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CONTENTS

Upper Class Section

Patrol Into Fear.....	Kenneth Hopkins	5
The End, <i>a poem</i>	Basil J. Raymond	14
Christmas Fantasy.....	Alice Robertson	15
"Miss Marks Is Dead".....	Shirley Swartz	18
Migraine, <i>a poem</i>	Joan Myers	24
The Sparrow's Fall.....	Emilio Ratti	25
Henry's Birthday.....	Joan Owen	29
"Death of the Hired Man".....	Rosalind Intrater	33
The Observatory, <i>a poem</i>	Claire Gaddy	34
Duty.....	Bruce Hamman	35
The Convict.....	Louise Grigsby	36
The Characteristics of Pulp-Magazine Fiction.....	Tom Pease	39
The Movie, Synthetic Art.....	Ross Lambert	40
Man, the Forgotten.....	Carl W. White	42

Ophelia, <i>a poem</i>	Mary M. Quinnell	45
Listen to Me.....	Barbara Sims	44

Freshman Section

The Garage.....	Richard Hollingsworth	46
I Went on a Diet.....	Jacqueline Thereasa Oliver	47
Cool Waters.....	Janet McCumber	48
Small Town.....	Dick Behan	49
Copernican Unity versus Ptolemaic Discord.....	G. R. Prentice	50
The Snow Phoenix.....	Allen Sutherland	51
Travelers South.....	Leland Baker	52
Places I Should Like to Visit.....	Doris Graham	54
Freshman Turns Cynic.....	Polly Burbank	55
Impressions.....	Adel Fochtmann	56
My Childhood Hero.....	Connie Jenkins	57
My "Third Man Theme".....	Lou Ann Phillips	59
A Childhood Experience.....	Lucy Turecek	60
'Twas the Night Before Finals, <i>a poem</i>	Virginia Lavinder	61

Patrol Into Fear

Kenneth Hopkins

SERGEANT CALDWELL of the third squad sat in the light-proofed hovel which served as the platoon Command Post and watched Lieutenant Quimby across the battered table top poring over the sector map. Every night it was like this, with Quimby scanning the maps like one of the top officers in SHAEF and every night he came up with the same orders—night patrol for the third squad.

The sergeant sat there and looked across the dimly lighted silence at Quimby and wondered if anyone could hate anything like he hated this damned, ersatz shavetail, who always put on the act of being a great strategist and who never came up with an original idea. The sergeant looked at Quimby's forehead and at Quimby's nose which traveled down his face a little to the left of center and at his eyes which seemed to be taking in the map point by point, and the sergeant wondered if Quimby actually spent this interview time every night really studying the maps or if it were not some kind of a war nerves set up to impress the sergeant with the lieutenant's deep thought and dignity. The sergeant wondered how long Quimby had had his bars, and he wondered if he had been a human being before he had become an officer. He suddenly felt the urge to get Quimby stinking drunk and then kick the hell out of him. The idea sounded good to the sergeant and he smiled over the vision of Quimby lying on the ground and yelling quits. That would be rich. He realized that that sort of conduct was not the kind of thing which would be exactly befitting a non-com of the United States Army, but it sure would be a hell of a lot of fun, and over here a guy had to take whatever he could find for amusement. That sure would be a big break in the monotony of this place, getting this gutless Quimby drunk and then knocking the hell out of him. That would be good. Even worth the bust. The sergeant began working out the details, half seriously, in his mind and had decided on cognac as the best tempter when Quimby released his gaze from the map.

"Well, sergeant, you look happy tonight. Everything going well in the third squad?"

"Yes sir."

"Good. Good. I'm going to send you and your men out on another little patrol tonight, sergeant."

Quimby had said those same words every night since the outfit had come up on the line. Every night for the last two weeks this brass bound idiot had taken a half hour or more digesting the map of the area and every night he had come up with this same world shaking conclusion for the activity of the third squad. The sergeant wished Lieutenant Quimby would take his night patrols and go straight to

hell with them. That's what he wished, and he wished there were some loophole in the ruggedness of Army decorum that would let him get away with telling Quimby how he felt.

"Sergeant, this outfit has been damned lucky. We're all as green as grass in this business, and most of our men haven't had the required amount of training in the States and no combat experience at all. We were damned lucky to get pulled up to the line here when this sector was relatively quiet. I hate to think what would have happened if we would have come up when things were really moving."

"Yes sir." The sergeant thought about saying that he had a little trouble seeing how any outfit could be considered lucky to come up to the line at anytime.

"Now we've only been here two weeks and nothing's been going on. But some day things are going to get hot around this sector and we've got a lot of kinks to iron out before that happens. Now I want you to be perfectly frank with me, sergeant. I want you to tell me exactly how you feel about the men in your squad. I want to know if you feel that there should be any changes made in personnel."

"Well, . . ."

"Now before you answer, I want you to momentarily forget all loyalty to your men, and consider this question from the standpoint of bettering the squad. What do you think?"

The sergeant thought the whole damned squad should be sent back to the girl scouts. He even flirted with the idea of suggesting that Quimby get a new squad leader. He said, "Well sir, I don't really know the boys. Only been with them two weeks so far, you know. But I think probably they will all shape up if we can give them enough time."

"Yes. I hope we'll have enough time to give them. Now sergeant, this is no criticism, but the third squad has been consistently assigned night patrols in order to get at least one squad of the platoon developed to the point where they can operate efficiently at night. Of course, we can't expect miracles of the men, but you know the results of the night patrols so far have been pretty negative."

The sergeant wished he could bring himself to ask Quimby to get off his fat ass and come out with the squad some night and show the boys how it should be done. He said, "We've made a lot of mistakes, sir. But the men will snap out of it with a little more experience."

"You have fine confidence, sergeant. I'm sure the third squad will do well. Now for tonight, I understand the Germans are making some kind of an installation in that little grove over to the northeast. Some kind of a CP. Find out what kind it is—artillery or infantry or what—if you can get close enough. And find out how much fire power they are putting around it."

The sergeant wondered why Quimby did not ask him to string a telephone line over so he could interview the German high command by voice.

"And keep an eye on the men. See if you can tell which are just along for the ride."

"Yes sir."

"It's about nine-thirty now. You can move off at twenty-two hundred without any difficulty, can't you?"

"Yes sir, twenty-two hundred." The sergeant got up and started for the doorway which was shrouded in blankets acting as a light lock.

"Oh, and sergeant, we're all in this together, you know. Chin up. Everything will work out." Quimby smiled as if it was a gift.

"Yes sir." Now the bastard was trying to get chummy. Great boy, Quimby. Great.

The sergeant walked out of the CP into the solid blackness of the night and felt the cold mist that oozed out of sky onto his hands and face. He began counting off the hundred and twenty-eight steps that it took to get to his dugout, and the hatred he had developed for this filthy, eternally soggy life in the two weeks he had been on the line, came back to him. He had never told Quimby or the boys of the squad what he felt about the whole deal, but without discussing it with anyone he had come to the conclusion that he was sick and tired of these damned night witch hunts across the mouldy French terrain, and he wished the whole damned Army would go the hell away and let him get a good night's sleep.

He dropped down into the dugout and felt his way over to his corner. He put a match to a cigarette and then held the flame up and looked around.

"Hi, men." There they were, all four of these pretty, young civilians that shared the same dugout and the same squad. There was Beadnell, who had the pasty face of a junior file clerk. There was Jorgensen, the rube who looked as if he should be looking across a plow at the rump end of a team of horses on a Minnesota farm. There was Gallatin, a character who was always waxing academic instead of cleaning his rifle or trying to get a pair of socks dry. And over in the far corner was Kaufman, whom the sergeant had given up trying to figure out. But this wasn't bad enough. The sergeant had to play mother to another dugout full of these cherubic hicks who were also assigned to the third squad.

He said, "Jorgensen, run over to Mac's dugout and tell the boys to get ready for twenty-two hundred. Take all your gear and we'll pick you up over there. Tell him to snap to, we can't keep the Wehrmacht waiting, you know."

Jorgensen squeezed out the doorway and the sergeant leaned back against his blanket roll. He lapsed into bitter reflection. What ever in the hell had made him ask for a transfer out of that stateside training center into a hell hole like this was something that he had been kicking around a lot for the last two weeks. Christ, he must have been nuts. If ever a guy had it made, he sure had back there along

the Jersey coast. It was hard to see now what had made him jolt loose from a deal like that. Just forty-five minutes from the city. What a lush set up that had been. But no, that wasn't good enough for Sergeant Caldwell. He had to go on to greater things. He had to ask for a transfer overseas. He had to participate in the glory of winning the war physically. He had to go and give up a deal like that for a soggy, stinking hole like this. He had to trade his stateside buddies for a bunch of ignorant kids that didn't know enough to stand on the right side of the latrine on a windy night. He began to wonder if he shouldn't have a little talk with the psychiatrist. Just an explanation of the deal would convince anybody that he was nuts.

But then there had been Marie, back there in Jersey. He had not thought much about her when he had started going with her, but then the Sundays at her house became more and more regular and one day the sergeant had realized that she meant more to him than he liked to think about. Marie had not said anything that a guy could exactly put his finger on. She would not have intentionally said anything, even if she would have felt like saying it. But she had a brother out in the Pacific, and somehow the sergeant wondered if maybe the contrast wasn't pretty big. The idea had worked on him too much, and he had given too much thought to it, until one day he went to see the CO about it. From then on there had not been any way back. There had been no chance to say that he had made a mistake, and that he wanted to start all over again back at the training center. It had been a one way squeeze from the port of embarkation through the replacement center and on to the position of squad leader to this sorry bunch of kids. He hoped Marie appreciated it, damn her anyway. And damn her brother too, he was mostly responsible.

The sergeant dragged the last puff out of his cigarette and crushed it out on the floor. The luminous hands of his watch showed about five minutes till ten. He said, "Ok, kiddies, get your rubbers on. It's dampish out and I don't want to have to go home and tell your mammas that you caught your death of cold."

From Kaufman's corner he heard, "Aw lay off, Sarge, we can't be as bad as you're always lettin' on."

"No, Kaufman, Goddam it. That's what I said the first night I took you guys out. I said nobody could be as bad off on night patrols as you guys are."

"Well what the hell do you want? Would it make you happy if we went out and captured a big chunk of the German army? Would that make you happy?"

"You know, Kaufman, this'll be a surprise to you, but I really don't think you'll ever capture a German, unless it's a girl, and she'd have to be under six even then."

"Aw get off my back, Sarge."

"Ok Kaufman, but you haven't heard anything yet. If you pull another deal like that one last week when you let those German scouts

sneak right past the ass end of our patrol, you better give your heart to God because the rest of you is going to belong to me. You think I'm tough on you. You should've heard that bastard Quimby eat me out after that one."

There was silence and the sergeant smiled in the darkness. He would have to remember that Kaufman was sensitive to references to past mistakes. That would be handy whenever Kaufman got smart with him. The sergeant knew that it was easy to let a German sneak right up under your nose in the miserable blackness of these overcast nights, but Quimby had literally blown his stack about those German scouts coming through last week, so what the hell. Besides, this Kaufman needed to be set straight once in a while.

"And now if this cozy little section of the third squad of the beaver patrol is ready, we'll shove off."

The sergeant led the way out of the dugout, and the lightless substance of the French night closed around them, cutting them off from everything but sound. They stood still outside for a moment and listened to what went on. It was quiet. Too quiet, the sergeant thought. The sounds of spasmodic firing came from far to the north, rattling soddenly through the night. The sergeant said in a half-whisper, "Let's go."

They started in the direction of Mac's dugout, keeping track of their positions by the sounds of their footsteps on the wet grass. They hadn't gone quite a hundred feet when they heard Mac's voice, "Here, Sarge."

"Got all your boys here, Mac?"

"Yeh."

"Okay, bring them in close. Now get this. Quimby seems to think we ought to cut out our night time walking exercises and do a little reconnaissance for a change. He hungers for information, and we are elected to get it for him. In short, it would be appreciated by the brass and even a little bit by me if you guys would go out there tonight and keep your eyes and your ears open for a change. Watch for lights and listen for Krauts, and in general act alive for once. Any questions?"

There was no sound and the sergeant wondered what kind of expressions the boys were wearing on their faces. He said, "Everybody ready?"

"Yeh."

"One more thing. Kaufman, you're not worth a damn at the back of the squad. You come up next to me and let Beadnell take the end. Let's go."

The sergeant moved off across the field to the northeast. He could hear the boys coming behind him trying to step quietly on the soggy grass. This was it—another weird walk in the night. Another expedition into God knew what.

The sergeant tried to accustom his eyes to the blackness, but it was no good. He could not even see the end of his rifle. Damn these no good European nights. Damn Quimby and his night patrols. Damn the whole damned war to hell.

It was more than just hatred for the night patrols that got on the sergeant's nerves. If it had been only hatred he might have been able to swear about it enough to lessen that. It was something deeper. The sergeant noticed that his heart always beat faster when he was walking across these uncertain fields with their miserable briar-ridden hedgerows, and it worried him. It was not anything that he knew exactly, but deep inside the sergeant wondered if maybe he was not just plain scared. He did not like to think about that angle, and yet here was something that was not quite right. He did not like to think about himself being a coward—being yellow, but this uneasy feeling that always followed him across the field did not look good and it worried him. He sometimes found himself wondering what he would do if he stumbled into a bunch of Krauts face to face. He wondered if he would freeze in terror, or if he would run away, or if he would yell like a scared kid and make a posthumous ass of himself with the total Allied and German armies for an audience. He wasn't sure what he would do, and thinking about it never seemed to get him any closer to the answer.

Then there were these kids following him. Maybe it was the kids that made him feel this way. This nursemaid duty in a place like this was not the best deal in the world. Maybe if he had a good squad, one that he could have confidence in, he might lose this uneasiness. That must be it. It must be something like that. He had had guts enough to get into this mess just to square himself with Marie, that must prove something.

The sergeant began wondering how far ahead the nearest hedgerow was. It could not be far now. They had come about two hundred yards and fifty more ought to bring them to the hedgerow.

He began counting off the steps, just to see if his calculations were running in good shape. He had not counted more than a half dozen when he heard a sound from up ahead. It sounded as if someone had stumbled into a hedgerow and dropped a rifle. Then it was followed by, "Hundeseele!"

The sergeant stopped in his tracks and crouched. The voice could not have been more than fifty yards away. He listened for the steps of his squad. Everything was quiet. Could it be, he wondered, that these knuckle heads in his squad were getting on the ball? The sergeant listened to his heart pounding against his ribs, and felt the palms of his hands get clammy against the stock of his rifle.

Everything was quiet. Too goddam quiet. Why the hell could not there be a little noise or a little light or a little of both in the world when a guy wanted it so bad. Everything was a nauseating

void except for his heart jerking at the inside of his chest. Then he heard it. The slow squish, squish of steps on the wet grass. Good God, these Krauts were walking right into the squad! He listened again. It sounded like three, not more than four of them. They were getting close. Too close. Too damned close! The sergeant's finger felt along the smooth front of the trigger. He was trying to get his heart to quit pounding long enough to get another good listen when he heard it.

It said, "Wer sind Sie?"

Jesus God, that voice was loud! And it came from right beside his right elbow!

The sergeant's heart clutched at the inside of his neck. He felt a stream of liquid terror flow down his back a foot wide. He crouched there and wanted to turn and look to his right, but he was afraid of bumping into the muzzle of a German gun if he moved. He crouched there in that godawful, death-like silence and felt his heart pound in slow convulsive throbs. Why didn't somebody do something? Why the hell didn't somebody do something?

The footsteps of the Krauts ahead had stopped, and the sergeant started turning over in his mind the puzzle of how the hell one of the bastards could have got so close—right there beside him—without him hearing him. He was working on it there in the silence. He was sweating and thinking, trying to overcome the confusion. This eternal blackness had done it. Too much of this night prowling had cracked him up, had short circuited his faculties. He had almost decided to swing his rifle around to the right and fire point blank, when it came again.

"Wer sind Sie?" It was loud and clear, like it was the only sound in the world. And it came from right beside him like the first time. It gushed into the sergeant's ear and mingled with the blood in his head and flowed away down his spine.

Then he had it. Kaufman! That was Kaufman's voice. Why, that goddamn bone brain was talking to those Krauts out there.

The sergeant started breathing again as the relief swept over him. Then one of the Germans said, "Freunde. Wir haben uns verirrt."

Kaufman said "Einen Augenblick, bitte." Then the sergeant felt Kaufman's hand on his shoulder and heard him whisper, "Keep the squad far enough away so the Krauts won't hear them. I'm goin' to take those boys in."

Kaufman moved away, and the sergeant tried to get his mind working. He was not sure about this deal. He was not sure what a guy was supposed to do in a case like this. He couldn't remember that he had ever read in the book that it was customary to carry on conversations with the enemy on chance encounters like this.

The sergeant heard Kaufman up ahead say, "Folgen Sie mir," and then he heard footsteps going away to the north and then turning westward, back in the direction of the CP. He waited until he

thought they had enough lead and then he moved off after them. He walked a few steps and then he stopped to listen. The boys were coming behind him, and he felt pretty good for a change. These guys were following through just like they had stage directions. Maybe it was not such a bad squad, at that. He walked slowly so as not to gain on Kaufman and the Germans, and he began wondering how the hell Kaufman happened to know how to speak German. That Kaufman was really a mystery. It would not hurt to study up on that guy just to see what makes him tick.

They had gone quite a ways back to the west and the sergeant knew they were passing some of the forward dugouts of the platoon. If Kaufman had not got mixed up in his directions he must be getting in the neighborhood of the CP. And if he had got mixed up, he would sure be in for an interesting night wandering around the sector playing host to a bunch of lost Krauts.

Then the sergeant heard the CP guard up ahead say "Halt."

Kaufman had made it that far without getting shot. This was going to be ticklish. The sergeant didn't go for yelling in places like this at night, but Kaufman was liable to get in a jam otherwise. He cupped his hands toward the CP and said, "Tell them to drop the hardware, Kaufman. We're all around them."

Kaufman blurted German and there was the sound of rifles falling to the ground. That was easy. The sergeant began wondering how the hell those Krauts had fallen for a deal like that. They were either damn stupid or they had come to the point where they were willing. It didn't make sense. Capturing Germans was supposed to be tougher than this.

The guard herded the Germans into Quimby's CP and the sergeant went in after them. Quimby was ecstatic. He kept saying, "Good work, good work, Caldwell," and filling out forms and making arrangements for prisoner escorts. Finally the sergeant turned to go and Quimby said, "Your squad is shaping up. Tell the boys they did great work tonight."

"Yeh, great. If we get three every night the war will be over in a few million years."

"Heh, heh. That's all right sergeant. This is your night. You can afford to be flippant for once."

"Thanks." To hell with this condescending bastard.

"Of course, sergeant, we can't exactly say the mission was accomplished tonight. Unless, that is, these prisoners will spill what we want to know about that new German installation."

The sergeant was getting ready to tell Quimby that if there were to be anymore patrols tonight he would have to do it himself.

Quimby said, "We can wait till tomorrow night, however. You and your boys have done well enough to deserve a little relaxation. Take the rest of the night off and then you'll be good and ready for tomorrow."

"That's what I like about the Army—always something to look forward to."

"You know, sergeant, it's lucky for you that I understand your sarcastic sense of humor. It's very good really. A little trying at times, though. You should try to control it. Someday you might be working under someone who wouldn't understand."

"I'll see what I can do." The sergeant closed the CP door and started for the dugout. He felt pretty good until he remembered how scared he had been when he heard those German words at his elbow. How scared. Yellow. That was it, yellow. He hadn't really realized it before. He had just skirted around it. He had refused to admit it to himself,—refused to face the fact that the uneasy feeling which always dogged him on the patrols came from his being yellow. What would Marie say if she knew it. Maybe she wouldn't think anything about it. Maybe she would say that it was natural for anyone to be scared in situations like that. Maybe she would kiss him and say he was the bravest sergeant in the world. Maybe she would look at it that way and maybe she wouldn't. She might laugh and say she had known it all the time. That she had known he was yellow because he had held onto that stateside training center job when all the real men were out getting themselves shot at long before.

Marie was such a wonderful girl, and probably she would understand. But then there was her brother in the Pacific.

The sergeant slid between the walls of the dugout doorway and hung up his rifle and the rest of the gear before he dropped onto his blankets. Then he said, "Kaufman, how come those Krauts fell for your mouldy German?"

"Mouldy? Why, I got nothin' but the best Hochdeutsch accent. Lived in Munich till I was eight, and my folks talk German all the time at home."

"Well bless your little pointed head."

"Boy we really got on the ball tonight, huh, Sarge? What'd old Quimby say?"

"He said you'd probably replace Eisenhower within a week, that is if they can get you house broke enough to get along in SHAEF."

"Aw, damn it, Sarge. I thought if we went out and did some good for once, you might lay off for a while."

Sergeant Caldwell rolled over and pulled the blanket up around him. He knew he could not lay off. He knew that if a guy that was yellow stopped acting tough, it would not be long before he would not be fooling anyone. And there would be more patrols. There would be tomorrow night and the next night and every night from now on. And he knew that that feeling would be there to haunt him, and that he had to put up a good show. He said, "Why don't you run down to headquarters and see if they have any old medals left. You could hang them on the end of your rifle and scare all the Krauts to death."

"Aw, go to hell."

THE END

Basil J. Raymond

Why have I died,
Half climbed the hill to see the land beyond
While lime-dust dried
My eyes in death, I wide-searching long
To see the end?

Why do I sleep
While comrades over the crest have passed,
Left me to keep
Dead hands that clasp the rifle fast?
Is this the end?

Of those I loved
Across the fires of long ago, I spoke;
Now lips are dumb,
With war the wheel of life is broken
To jagged ends.

I willed to conquer
And took Death's hand to see the land ahead
As others have before.
Do you leave me silent, crouching in a gravel bed,
And to what end?

O God why—why
Must I look up the slope and never see?
Why did I die
Before the land across the hill belonged to me?
To make an end?

Christmas Fantasy

Alice Robertson

JACKIE DROPPED HIS LUNCH pail by the backdoor and picked up the ax from the top of the woodbox. Usually when he came home from school, his mother had to remind him about the woodbox, but today he started off without a single word. It was the week before Christmas and for the very first time, Jackie was going to pick out the Christmas tree by himself.

He had known for a long time which tree he would pick. It was a balsam tree, very tall and very thick with long, graceful branches alternating from each side of the slender trunk in perfect balance. The ground under the tree was covered with moss in the summertime, and it was here that Jackie had made friends with the Squirrel.

Squirrel was not really a squirrel; he was a chipmunk. But Jackie had never seen a chipmunk before the time they met, so he had been a little confused. Squirrel did not seem to mind being called by the wrong name. As a matter of fact, he thought it rather flattering since all the real squirrels he knew had much prettier tails than he.

Jackie and Squirrel had become great friends since that day last summer, and today Jackie hoped to see him and tell him the news about the Christmas tree. When he reached the spot where the great pine tree stood, Jackie looked around for Squirrel and whistled. Suddenly something warm and soft landed on his shoulder and he jumped backwards exclaiming, "Oh, Squirrel.. How you scared me!"

"Ha, ha," laughed Squirrel, showing two large front teeth, "that's just exactly what I meant to do."

Jackie leaned his ax against the tree and sat down cross-legged on the ground.

"Guess what I'm going to do today?" Jackie said excitedly.

"Chop wood, I suppose," Squirrel said crawling down Jackie's arm.

"Yes, I'm going to chop wood. But that's not all. I'm going to cut down our Christmas tree!" Jackie sat up very straight.

"What!" said Squirrel, jumping onto Jackie's knee. "That's going to be great fun. I'll help you find one."

"You don't need to help me. I've already got it all picked out." Jackie paused importantly. "I'm going to cut down this very tree for Christmas, and my father is going to come and drag it to our house."

Squirrel hopped to the ground and ran excitedly around the trunk of the tree. "No, no, no," he chattered stopping in front of Jackie. "You can't cut down this tree."

"I bet I can," Jackie laughed.

"Oh, dear, oh dear, oh dear. This is terrible, simply terrible." Squirrel ran up one side of the tree and down the other.

"I do wish you would stop running around like that," Jackie pleaded. "Please sit down and tell me *what* is terrible." Squirrel ran up the tree again and sat on a branch above Jackie's head.

"Well, you see," he said, curling his tail around him, "this is the animals, Christmas tree. Every year all the animals in the woods bring things to hang on the tree and then we have a wonderful party on Christmas day with lots of nuts and everything."

"That sounds very nice," Jackie said sadly. "But I would like to have this tree for my own Christmas."

"Oh dear, oh dear. Surely you can find some other tree to suit you." Squirrel scampered out to the end of the branch and back to the trunk again.

"No, Squirrel," Jackie shook his head, "there isn't another tree like this one in the whole woods."

They sat silently for several minutes and Squirrel tried to think how angry the other animals would be if they knew that Jackie was trying to take their Christmas tree.

"I know what!" Jackie said jumping up. "I'll take the Christmas tree home, and you can all come to my house for a party on Christmas day."

"That will never do, never do," Squirrel shook his head. "I'm sure the fireflies wouldn't come so far in the cold, and you can't have a Christmas tree without fireflies to light it up."

"That's no reason," Jackie said defiantly. "You can't fool me. There aren't any fireflies in the wintertime."

"Why of course there are, Jackie. Just because you don't see them doesn't mean they're not still around. They sleep all winter just like bears do, but all the animals come out on Christmas day. Goodness, I don't know what we'd do without the fireflies."

"Well, if they wake up on Christmas day, they can just come to my house to see the tree," Jackie stamped his foot.

"But the animals wouldn't be happy away from the woods, Jackie, and besides, there are far too many of us to get in your house. No, you'll just have to find another tree."

"I think you're awfully mean." Jackie began to cry. This was just too much for Squirrel. He couldn't stand to see people cry (or

animals either, for that matter), especially Jackie, since he was his very best friend. But he couldn't let Jackie have the Christmas tree either because the animals would have no place to have their party. Then he got a wonderful idea.

"Come along, Jackie. I want to show you a tree as pretty as this one, only it's not quite so big."

Jackie nodded his head and shuffled after Squirrel through some bushes.

"There it is!" Squirrel ran up the trunk of a little tree not much taller than Jackie. It was almost exactly like the big tree except that it came to a very sharp point on top.

"Oh," said Jackie cautiously walking around the tree. "It is awfully pretty."

"Yes," Squirrel nodded. "And you could drag this one home yourself."

"Uh, huh. And I could reach high enough to put the star on top, too." Jackie hesitated. "But I don't know . . ."

"I'll tell you what! Why don't you come to the animals' party on Christmas day and see the big tree with all the hollyberries and nuts on it. I'm sure the other animals would be glad to have you."

"Ho, that would be wonderful!" Jackie began to hop up and down excitedly, because he loved parties.

Jackie and Squirrel went back through the bushes to the animals' Christmas tree to get the ax. They chopped down the little tree and Jackie took it home and trimmed it all by himself.

On Christmas morning, he got up early and combed his hair very carefully. He hurried to the woods and ran down the path to the big tree. When he reached the edge of the clearing, he saw Squirrel running from one side of the tree to the other, shouting instructions to the fireflies and directing the birds in the arrangement of berries and long strings of colored leaves. Jackie watched for a long time before Squirrel noticed him.

"Oh, here you are." Squirrel danced around him. "I want you to meet all my friends." He introduced Jackie to the rabbits first, but Jackie couldn't remember any of their names because they looked so much alike. Then he met the tree animals, and the birds, and said hello very shyly to the bear who yawned and rubbed his eyes sleepily. Jackie was given the seat of honor on the back of a very old moose with a great beard of wrinkled skin and from there he watched the party under the animals' Christmas tree.

"Miss Marks Is Dead"

Shirley Swartz

PATTY STARED at the evening paper again. There it was, just as it was five minutes ago. It was true then. The accident that Larry had seen was Miss Marks'. The paper did not say all the things that Larry had seen, just, "Miss Lucinda Marks, 25, popular teacher at Miss Nobbs' School for Girls, died today in a traffic accident on U. S. 40. There are no survivors."

Patty quickly went to the telephone, tears shining in her eyes.

"Hello, Buns . . .

"I have something to tell you, Buns.

"Oh, you read it in the paper. Honestly, Buns, it was awful. I wanted to be the first to tell you. Larry saw it on his way home. He said they were just taking her away in the ambulance and the car was just a shambles.

"I can see her right now, just like she was at the class picnic yesterday. It's funny, but you know how she always gave the 'honk'? Remember—yesterday she forgot to honk when she left, just as if she knew! Oh, Buns, it's simply awful!

"It doesn't seem possible that she's . . . I know what friends you two were. Everybody always said how great it was, since you'd never liked school. Jenny Lou said it was because you were 'twins,' but I told her, and she needs to be told, well. . . . I told her that you liked Miss Marks because she was the only person who had ever been interesting enough herself to make school interesting. And. . . .

"You know, it was funny how much you two looked alike, even acted alike. That was the first thing everyone said when she started in at Nobbs' this year. You two could have been sisters. . . .

"We *all* will miss her like crazy. She's the nicest person we've ever had on the faculty. Listen, Buns, she didn't suffer. The car

rolled and threw her out. Crushed her skull before she could realize what had happened. Her arms and one leg were torn off after . . .

"Buns . . . Buns . . . She hung up."

* * *

Christena Bundy put the telephone receiver slowly into its cradle, walked into the bathroom, and became very ill. She clung weakly to the wash basin, her mouth burning and acrid. Looking into the mirror, she remembered the first day of the school year at Miss Nobbs' School for Girls. She had walked into her Analytic Geometry class, looked at the new math teacher, and felt as if she were looking into a mirror. Lucy Marks' warm, brown eyes showed recognition; both of them had stared at each other. That was the start of it all.

Christena went back into her room and, sitting down on the bed, took a hidden package of cigarettes from a drawer, and lighted one of the white cylinders. This was the last pack of cigarettes that Lucy had ever given her. She had never smoked before knowing Lucy, and she really did not like it much. There were, after all, so many things that Lucy had taught her that she wished she had never learned.

The smoke from the cigarette curled gently above Christena's head, making airy loops and irregular circles. Suddenly Lucy Marks' face appeared in the smoky haze—smiling, taunting, angry, crying, pleading. All the poses she had ever used. Christena was glad that Lucy had not persuaded her to go driving with her today. She would have been lying, just like Lucy, with her head smashed and arms and legs lying all over the highway, the car they always used crumpled in a tinny heap.

She knew her mother had wondered. She had even heard her talking to her father. "It isn't normal, I tell you, Harold. It just isn't natural. Something is going on."

"You old fool," she had said silently to her mother, many times. "Just like a parrot, 'Where've you been. Where've you been. Where've you been.'"

She could see her mother did not believe her when she made up excuses. "Lie" was stamped across her mother's eyes. Christena knew her mother hated her. She hated her mother, too. She never took her any place with her. At least, Lucy had taken her places. They had gone all the places that her mother would never take her. Lucy had love. . . .

The face in the smoke smiled, she seemed to be saying, "No one will ever know. Just you and I." Christena had heard that so many times. Now no one would know. Not anyone, Lucy could never tell.

Christena smiled as she ground the cigarette out in the ash tray. "I don't give a damn," she said to herself. That was what Lucy had always said was the best policy. The smoke and its picture dissolved and Christena crushed the cigarette package and threw it into the waste basket.

Jenny Lou Kincaid walked into the library and casually announced to her mother, "Miss Marks got killed."

Her mother looked up from the book she was reading and said, "Really? How?"

"Car accident. Tried to pass another car on the wrong side and hit a concrete something-or-other at the side of the road. Arms and legs cut off. Head smacked in."

"Dear! Who was she now?"

"Oh . . . my math teacher."

"Weren't you having some trouble or other in math?"

Jenny Lou hesitated, and then nodded her head. She then walked slowly from the room, humming softly. Her mother looked after her, wondering vaguely what was wrong with her daughter.

Jenny Lou went into the kitchen and fixed herself a 'Coke.' She thought momentarily that she should call someone and find out more about Miss Marks, but instead, she took her drink and went out onto the front porch. It was cool in the shade of the porch awning, and Jenny Lou sipped the Coke and thought how glad she was that graduation was the day after tomorrow.

Now she would graduate. It was nice to be sure of things. Tomorrow would have been a bad day, but everything would be fine now. It had been perfectly awful when Miss Marks had found out about the final. Jenny Lou reminded herself that it was her own fault for putting the crib sheet in the waste basket in Miss Marks' room. Still, if Miss Marks hadn't been so snoopy, she wouldn't have found it and then there wouldn't have been all the trouble.

Miss Marks should have known that she would not pass that Analyt course without a crib. Jenny Lou almost thought that Miss Marks did not want her to get out of high school. Jenny Lou visualized herself sitting in Miss Marks' class, still trying to pass, when she had grey hair. No, that crib was the only way. Today was the day that Miss Marks was going to speak to Miss Nobbs. She was probably on her way into town to tell Miss Nobbs when. . . .

Jenny Lou smiled to herself and finished her Coke.

* * *

Mrs. Edward Sylvester read the death notice with a great deal of shock and more relief. Sistie would not have that woman any more now and Edward . . .

Had Edward? No, it was unthinkable! She'd never know now. Or was this the way to know definitely. Men are so foolish, Mrs. Sylvester reasoned. But Edward had always been so stable . . . until she had come to Miss Nobbs'.

Edie Sylvester rearranged the folds of her dressing gown, popped another chocolate into her mouth, and refused to think about it any

more. A cold, a terrible summer cold, was enough to worry the life out of a person for one day.

But the newspaper lay there in her lap and the name of Lucinda Marks was printed on it, black and unforgettable. Edie Sylvester sighed shudderingly and resigned herself to thinking about that "awful woman."

She hated it so when everyone on the Mother's Council called her a "wonderful girl," and "such a good teacher." "Good teacher," yes, probably taught Edward a thing or two.

It was strange. She had always wanted Edward to get on the Board of Trustees at Nobbs', and then he had been elected the year that She came to Nobbs'. Of course, it *was* perfectly impossible to think that Edward would ever stoop to . . . well, "carrying on," with some dried-up old school teacher.

Still, it was strange that he seemed so co-operative now, so willing to take Sistie to school in the morning, getting up at that ungodly hour, and to pick her up in the evenings. He'd been gone in the evenings too much, too. "Trouble with the tax reports." What a foolish excuse. Men were so stupid, basically.

Then that one awful parent-teacher meeting. Oh God, how everyone persecuted her. The way that they looked at each other, it seemed, well . . . *no* one's imagination was that good. Even her's. But when she had called Edward "Ed." Then the blushes, and stammerings, and apologies and excuses. No wonder she had had one of her migraines. God, God, the trials of being a good, faithful wife. All twenty years of marriage, and then this was her thanks for all she had done for Edward.

As long as they had been married, she had never called Edward Sylvester—"Ed." And then to have that nervy little . . . No, it was simply unthinkable.

Edward was the only thing that had ever belonged to her. Her clothes, her home, her furnishings, even her coiffure she had never been able to call her own. First it was her parents, they had owned everything, then Edward. But she owned Edward. Even Sistie had always called herself "Daddy's little girl." Edward was hers, though. All hers . . . until this year, and then She had to come along and . . .

Now Edward was hers again. There was no Lucinda Marks any more.

Mrs. Edward Sylvester smiled as she heard her husband's voice in the lower hall. She arose from her bed of pain, went to the door, and called sweetly down to him, "Edward, darling, come here. I have something to show you."

* * *

Miss Emily Wilkes read the small announcement in the death notices in the evening paper. She brushed a wisp of white hair back into place and picked up the tatting on which she had been working

before the paper had been delivered. The thread pulled tighter and tighter, and finally Miss Emily returned the work to her lap and put a hand in front of her eyes.

Miss Emily could not hold a grudge, no matter what had been done to her, and she felt pity for the young teacher. She had been young, as Miss Emily had been reminded many times.. A very brilliant young woman. Lovely, too. Miss Emily shook her head slowly as she remembered all the things that Miss Nobbs told her that Miss Marks had said.

All that had happened seemed to be so long ago. Miss Emily thought that this, her first year in retirement, had been a long one. All the angry words of last fall returned to Miss Emily's ears and made her head ache.

"She's too old." ". . . give the children a chance . . ." "out-lived her usefulness." "Outmoded methods," "Children haven't learned a thing for years."

That was not true. She had always given all the girls as much knowledge of mathematics as any text that had ever been printed. They liked her, and she liked them. She had never flunked anyone, even though she knew some of them would never have passed if she had not looked through the wrong side of her glasses.

Sixty-seven wasn't so old. Miss Emily did not feel old. Maybe with the young teacher gone. . . .

Miss Emily smiled and picked up her tating again. She must remember to call Miss Nobbs the first thing in the morning.

* * *

The last rays of the early summer's sun were fading into the shadows on the stack of letters on Miss D. Helen Nobbs' desk. Miss Nobbs locked the door of her study and turned on her desk lamp. She did not feel as if she were really prying, she felt it her duty to inspect the late Miss Marks' letters and to discover if there was anyone to whom she could send condolences.

The short notice in the paper had read "no survivors," but surely there must be someone. Miss Marks had been a very solitary person though, Miss Nobbs recalled. None of the faculty had been close to her. In fact, the students had been her most constant companions. The little Bundy girl especially had worshipped Miss Marks.

Miss Nobbs sighed and untied the tidy bundle of letters that she had found in Miss Marks' bureau. The first one was addressed to "Lucy Marks" at the school. Miss Nobbs had not seen Miss Marks take much mail from her private box, but then, Miss Marks did not confide in any of the staff.

The first letter was from a young man named "Jack" and begged "Lucy darling" to marry him. It was dated at the opening of the school term. Miss Nobbs felt very guilty, but she reminded herself

that Miss Marks would probably appreciate someone's writing to her dear ones.

The second was from "Jack" also. It was dated two weeks later, and contained many references to "Buns," who Miss Nobbs deduced must be Christena Bundy. Again the young man asked "Lucy" to marry him. Miss Nobbs smiled when the young man made allusion to "frustrated school teachers in a damned nunnery for females." Obviously Miss Marks had refused him. Near the end of the letter there was a passage alluding to her as "Delilah," and Miss Nobbs blushed angrily, for she had always guarded the inappropriate name from being known, even to her staff.

The third letter was short. It was from the same man again, and dated only several days after the second letter. All that letter said was that Jack was leaving for South America and would never see Miss Marks again. There was one sentence that puzzled Miss Nobbs considerably. It read, "You'd better leave, Lucy, before someone finds you out for the phony you are, as I have."

The sentence made no sense to Miss Nobbs at all. She could not imagine what the young man meant. Miss Marks had been such a fine young person. It was strange too that he should change his mind that way when he had wanted to marry her so.

Miss Nobbs cleaned her glasses and picked up the fourth letter in the stack. This could not have been Miss Marks'. It was addressed to a "Miss Lucille Marcus." But the address was the school's. The greeting read "My dearest daughter." Miss Nobbs stopped. The paper had said that there were no survivors and when Miss Marks had applied for the position, her references had said "Parents deceased." Miss Nobbs felt one of her headaches coming on.

The letter read:

"My dearest daughter,

"I know you have asked us not to write to you at your school, but now I have to. Your papa is very ill, like the last time. Doctor Rosenbloom says he won't live the week. He calls for you all the time in his delirium.

"I could not tell him that you said for us never to write to you again. He don't understand that you are a young lady now. It is a good feeling to me that you can get a job in a fancy big school with all those high-class people.

"In your letter you said you would never come home again, but please, Lulu. Papa is dying, and the only thing in the world that he wants is to see you again. Get leave of absence. Please come home and make Papa happy, for you . . ."

Miss Marks had never asked for leave of absence. She had even stayed at the school during Christmas vacation. Miss Nobbs definitely had one of her headaches. She turned out the lights, leaving the letters on the desk, and went up to her room to prepare a memorial service for Miss Lucinda Marks . . . or was it Miss Lucille Marcus.

MIGRAINE

Joan Myers

My brain is but
An infinite small grain
Of sand, upon which sea snakes
Coil their weight
Of writhing tentacles.
Waves of pain
Dash it on the shore
Then snatch it back
With vicious might
To hurl me shoreward,
Seaward, shoreward again.

My brain is the grain of sand
That in the oyster of my flesh
Grows into a pearl.
But the flesh must needs at times
Reject the jewel.
Here it lies on the barren shore
Until a stone, careless of the gem,
Crushes it;
The glittering bits lie on the shore
Waiting for the winds to come
And blow about the broken
Fragments of pain.

Winds blow, and wash the grain
Clean as the sharp edge of pain.

The Sparrow's Fall

Emilio Ratti

THIS WAS IT, the last mission! As Bill crawled into the cockpit the thought ran through his mind again and again. The last one! His orders should come in on the noon flight from headquarters. That was what the adjutant had said. Well, it was too bad that there was an escort mission before then—but it should be easy. The bombers were hitting Buka, and, although it was a long flight for a “38,” it wasn’t *too* far. . . .

Bill checked his equipment and looked around the cockpit. The notes on his knee pad were the usual ones; he would need to refer to them in flight: Time for starting engines, take-off, rendezvous with the bombers, time over target and estimated time of return. He looked over the list quickly, but hesitated as he read the last line. “Estimated time enroute . . . 4:30. Fuel limit . . . 5:00.” “Not much time left over if we see any real action,” he thought. “But what the hell, here goes.”

Along the line of revetments, planes came to life. Starters whined and engines coughed into action. Bill started his engines with practiced ease and set the throttles for 100 RPM to keep the plugs from getting fouled. He watched his hack-watch carefully, knowing that it was timed exactly with the watches in all the other cockpits on the field. When the time came, he taxied out of the revetment into his usual place in the line of planes that was filing past toward the run-up blocks. It was the same routine he had gone through more than eighty times in the islands and so many times in the States. He went through each procedure like an automaton, carefully and accurately—and almost unthinkingly.

The planes warmed up in turn on the run-up blocks and taxied to the take-off point. There they waited, and in each ship there was a young man, very much like Bill, bending over his watch or eyeing his instruments anxiously. Soon they all straightened up. It was H-hour, on which their complete time-table hinged. One by one, they taxied onto the runway and took off.

Bill’s time was H plus 3. His was the fifth plane to take to the air. He moved onto the runway as number four moved off. Then,

after carefully counting off thirty seconds, he shoved the throttles firmly but slowly forward. Just as soon as his airspeed indicator reached 120 he moved the gear lever to the "Up" position. His wheels retracted while his plane was still on the ground, and he pulled up only after the gear was almost retracted and his airspeed was 140.

Climbing quickly, he found his place in the formation that was circling the field. As soon as they were all in position they arrowed away to the northwest, toward Japanese-held territory. After climbing to 10,000 feet they leveled off, low enough so that they would not need to use their oxygen masks and yet high enough so that a short climb would let them catch up with the bombers that had to labor slowly up to the assigned altitude.

It was a beautiful, clear day and the pursuit ships flew along at an economical speed, for there was no rush about the rendezvous with the bombers. If necessary, the big ships would wait for them. In the first place, they wanted an escort whenever they could get one. Besides, they had all the gas they could use and the time schedule allowed plenty of leeway for making up the few minutes that might be lost.

The big planes did not have to wait, for they spotted the smaller ships coming and started away toward the target, knowing the pursuits could easily see them and catch up. As they overtook the heavies, the fighters broke up into two-plane elements, and scissored back and forth over the formation of bombers in order to stay close to them without moving ahead of them. They could not fly as slowly as the bombers without losing gas efficiency.

"Those poor devils that got stuck in bombers," Bill thought to himself. "They don't get a chance to have any fun at all. Even in combat they have to think about their crew. If they want to cut loose they have to come over to our field and beg a plane they can do it in. They sit there for ten hours at a stretch, heaving those airborne cows around in formation. There's only one thing worse, and that's transport." He thought about this for a while as he weaved back and forth, back and forth over the bomber formation. Then he smiled. "If Betty's plans are as complete as she says they are, I might try to get a transport job if I can. Why, by God, this is the last one! In a matter of days, I'll be married—a family man. Got to settle down. Can't expect a girl to put up with a guy who takes too many chances. Betty'd understand, of course—she's that kind. Yeah, that will be the life. I'll log plenty of hours, sitting back in a plush seat while 'Iron Mike' flies the plane."

Bill's attention was brought back to the present when he realized that they were starting in on the run. The bombay doors were open and the formation seemed to writhe as the pilots tried to stay in close and still keep their bombardiers happy. Guiltily, he scanned the sky for enemy planes. According to Intelligence, they should be out in

force and Bill was not the type that leaves such essential cautiousness to others.

He was not disappointed. Coming up from Bonis, right across the strait from Buka, there was a swarm of them. They stood on their tails as they climbed steeply to meet the raiders. It was a formidable welcoming committee. Quickly, Bill switched his guns from "Safe" to "Fire" and charged them. Then he made an "S" turn in order to approach with the sun at his back.

The Japs headed for the bombers, moving in quickly before the bombs could fall on their comrades. Bill dived to intercept them before they could accomplish their purpose. His wingman pulled up nose to nose with him. Bill could see him straining forward in the cockpit, intent on his target.

"Nice guy," thought Bill. "Eighth mission. God, if he only knew what was ahead of him. I'd hate to have it to look forward to, myself. Oh well, it's all over for me. This is the last one. Say! That Nip there ahead might make number four. He's just sitting there waiting for me. Hope he doesn't look around in time." He pressed the trigger stud and watched his tracers strike home in the enemy plane. He held the trigger down until the Jap started to smoke, then let up and pressed down again. With an orange flash, the Jap plane blew up. Bill ducked as he passed through the smoke that marked the remains of the enemy.

Then the world became a wheeling, swirling panorama. One after another, big, red "meat balls" flashed across his sights and he fired again and again. Sickening black-outs closed his eyes as he twisted and dived. Whenever possible, he looked around for the bombers and worked over toward them. His mission was to protect them. The world was a nightmare of red tracers and flashing wings, intricately interwoven with thin tendrils of smoke and silver vapor trails. He had become a flying, fighting machine.

Suddenly, he was conscious that the enemy planes were gone. He looked around and saw that they were far away from the target and one of the bombers was missing from the formation. Ponderously, the other ships moved up to fill in the gap. Bill wondered fleetingly when it had gone down. He had not noticed. He realized that he had been so absorbed in the fight that he had seen nothing of what had happened. Glancing quickly at his watch, he found that it had been ten minutes since he had made his kill. Then he looked around for stragglers. There were none. He relaxed.

"Bill, look out!"

He turned and caught a glimpse of a Jap plane, fire flickering along its wing. A neat line of holes stitched into the fuselage across the cockpit. Bill gasped and threw his head back, pain racking his body. Blood gushed into his mask from lips bitten through. He felt as if he had been kicked in the stomach. His vision dimmed and he stared at the instrument panel through reddening eyes. Perspira-

tion ran from his forehead into his eyes and added its sting to the all-consuming anguish he felt. He vomited into his mask.

Struggling, he opened his eyes wide and looked out. He was in a steep diving turn. Slowly he pulled out, grimacing as the extra gravity tugged at his wounded intestines. He shook his head to clear it and pressed his mike button.

"Gem one from ruby three, over."

"Gem one. Roger, over."

"I think I got pinked, sir. Request permission to proceed alone."

"Roger, Bill. Go ahead. Williams, you ride herd on him."

Bill fumbled for his first-aid kit and took out some bandages. Tearing his flying jumpers apart, he looked at the two blue holes in his left side. Blood oozed slowly from them and ran down into the bucket seat under him, soaking his parachute. He placed a bandage over each hole in turn and straightened up. A surette of morphine was in his hand, and he fingered it uncertainly as he looked over to his right where his wing-man, Williams, was flying close by. Putting the surette away, he waved and tried to smile. "Lucky the mask is over my face," he reflected, then turned to the serious business of trying to keep his plane straight and level. To all outward appearances, he succeeded, but it was a struggle to keep awake. The growing pool of blood on the floor and in his seat worried him. There was little pain now, only a numb feeling that seemed to creep up from his stomach into his chest, making his breathing painful. Several times he shook his head to clear it. The drone of his engines lulled him and he wanted nothing more than just to let himself slip off to sweet slumber. He removed his mask gratefully when he had descended to breathable air. Lighting a cigarette, he sucked on it greedily.

Time passed with dragging feet. Each turn of the propellers seemed an eternity and he watched the slow motion of the water sliding past under his wings. One hour, one and a half. Now the time had come to look for home. Visibility was still good and ahead, about fifty miles away, he could see the home island. He threw his head back and pushed himself upright from the slump he had unconsciously assumed when he was hit. This started a fresh spurt of blood and he felt the warmth again, trickling down his side. He tried to look up but an intolerable weight pulled his head down again. He lifted it once more, sobbing with the effort. It was no use. With one last effort, he raised his head enough so that he could look over at Williams. He waved—and then blackness engulfed him. He slumped.

"I thought he was reaching over to check his gear lever, honest. Then he dived straight in. Tough. It was his last mission." Williams rose and wandered over to the snack counter to get some coffee. The intelligence officer nodded slowly and made a note on the pad before him.

Henry's Birthday

Joan Owen

TODAY HENRY NOTLITTLE was thirty-one. As soon as he opened his pale eyes that was the thought that washed over him. No longer was he a roaring twenty nor had life yet begun, but there was something special about this birthday.

"Happy Birthday, Henry," growled a deep voice from near the window.

"What, what—where, who . . .?" stuttered poor Henry as he bolted out of bed in his baby blue, broadcloth pajamas.

"I said happy birthday, Henry," boomed the voice.

"But who are you? What are . . .? Where are . . .? How . . .?"

"Just a minute, my boy. Give me time to explain. I'm your great-great-great-great-grandfather. You can call me G.G. for short."

"But how . . .?"

"Take it easy, son. When I was thirty-one I made a rash deal with a certain famous but disreputable gentleman. For some small deliberate oversights I was granted one wish—mine was to return in the twentieth century and each century after to view a male Notliddle of that time on his thirty-first birthday. This century it's you."

"But how . . .?"

"Tarnation, Henry. I can't reveal my professional secrets even to a relative. So forget the whys or I'll be forced to leave with a very bad opinion of this century's male Notliddle."

"But I don't see . . ."

"That's not important. I can see you and I can carry out my investigation better when you're the only one who can hear me. But now to more important matters."

"I don't quite understand, sir," began Henry.

"You aren't supposed to. But I've been watching you, son. And I'm sorry to see the fire and brimstone has gone out of the male Notlittles. I'm here to help put some of it back. Now get up and let's start movin'."

"Yes, sir," murmured Henry as he meekly arose and began to remove his pajamas.

"What'n the land ya doing? Folding up your night clothes?"

"Yes, sir, I always . . ."

"I don't care about that. There's a gal to clean up the apartment, isn't there?"

"Yes sir, but . . ."

"But nothing. Sling those clothes on the floor and let her earn her wages."

"Yes, sir," said Henry and sling he did as best he knew how.

"Well, that's not too good," growled G.G. "But I guess it'll have to do."

By now, Henry was putting on his dark suit, customary white shirt, and black tie.

"Lorda mighty, where ya goin'? To a funeral?"

"No," said Henry sharply. (That is, it was sharply for Henry.) "I'm going to the office."

"Muddy boots and rusty rifles," bellowed G.G. "Put on some gear with some fire in it."

Suddenly the clothes in Henry's closet began to sway crazily. At last a blue shirt jumped out and hung suspended in the air.

"Wal, this is a little better. Where'd ya get it?"

Henry sank limply down on his bed and mumbled, "The girls at the office—my birthday present last year."

Finally, Henry was dressed and shaved to meet G.G.'s approval. This included using some of the shaving lotion the office had given him year before last. Henry had never dared to use it before.

As they were leaving the apartment building, Mrs. Lotsup, the landlady, called a hearty good morning from the first floor window. Henry looked up, stumbled, and muttered something which left her looking puzzled. Immediately Henry's ear began to twitch.

"Ouch, oh," he cried, "let go."

"Not until I teach you how to greet the public. Why didn't you wave back and speak up from your stonick? We Notlittles never been known as sissy britches and you aren't going to spoil the record."

The elevator boy at the office greeted Henry cheerily. And after one severe ear tweak, Henry responded with such unusual energy that the boy kept sniffing to see if he'd been drinking. But Henry thought he was admiring his shaving lotion and resolved to wear it more often. As he stepped into the long ante-room, choruses of "Hi Henry," "Morning Henry," and a giggled "Lover" rushed out to meet him. Henry smiled anemically and stumbled into his private cubicle as if he'd been booted from behind. And he had been. The door slammed and G.G. let fire.

"Why didn't ya joke and talk to those gals? They'll treat ya like a ninkapoop if you act like one. You're the office manager. Demand a little respect. 'Mr. Notlittle' and 'sir,' not 'Henry.'"

"Yes, sir," began Henry.

"There ya go again. Isn't there any man in that frame of yours?"

At ten o'clock Miss Lofing came in for dictation.

"Hi, Henry, I brought some flowers for your desk." She put them down by the calendar.

"Oh you ah really . . ." Tweak went the ear, and a heavy book fell out of the shelf on his finger. "Ouch, I mean. Would you call . . .?" Tweak, slam. "From now on address me as Mr. Notlittle," Henry ordered in a surprised voice. Miss Lofing dropped her dictation book so astonished was she at her employer's behavior.

"Oh dear, I mean . . ." Tweak, slam. "I mean I don't want you sitting out there talking when I buzz either. Come immediately

or I'll . . ." His voice trailed off weakly. As Miss Lofing saw the book falling for the fourth time, she dropped her pencil and rushed out.

G.G. roared and slapped his knees, or so it sounded, as Henry sat there rubbing his ear and hand alternately.

"Hi ho, Henry. I knew you'd do it. And say, that little gal's kinda cute and I think she's sort of sweet on you. She did bring you some flowers."

"Well, she is rather nice," admitted Henry. "But I know she'd never look at me."

"She will if you'd show some interest. Now let me see. Don't buzz her. Just sit here and yell for her."

"But . . . oh, no don't, I'll do it. Miss Lofing."

"Louder, Henry."

"*Miss Lofing.*"

"Louder."

"MISS LOFING."

The door banged open and in ran the little blonde.

"Oh, what's wrong, Henry? I mean Mr. Notlittle. Is something hurting you?"

"Oh, no . . . I ah just wanted to make sure you'd come quickly. You may go."

Looking puzzled and very surprised, she backed out of the office.

"Jumpin' grasshoppers. Why'd you send her away?" snapped G.G.

"I didn't know what to do. . . . You said call her and that was all."

"Tumblin' tumbleweeds son—can't you carry a little bit of brain in that skull of yours? Ask her out for lunch and then take the rest of the afternoon off. Live, son, live. That's one thing we Notlittle's always practiced."

"Well, I'll try."

"Okay, now, call her again."

"Miss Lofing."

"Louder, Henry."

"*Miss Lofing.*"

"Louder."

"MISS LOFING."

"OH, yes, Mr. Notlittle. Right here," she puffed.

"Well, I ah have to have you eat with me this noon. Business discussion . . ."

"Sts." A hiss came from near the desk.

"Ouch," yelled Henry grabbing his ear. "I mean I want you to have lunch with me today."

"Oh, Henry, . . . I mean Mr. Notlittle, I'd love to."

"Well, I'll ah stop at your desk at noon."

"The afternoon, afternoon," a piercing whisper prompted.

"Will that be all?" asked Miss Lofing as she paused with her hand on the door knob.

"Oh, yes, I mean no, ah. I say I think we ah should take the afternoon off, too. Don't you? You know we could talk about ah the office. . . ."

"Oh, that would be nice. Thank you," said Miss Lofing and then she closed the door behind her.

"Well, son, I think there might be some hope for you." This time the voice came from up near the ceiling. But immediately after, Henry was soundly thumped on the back.

At five minutes of twelve, Henry began to get cold feet.

"G.G. I can't go."

"Oh, yes you can and you are, too. Especially since I have taken all this trouble to get you goin' in the right direction. I didn't make this trip back here for nothin', you know."

"But G.G. I . . ."

"Put on your coat."

"But G.G. . . . oh, no, not my ear again. I'll go but . . ."

"Now, get out there and give that little gal a thrill."

"I can't."

"Oh, yes you can."

"But G.G. . . ."

Suddenly, the door to Henry's office opened and Henry somersaulted out as if he'd been kicked from behind. Everyone in the office looked very surprised, but Henry. And as he flew through the air in the general confusion, he heard a familiar voice.

"Carry on, Henry, and happy birthday."

"Death of the Hired Man"

Rosalind Intrater

THERE IS SO MUCH of New England in Robert Frost and he has put so much of it into his poetry that, although he was born in California and first won literary notice in Britain, New England has claimed him as her own poet-laureate.

One of his best known poems of New England, "The Death of the Hired Man," is a narrative in dialogue, told simply, with the restraint that marks all of Frost's poetry. He seems never to make the mistake of telling too much or "over-writing"; he suggests all without telling all. Three people are portrayed in the poem: a farmer, his wife, and an old farm-hand, shiftless and proud. It is one of the poem's subtleties that Silas, the character most fully revealed, is the one who never makes direct contact with the reader.

The dialogue throughout is completely natural and unaffected—the plain talk of farm people, the idiom of everyday conversation, manipulated into poetry of vigor and cadence. Frost succeeds in retaining realism while avoiding coarseness—a reflection of the attitude he expresses when he says: "There are two types of realists. There is the one who offers a good deal of dirt with his potato to show that it is a real potato. And there is the one who is satisfied with the potato brushed clean. I am the second kind. To me, the thing that art does for life is to clean it, to strip it to form."

From the statement of the title to the last line of the poem, Frost is direct and sincere. He makes no attempt to herald the tale with elaborate symbolism or metaphor. When we read the title we know that we are going to hear about the death of the hired man; and then we are told just that. At the end Frost does not leave us with vision of a disembodied soul trailing clouds of glory through the firmament. We are confronted by the unavoidable fact that the hired man is dead—a fact simply to be accepted, as death itself is to be accepted.

Despite its plainness, the poem does not lack beauty. Frost's descriptions are eloquent and vivid without being pretty, as in the lines in which he describes the scene on the porch steps of the farmhouse:

Part of a moon was falling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.
Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw it
And spread her apron to it. She put out her hand
Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with dew from garden bed to eaves,
As if she played unheard some tenderness
That wrought on him beside her in the night.

Or when Frost tersely sums up the tragedy of the hired man's life:

Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
 And nothing to look backward to with pride,
 And nothing to look forward to with hope.
 So now and never any different.

And again, the pungent definition of home which husband and wife exchange—they bear a light irony and unmistakable trademark of Frost's forthrightness:

Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
 They have to take you in.

and

I should have called it
 Something you somehow haven't to deserve.

The poem itself, told mainly by the kindly tongue of the farmer's wife, in an atmosphere of moonlit whispers, is filled with a gentle sense of peace—the peace of a wanderer come at last to rest.

THE OBSERVATORY

Claire Gaddy

We traced Orion's image in the stars,
 Saw Cancer crawl over the dome's pattern,
 Surveyed the galaxies and turned from Mars
 To calculate the involute rings of Saturn.

We mounted higher, by reason stellar and sound,
 To space no mind can leap or violate.

Queried, your lips gave answer: thus we found
 Passage through heaven's adamant gate.

Duty

Bruce Hamman

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW has defined duty as, "A stupid excuse for a foolish act." Shaw's definition hits at small men engaged in seemingly purposeless or criminal labor. Buttermilk Joe was a small man.

Buttermilk Joe was a milkman. He was called "Buttermilk" because it formed half of his diet. The other half was whiskey, and between the poison and the antidote, he managed to maintain a kind of equilibrium. Joe often came to work in such a condition that it seemed as if all the buttermilk in the dairy would not be enough, but no one could remember a time when he had not finished the job.

Joe and his wife had come from Hungary shortly before the first World War. They left Hungary for the usual reasons: constant conscription, no security, international "hot bed." In this country, Joe and Annette established a two wagon dairy. When Joe learned that liquids other than milk came in bottles, they had to sell the dairy. Joe and Annette never quarreled.

It was the practice at the dairy, on the day before Christmas, to deliver a double order to the houses and take Christmas day off. Joe always delivered a single order each day. Once, before Christmas, Joe came in very sober. The dairy room odor made Joe's eyes water and that had never happened before. He could not remember exactly what his milk orders were, but nevertheless he made his usual stops on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth.

On the twenty-sixth, Annette was buried.

Jack Meyers was a one hundred forty pound high school fullback. He graduated in nineteen forty two and immediately entered the army. In nineteen forty five he was killed after blowing up two enemy positions with hand grenades. He was trying to blast a third one. The citation called such acts, "Heroism beyond the call of duty."

Duty, according to Webster's definition, includes obedience, submission, respect, and moral obligation. This definition is brutally expedient. A dutiful child is an obedient and submissive child while a dutiful parent is demanding. A dutiful servant is respectful while a dutiful master is a respected one. Duty requires as many definitions as there are people fulfilling it.

A German writer recently classified duty as political, moral, and metaphysical. Political duty is the superficial act of choosing governors. Moral duty means upholding social laws and customs. Metaphysical duty is the responsibility one person feels for all others. A

bird is put back in its nest. Jack Meyers is killed. Religions are formed. Buttermilk Joe delivers his milk. These all grow out of a feeling of metaphysical duty. A university may be formed and a suffering dog may be shot. Metaphysical duty may give rise to didactic literature or soap box oratory.

Duty is, then, an innate individual means of choosing a course of action. It is different from habit because of its origin. The ultimate goal of duty is emulation of the Infinite Creator.

The Convict

Louise Grigsby

JED LOOKED at the closed door of the jury chamber, waiting nervously on the stiff-backed wooden chair beside the defense lawyer.

He remembered the day he had come to Pop's station to work. It was not really Pop's station, but he was the manager and could hire and fire people if he wanted.

The bus stop was half a mile down the dirt road, and his hesitating feet had scuffed little clouds of grit into the air, filming his black work shoes a powdery tan.

Pop had not asked many questions—just looked him over carefully and stated the pay. Pop was a shrewd old geezer, all right. Never one to miss a chance to make an extra buck, only it had to be honest.

Jed worked up enough courage one day to tell Pop about the reformatory; his clothes were packed, ready to move again, if Pop acted like the others. Convict—that's what folks had called him. Convict—for driving a souped-up car away from a hold-up. Convict—for being paroled on good behavior after only eighteen months of his sentence. Six months out of the white-washed barred cell and no decent job. Once a bad egg, always a bad egg, that is what lots of folks said.

Pop was different, though. He had just shifted his quid of tobacco to the other jaw and said, "Now, son, you've done good work here. How'd you like to be night manager? I'm too old to work two shifts." Jed had been extra careful after that to be on his toes at the station. The customers seemed to like his knack with an engine, and he liked working at the station.

Everything was going swell until the day Barney and Hap had driven up to the gas pump on the far end of the island. Barney and Happy-go-lucky. Somehow they had found him again.

Barney motioned Jed to come over, and Jed went slowly, wiping his grease-covered hands on the rag stuck in his belt.

"Hi, kid. How're ya doin'?" Jed watched Barney's long cigar writhing as the older man talked.

"Okay, I guess," he muttered.

"Nice ta see ya again, kid. How long did ya have ta stay at the reform place?"

"Eighteen months."

"Been a good boy? Thought ya was in for five years."

"The sentence was one to five years. You were at the trial, too."

"Yeah, kid, but Hap and me've got friends. Haven't we, Hap?"

"Yeah," agreed Hap cheerfully.

"By the way, kid, there's a little job we'd like you and your jalopy for."

"Sorry." Jed turned and started back toward the brick-trimmed station.

"Pays plenty, kid. Better think about it."

Jed strode angrily back to the car, glaring at Barney and his companion. "Listen, I'm goin' straight. I've got a good job here and I'm goin' to keep it. Now let me alone!"

"Kid, you're askin' for trouble," warned Barney. "Hap and me won't forget you. I'll give you one more chance. Comin' with us?"

"Let me alone!" yelled Jed.

He watched their dusty car disappear down the road toward town.

Things went along smoothly for about a week. Then, one night, as he was alone in the station counting the days receipts, a thin wave of smoke drifted in through the open door. Jed rushed out to investigate. A pile of greasy rags was smouldering dangerously close to the gas pumps. Running for the water hose, he succeeded in controlling the fire just as the little tongues of flame were licking upward toward the gas hose.

He confided his worry to Pop. "I don't think that fire was any accident, Pop. I better quit workin' here. It'll just get you in bad trouble. Barney and Hap are out to get even."

"You won't do no sucha thing, Jed. I've trusted you as manager, and I don't aim to quit now. Now go on home and get some sleep if you're gonna work tonight."

That night a gas pump blew up, and the station was quickly enveloped in flames. Jed grabbed the cashbox and sprinted toward the door, but, just before he reached the open air and safety, he pitched forward and lay still.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the defendant claims he was struck on the head as he was leaving the station with the receipts. Now is it likely that someone would have been hiding in that inferno, just for the purpose of rendering the defendant unconscious? Here's what really happened. The defendant had been planning to steal the cash and leave with no blame attached to him. That was the real reason for the fire. To provide excitement so that his absence wouldn't be noticed. Look at the defendant, ladies and gentlemen. Not a resident, life-long, I mean, of this town, is he? Where is he from, ladies and gentlemen? From the state reformatory with a record of participating in a hold-up!" The opposing lawyer had thundered out the accusing words to the jury, and Jed's heart sank.

Finally, the door opened, and the jurists filed back into their box. The foreman stood to deliver the verdict. Jed's heart pounded so loudly that he could not hear the words clearly.

"What was the verdict?" he asked unbelievably.

"Guilty of theft as charged."

Pop rushed up to Jed. "You'll be back in no time son. Then you'll be manager in my place. It won't be long, Jed."

Jed answered him bitterly. "No, Pop, not long. Five, maybe ten, years, that's all. I'm a convict, remember?"

The Characteristics of Pulp-Magazine Fiction

Tom Pease

MASS PRODUCTION, a theory which successfully combines speed and efficiency, is one of the most important features of American industry. It affects the assembly of precision-made machinery and is even incorporated in the bending and packaging of the common hairpin. Through the medium of pulp-magazine fiction the process of mass production has also played an important role in the development of American literature. This type of literature, if one may call it that, is easily read because of its simplicity of construction, and readily available to the general public because of its low price, has wrought a decided change in the reading habits of the nation. These changes, unfortunately, are not beneficial to the development of better reading habits.

Pulp magazine fiction is easily recognized by its obvious characteristics. The fact that the material is printed on pulp paper is not a definite sign, however, for good fiction can often be found on pulp paper and, likewise, pulp-type fiction can be found in slick-paper magazines.

The guideposts pointing out true pulp fiction are painted in luminous letters that are visible through the densest fog. The plots employed in the writing of pulp-fiction are generally the same, regardless of the physical location or the situation involved in the story. The loyal cowpoke invariably staves off the mortgage collector and wins the love of the ranch owner's daughter by recovering the rustled cattle and sending the villain to his just rewards with his Colt .45, the valiant space pilot inevitably saves his beleaguered planet and wins the President's daughter by recapturing the oxygen-making apparatus for his air-starved planet by blasting the space renegades with his trusty atomic pistol, and the football hero always scores a touchdown in the final second of play to win the "big game" of the year and the hand of the coach's daughter after first subduing the gamblers who had attempted to "fix" the game. The development of the plot often becomes illogical and impossible; the hero escapes from an escape-proof room, takes physical punishment beyond the limit of human endurance, and completely neglects the necessities of eating and sleeping because his author must concentrate on action and can not afford to waste words on petty details.

The repeated use of hackneyed expressions is a trademark of pulp fiction. Witness the "trusty .45" of the "weather-beaten cowpoke" who rides the "lonesome prairie," the stealthy movements in the "dead of night" by the "private eye" who apprehends the "second story man" as he is about to "put the heist" on the widow's "rocks" and tells him to "reach for the ceiling." Into the same category fall the colloquialisms and slang expressions that abound in pulp fiction, the poor sentence structure, and the frequent use of bad grammar. These techniques belong to the writer who has little time to spare, and who must make up in quantity what he lacks in quality; the monetary rewards derived from the writing of pulp fiction being pitifully small.

The effects of pulp-type fiction on the reading public of the nation are, for the most part, detrimental. True, it has made reading a pleasure that is within the financial reach of all of us, but it has done so with literature that, at best, represents a very poor form of entertainment. The reading of good books increases the readers vocabulary, informs him, and provides him with material for thought; the pulp magazine does not.

"The Movie, a Synthetic Art"

Ross Lambert

THE MOVIE has become, not only one of the greatest forms of entertainment, but also, one of the greatest media for artistic expression known today. It is a specific form of art, called by some, a synthetic art. A good movie is built up as the result of the collaboration of numerous creative groups, all of which must function expertly. It appeals to people of all ages and types, and functions with varying degrees of effectiveness in the transmission of artistic ideas, portrayal of human emotions, and general information. Literally, it has become a universal language.

The movie is the consummation of the work of many creative artists. Painting has composition, color, and line; sculpture has form; music has the play and interplay of sound; the novel has the word; the dance has movement and rhythm, but the movie has all of these. To produce a movie there must be: the camera man, the sound recordist, the composer of the musical score, the art director, the actors, and the director. Each has his own technique, the perfection of which becomes an important part in the development of a truly good moving picture.

Although relatively young, the movie industry has developed, since 1895, into a world-wide institution. G. M. Mayer, of the movies, has said: "The motion picture is the only art which all the people of the world today commonly enjoy." It has become a medium of communication by which the peoples of the world can speak to one another in the universal language of pictures. The moving, talking images on the screen bring all the immediacy and vitality of life itself to those who see them. People from all nations can come into each other's presence and understand the same reality together. Whether they are seeking relaxation, entertainment, culture, or information on world affairs, they will be able to find it in selected movies.

The movie is the successor to the older media of pageant, dance, drama, and opera. History has been revitalized on the screen, and great books have been relived. "Ben Hur," "Tale of Two Cities," and "Hamlet" have become real to thousands, who otherwise would have known them only as books on the library shelves. Great voices have been heard, and musical masterpieces enjoyed by countless numbers who never would have had the opportunity of hearing great music. Melchior, Tibbett, Iturbi, Rubinstein, Pinza, Heifetz, Paderewski, and many others have shared their talent with the world via the movie screen. Likewise, great names of the stage have become a part of the cultural life of the movie "goer." The great Barrymores, Jane Cowl, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Tallulah Bankhead, and Helen Hayes have brought real drama to the movie screen. The beauty of the dance is not to be omitted, for the movies have presented excellent productions, such as, "Red Shoes" and "The Great Waltz." Likewise, movies have profoundly influenced human relationships. Occasionally, there is an outstanding picture expressing a universal emotion that rises above the prejudices of a special group and reaches the heart of everyone. "Going My Way," "Gone with the Wind," "The Song of Bernadette," and "The Yearling" have been favorites of all who have seen them. Such pictures have been regarded as means through which an individual understands himself, his social role, and the values of his group.

Educationally, the movie has been generally accepted as one of the most effective means of transmitting information. During the recent years of international strife the screen has been used to crystallize national thinking and to spread propaganda. Whether it be subtly through a play, or directly by news reels, it is effective. By the moving picture the general public can be kept informed on all vital issues of the day.

Generally speaking, no other art makes a broader appeal to mankind than the movie, because it is many arts in one. No other medium of expression can reproduce life for so many people in so many places as the movie. It is a dynamic force in dissemination of cultural, social, and educational values among all peoples, and it may prove to be a milestone on the pathway of international understanding.

Man, the Forgotten

Carl W. White

GENERATION AFTER generation of women have proved, conclusively, that they are the stronger of the sexes. Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their party. Arise fellow males! Throw off the yoke! Let us no longer take a back seat to the "back seat drivers."

So you think you are not being persecuted. Then look around you at the poor, forgotten males. From the crib to the crypt, men are relegated to a position directly in the shadow of women.

Man is assigned to this station at a very tender age. A new-born male is examined and dismissed with a few perfunctory remarks such as, "Isn't he darling," or "Isn't he cute." On the other hand, volumes of flattering phrases are bestowed upon the female child. After a few short moments of respiratory action, she is well aware of the regal position reserved for her and, true to her feminine heritage, takes full command of the situation.

Throughout the first twelve years, the doting mother experiments daily with clothing and setting that will bring out Mary's eyes, hair, complexion, et cetera. Junior is again hastily dismissed. This time a few cuffs may accompany dismissal. Off to the corner he trudges with Dad's cut down pants and followed by Mom's "cut off" looks.

In the next stage of development, more and more attention is given to the rearing of Miss Mary. Both mother and father offer their counsel to guide her through the temptations of the teens. Father inserts an average of two sentences of advice a year. Mother, since she is of the feminine gender, is an expert in all fields, and her advice is bestowed upon Miss Mary at least four times a day.

But a typical conversation between mother and Junior goes something like this:

Junior, who has secretly dropped the "Jr." from his name, says, "Mom, I just scored four touchdowns in the last quarter to win the game and city championship. I've been voted All-State . . ."

Mom retorts, "Junior, please be still. Can't you see I'm busy fixing Mary's formal? She is wearing it to the New Year's Eve dance and it must be ready."

Time passes, but not Junior's troubles. William, as Junior is now called, finds himself, at the age of twenty-two, blissfully unaware of his admittance to the society of forgotten men. He is happily in love. Matilda, who does not object to his affections, has gently blasted the notion of marriage into his head. They become engaged. William anxiously waits to see their names linked in the *Daily Bugle*. Eventually a two-column story announces the coming rites. There the two names are in print. William scans the news story. Except for a brief notice in the leading sentence, the name William Jones does not appear. Matilda's ancestry, history of her sojourn in college, and list of club memberships complete the remaining two hundred lines.

He feels slighted, but has no time to give voice to his disappointment. His time is entirely taken up driving Matilda to this shower and that shower, mailing invitations, and buying rings, in addition to his regular eight hours on the swing shift.

The eventful day comes and passes. The *Daily Bugle* prints the same story, this time supplying the words "were wed" for "will be wed." A complete description of Matilda's bridal finery lengthens the story to three columns.

William should be thankful for his early training which has prepared him for the role of a full-fledged forgotten male. The marriage ceremony could be aptly termed a disappearing act for the male participant. A few short notices will be all he will receive from that day forward.

Walter Winchell will soon be announcing that the former Matilda Brown is infanticipating. Friends will be giving showers for the expectant mother. The expectant male must reconcile himself to a great number of feeble jokes of how the hospital has never lost a father.

The long ordeal is over. Matilda and little Genevieve are brought home.

A typical conversation:

William, clears throat, "Uh . . ."

Matilda, "William, please be quiet. Can't you see I'm feeding the baby?"

William has completed the cycle. It is up to the down-trodden males to assert their rights and break this vicious cycle. Arise men! Throw off the yoke!

Listen To Me

Barbara Sims

LISTEN TO ME. You *must* listen to me. The body they found upstairs—the old man's body—I killed him. Yes, *I* killed him, but you must believe me it was an accident, a mistake. Now, please listen to me.. There is so little time left, and I must tell you everything, and you must believe me.

The old man—I thought he was someone else standing there behind the curtain—someone I *intended* to kill. I am not a murderer by nature, you know. My father said, "Avenge me!", and I had to kill. Yes, yes. Of course, my father is dead. Fool! Do you think me mad? He *is* dead, but the corpse does not rest. You understand? He walks sometimes, and he speaks to me in a voice piteous to hear. He cries, "I am wronged. Avenge me!" And he knows that only I am able to hear him, so it is I who must avenge him.

Listen to me! Do not stare in such a fashion, as if you are afraid. I was not a murderer until the ghost walked. My soul was at peace until I heard my father shriek, "Avenge me!" You understand what it is to have those words tear at the roots of your soul? I see you do not. No matter.

The old man—God forgive me that sin! And his daughter. She was mad, you know. Quite mad there at the end. Poor child. Her soul will never be at peace either. It will float forever, swim and float and eddy in the pool, never to know rest.

My father's ghost! What a vein of blood he has let! I wonder, will he rest now, or will he walk and speak even when I am gone and there is no one left to hear him?

I see that you are yet afraid. Be at peace, friend. All violence is gone from me. When there is nothing of me but bone and skull and horrid remembrance, what will they write of this family who turned upon themselves as ravenous beasts?

You have listened, and it is done. Go pray for me. Go pray for the soul of Hamlet, late Prince of Denmark.

OPHELIA

Mary M. Quinnell

And so she went, with tragic garlands
All bedecked, and slept
The sleep of those who die for love.
And I, what shall I do?
I cannot deck myself as she:
Tears are not mine, but work in the stone
Field with those who are not loved.
So shall I sing, indifferent, blithe,
And let you go your way unknowing
My heart dies in her soothing stream.
Ay, so she went, and slept,
But I must wake to bitter sowing.

The Garage

Richard Hollingsworth

AS WE GROW OLDER our minds become filled with the picture of the past. We replace dolls and guns with books and pencils, our teasing of the girl next door with our first date, but we never forget childhood. As I think of the enjoyable times of the past, my mind takes me back to the center of those experiences. The garage I played in is old now, and badly in need of paint, but inside there are still some of the dusty, cobweb-covered playthings I entertained myself with in my youth: old curtains, drapes, rugs, and broken ladders. This garage was used for everything but a car.

The first thing I remember about the garage is a playhouse I and my friends made of it. Our miniature house was complete in every detail, even to an old, worn-out piano which had been given to us by a kind neighbor. We kept this house up as well as our parents kept their homes. But each summer our garage became something new and better, something that reflected experiences we had had. A travel agency, a doctor's office, a flowershop, a bookstore, or a theatre—all these had a special meaning to us. Then down came the swirling leaves of autumn, and the close of our playing season.

Of all the make-believes we had in the garage, I think the theatre made the most impression upon me. Almost everybody has at some time or the other had the desire to be an actor or actress. Broadway in all its splendor could not outdo us, so we thought. Our productions consisted mainly of the Ziegfield type, although once we did produce a three-act play. The stories or plots of our shows were written as we set the stage for the production. The props for the setting consisted of ladders, wooden boxes, and anything else we could find to use. Although the costumes were handmade and home-made, we took as much pride in them as if they were fashioned by experts, but they might become walls or table cloths in the next scene. The audiences must have liked our productions or else they would not have come back for other shows. We, of course, did not give Broadway any competition, but we enjoyed our theatre, for you see we were only thirteen and we played to an audience of six- and seven-year olds.

We loved our parents, but that garage was more a home to us than the house we lived in. Why? I did not know then, but I know now. "Home is where the heart is," and a child's heart is in his play. But responsibility and self-expression have something to do with the matter, too. The garage was ours, and we made it what it was to us: an expression of what we were and wanted to be.

I Went On a Diet

Jacqueline Thereasa Oliver

FEELING MORE OR LESS AMBITIOUS and full of excess vim, I decided to go on a diet this summer. I thought that I, as *Senior Prom* magazine put it, "possessed the will to become a wisp." As compensation for this unusual adventure, I promised myself a new outfit of the latest fashion. Vividly I pictured myself, a lovely, slender thing, on the campus of Butler University, clad in a tartan, pencil-slim skirt and a cashmere sweater. No longer would I feel self-conscious because of my excess poundage.

I gathered up in my arms a stack of fashion magazines, a couple of cook books, and a Metropolitan Life Insurance Company pamphlet entitled *Overweight and Underweight*, and waltzed into my room. While munching Toll House cookies, I fumbled excitedly through the pages of each periodical. Finally, to my immense pleasure, I found an article which seemed written especially for me. It was headed "Eat Your Way to Beauty." Before beginning to skim over the article, I dashed into the kitchen and grabbed another handful of cookies. Upon returning to my room, I perched myself on the foot of my bed and rapidly read the article. Assuming that I had grasped the most important points of the article, I began writing menus consisting of foods low in calories.

Since I was teased severely at dinner that night when I refused second servings of my favorite foods, I was determined to redouble my efforts at reducing. The following morning I prepared a poached egg without seasoning, a slice of toast minus butter, and a glass of milk. It tasted no more appetizing than it sounds. For lunch I had lettuce, a small grilled hamburger, and glass of unsweetened lemonade. By dinner time I was weak from hunger. Furthermore, from the kitchen there drifted the aroma of fried steak, hot buttered potatoes, fresh green peas, tomato salad, and strawberry mousse. Temptation was too great! Of course I was too sleepy to bother to weigh myself that night.

I stuck to my diet quite well the rest of the week until Sunday afternoon when I succumbed to temptation a second time. The dessert mother had made was raspberry salad—raspberry sherbert topped with pecan halves. I looked and longed. I ate two servings.

The next week I did exceptionally well in following my diet as mother was away from home, and there were no odors to entice me. Feeling very virtuous and confident, I weighed myself on Saturday night.

For Sunday dinner I had fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, perfection salad, light rolls, iced coffee, and lemon chiffon pie. Later that evening I enjoyed a hot fudge sundae topped with whipped cream and walnuts. Why? Well, after two weeks of concentrated effort and sacrifice of some of my most beloved dishes, I had gained three pounds!

Cool Waters

Janet McCumber

ALTHOUGH I HAVE always been awed by the beauty of the land around me, it was not until this summer that I became conscious of still another kind of beauty. I spent my summer at one of Indiana's beautiful northern lakes. Here I learned of the scenes that were revealed by water, crystal clear and pure.

It was in the early morning that it was most picturesque, when the long fingertips of the seaweed slowly stroked the calm surface of the lake. The little bright-eyed fish played hide and seek while occasionally a large, proud bass would effortlessly glide by, undisturbed by the antics. Tiny black water bugs scurried about, endlessly busy, while in the deep, cool depths little bugs no larger than a pin head, of brilliant scarlet, drifted with the slow current that flowed always to the morning sun. Here and there a turtle lazily stretched, sending up fine sand to sparkle in the slanting gold rays of the sun. This was their world, a world of emerald green, a world undisturbed except by life and death and storm.

Small Town

Dick Behan

THE SALESMAN left his office to go to his car. He drove out of Chicago on Milwaukee Avenue. The miles slipped by him and soon he came to a town sign which said the population was 3900. Vanderheist's Flower Shop caught his eye. Across the street from the flower shop was Kroll's Tavern. Houses, a few stores, and a gas station seemed to move backward as his automobile carried him toward his wife and family. He noticed Doc Bailey's animal hospital and wondered if his son Dave was through working. The car bumped as it went over tracks, stopping for the red light at Park Avenue. The salesman looked up Park and could see the high school with its football field nestling close by. He wondered if Dick was still practicing football. Turning the car left he drove past Ray Burnett's funeral home on the way to the high school. Seeing the field empty, the salesman turned down Brainerd Avenue and drove north once more. The post office and the Methodist Church seemed to make room for the car as he approached the bend in Brainerd where School Street branched off. Turning down School Street brought him back to Milwaukee Avenue and business district of the town. Once more he made a left turn. As he went north, Cook Park and the Library were on his left; Cooper and Geary's Radio Shop and Impson's Studio were on his right. Just across Cook Avenue was the First Lake County National Bank, and on the other side of the street was Ma's (Decker and Neville's Drug Store, to the uninformed) where all the high school students congregated. He drove down past the bakery, and Herchberger's Record Store, and finally at the foot of the hill he turned left up Lake Street. Through his rear-view mirror, he could see Baker's Popcorn Stand and next to it, the theater. The car whined in second gear to climb the crest of the hill at the foot of Lake Street. Presently, the street levelled out, so the man once again put the car in third. He went up a small rise and turned into the driveway of his house on the hill. He looked west out over Butler Lake to watch the sunset. Mr. Behan had once more come home to Libertyville.

Copernican Unity versus Ptolemaic Discord

G. R. Prentice

I LIKE MR. EMERY REVES, believe that our modern world must become a Copernican society, and that we must emerge from the old Ptolemaic system of living if we are to have a harmonious existence. It seems to me, however, that just as the change in point of view from Ptolemy's astronomical doctrine to the new and enlightened one of Copernicanism took generations, so will it be with the conversion from Ptolemaic nationalism to Copernican worldwide unity. The ideas of state sovereignty (Ptolemaic) have been well instilled in the minds of modern men, and one-world-mindedness (Copernicanism), like the theory concerning the solar system, will not be a readily accepted ideology. We must then, destroy the barriers of sovereignty, and replace them with standards of universal equality. By so doing, we shall create new codes of philosophy, and our narrow, nationalized interests will become proportionately microscopic conversions to an international doctrine. A current move in this direction has resulted in the United Nations Organization, where again we are recording, for history, the attempts of great nations to reach amicable settlements of their differences. This fabulous organization, if allowed to function properly, could establish a definite line of demarcation between nationalist Ptolemaic and unified Copernican thought. Within this collective unit of representative nations we should have the "remnant"¹ of our expansive world population; a remnant of delegates possessing ability, wisdom and the will to improve and strengthen the international relationship of the masses.

With due regard to those representatives now serving with the United Nations, I believe we still must learn more of tolerance and compromise; and make an even greater effort to minimize the nationalism which is now dominant. If we can accomplish these goals, our feeble steps toward harmonious living and world peace, will become strides of progression; but if the remnant is not qualified, and if their accomplishments are constantly superseded by selfish motives of isolationism, then our ultra-modern atomic civilization is doomed to perish by its own near-sightedness.

¹ As Matthew Arnold uses the word in *Numbers*.

THE SNOW PHOENIX

Allen Sutherland

On a cold, crisp night with wind as accompanist
Flurries of snow danced wildly over the town.
The people lay peaceful, asleep in their warm beds,
Unaware of change or the crystal icicles
Hanging from ermine roofs, or branches of trees
Coroneted with whiteness. Streets that once met
At angles, curved with pilings of snow, and lamps,
Glistening brilliance, created mystical halos
Down to the frozen lake. The spires of the church
Glinted luminously in silver moonlight,
Then suddenly silhouetted against the sky
As a cloud eclipsed the lunar fantasy.
There was no life except for the furtive tracks
Of a tiny groundhog abroad in the search for food;
There was no sound except an occasional shriek
Of a shivering barnyard owl aghast at a world
Whitely dead and from it a new world born.

Travelers South

Leland Baker

TRAVELING, IN AMERICA, has become one of the popular forms of vacation in recent years, and many American travelers turn south to Mexico. It is necessary for every traveler going into a foreign country to pass the customs. The Mexican customs, located across the Rio Grande River from Laredo, Texas, has a large office building in which the official documents for travelers' insurance, passports, and road information can be obtained; the Bank of Mexico has a branch office here, to convert the American dollar into Mexican currency. The Pan American Highway extends south from Laredo, through Monterrey, Ciudad Victoria, Tamazunchale, Actopan, and the City of Mexico, the capital.

Mexico City is located in the Valley of Anahuac, a great basin surrounded by high mountains on all sides except the north. The elevation of the valley ranges from five thousand to eight thousand feet. To the southeast may be seen the snow-capped peaks of Popocatepetl and Ixaccihuatl, "The Sleeping Lady." Although located in the tropical belt, the altitude of Mexico City makes it a place of eternal spring.

Twenty-nine miles northeast of Mexico City lie the Aztec Ruins in the Valley of the Dead, a National Park displaying some of the most ancient structures on the continent. Several pyramids are located in the Ciudadela, a great court surrounded by a huge stone and earthen wall. Outside the Ciudadela stands the greatest construction in the entire area, the Pyramid to the Sun. This pyramid, rising to a height of two hundred feet, has five symmetrical terraces with a stairway on one side; at the top one can see a panorama of the entire valley.

Of interest too, is the Chapultepec Castle, begun in 1783 by the viceroy, Galvez. The castle is built around a hill; all rooms on the lower floor open onto the portico which encircles the castle. The top of the hill, however, provides an open court with a beautiful formal garden surrounded by the rooms of the second story. The walls of the rooms throughout the castle are covered with tapestries of silk and gold. The furnishings of a bedroom and the drawing room were given to Carlotta by Napoleon III. The castle was the home of Maximilian and Carlotta and until recently was the official home of the president of Mexico.

Cuernavaca, located about thirty-five miles south of the City of Mexico, is one of the most charming spots in Mexico; the gaily tinted houses, the luxuriant vegetation, and the brilliant flowers make it a town of enchantment. Persons interested in articles of leather, silver, and native pottery can find excellent markets in Cuernavaca; these markets are known for colorfully woven huaraches, fine silver, and

the famous Cuernavaca Pottery. From the early history of the Aztec period until the present time, Cuernavaca has been the summer home of the great rulers and of foreign diplomats in Mexico.

A trip to Mexico would be incomplete without a visit to the bullfight. Promptly at 4:00 p. m., the colorful pageantry begins; it is said to be the only event that begins on time, anywhere in Mexico. Located in the City of Sports, the Plaza Monumental Mexico has a seating capacity for fifty thousand persons, making it the world's largest bull ring. Bullfighting is neither a fight nor a sport as we understand the meaning of those terms, but rather an artistic pageantry. At the moment the event is scheduled to begin, the official raises his hand and one of the most graceful events unfolds before the eyes of the many spectators. The fight is divided into three parts, called "tercios." The first tercio consists of the running of the bull; picadores, combatants on horses, commence the attack with lances, and the bull is thus infuriated. The second tercio is the work of the banderillero who, on foot, tries to place barbed darts, decorated with colored paper, on the back of the angry bull. The third tercio is the killing of the bull; this is mastered by the matador only after many years of gruelling practice. The bull is killed by plunging the sword between the left shoulder and the shoulder blade and then into the heart. As a reward for his gallantry and excellent showmanship, the matador is given the ears of the bull with great formality. It is colorful, it is gay, this pageantry of the bullfight, and it mirrors the spirit of the people of Mexico.

Places I Should Like to Visit

Doris Graham

WHEN I WAS a little girl, I sometimes sat for hours at a time dreaming of all the places I should like to visit someday. As I grew older and my knowledge broadened these places became more distinct and vivid in my mind. How I wished that by some miracle I could visit some of them. The places I wanted to see, however, were impossible to reach; I wanted to go back in time to the days of the Roman Empire. To me it seemed that these people led fascinating lives. Their culture was one which made great contributions to the modern world, and I wanted to know it firsthand, to see the old houses, to watch a chariot race in the Colosseum or to witness an ancient battle. Another place I had always wanted to visit was England during the Middle Ages. I thought that nothing could possibly be more entrancing than a medieval castle with all its brave knights and lovely ladies.

My attentions were not all turned toward places in the past, however. The future also fascinated me. I looked forward to the days when rocket ships would replace airplanes and when underground cities would replace those of the present. I wanted to be transported to this magic land and take a ride in a rocket ship to Mars, Saturn, or some other far-off planet. I wondered also how people would look in that strange new age. These places which I would like to visit may seem fantastic perhaps, but what person with a lively imagination does not have the desire to encounter new adventures in another world?

Freshman Turns Cynic

Polly Burbank

THE PURPOSE of this bit of writing is to aid future Butler freshmen by suggestions and instructions in the art of surviving Registration Day gracefully.

To begin with, each student should plan to send in his application to the school at the earliest possible moment and thus obtain a low registration number. All high school seniors should be notified of the advisability of this step immediately. Then everyone could have a low registration number.

For the process of actual registration, the student is advised:

1. To have a hearty breakfast followed by a shot of adrenalin.
2. To wear sturdy walking shoes.
3. To have with him a pen and two ink erasers.
4. To bring twice as much money as he thinks he will need.

At the appointed time, the eager Freshman will appear at the Field House. He will enter what appears to be an obstacle course designed for the Marine Corps, but which is, in reality, a system planned to expedite registration. At this point, the befuddled Freshman, if he has not the blind instinct of an Alaskan trapper, should have a pocket compass in readiness. During the next three hours, he is expected to trot submissively from one desk to another answering questions and filling out forms. Pictures for identification cards are taken at the last possible moment, and for this reason the student should anticipate having the dazed, debauched look of a confirmed alcoholic.

When at last the weary Freshman staggers outdoors into the sunshine of an otherwise perfect day, he will find himself a little changed by the harrowing experience he has just had. Some of the happy innocence and enthusiasm of the Freshman are gone. He is already along a four year road to the understandable cynicism and languor of the Senior.

Impressions

Adel Fochtman

LIKE MANY ANOTHER city our nation's capital is crowded with picturesque scenes and memorials to history and culture. It has one place that would be difficult to duplicate, a place that is made most effective by night. We stop at the Reflection Pool and gaze at a square, colonnaded memorial. At first we are reluctant to get a closer view because of the seemingly endless number of steps to climb. But even at a distance there is something in the face of the softly lighted marble statue in the rotunda that draws us up those steps until we are standing at the feet of Abraham Lincoln. Shyness causes us to blink hard to hide the tears as we stand in silence, gazing into the face of this homely and sad-looking man. And yet around us are many, mostly foreigners and Negroes, who are not so inhibited. They are weeping and kneeling in homage. A prayer rises in our heart, "Grant us a small portion of the humility and strength of this great man."

We read the Gettysburg Address that is inscribed on the wall "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. . . . government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth." How often our thoughts, words, and actions break faith with these promises made for us! Costly wars have been fought to gain these principles of democracy and equality; yet we as individuals thoughtlessly neglect the obligations and privileges of our government; daily we succumb to racial and religious prejudices. Could that sad expression on Lincoln's face be disappointment in us for our selfishness and indifference, our taking without giving?

As we descend the steps we see in the pool perfect reflections of an obelisk and a sparkling dome-topped building. Our eyes rise farther and we see in the distance the austere shaft of the Washington Monument and behind it the brilliantly lighted Capitol. So in this one spot we see the symbols of our nation's ideals—greatness, courage, defiance, strength and humility; and a quiet "thank you" rises in our hearts.

My Childhood Hero

Connie Jenkins

DURING MY CHILDHOOD I had several heroes and heroines whom I would worship for a short time and then drop in favor of another one. These heroes were usually movie stars, sometimes school teachers, and occasionally a character from a favorite book. But my favorite one of all was a relative: my uncle, a Methodist minister.

The thing I remember most vividly about him is his sense of humor. Knowing so few ministers at close range, I stood a little in awe of him at first. Then, during the summer of my ninth birthday, my sister and I went to the Rivervale Youth Camp, where Uncle Henry was acting as director. We ate our meals there at long, oil-cloth-covered tables, with about twelve of us on each side. This arrangement led to what became the favorite camp trick. The person seated at the end of the table would turn up the oilcloth cover, making a sort of gutter of it; and when no one was looking he would pour into it his water glass, and the water would go splashing merrily down toward the other end of the table. The unwatchful person who failed to hold up his edge of the cloth as the water went past would suddenly find himself with a lapful of water. Although there were no hard feelings, I kept expecting Uncle Henry to put a stop to it. He did not, however, and I found out later that the whole thing was his idea.

It was not until I grew older that I began to realize how much he knew about other things as well as playing tricks and telling jokes. He was an accomplished linguist: as well as his smattering of French and Italian, he could converse quite fluently in German, and he could read and write Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Sanskrit. He took great delight in teaching my sister and me the foreign words for familiar objects, almost before we could pronounce their English equivalents. And by the time we were five or six years old, we could sing two verses of "Adeste Fidelis" in Latin, "Silent Night" in German, and several German and French folk songs in their original dialects.

My uncle wrote, too. My favorite of his literary efforts was a story he wrote for my sister and me, about two children who lived on a farm. He also wrote a Boy Scout manual called *Chicago Aids in Scouting*, and he wrote a chapter for a book entitled *The Rural Church*. The last two pieces I did not know about until recently, but the one he wrote for my sister and me is still enjoyed by the younger members of the family.

One incident I loved to hear him tell happened a short time after he had graduated from Northwestern University, and had begun his life as a minister at a small church in Chicago's Italian district. One day he had to send a tough, unruly boy from the church playground for annoying the younger children. Less than half an hour later the boy returned with his father and a horde of relatives. His father was carrying a gun. Very calmly my uncle started toward him, talking to him. The man fired once, and missed. A lifetime later, as Uncle Henry put it, he reached the man and wrested the gun away from him through sheer force. Then, with his meager Italian vocabulary he tried to tell the man why he had sent the boy away. The man went home, apparently only half convinced. He returned the next day—with an armload of new footballs, baseballs, bats, and catchers' mitts, "for the boys," and a stumbling apology for having caused so much trouble.

When I was twelve years old my uncle came to Indianapolis to preach. I joined his church and began attending the youth meetings there. Then I had another surprise. All the young people there called him "Uncle Henry" instead of the more proper "Reverend." Sometimes he pretended to grumble about the lack of respect of the younger generation, but knowing my uncle as I do, I am sure he would not have had it any other way.

My "Third Man Theme"

Lou Ann Phillips

SEVERAL MONTHS ago I saw the highly praised and greatly discussed motion picture, "The Third Man." My first impression of the over-all production was very favorable, because the movie held my interest. For that reason, in a sense, the movie is a success, since the primary purpose of a motion picture of this type is to entertain. However, after thinking for awhile about "The Third Man," I have decided that the plot of the picture is shallow and meaningless. When analyzed, the movie is actually nothing but unusual photography, local color, and weird background music.

The audience's attention is held by the psychological manner in which the scenes are presented, instead of by the plot. For example, a conversation takes place on a Ferris wheel in a carnival. Nothing significant is said in regard to the story, but the audience is interested in the conversation because of the atmosphere in which it takes place. The movie contains too much local color, such as the use of a great deal of foreign language spoken by the characters. This dialogue only mystifies the audience and apparently complicates the plot, since the average "movie-goer" can not understand what is being said.

But perhaps the most unusual feature of "The Third Man" is the much publicized background music that is played on a zither. This instrument was practically unheard of in America until it became recognized as the popular musical background of this particular motion picture. The music intensifies insignificant conversations by growing louder and louder until the climax of the speech is reached, which, without the music, would undoubtedly be unnoticed by the audience. If the speech itself contained sufficient force, it would not need this emphasis.

I have used "The Third Man" as an example of the weakness of many an American moving picture. The public is too often fooled by mere technical skill used in the handling of scenes and by extraordinary photography and music. Because the average person is satisfied with what he sees on the surface, he does not stop to realize that the motion picture relays no message and has no underlying meaning in general. Much of the material and many of the sequences in movies, as is the case in "The Third Man," are used to fill in and take time, making the picture long enough to be accepted as a full length production. But does the length of a moving picture determine its value? Or does value depend, at least in part, on an inner meaning that can inform the public mind with moral or intellectual truth?

A Childhood Experience

Lucy Turecek

THE MOST THRILLING EVENT I experienced as a child occurred several summers ago when my parents, one of my friends, and I were touring the West. One of the spots we visited was Yellowstone National Park. Arriving there in the early morning, we drove through the great forest. We saw that the wildlife there was unhindered by the outer world and was left to live in a state of freedom. Deer, bears, and some buffaloes roamed throughout the great preserve. We had just passed a small group of deer and were still talking about them when we noticed a car stopped on the road ahead of us. We suspected that some wild animal was near and slowed up in order to see it. There was a large mother bear and her twin cubs. While her cubs waited a little way behind her at the edge of the woods, the older bear nibbled some sweets the people in the other car had given her. We stopped our car a short distance down the road, and I hopped out to get a picture of the animal and her offspring with my new camera which I had received as a gift earlier in the summer. Meanwhile the other car pulled away, and the old bear finished her sweetmeats. Looking up, the bear saw me and decided that I would probably be a generous donor of maybe a cookie or some peanuts. She then struck up a brisk little trot towards us. This performance was all going on while I—still inexperienced at taking pictures—was trying to get the camera in focus. The female bear was not tarrying, for she had now broken into a trot. Seeing the danger I was in, my parents and my friend joined in a chorus of warnings. Finally, realizing the situation, I hurriedly ran and jumped into the car—and none too soon, for the mother bear seeing her would-be-feeder running, increased her gait and was close on my heels. As the car door slammed behind me, the great bear reared on her haunches and stuck her black nose through the open ventilator of the car, sniffing for food. Although the bear probably was not ferocious, she would most undoubtedly have torn me to shreds unless given something to eat. Everyone gave a sigh of relief to see that I was back in the car and in one piece. Leaving the bear, we drove on. Afterwards we laughed; but, even though I had joined in the laughter, I was quite sure that I was going to be more observant of hungry bears from then on.

'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE FINALS

Virginia Lavinder

'Twas the night before finals, and all through the halls,
Hung the echoes of groans, and the smoke of Pall Malls.
The students were nestled down snug in their chairs,
With shaking hands tearing at strands of gray hairs.
Many books, long deserted, were piled so high,
That the stacks, like a mountain, reached high in the sky.
With coffee cups drained for that last luscious drop,
And layers of pin curls piled high on my top;
The cat wound up tightly, and the clock out the door,
My roommate and I settled down for a snore.
When out of Jell Hall there arose such a roar,
That we leaped from our beds. (And fell flat on the floor.)
Clear over to Jordan, we flew with such zip,
We astonished ourselves by the speed of our trip.
The halls of Butler showed studious devotion,
With cigarette butts piled as deep as an ocean.
Then our bloodshot eyes sighted a strange apparition,
For quite such a sight, we had no preparation!
He rode in a hot rod pushed by eight steaming fellows,
And his eyes flashed out arrows of pinks, greens, and yellows.
He wore a black gown, with red satin adorned,
And a mortar board perched on his head, which was horned.
His teeth, how they sparkled, his eyebrows how hairy,
His cheeks like four roses, his nose like a cherry,
He foamed at the mouth, like a victim of rabies,
And he clearly resembled a professor from Hades!
His car carried grade books, and blue books, and textbooks;
Piled on top, were series of "Who Knows What Next" books.
Spotting me there, he gave a fierce scowl,
And promptly emitted a loud, fiendish howl.
My roommate had vanished, and I was alone,
My blood became ice, and my feet turned to stone.
I made an attempt to flee through the hall,
But the fiend had me trapped, with my back to a wall.
He hurled flaming books, and shouted with glee,
And everyone seemed quite amused, except me!
I dodged essays, poems, brief forms, and quotations;
Balance sheets, loans, cosigns, and equations.
I was gasping for breath, and I saw at a glance,
That the third story window was my last desperate chance.
With a terrified hurtle, I dropped to my doom,
And hit with a splat . . . on the floor of my room!
But such things are deserved by each scholarly drudge,
Who tries mixing knowledge, dill pickles, and fudge!