of milk flew forward, then backward and soaked his clothes with sweet, sticky liquid before it came to rest upside down beside his head.

He had to do something before the lady spotted the bread, but time was running out. She was already halfway through ringing up the big woman's groceries and the cart had been stacked high with different kinds of cereal in bright colored boxes, sweet rolls with red and purple jelly on top, doughnuts, potato chips and cartons containing bottles of pop. He became so fascinated by the groceries emerging from the cart, that he nearly forgot about the problem with the old man and the bread. Suddenly the girl with the curly brown pigtails pushed her way in front of him waving the play high heels. He reacted with an immediacy that surprised even himself.

"Look at what you did to his bread!" he yelled at her. "You ruined it. Look at this!" He grabbed the old man's hand and pushed the bread at her. The girl leaned against her mother, who turned to look at Jacky. Her eyes were too small for her head and she was scowling.

"I didn't touch his stupid bread!" the girl yelled back at him.

"You did!" Jacky said accusingly and he looked at the lady behind the cash register whose finger momentarily paused on the keys. He heard his father say his name in warning but he couldn't stop. "I saw her," Jacky said. "She shoved her way right in front of him and just ripped up his bread!"

The lady leaned over the counter and took the mutilated loaf of bread. "Ernie," she turned to the boy who was putting the groceries into sacks. "Get another loaf of bread," she said as the mass of bread and plastic disappeared under the counter.

"You're a big liar!" the girl said.

"You're a big fathead." Jacky said in a low voice. He looked up at his father who had resumed his conversation

with the man in the next aisle. They had moved on to the price grain was bringing.

The girl stuck her tongue out at him as she followed her mother and the grocery boy behind the cart which was now laden with sacks. The old man stepped forward and placed the cheese on the counter beside the fresh loaf of bread. From somewhere inside the old baggy coat he produced an ancient wallet. With shaking hands he laid a dollar bill and some silver coins on the counter. The lady rang up the total and counted the money.

"I need fifteen cents," she said to the old man who was already trying to return the wallet to the inside of his coat.

He brought the wallet back out, but it contained nothing more than a few faded pictures, some folded papers and a couple of discolored identification cards. He kept sifting through them like he expected money to appear. The nickel bit into Jacky's palm as he willed the old man to produce the needed coins. He saw the second dip of ice cream fading as he reached down to the floor.

"You dropped some of your money," he said as he produced the nickel. "I saw some fall."

The old man bent over and began to search the floor with Jacky. The lady behind the cash register sighed and rolled her eyes.

"Forget it." she said as she put the bread and cheese into a sack.

Jacky straightened and watched as the old man walked away clutching the brown sack. Already he was tearing it. As he stood there beside his father, he found himself wishing he could follow the old man.

-- Debra Dean

AWE....

I watched the stumbling foal
grow into a beautiful mare,
I watched her rear an offspring---
so perfect,
my Angel's heir. . .

with spirits bursting
they welcome an early Spring---
no goddess has touched their glory,
no nobler,
any king.

-- BRENDA GRIMM



MY PERFECT BABY

My perfect baby, Helen,
My third babe and my last.
At first I didn't want you--
My "newborn days" were past.

But when I felt you moving,
I had to change my mind.
My heart could hold another,
As I was quick to find.

And now that you are with us,
You're such a sheer delight
With funny faces, happy smiles,
Your coos and eyes so bright.

I know that they are fleeting,
These enchanting infant charms.
You'll cause me grief and heartache,
As you outgrow my arms.

But, sweetheart, in the meantime,
I'm so in love with you.
I gaze in wonder, spellbound,
At each new thing you do.

This poem, I hope, will show you
In each and every line--
My perfect baby, Helen,
I'm so glad that you're mine.

-- Liz Delisi

MOTHER

thinking of you, Mom---

soft; yet, strong
her warm embrace--
kind and loving
her dear face. . .
shelter from storms
of discontent,
a helping hand
when I've over-spent!
my children's grandma--
a treasure
adored;
my precious mother--
a gift
from the Lord.

-- Brenda Grimm

YOUNG LOVE

The moon shines brightly
Through the cracks of the trees,
As it softly touches
The tender grass below.
The creatures of the night,
Scamper from its harsh beams,
While two young lovers walk
Hand in hand, through its illuminating shadows.
The rustling leaves
Are soon quieted,
As the wind dies softly,
Like the final breath
Expels from exhausted lungs.
The two walk together,
So much in love,
Unconcerned with principal matters;
Enjoying each other's company,
Although speech is silent.
Speech seems irrelevant,
And conversation appears to take place,
Just by touching one another.
Love combines with nature,
While the reality of life suppresses,
And leaves two together,
Alone in their fantasy world.

-- TOM CUMMINS

LOVES FORCE

Love's force--
That spirit which gives
To the breath of man, life,
That spirit which stirs
the soul into expression.

Love's force is that spirit which
Gives the breath of man's life, stirs
The soul into expression and brings about
The joining of hands and the uniting of two
Into one.
Yet these we all but glimpse of
Love's force.

-- Kelly Smith



CLOSE SHAVE

Divorce? No that's not the answer, Kate thought as she gazed at the cloudy sky through her bay window. It's like a disease. He's a good father and a loving husband. Even when he has an attack, he controls himself, sometimes through sheer force of will.

Kate's reverie was interrupted by the cries of her three-year-old son, Pete.

"Daddy yelled at me!" Pete sobbed.

Kate smiled at her tear-stained son. "Daddy likes his privacy when he's in the bathroom, dear," she replied.

"Why?" six-year-old Matt asked.

Kate hated that question. No matter how one answered a six-year-old, it was always followed by another why. "Daddy just likes to be alone while he bathes, and shaves, and does his teeth."

"Why?"

"When you get older and have to do all those things, you'll understand," Kate sighed.

"But why does it take him so long?"

"Listen, Matt, did you lock the front door?"

"I think so."

"Be a good boy and check for mommy."

"Me check. Me check," Pete said, running past his brother.

"Mommy told me to check," Matt said, running after Pete.

It worked, Kate thought. I'd better go check the back door. They're just like their father. Perhaps they're too much like their father. When they grow up we'll probably need three bathrooms.

As Kate twisted the knob on the back door it jumped back at her. She felt the sharp blade of a knife at her throat.

"Be real quiet, honey. You wouldn't want those precious babies of yours to get hurt, would ya?"

"She looks real foxy, Marty," a tall skinny man said.

The leer in his eyes disgusted Kate. The smell of his liquored breath nauseated her. Kate thought of her boys on the other side of the house. "Please, just take what you want and leave. Don't hurt my babies," Kate whispered.

"Now, don't you worry, little lady," Marty said.

"Where do you keep your money? You got any jewelry?"

Kate pointed to the bedroom.

The skinny man shifted his eyes from Kate to the bedroom and back again. "Maybe she'll be extra friendly to us, if we don't hurt her brats," the man said as he caressed Kate's shoulder.

"Shut up, Al. There'll be plenty of time for that later. Where's your old man, honey?" Marty asked.

"Please leave daddy alone," Kate said. "He's sick."

"That's not very smart, honey. What do you think we are? A couple of idiots? We cased this joint. Your old man was fine this afternoon." Marty gave her hair a vicious tug. Kate screamed.

"No hurt mommy." Pete grabbed Marty's leg and bit it.

"Ow! why you little. . ." Marty said, kicking the toddler. Pete scampered under the coffee table.

Matt ran to the bathroom and pounded on the door.

"Daddy! daddy! Come out, please!" Matt heard the electric shaver, but his daddy didn't answer.

"I'll get him out, kid," Al said, pushing Matt aside. Al pulled a 38 revolver from his jacket.

"Don't hurt my daddy!" Matt screamed. He jumped up and scratched Al's face. Matt ducked Al's backhand, and ran into the corner.

"Ow! Lady, you've got some real animals here. You're going to have to be extra nice to us." Al smiled as he rubbed his cheek. "If your husband's cooperative, maybe we'll let him watch," he giggled.

Al quietly entered the bathroom, and shut the door.

"Listen," Kate began, "I'll do anything you want, just don't. . ."

Two shots rang out.

"No!" Kate screamed.

"Daddy, daddy!" Matt yelled, "Are you all right?" All Matt heard was daddy's shaver and then, the shaver stopped.

"It won't be long now, lady. You'll be able to live up to those promises you been making." Marty kicked the bathroom door. "Come on, Al, we ain't got all day," Marty reached for the doorknob.

"Please don't," Kate said, grasping his hand.

Marty felt the warmth of her flesh. It excited him.

"At least. . .at least don't make the children watch, please."

Marty moved his hand down Kate's shoulder.

"Sure, honey. We don't need them. Gowan, kids, beat it. Your ma's got things to do. Say, did you hear me? I said get out of here!"

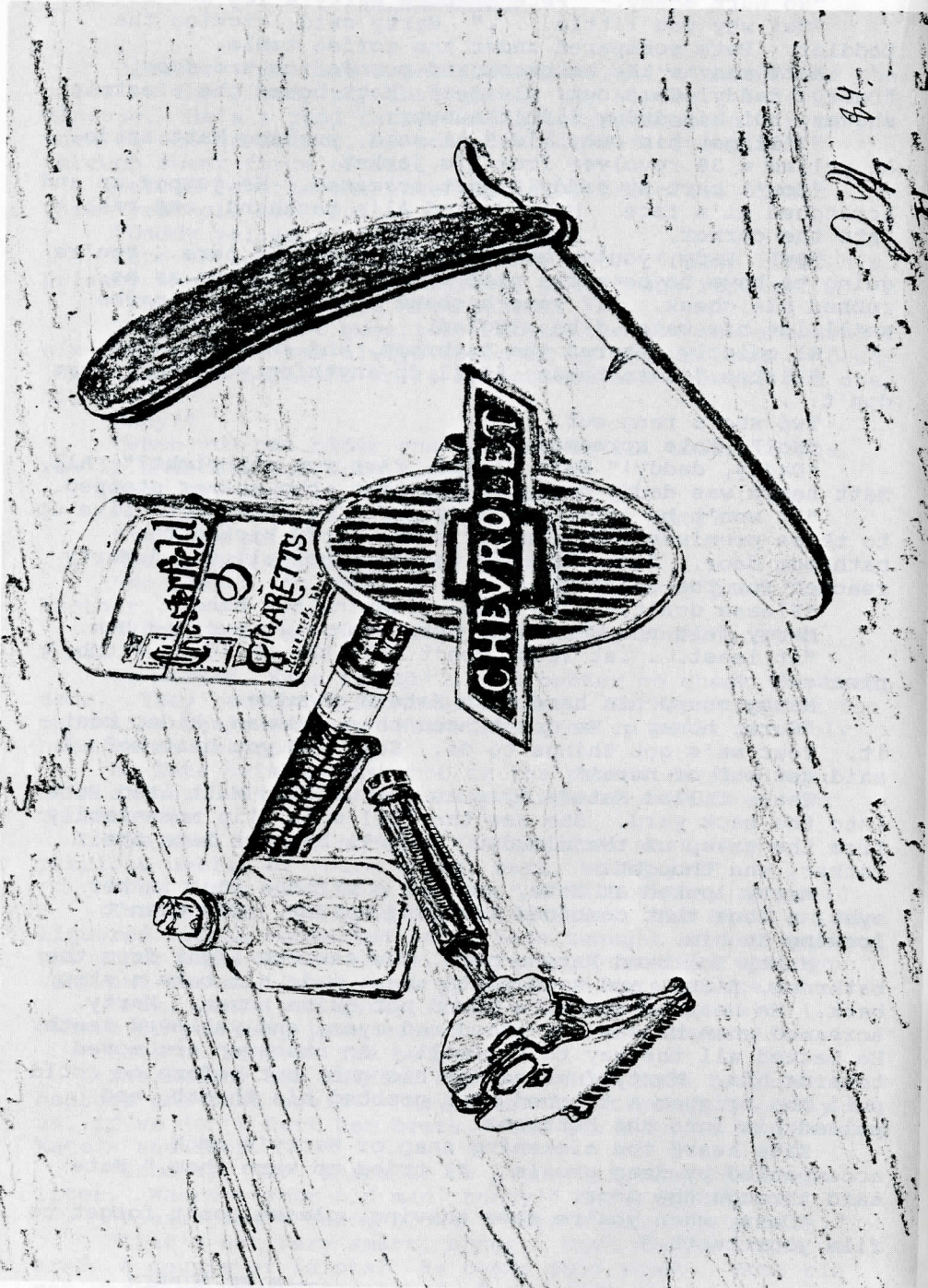
Tears filled Kate's eyes as she watched Matt lead Pete into the back yard. She saw the full moon slip momentarily from the grasp of the clouds. They'll be just like their father, she thought.

Marty looked at Kate, and saw a strange look in her eyes, a look that combined love and horror. She wasn't looking at him.

Marty followed Kate's gaze. He saw the light from the bathroom, first, and some sixth sense made him take a step back. He heard a sound, a sound not quite human. Marty screamed when he saw the blood-red eyes, and yellowed teeth. He backed all the way to the wall. An unshaven arm moved towards him. Marty fumbled for his gun, but before he could pull the trigger a taloned hand grabbed his throat, and pulled him into the bathroom.

Kate heard the sickening snap of Marty's neck accompanied by deep growls. "I tried to warn them," Kate said through the door.

"Dear, when you're done shaving, please don't forget to file your teeth."



Twiddle Dee, Twiddle Fly,
Should I fish or should I fly?
'Tis long and hard to see the sky,
But long and hard if I should fall.
The wings are long and clear,
Of shiny hues of summer air.
Crippled flee, crippled fly,
Look at what has become of me.
Of when I flew, of when I've flown,
But now my flight is all but spent,
Squashed beneath the plight of man.

-- Dwight Gullickson

LADY

I'm in love with a lady, who's
Body glows golden brown in summer light.
She's long and thin, with gentile, ample curves,
Curves meant to be caressed and held.
And yes, I've seen the look in others' eyes
As I've held her, both sneers and lust.
Down her slender back runs a length of raven black,
Straight and warm undefiled by waves,
At the end of its length, a single lock.
She likes to be adorned in yellow, don't we all,
A frivolous bauble here and there.
As a symbol of her sensuality, a single
Nipple protrudes among the curves,
Always guarded by the crook of slender arm.

She was born that way.
And no, I don't consider her deformed.
Just because some have more doesn't
Make it the norm. She loves to eat and talk,
And in that order, she's also rather picky.
Upon eating, she loses all her grace,
For she must be force fed, then comes
The time she's most lovable to hold,
Cheek to cheek, smooth and firm,
Encircled wit steady hands. It's here
She speaks, and not softly as other ladies do,
But with a loud, boisterous voice and
Promptly slaps you, spitting out her meal,
Once again demanding to be fed. But don't
Be alarmed, you would too, if you lived on
Blackpowder, greased linen and lead.

-- Jay Henderson



COMPETITION

A solid smack on the jaw in the first round sent my rubber mouthpiece sailing into the tenth row. A left hook caught me on the nose again now hemorrhaging like a stuck hog. Why did he keep attacking like a wild baboon? Didn't he know this was to be a gentlemanly sparring match, no a slugfest? None of what I had learned in practice had prepared me for this ordeal. I felt like an over-incubated hen under the hot white lights. Three-minute rounds--Baloney!! More like half an hour. The crowd loved the gladiatorial gore of two welterweight studs locked in their primordial fight for the harem. Third round at last. I'm losing I thought. What can I do? He must be getting help from on high, I remembered, thinking it odd to see a fighter on his knees in the locker room before the match. Only hope. Duck wild left hooks. Jab him in the belly. Clinch. Counter-punch. Left jab, right cross. Thank God, He's panting too. We clash in the center and clinch. His knees kill. "Let's put this wimp on his knees for good," I pray. But time ran out. Couldn't get the knockout. Lange by a split decision. How disgusting!

-- Gerry Lange

BARNEY OLDFIELD

Barney Oldfield was big and burly,
Arms and shoulders like an ox.
Oldfield was proud and surly
And raced to beat the clock.
Moon faced, oil spattered, cheroot between his teeth,
The common man's underdog, who finished first, from
Underneath.
They said the minute mile would kill him, then the Christie
Too.
Green Dragons and Golden Submarines made his dreams come
True.
He knew Ford, Goodyear and Miller; his name helped make them
Grow.
Raced county fairs and Indy and told triple "A" where to go.
Over many miles he drove wishing De Palma far in back,
And as the years sped along became the Old Man of the track.

-- Jay Henderson

I've seen courage many times--
But never named it so.
My parents stand for courage
As they face each year anew.
The hail, the heat, the sodden fields--
Each year brings an evil foe.
Their dreams are shattered--
Even when the weather's good,
For that usually means that
Prices are exceptionally low.
But there is no relief, no sign of end.
Still each year my father says,
"This year might be the best one yet."
And Mom with her love and strength,
Stands firmly by his side.
They get no applause or metals of gold--
Only the respect and love of those of us who know them.

-- Monica Forest

I guess he ain't much in the eyes of some,
But when it comes to mine,
There's just not one
Who can compare to this guy.
One might hear said
That a simple life he's born to lead
Even backward,
Uncivilized,
Uncouth.
But that's just because they don't quite understand
Just what's all rolled up in this bundle of man.
He's a sower of plenty for plenty's sake.
Even the good Lord used in parables
With a point to make
That we too should be like him.
One might even say he's God very own helper
Sent down to earth to keep His things growing.
He's a vet when he's needed
To take care of His critters,
A real live soul-saver.
He's a welder,
A painter,
And builder of things:
A real live maintenance man.
He's an animal custodian
When the need should arise
Ah, there's money in the farm boys,
If only they'll pitch it out.
And the next time I sit down to table at feast,
I'll better remember just where it came from,
And thank him, the good farmer, for the work he has done.

-- WANDA CARR

TAMED NATURE

The thunder cracks
while the lighting
Illuminates the midnight sky,
And the rain beats
Upon the tender, budding flowers,
Which are quick to bend
From the powerful drops.
You and I
Dwell safely inside,
Warmed by a luminant fire
That generously offers warmth
To the cold and gloomy night.
Love flows
Like a mountain stream--
Soft and gentle.
Being close to you,
Gives a real feeling
Of what life should be.
No pain, worry, or fear,
Just tender love
From that special someone.
The vicious night appears
Harmless, when filled with
Our love, and warmed by our hearts.

-- ANONYMOUS

THE STARS

When the stars are deep,
I can never sleep
in the peace and quiet.

When the moon begins to creep
across the sky at night,
look at the stars so bright.
They seem to be as lights
shining out of the deep.
Never to be out of sight.

Always on the silent watch
of what goes on below.
Then out the clouds billow
except for one or another patch,
clouds as fluffy as a pillow.

-- ROSE MARY OWEN

SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO CRY TO SHOW EVERYBODY YOUR A MAN

Raindrops fell on my mother's cheeks, mixed with her tears, and fell in streaks down to the tip of her chin where they met with other drops, formed even bigger drops, and fell either to be absorbed in her black dress or to the tangled wet grass about her feet. I didn't really understand just what it was that made her cry. I thought perhaps it was simply the occasion, because as I looked around the cemetery at the others who had come to see my father away; I saw many who joined my mother in this teary lament. My younger brother and sister cried also; however, I thought that was only because they were too young to know any better. But me, well I was a man of twelve years, old enough to understand that big boys didn't cry. I guess that probably had something to do with how my father had raised me. He wasn't there very long, but those few short years he was, laid the foundation for what I was that day.

I paid little attention to what the priest said about Dad; I was too busy thinking about the times when just he and I would pack up and go off together. Sometimes we'd go fishing. I remembered the time I caught that big Northern out at the river.

"You got him, son! Now just keep reelin' 'im in. Must be a big 'un."

"Hey, Dad, I need your help; it's too tough for me!"

"Just keep goin'. You'll get 'im in. You're a man now; remember?"

A warm hand firmly squeezed my shoulder; I turned quickly to see my grandfather standing there looking down at me. He wasn't crying, but the faint shadow of a tear made tiny red lines in his eyes. Still, it didn't seem right to cry. Somehow I knew that wasn't what Dad would want. I thought about what he might say, and all that came to mind was, "Come on, boy, stop that fussin'. You're a man now, and there just ain't no room for that kind of carryin' on. Stand up straight and act like you're in control and proud to let everybody around ya know you was glad to a had me as yer daddy."

Then I realized my grandfather was still standing there looking down at me just like he had been before my thoughts had drifted.

"You ok, sonny? You look like ya was a hundred miles away," he whispered.

I didn't say anything; just shook my head to let him know I was alright and admit to my drifting thoughts. He squeezed my shoulder a little harder and pulled me up tight against him as if trying to make sure he squeezed me so tight, my mind wouldn't wander.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw the tall slender, black figure of my mother as she stood staring at the big coffin that held what was left of my father. Tears still made their way down to the tip of her chin, ran together forming sparkling beads of water and fell away to unknown



destinies. Just the sight of my mother's tears and the thought of her being so saddened by the loss of my father made my heart swell. I could feel every drop of blood that was in me as my pounding heart forced in flying through my veins. For the first time, I too wanted to cry.

I tried to stand up taller, thinking that I would look and feel a little prouder, but I could still see her tears. I tried to swallow, but the huge lump in my throat wouldn't budge; it just sat there as if purposely trying to choke me. My heart pounded faster and faster, each beat louder, more distinct. A cold sweat enveloped my body; I wanted to cry more than before. I gnawed at my bottom lip, thinking I could get my mind on something other than wanting to cry. But, all I could see was my mother. Such a pretty thing. It didn't seem right that she should be so saddened.

"No! No! I can't be," I thought to myself as I felt a huge warm drop of water swell in my eye and trickle down my cheek. I quickly reached up and brushed it away before anyone else had time to see it; however, just as I had rid myself of the evidence of that tear, another of an even larger magnitude made its way down my cheek. I bit down harder on my lip. A nervous twitching in my leg sent it banging hard against my grandfather who I had forgotten was standing there. He glanced down at an embarrassed, humiliated me, knowing he had seen my tear-stained eyes and cheeks. He knew I wasn't a man now. What would he think of my weakness, my carrying on this way? I tried to wipe away the watery residue left behind by my tears, but the task seemed impossible. As soon as I wiped away the tears already there, new ones would slide down and take their place. The only thought I had was the scared feeling that my grandfather would think less of me. He would probably scold me for acting so foolishly. Yet, he held tighter to me now than before. I was confused by his action.

"Dad, please forgive me for cryin', but Mom...Mom just looked so sad."

I noticed that some of the others who had come to pay their last respects were now beginning to disperse, making their way to their cars. I was sure my grandfather would scold me. Impatiently, I stood waiting for his words. I waited longer, but none came. When I could no longer help myself, I burst forth with a sorrowful, "I'm sorry I cried, Grandpa! Please don't be mad at me for not being a man!"

Startled by my sudden outburst, my grandfather hugged me tighter. His head bent down toward me and his grey-green eyes glanced caringly over the rims of his glasses. "It's o.k., sonny. Sometimes ya have to cry to show everybody your a man."

ON WISCONSIN!

in desperation

and disgust

i sit

limp and livid

silently condemning

the mulish motor

ironically named

"Wisconsin"

American home of

our German roots.

warm sun, easy breeze

waves brome

and purple-flowering

alfalfa

needing a hair cut

two weeks ago;

but i sit,

more relaxed now

knowing that

desperation and disgust

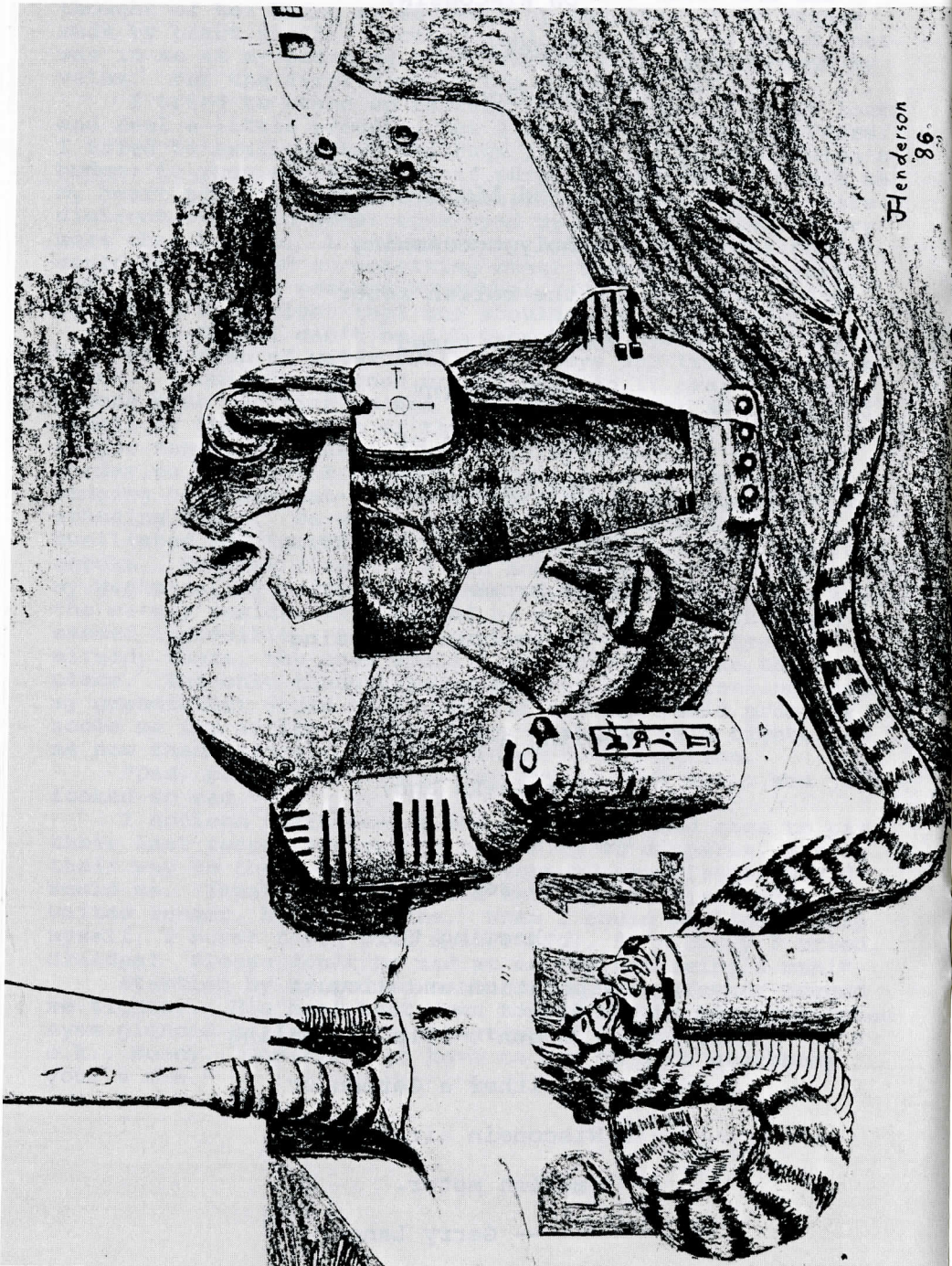
doesn't help in dealing

with either a German or

a Wisconsin air-cooled

mulish motor.

-- Gerry Lange



MOURNING AFTER

Sun smiles
warmly
Thru minus 10
degree
air
In dead living
room
Where last
night's
debates
Lie silently
enigmatic
Like the untouched
table of
stale debris
and fresh-cut
flowers.

Each atom
returns
to
It's Sunday
orbit
But mutated,

the molecules
Of the evening's
encounters

Will regravitate
toward
new
Configurations
of
Thoughts.

-- Jerry Lange

THE MERRY THIEF

There she lies all glitter and gleam
With nary a flaw or broken seam.
She's mine, all mine--
And I'll take my fill
I'm not a greedy person--
I just want my share.
There's plenty here,
For those who dare.
Come quickly if you want or need--
And grab your gold, for gold will flee.

-- Monica Forest

FRIENDS

Your friends do things that are proper
When you are dead and gone.
Their hearts are sad for other things--
A card game or the trip across town.
Perhaps they are glad to have you gone,
For it will profit them with new wealth and prestige.

-- Thomas R. Carruthers

THE LADY

The lady it seemed
Was of high degree,
Dressed all in lace
Drinking rich tea.

The lady was wealthy
With money to spare.
Men crowded 'round
To support her with care.

From rags to riches
She made her way,
Using her body
For which men would pay.

The lady is ruined
In more ways than one.
Is she really happy
After everything's done?

-- LeAnn Feldhaus

FATE

I endured
To what avail?
Naught has changed
Or ever will.

No escape--
Is there from fate,
Life or death;
What choice to make?

In life
I must choose again.

Choose to do
All that I can.
Or otherwise,
To do nil.

Tho in death
The choice is not.
Alas, my choice
Is life itself.

Only in life
Can I show
That I endured
The life I know.

-- KLS

SUN AND BREEZE

The gentle breeze caresses my skin.
It tenderly massages while cooling.
It's like a soft kiss from
A lover who likes to play,
And is in no hurry to go away.

The sun warms and stimulates.
It gently and carefully tans some,
While savagely and wantonly burning others.
It's like a restless lover,
Warm and soft at times,
But with many different climes.

The sun and the gentle breeze
Often work as a loving team.
While the sun warms and heats,
The gentle breeze cools and soothes
As through the day they move.

-- Rose Mary Owen

"GROCERY STORE MADNESS"

Nothing is more aggravating than a trip to the grocery store to pick up a "few" things for supper. Five o'clock strikes and 120 tired and hungry people race up and down the aisles not caring whom or what they knock over. Everybody had the same goal: to get their groceries and get out of this madness as quickly as possible.

"Excuse me, ma'am," one frantic mother says as she tries to squeeze her cart between two others that are parked right in the middle of the aisle. One of her children is clinging to the side of the cart while she tries to keep the baby from throwing tonight's supper on the floor. She finally gets to her destination, the produce department, and turning her back to her children, she makes the biggest mistake of her life. Her son heads toward the apples and grabs a big, shiny one out of the middle of a perfectly formed stack. A sudden shriek from the produce manager turns everybody's eyes toward the avalanche of soon-to-be bruised apples.

Ten apologies and five minutes later, the woman speeds off uttering mindful threats to her mischievous-eyed son. Up and down the aisles one disaster occurs after another leaving the store in shambles. Store employees scramble to cure the chaos, but to no avail. But is it any wonder that stores have such catastrophes occurring almost simultaneously throughout the day? If only store managers would use their heads by organizing their products on the shelves instead of standing on every corner or directly in the center of an aisle. How do they expect people to get their carts around these towering displays? Why, even if you did want to buy one of these over-pushed products, you wouldn't dare take one off the stack anyway, for fear of an avalanche.

Then there's the check-out counter--another grocery store menace. Shelves and shelves of mouth-watering treats to tempt each and every child who comes by. Besides the annoying ring of cash registers tallying up people's hard-earned money, you can hear an uproar of women's voices trying to calm down their screaming children. "I wanna candy bar!" "I don't have enough money!" "Please, Mom, just one, I only want one!" "No, just shut up--every time we come in here you do this!"

Grocery store madness! Who in their right mind would even enter this madness unless it was absolutely necessary? Oh, here's the same woman whose kid knocked down the apples, frantically pushing her way back up to the check-out counter. She forgot to buy some aspirin and receives annoying glares from all the people in her aisle who have been held up because of her delay. You really can't blame the woman, though, she's had quite an experience! But at least grocery stores use a bit of logic. The aspirin aisle is always close to the check-out counter to save mind-boggled mothers who have had to struggle their way through this every day routine of grocery store madness.

-- Pamela Lewis

There are moments in life when the spoken word must give way
To the expressions from the heart.
For in these moments of life, when the echo of words
Carry little comfort, it is then that expressions from
The heart speak the loudest in the silence of a gesture.

-- Kelly Smith

KKK

Spawned of the world's most powerful drug,
Hatred wrapped in white,
They walk the common street by day
And strut in sheets by night.
They love to terrorize, bomb, and lynch
And to burn a cross or two,
To feel that they're superior
To Catholics, Blacks and Jews.
Once again tensions are on the rise.
But if there's one thing we don't need
It is a world filled with hate based on racial greed.

-- Jay Henderson

SMILES

Have you ever noticed
Behind their smile
People keep their teeth?

-- Bob Jensen



RIDE THE WINDS OF YOUR DREAMS

Ride the winds of your dreams, my child;
Reach into that dark blue that surrounds the moon
And touch it with a smile.
Cradle in your heart a love divine that accepts all mankind
And soars in the winds of trials.
For in the paradox of life,
We reach the highest.

-- Kelly Smith

I WISH I HAD A WISHING WELL

Wishing wells remind me
Of the days within my past.
The happy dreams of childhood,
The ones that never last.

Dreams of perfect fairy tales,
Like marrying a prince.
Dreams that die as one grows older,
When life becomes more tense.

But do dreams die completely?
Can one ever tell?
Do dreams stay deep within us,
Or inside wishing wells?

-- Teresa Pechota

THE NIGHT

Darker than a blind man sees
Quieter than a deaf woman hears
Calmer than the calmest sea
Scary at times
Relaxing at times
Nothing is like the night.

-- Trish Murphy

A TEAR FROM THE LOVE LIGHT

"Kate. Will you stop that senseless whimpering? I've got one hour until they slice me open, and I don't need to hear it."

"Ow." The intern roughly gives me a shot in my backside. My head feels like a dish of mush. My teeth keep tripping over my tongue.

I see five-year-old Michelle fearfully tugging on Kate's dress. The shot makes me wimpy. I turn towards Michelle, and feel my stomach start to come up. I force it down. "Don't worry, Miss Shelly, daddy will be all right. You take care of mommy. Hear?"

"I will, daddy. Here." Michelle shoves something soft into my hand as they wheel me to the OR.

Kate and Michelle grow cloudy.

I'm in a white cubicle. It's lonely here. I have some company, though, a stuffed puppy Michelle placed in my hand, as I went into surgery.

It's getting darker, now. I see an ebon figure approaching me. A hooded robe hides his features, but an aura of evil sadness surrounds him. I feel the weight of the suffocating darkness as he draws near.

"It's time," the figure hisses.

"I'm not dead, yet."

I grab him. My hands wither when I touch him. My hands feel like burning stumps. He tries to continue on his dark journey, but I refuse to go. The dark figure turns towards me. His cowl falls back from his robe.

No skull or disfigured caricature of a man do I see. I am looking into a black tunnel. A tunnel filled with beings screaming for help. I am looking at Death.

I try to pull away. I try to scream, but I'm transfixed by the horror.

"Can I at least take the puppy with me?" I ask in a last ditch effort to remain among the living.

"What puppy?" he laughs. His clawed talon touches my daughter's love dog; it disappears.

Death pulls me towards him. The smell is rancid. He tries to pull me into him. I fight with my diminishing strength, but I can see. I see down his cowl, past the screaming faces, past the demons. I see a light, an operating room.

"Damn, his heart stopped," the anesthesiologist says.

A nurse grabs the twin electrodes of the Defibulator, and prepares to hand them to the surgeon.

"No! No defib!" the surgeon says. "I've almost got it. Why now? If we stop, we'll lose him for sure. Give him 5 cc's of adrenalin and pray."

As I walk with death, I am afraid. I am afraid of dying, and I am afraid for the family that I leave behind. I hope Kate is strong enough. I don't know if I am.

A light shines behind us. "You'll have to take me, too," a small voice says. It's Michelle.

"I can only take one," Death laughs. "Which one shall it be?" Death's laugh fouls the room.

Death knows that I can never sacrifice my daughter.

Suddenly, the room explodes in light. Death shrinks from the brightness. He seems to get smaller. A giant stands between us.

"No," the huge, soft voiced figure says. Her size confuses me. I am used to seeing her as a small, feminine figure, not this Valkyrian woman who dwarfs us with her presense. Then, suddenly, I understand. I am used to looking at the size of Kate's body, not the size of her love.

"No one will be going with you this trip, Death," her melodic voice continues.

The dark figure steps towards Kate, and extends its claw.

Miss Shelly and I cower at Kate's knees. She gazes down at us, and her eyes fill with moisture. A single teardrop falls from her eyes. The teardrop meets with the talon of Death.

Death shrieks the scream of the damned, as his claw shrinks and burns.

"Next time I will take your entire family," he screams as he shields his withered claw.

"I don't think so," Kate smiles.

"You've certainly been sleeping a long time," Kate smiles tearfully. "Michelle will be sorry she wasn't here to see her daddy wake up."

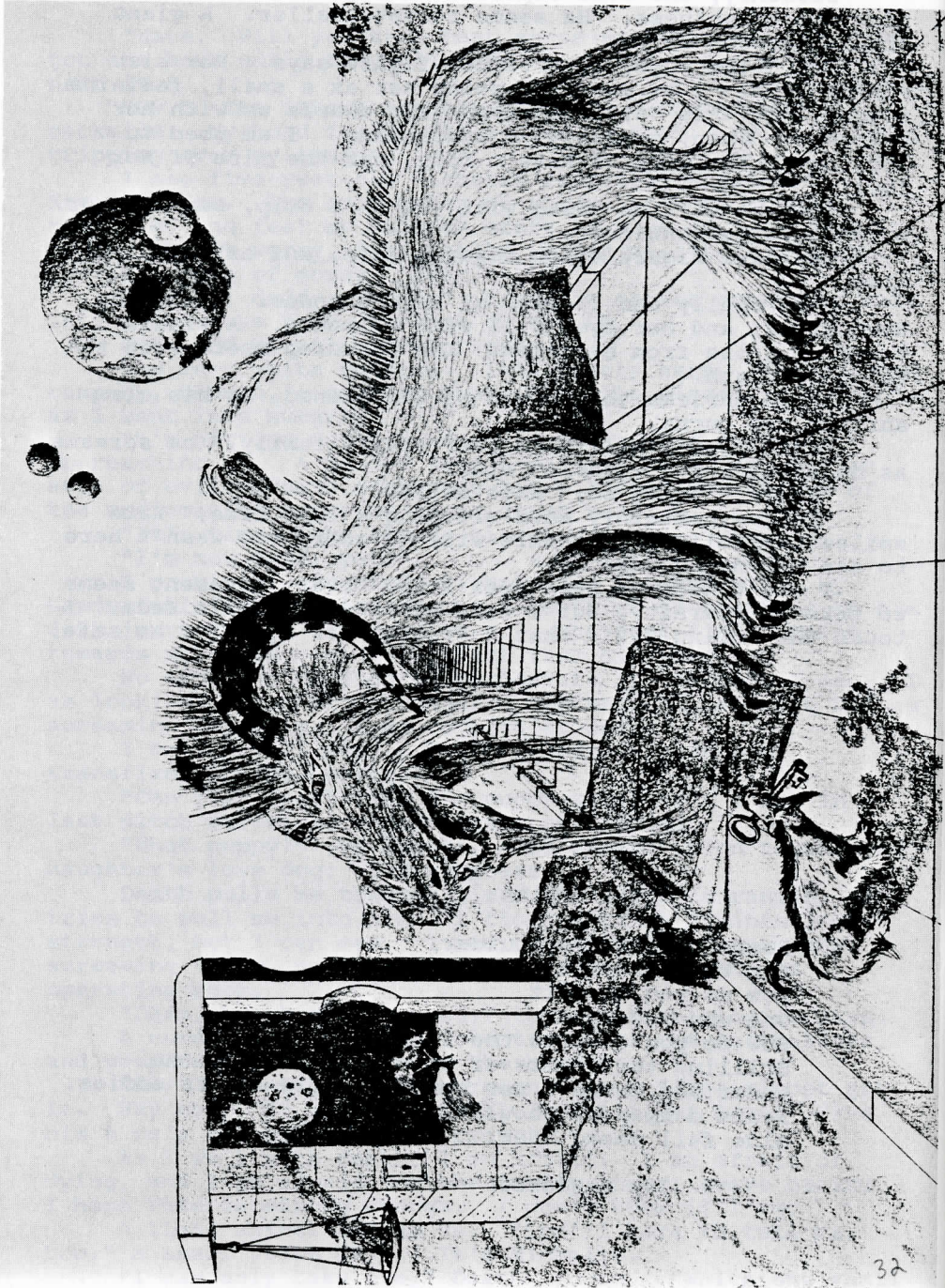
I can't keep my eyes open long. Every movement seems to take an eternity, but I move my hand up Kate's face. I touch the loving fluid that surrounds her eyes. I am safe.

-- Mike Duffin

FEARS

Fears dampen my shoulder,
But they are not mine.
How do you comfort
One who has none?
How do you console the losing of a world?
Stilling the rivers of the soul can drag one
Under and cause a new world to slip in its eddies.
Fears dampen my shoulder,
Mine fall among them.

-- Jay Henderson



TIME

Why did man invent time?
 Why would he want to enslave the whole race
 To the tedious swing of a pendulum?
 Tic-Toc, Tic-Toc, Tic-Toc, Tic-Toc,
 What time is it? What time is it?
 Now I am late. Now I am late.
 Why can't I stop? Why can't I stop?
 Because the clocks do not stop.
 Tic-Toc, Tic-Toc.

-- Allen Paulsen

RED TAPE

Red tape, red tape, red tape.
 Always in the U.S.A.
 Can't do anything
 until Uncle Sam has a say.
 Can't even move
 from here to there
 unless Uncle Sam knows
 from where to where.
 "You must sign here,"
 he says to you.
 Whether buy or sell,
 no matter what you do,
 Red tape, red tape, red tape.

-- Rose Mary Owen

CIRCUMLOCUTION

Circumlocution
 Is the accusation.
 Against this chanter verse.
 He's not the least bit terse.
 His words, they come in a myriad;
 There's hardly room for a period.
 Albeit, I surmise, it's his prerogative.
 If his words, away he wishes to give,
 So, his verbiage I'll not attempt to subjugate,
 For in his heart, verses, he'll just continue to formulate.

-- Patty Warne

"ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE..."

I'm so anxious for Spring;
the warm, pleasant days
we spend outside,
whether working (or playing)
with the horses
or
tossing a baseball
with the boys;
just being as one,
so close
to all of our creatures
is as close to heaven---
the heaven I have in mind---
as I can imagine being.

-- BRENDA GRIMM

HEAVEN

"Daddy, what's heaven like?"
"Heaven is a place high up in the sky
A place where everyone is happy and content
A land in which all your wants are satisfied
A home where we will never feel pain, sorrow, or grief."
"Heaven must be a place where nothing ever happens."

-- Allen Paulsen

MY SON ...

I see Jesus smiling down on you,
I see a halo encircling your head,
I see the angels protecting you
night and day around your bed. . .
You're still so near to heaven
your spot in His garden's still warm,
Yet, you're finally here with me--
my "rainbow" after months of storm. . .
You're the essence of innocence
I've dreamt of so long--
in your dependent sweet weakness
you're so unearthly strong. . .
your soul is so pure
unmarred by sin---
to capture my love
with mere words---
I don't know where to begin!

Oh, my son, how I worship you,
that's all I can say--
the love I hold for you
I pray you sense in some way. . .

-- BRENDA GRIMM



It's early afternoon in the Roodifield household, and Mrs. Roodifield has planned one of those famous coffee parties of hers. Of course she has chosen to invite all those most familiar wonderful old neighbor ladies of hers.

Oh, god, it must be near time for them to come! She's dusted me four times already, and she's loping at me with an old dirty blue cloth right now.

Hey, stop that, don't you know that rubbing my arms that way tickles. I swear, lady, by the time you get done with me my skin will be worn out.

Oh, few, there's the door bell. What do ya know. A thing really can be saved by the bell, ha ha.

Would ya open the door already, I'm dying to find out who it is. Your hair looks fine Mrs. Roodifeild. You keep looking in the mirror and it's going to crack up right before your eyes. Beauty never was one of your strong points, was it?

The door! The door! Answer it already. The bell has rung twice now and you know it is just not polite to leave one of your guests waiting even though I know most of them are just invited because their husbands work with Mr. Roodifield.

Hmm, Hilda Monchy, the first to arrive as always. I think she does this just to see if she can catch you not ready. I wonder what she thinks about people who do the same to her? Probably gets herself ready three, maybe four hours, before it's time for everybody to come, and then sits in front of the door with her hands crossed waiting for the people. Ah, there's the bell again. Answer it. Why it's Dorothy Vandergoody. She's the one you always tell your husband serves the stale bars and cold tea when she has social gatherings. But then, she probably tells her husband the same about yours.

The bell! The bell! Who is it? I can't see, you're in the way. Oh, it's Martha Vonpucky. Dig that red flowered dress she's wearing, must do her shopping at the good will center. Would you get a load of that fur piece and hat? Now that's a sight. It makes me wonder where she dug those up at. They're so old they probably smell like old stale moth balls. You always remark to Mr. Roodifeild how her house smells of moth balls and that by the time you leave you're preserved from a huge herd of moths. I guess she'll never have bugs anyway.

The doorbell again. Hm everybody else is here, so it must be Gertrude Gwen. She is a hefty one, isn't she? I do hope you have enough food because last time you nearly ran short before she got finished, so you had to break into your freezer supply. I do wonder how she got herself into that dress she's wearing. Must have taken a long time to get herself in and get it shut up. She probably shouldn't be made to laugh too hard or breathe in very deeply, or those seams are going to bust. They already seem to be a bit hyperextended.

Oh, dear Lord, she's walking my way. Oh, I can see my life passing before me. I've only got four little legs, lady. Hey look over there, there's plenty of room on the love seat

between Hilda and Dorothy. What did I do to deserve this? I'm too young to die. I don't think there's enough room between my arms for you to fit, lady. Oh, I can't watch.

Ouch! Ouch! Get off! Get off! My legs can't hold you. I'm slipping! Please somebody, help me out! Suggest another chair for her before it's too late. Oh god, don't make her laugh that way; she's making my whole body tremble.

That's it; I can't hold her anymore! There I go! What a way to die!

-- Wanda Carr

POET'S RETORT

Malediction

Is the recrimination
Against this senseless simpleton.
Can't tell a sonnet from a sermon.
His cadenza is remotely artistic,
His elocution sedately didactic.
Hasn't an inkling to make words mesmerize.
And yet, my verses he wishes to bowdlerize.

-- Patty Warne

REFLECTIONS OF ELECTIONS

The world is in tumult.
It there a change in the air?
Someone find the fault.
There are answers; but, who is fair?

Some win, some lose, some abstain
Though they say, "Here's the answer."
To embellish is their game,
And we look, but no one's there.

Their words are heavy,
Their visage contorted.
Are we indifferent? Maybe.
And the groveling? Unreported.

Much is said; little is said.
The taunting's amuck.
"Pull my switch; get me paid."
"I'll be great; you'll be...good luck!"

-- Randy Stratton



Pamela
Lewis '97

