

SPRING — 1961

VOL. XIV — Nos. 1 & 2

# MANUSCRIPT

THE LITERARY MAGAZINE

OF

WILKES COLLEGE



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Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

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## *The Seasons*

When the sun has barely thawed the winter  
in the first cool days of spring —  
    the lies, the leaves half turned,  
    the birds, about to sing, the sun  
    not truly set but clinging  
    half above and half below the water —  
then lives, like lies  
abound in promises half kept  
and only half intended,  
    and loves, like lives,  
    abound in promises half meant  
    and only half remembered.

In summer, in the bleached months,  
when colors paint themselves  
like coating on the surface of a candy  
though the shell lies white beneath —  
    when the sun has claimed the sky forever  
    and the world bathes in eternal light —  
then lovers, like colors themselves,  
paint the world with brilliance,  
paint the world with glory —  
then lovers, like colors themselves,  
paint the world with surface joy,  
    though the heart is dead.

Ah, and in those autumn whirls,  
with rocking breaths of flame and ice,  
a memory and a prophecy —  
    when the leaves have turned their final side,  
    their blood, bursting from the season,  
    the wind, awaiting them, barely patient —  
then does love prepare,  
then does love abound  
in memory of the future —  
    then do lovers feast upon themselves,  
    so fruitful, so colorful,  
    so full of joy.

And winter,  
    my winter —

It is a mighty love indeed  
that lasts the winter.

## THE ADEPT

"I'm at Grandma's! I'm at Grandma's!" she chanted exultantly as soon as she woke up. Grandma was making chili sauce. She knew that even upstairs. She hurried to get dressed and go down.

Janie bounded through the kitchen door and rushed to kiss her grandmother. The woman hugged her and greeted her with the familiar "Good morning-glory." She wiped her hands in her apron and turned from the neat little piles of green pepper she had been chopping. "Sit down, and I'll have your breakfast in just a minute. Is your brother still sleeping?"

"I guess so," said the little girl. She rushed excitedly around the kitchen. There were baskets of shiny red tomatoes on the floor. Heaps of fresh, crisp vegetables, celery, onions, and peppers were piled here and there. A large pot of chili was bubbling quietly on the stove. The spice cabinet was open. Janie pulled out each of the little wooden drawers. She examined the white, red, and brown powders, the oddly shaped seeds, the dried leaves. She sniffed each one and muttered the names of the ones she could identify, "Cinnamon — mustard — nutmeg, I think."

"Will you stop hopping around and sit down and eat your breakfast? I'm going up to wake your brother." Janie sat down and ate her oatmeal. She was eating a huge slice of bread spread thick with butter and strawberry jam when Grandma came back.

"Where's McGuffey, Grandma?" she asked, staring thoughtfully at her glass of milk.

"He's probably out in the barn now. You aren't going to tag around after him all day again, are you?"

"I think I'll go see him for a while."

Billy burst into the kitchen. "Who ya gonna see?" he asked uninterestedly. He plopped down in a chair at the table and reached for some bread.



"McGuffey."

"Oh, him. Whadya always hang around him for? He's a nut."

"I like him."

"He's a nut."

"He is not. At least he doesn't tease me all the time like you."

"Ah, he's always tellin' ya such junk. You believe everything he tells ya, too. Boy, are you dumb!"

"Now is that anyway to talk to your sister, Billy?" Grandma scolded.

"Yeah," said Janie. "And anyway, he doesn't tell me junk. He knows lots a things that you don't, and he tells me, and I guess that makes me smarter than you. I'm goin' out."

"Put your sweater on, dear; it's still a little cool. And don't bother McGuffey if he's busy."

The little girl made a face at Billy and ran out, banging the screen door loudly.

"She does believe what he tells her, Grandma. She's always talkin' about him. What a dumb kid."

"You eat your breakfast, not just bread and jam either, and leave Janie alone."

The little girl rushed out into the early morning sun. She picked up a ball from the porch and hopped down the stairs bouncing it in front of her. She kicked her way through the high grass, carefully avoiding the path. The dew made wet circles around the bottoms of her slack legs. She started toward the field. Along the cross-logged fence, poppies moved gracefully in the slight breeze. She remembered McGuffey and turned in the other direction, toward the barn.

McGuffey was sweeping the hay from the stalls when she got there. She tiptoed quietly until she was behind him. "Hey McGuffey!" she shouted.

"Well, if it's not my best girl!" He put his broom aside and caught her up, holding her high above his head and tossing her up and down. She laughed happily and dropped her ball.

"Let me down! Let me down!" she pleaded playfully.

"Down ya go, Daisy May. On another of your visits, are ya? Come to see yer old fella agin, huh?"

"I said I'd come back as soon as I could, didn't I?"

"Ya sure did. Well, what's been happenin' to ya in the city?"

"Oh, nothing."

They were both silent for a while. The man picked up his broom again.

"Be goin' back to school soon, won't ya? Third grade, huh?"

"Yes."

"Yer gettin' to be a big girl. You'll be gettin' to know more than me, if ya keep this up."

Janie busily scraped away the pattern of a square on the floor with her foot. "I think you're real smart, McGuffey. What's new with you?"

"Nothin' much. Doin' the same things as always." She sat down on a ledge and stared at the floor. She picked up a piece of straw and put it in her mouth the way the man did. She was quiet again.

"Did you find out where he hides it, McGuffey?" she asked in a soft voice, almost so he couldn't hear. She didn't look up. The sound



of the broom's scraping stopped. The man looked around at her. He grinned broadly; his blue eyes became bright.

Not yet, but I just about caught up with the rascal." The girl looked up. Her face was alive again. She waited expectantly. He leaned on the broom.

"I'll tell ya somethin'. I wouldn't tell it to nobody else because it's a secret. Just you. I seen him down by the rocks near the creek, and I supeck that's where he's got it hid."

"You saw him?" she asked excitedly.

"Yep. But he seen me, and poof!" He made a quick gesture with his hand.

"Ya mean he vanished?"

"Quick as that. That's how the little people are, darlin', as soon as they see somebody's watchin', they disappear. But his pot 'o gold can't vanish, and if I kin just follow him without him seein' and find out where it's hid, it'll be a good one on him. Then we'll have his treasure," the man chuckled.

"Tell me how he looks again, McGuffey."

"He looks like all of 'em. They're all the same. About this high and so fat. With a green coat and a funny hat like —"

"Hey, Janie, you in here?" Billy came into the barn. Janie looked up.

"Don't tell him any of it, McGuffey. He thinks it's dumb."

Billy walked toward the stall. "She botherin' you again? You can just chase her out. She's a pest all the time."

"My best girl botherin' me? Of course not." He started sweeping again.

"Grandma wants yuh to go down the house for a minute, Janie. Mrs. Kelly's here. She wants to see yuh."

"Do I have to?"

"Yuh better."

She turned away reluctantly. "I'll be back soon, McGuffey. I won't be long." She walked along the path toward the house. "My ball!" she remembered, "That darn Billy'll hide it somewhere on me." She turned back and walked into the barn. Billy and McGuffey were at the other end.

"She really believes yuh, McGuffey. How come yuh tell her all that junk, any how? She'll be gettin' nutty believin' in fairies and that stuff," Billy was saying.

"It don't hurt none, boy, she's still small. Big people like us know there aren't no fairies. But she don't." He winked at the boy.

Janie turned away quietly and walked out. Outside the door, she began to run down the path as fast as she could. Tears ran down her cheeks. She threw herself against the cross-logged fence and cried silently.

"Betcha he's just sayin' that to Billy. Betcha he is. Betch even if he doesn't know, there are some. Betcha anything." She stopped crying. "Big girls don't cry. Not for nothing. Only if they're dumb." She sat down on the fence and, while wiping her eyes, she looked at the poppies. She reached out and picked one. Three of the delicately fringed red petals dropped to the ground as she plucked it. She stared at the last petal dangling feebly from the stem. It would hang on unless she blew it away.





# RAIN

Rain

water cascades from above  
washing bar windows and cellar steps

clean clear it rushes down  
curbs and gutter sewers to hell

it takes away discarded papers and muddy footprints  
scattered pebbles and day old horse manure

washing the street at night  
it glistenes in glaring streetlight splendor

soon it will dry  
to leave its litter by some curb

it has done only part of its job  
it must return



SELF-PORTRAIT  
by LES ANDRES



## OUT INTO THE FOG

It was dark there in the corner between the bookcases and the fireplace. From this corner she could hear the conversation and watch the heavy ocean fog drift through the screen door. The room became unbearably damp. She saw the husky fog winding around the three of them, the boy talking with her mother, and herself. As she got up to go into the kitchen her mother quickly turned to look at her.

"Honey, I didn't know you were here. I thought —"

"Well, I was."

"Come over here and meet Frank. He plays the guitar. A darling boy. This is the first time he's been to the Island. He came here all by himself. Isn't that charming?"

"Yes, it's charming." She started for the kitchen.

Where are you going?"

"Obviously to the kitchen."

"Well, for what?"

"To make some tea. It's damp."

"You should have asked us if we wanted some."

"I was going to make some anyhow."

"But maybe Frank doesn't want any."

"I thought he would. It's damp."

"Well, you should have asked."

"Mother, would you perhaps care for a cup of tea?"

"Thank you, yes."

She started walking towards the kitchen. As she entered the doorway, she turned her head and asked, "Frank, would you like some tea?" and met his stare, and saw him gravely nod his head.

The kitchen was a renovated bedroom which contained a black stone sink, a small kerosene stove, and assorted unmatched utensils. There was no other furniture or accessory in the room save a dilapidated cardboard box filled with old shoes. She lit the stove, placed a pot of water on the flame, and wandered over to the window, pressing her face close to the rippled glass. She saw nothing but the fog. She heard the voices of the other room.

"How long have you been playing the guitar, dear?" her mother asked him. "It's such a wonderful instrument. Once when I was younger I had a friend who played the guitar. He was a charming boy. Always singing. Will you sing something?"

"Of course," said Frank, and lifted the guitar onto his knees. The girl stood peering through the doorway. Addressing both of them, he asked, "Is there anything special you'd like to hear?"

"Sing a love song," the mother volunteered. "Do you know, 'I Know Where I'm Going'?"

"I rather not play it. It's been worn pretty thin, you know."

"It's unfortunate how those things happen. But it is a lovely song."

"I'd like to hear you sing," the girl interrupted. Frank began to play softly.

I was born and raised in East Virginia.  
South Carolina I did go.  
And there I met a fair young maiden.  
Her name and age, I did not know.

The girl stirred with his husky voice.

Well her hair was dark of color  
And her lips were ruby red.  
And on her breast she wore white lilies  
Where I longed to lay my head.

She noticed his hair falling softly on his forehead.

I ruther be in some dark hollar  
Where the sun refuse to shine  
Than for you to be another man's darlin'  
And to know you'll never be mine.



She watched his long fingers fall gracefully over the strings.

I was born and raised in East Virginia.  
South Carolina I did go.  
And there I met a fair young maiden.  
Her name and age I did not know.

"Frank," the mother said, "You play just wonderfully. The guitar is beautiful. I always thought that guitars were amazingly expressive instruments. Some people don't know their true value."

"Where does the song come from?" the girl asked.

"It's a blue grass song. It comes from the Southern mountains."

"That's amazing."

"What's amazing?"

"That a song can travel so far."

The mother touched Frank's knee. "What kind of wood is it made of, dear? Aren't most guitars made from darker wood?"

He turned to her patiently. "Well, the better guitars are made from light wood, although you see that the neck, that's this part, is made of redwood."

The girl moved to the sink and started to prepare the tea. The lull of voices carried from the living room, then the scraping of a chair against the floor, the slam of the screen door, then nothing. When she entered the living room she saw her mother sitting alone.

"Frank left."

"I see."

"He'll be right back. He went to get some music he wrote to sing for me."

"His tea will get cold."

"I thought that was very nice of him. To want to sing for me."

"I hope he can find his way back. The fog is so —"

"He didn't even put on his jacket. He should have put on his jacket. Someone not accustomed to this dampness could catch a cold. I told him to put it on, but he ran right out. If he gets a cold, I'll feel it's my fault."

"He can take care of himself." She thought of his fine hair matted by the fog.

"But even after I told him."

"Mother, must you?"

"Must I what, honey?"

"Nothing." She began to look around the room and finally spotted the jacket hanging carelessly from a chair. She snatched it to her, ran past her mother, and flew out the door into the fog.





## P O E M

The sun has shut the celestial eyes of the placid night  
Bidding rise to the multitudes of the earth,  
Bidding farewell to the tranquillity of repose.  
The sky becomes illuminated with joyous hopes  
The multitude becomes active with passive expectancy  
If the cruel sky would but elucidate and weave  
A bright thread of reality into man's shabby garment.  
Yet the sun continues on its pilgrimimage and  
The hapless multitudes gaze and ponder until  
The celestial eyes return and they to bed.

## STEMS

He put his cigarette down in the small sterling silver ashtray. Then he peered down the long, long table at the maid, who was setting a cordial down in front of his wife. She had been sitting silently for the past five minutes with elbows on the table, one hand folded on top of the other, and her chin resting on top of it. She paid no attention to the maid as she walked out, but stared directly at him across the absurdly tiny centerpiece.

This had been their joke, mostly for the benefit of others, their latest contribution to the Game. But this, it occurred to him, was the first time they had played alone. But he would play along. It didn't look like it would become a bore—not this once. He couldn't bear to offend her.

Like the time at the country club. That South American player, temporary darling of the smart set. Hanging around the courts as usual, the place teeming with women, but that Latin sneak, saw his wife for the first time. He didn't care whose wife she was, didn't care that it was *his* wife. All those people standing around, watching as she came off the court. Not only had he held her hand too long, when she offered it to him, but his eyes looked like they wished to nudge the perspiration off her wet, tan body. In front of all those people, he, the husband could have looked bad, but she was bored and passed him off as another tennis bum. Her capacity for being easily bored had saved him once, but he realized it could kill him too, but it wouldn't hurt — just this once.

So he placed his elbows on his end of the table cloth, placed a hand on each cheek and started to make contact. He wanted a puff on the cigarette, but that would have been against the rules, so he stared and let it burn on.

He traced the familiar outlines of her high cheekbones, familiar cheekbones. But this was the first time he had not done it as ritual part of the Game. He had done it usually across the room



at parties up at Greenwich with his own crowd or here on the Island with her mother's crowd. It was a favorite pastime of the Game to ogle everyone. He particularly was a great starrer. He now stared at her, but thought of her mother. It was the high cheekbones, that was the striking likeness. They were much alike, but she would wear much better than her mother. Her tennis would take care of that. Most of all he hoped it would help her avoid that neck. That turkey skin that he remembered so clearly, reflecting the afternoon sun as her mother greeted the Game as she sat perched on the edge of a wrought iron chair at a lawn party. That perhaps was what he resented about her mother . . .

The cigarette burned down. He could smell the filter smoldering, so he knew he could stop worrying about it. He knew it wouldn't burn the tablecloth, but still it was a relief to know it was out. He shifted his mind, but not his glance, to the shirt-waist dress. She always dressed plainly, but never failed to be graceful. Even now, her firm, tapering hands reminded him of her quick, wild movements on the courts. He wondered how she could be so wild and still be so good at tennis. She was great at tennis. That was one of the reasons he married her. And love-making? But that wasn't one of the reasons he married her. Nobody on Long Island married for that reason. But even if they did, it wouldn't have been a good idea to put too much stress on that point. She wouldn't have stood for it. Neither of them needed anything, and it would have been unwise for him to need this. If he sought *aficionados*, he could find others in the crowd of the Game.

One rule of the Game was not to be selfish with your mate, nor to embarrass someone else, so these things were always done on the sly. But he knew from his reliable sources and from the gossips in the crowd of her mother, that old *grande-dame*, that she never looked at another man. She had the knack of keeping people at arms-length — sexually and socially.

That had been the reason he had been able to hold her — he had never tried to possess her. They had always been together, but she had always gone her way, and he his — at the Game. She was amazingly proficient — charming to all and close to none. Except

to her mother perhaps, who was essentially wild like she was, but who had achieved triumph and because of respect was able to temper herself. He knew he had thought too long and too deep. He knew she was going to stir a moment before she did, and then it was too late.

"Where are you going?" he asked. But he knew.

It was the first time in two years he cared, too.

"Home to Mummy." she replied airily. She pecked him on the cheek and left.

He twisted his cordial glass pensively between his thumb and forefinger and thought about her high cheekbones.





## The Cycle

To the oft' found follies of man,  
A peeling laughter through the corridors of time  
Doth give a ringing echo.  
From the pillared marvels that were Greece and Rome

To the astylar edifices of an age where men mock moles  
It comes — green with giggles and round like an oven door.  
Akin to the heathen hordes that sacked and looted:  
The ruinous thundering their snorting steeds would bring  
Foretold the cyclic climax that so long had been in coming.  
Agean, Chaldean, Assyrian, Phoenician — all folded in their time,  
As by the girded loins of tomorrow's grinning Visigoth  
Shall fall the gleaming cities  
Of the sleepy singing moles.  
Poor are they that crumble

In the wake of man's great game.  
The pawns great empires are

And the hapless king's the sleeping serf.  
The game for eons played; now Alaric sees the winning move  
And now the rubbled remnants of man's finest art  
Shows the loss.  
One Carthage, one Hyksos horde.  
The anachronism's harmony in oblivion,  
And oblivion's where the looters meet

To tell the tale of conquest.



PAN  
by NANCY BONHAM



# Sandy

Sandy came bounding across the schoolyard, and without turning left or right skipped across the highway. The policeman on the corner raised his whistle, but turned when he heard the voices of the others coming out of the big gate. After all, he knew very well that Sandy was always in a hurry to run off ahead of the other kids.

"Hey, Sandy, Sandy Kohn, can't ya wait up a minute," Jeffrey Clarke shouted as he hurried to catch up with her. "Come on, Sandy, wait up a minute. I promise I won't bite ya."

Sandy turned and with an expressionless face waited for her classmate.

"Gollee, Sandy, I don't figure you. I mean, you sure are different. Every kid in the third grade walks out of the room with other kids, but you, you're always runnin' off by yourself. Do you like walkin' home alone?"

"I don't mind it," Sandy replied. "I'm used to it. You don't need lots of friends when you never had 'em."

"Aw, Sandy, don't hand me that. My mom said a kid needs friends. My mom said us kids shouldn't bully you just 'cause you're different."

"Okay, Jeffrey, so I'm different. I didn't ask to be. Now just go away if you don't like me — who needs you?"

"Come on, don't get sore. I thought you'd be glad ta have some company. No one else ever walks with ya. I don't tease ya either. Why do ya think they tease ya?"

"I don't know, just 'cause they don't like me, I guess."

"Well, why don't they like ya?"

"I don't know. I don't know and I don't care, Jeff, so you can just leave me alone."

"Okay, I'll leave ya alone, but there's a whole bunch of kids comin' and they won't leave ya alone."

Just then Jeff turned and saw the group of kids coming toward Sandy. The bigger boys led the way and formed a circle around the two.

Sandy didn't run; she'd been bullied before. She looked down at her feet, trying to show no signs of fear. Her fingers moved across the hem of her faded dress, and came to rest on a small patch.

A girl who had been standing in the crowd came forward, eager to get face to face with Sandy. She pinched up her face into a smirk and began speaking in a mocking tone. Soon a rhythmic chant rose among the group, and Jeffrey too added his strong boy's j's and s's and u's.

Sandy stood motionless and waited for them to turn and go away. Then she ran on home, bouncing a little, eager to leave the crowd behind. As she swung open the kitchen door, she let loose a flood of bewildered tears, and finding her mother at the kitchen table, approached her with an urgent cry.

"Mommy, Mommy, the kids, they said I killed Jesus. Did I? Did I kill Jesus? The other day I poured water down an ant hole."





## LAMENT

My brow is too weak  
for silver dollars.  
I'll wear a king butterfly  
over my eyes  
and measure my suits  
six feet to the inch  
while my last taste of life  
and my last fortune dies.

## UNTITLED

Softly, softly,  
my dragon whistles in the wood,  
spring sentry among the perishing ferns,  
sun-headed girls dance in green waves,  
young men bud them, sea flowers,  
softly, softly, oh my dragon.

I shall never wear my armor  
in your green arms,  
for my fire-eyed dragon burns  
and all the world quivers,  
and the skies dance in heat,  
and my steel skin  
would sear you to the bone.

Yet I shall lie beside you  
clothed only in love,  
each single cloth a window  
opening only on fair weather,  
and I shall lie with you  
though our breaths must cross mountains  
to mingle,  
though our skins be separated  
and our sighs be separated  
and our looks be separated  
by the frayed cloak of distance,  
yet I shall lie beside you  
clothed only in love.

Softly, softly,  
my dragon whistles in the wood,  
spring sentry among the perishing ferns,  
sun-headed, dance in the green waves,  
follow the sea, only the sea,  
softly, softly, oh my dragon.



# JOURNEY

Today wears a shroud of haze. The horizon is just a smudge between sky and ocean. On the crowded beach vacationing New Yorkers sit sheltered under umbrellas. They read the *Times* and complain about the heat and last night's dinner. Surrounded by wet towels and banana peels, young mothers from the town relax and referee sand fights. A baby sleeps in his carriage. Sun-worshippers from the colleges lie motionless on their blankets, lulled by music from radios half-buried in the sand. Every year they come here to work in restaurants and hotels and orange-juice stands.

A laughing boy tumbles in with a wave and I turn away and walk along waterprints left by the tide. There — a clam shell, bone-white and perfect. Sandpipers dart frantically in and out with the waves; their tiny legs blur like hummingbird wings in flight. I watch and watch but the rushing water never catches them.

The jetty runs straight from the land into the ocean like an ancient road left by a conqueror. I wade through a tide pool, through water warmed by the sun, and the jetty stretches before me. Round yellow pebbles mark the path between great black rocks strewn through the water.

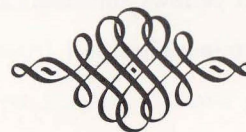
An old man is fishing. His bait bucket is empty and there are no fish on his chain. I pass him, looking for smooth stones to step on. It is cool at the end of the jetty and I can see underneath the rocks where the water is green and dark. With each swell of the ocean outside, the water smacks the glistening rocks and glides away. I look up and see the pier. It is nearly hidden by the haze.

We came here from work after the storm when the waves hissed and roared in anger and destroyed themselves on the shore. He pulled a helpless log from the exploding surf and together we rolled it onto the sand. Wet raincoats trapped our legs as we ran stumbling down the beach.

The pier led out over the water and we followed it, cracking our steps on the old boards. The sky had cleared and a warm pink glow burned over the world. The railing trembled as waves slammed against pilings below; a wind rose to push the clouds back into the ocean. We stood together, he and I, and it was quiet.

Overhead a gull is crying. He swoops low over the jetty and disappears. Tomorrow I will get a fishing pole and catch a sea robin. The old fisherman will show me how.

Out near the edge of the rocks the waves curl up to greet me as I stand alone in the sun.





## \***DARK NIGHT**

a blazing ball of fire sinks in the sky,  
taking with it yellows and blues and reds.

a blazing ball of fire sinks in the sky,  
taking with it the laughter of boys and girls,  
the talk of people and the cries of babies.

a blazing ball of fire sinks in the sky,  
taking with it yellows and blues and reds.  
and then there is night.

\*Winner of the 1960 National Poetry Contest

## P O E M

Winter Sundays

With air as brittle as frosted glass  
A sun as piercing as yellow arrow shafts  
And me  
With father, mother, and Joyce  
Out driving on a country road.  
We stopped and snapped a scene or two,  
With backgrounds,  
Just a road, or a car,  
Or a Howard Johnson restaurant.  
Time never seemed to move too fast  
On winter Sunday afternoons  
When I was eight or ten  
Or in photographs I look at now.





## SHADOWS

We are no other than a moving row  
Of magic shadow-shapes that come and go.

*Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam

Out of sight, the sun rises with antique and malevolent habit, to reveal the existence of the street. First, the sky begins to brighten, growing whiter every moment, defining more clearly the line between the earth and that above the earth. Then, the sun

rudely bursts forth in all its spurious glory, coughed up from the endless mouth of the horizon. The dirt of the street, the symbol of man's humanity personified in rust and rubbish, shoots out long, black shadows, piercing the shield of the poet as he returns to the sanctuary of his room.

The first few people appear and prepare for the work of the day, their shadows blending, struggling, each trying to outdo the others, though none are successful. Shops begin to open, dotted along the street. Here, carcasses hang over the commercial smile of the butcher; there, nun-faced dolls peek through a window, looking out as the dirt of the new day is thrown into the street to mix with the garbage of the day before. The street is busy.

The sun mounts the sky and the shadows grow shorter. Little children come out to play in the crowded street. They play the happy games of childhood, their shrill voices challenging the blank windows which echo the faces of their fathers. To them the street is not ugly, filled with the refuse of time, to them it is a kaleidoscope within which their dreams and fantasies are displayed, a kaleidoscope that is always filled with beauty. And as they play, their small bodies throw small shadows on the street, small shadows darting in and out of the large ones among which they run.

The sun has reached its zenith; the shadows have drawn themselves into dark little balls in preparation for the growth to come. The sun hangs in the sky for a moment, then slowly begins to descend into the earth below. The shadows are beginning to grow once again, slowly lengthening in tune with the sinking sun. As the sun sinks, people crowd the street, rush about, and become shadows as they strive to complete the work of the day.

The sun is sinking. The shadows lengthen, growing longer every moment, till at last they merge and blend into darkness. The sun is down. The lights from a multitude of windows are turned on, shining into the street. Now, where single shadows existed before, there are many, each one growing bigger and darker for a moment, then fading as others strive to take their place.



One by one, the lights are turned off; the people in the street return to their homes and the shadows disappear. The poet returns to the street for it has become beautiful. The moon is down and the stars are out — now, forgetful of the unseen dirt through which he moves, he is able to create. He wanders through the dead, dark street, full of life to one such as he, he who can see its beauty. But, sooner than he remembers, the night is done. He senses the coming of morning, and with it the rising of the sun.

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## Non-Tempo, Non-Tropo

Each morning the silent sun,  
boiling sight and sleep  
both  
from eyes washed clean  
more by the measures of excess  
than by omission,  
wakes us to put on again  
the robes of our fathers,  
to peer once more  
into the dusty mirrors  
of our understanding.  
That sun, that rage-rouged pupil  
in its ever empty iris  
of transcendant blue  
rising, enacts anew  
the grand illusion,            the false face  
of time

And in the dawn-naming sky  
Day's dismal daisy reigns omnipotent  
while night's emulsive negative  
shades and veils her own,  
more serene, if none-the-less perceiving.  
Yet night and day  
bear each eye alone,  
time's cyclops:  
While I, making metaphor of misery  
and symbol out of sorrow  
have both my inquisitors  
their torches lit together —  
How else explain why I can see  
more of anger in the world  
than can the sorry single sight  
of heaven.

And so, twice blinded, I,  
a prim poet, sit  
making words out of things  
but never  
things out of words.



# The Unspotted Tiger

The screendoor exploded open and the boy bounded through the opening and burst into the backyard. Since Tony lived only two backyards away from the Upton's, Joey Upton had only to climb an old, wooden fence and squeeze his way through the dense jungle of Mrs. Miller's rose bushes to see him.

Skipping quickly into Tony's backyard, Joey spotted the large figure of his friend and hero. "Tony, Tony, hiya, Tony," shouted the boy with the happy face as he raced toward the black sedan that his friend was fixing.

"Good morning, Joey," replied the man with the monkey wrench in his hand. Although it was only early morning, Tony Eler was hard at work on the auto, and as he squirmed from underneath the machine his rugged features were spotted with grease bathing in perspiration. He wore no shirt, only work pants and heavy shoes which showed evidence of at least nine different colors of paint. A rich tan complimented his burly, out-doors-type build and provided him with a handsome countenance. "I've just about finished the Huggins' car. Boy, it was in pretty bad shape."

Joey smiled from ear to ear as Tony winked at him. Since Tony was at home most of the time during the summer, making repairs on cars and doing all sorts of other odd jobs, Joey was at the side of his hero as often as he had the chance to be. And Tony didn't mind a bit. They enjoyed an almost father-son relationship. Since Tony's own son had been killed in the war, he treated the boy as if he were his very own.

"C'mon, pal, let's get over to the tree and get out of this sun," the tall, shirtless man suggested. "C'mon, I'll race you over to the tree." The two figures sped to the large tree and sank to the ground.

The weather was abnormally hot, stifling hot, and there was an uncomfortable dryness in the air. The sun radiated its unmerciful power at the sizzling below. Under the shade of the tree, a relief was found, and the two relished its protection. A yellowjacket circled wildly above the boy's hair, making a shrill buzzing sound

as it too sought an escape from the mid-summer oven. "Whew, the ol' bee pretty near flew right into your hair that time," Tony quipped as he stuck a piece of tall grass between his front two teeth. A faint breeze appeared suddenly and brought additional cool comfort. "How's that cat I gave you?" asked Tony as he withdrew the grass from his straight teeth.

"Good, I guess," said the boy, looking into Tony's eyes. "Well, I really don't know."

"What do you mean? Reason I ask is because I haven't seen the rascal around in a couple of days now. He used to be over here with Clara and me lots. I just wonder what happened to him, that's all," he said in a wondering way.

"Well, Tony, Tiger's been acting pretty funny the last few days, biting and scratching people and just being mean or mad or something," the child recalled, pulling at his red and white striped polo shirt as he did so. He picked a blade of grass, and copying his big companion, slid it into his expressionless mouth.

"Don't you worry about it, Joey," Tony assured him, "It's probably this sun that's got him in a funny mood." Upon reassuring the cat's young owner, he suggested they go into the house for awhile. "It's pretty cool in the house, fans going full blast, and Clara can get us some lemonade." At this Joey's face lighted up and they hurried up the back steps and disappeared into the framed house.

After a tall glass of refreshing lemonade they felt somewhat cooler. They sat at the kitchen table with their dripping faces in the direct path of the electric fan. Clara had joined them for a cold drink and she too occupied a chair at the table. "If you boys will excuse me now, I have some housework to do," she said as she left the room, slapping and fluffing the sides of her seersucker sundress to create a body-soothing breeze. "And when you go, Joey, I have some preserves for your mommy," she shouted from the front of the house.



"I have a surprise for you," Tony snappily exclaimed. "I don't show my war souvineers often anymore, but you're special," he said to the boy. "Follow me, son," he went on, and the boy in the stretched polo shirt obeyed. They climbed the stairs and went into a den-like room. Hanging on the wall were pictures and banners and two sabers, crossed in a very military manner. The proud man showed the equally excited boy an array of war treasures, each one more spectacular than the last. A repetition of "ooohs" and "aaahs" managed to slide through the open mouth of the boy who was in a trance with the splendor of the weapons.

"Did you kill any Japs?," asked the astonished boy.

"A few, Joey, a few," his hero reflected, "but I wish there was some way of bringing them back again." Tony's expression was serious and Joey was silent. "Yes sir, son, war is a funny thing. In one minute a man is as live as you and me, and then, boom, he's as dead as a beached whale."

"But those Japs were dirty and bad and everything."

"Well, it's all over now, Joey, and there's nothing we can do to change that." A glimmer appeared on his face, lighting-up his features, especially his twinkling eyes. "No, son, a man isn't like a cat. A cat has nine lives. You know that. Tiger, that rascal, has nine whole lives."

At these words, Joey started to count on his small, thin fingers. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine," he slowly counted with difficulty.

Tony smiled as he stored away again the memorable weapons of his past. "It won't be long now till you'll be able to count real good, huh, Joey?" Joey shook his head as he counted from one to nine all over, amazed at how lucky Tiger was. Nine whole lives, more than the dirty Japs had, he thought. "Yep, you'll be going to school come the fall," Tony repeated as he watched his pal struggle through the exercise of the cat's life.

"Joey, honey, will you come down, please?" His mother's high-pitched voice interrupted his boyish concentration. He raced toward the steps and pattered down to the first floor, followed by Tony. "Hello, Tony, how are you? Is he bothering you from your work? If he is, do tell me, and I'll keep him at home for a change." Mary Upton, youthful mother of two, stood with her hands on her hips and displayed a cordial smile. Her bright, white teeth showed-up well against the deeply tanned face.

"He's no bother, you know that," replied her son's companion.

"What do you want, Mommy?" asked the boy who still was tugging on his polo shirt.

"I need some bread from the store and I'd like you to go for it, okay?" She handed him a quarter and told him to buy himself some penny candy with the remaining change. "Remember, dear, it's for after lunch," she warned.

"Thank you, Mommy," he said as he dashed toward the back door, "and I'll see you later, Tony," he added as he slammed the porchdoor behind him.

"Tony, something awful has happened to Joey's cat and I don't know what to do," Mrs. Upton confessed. She appeared worried underneath her good-looking facade. "I didn't want Joey to hear, so I sent him for bread," she continued.

"What about Tiger?" he quickly asked as he turned and faced Mrs. Upton. "Joey just a little while ago told me he was acting kind of strange the last few days and I told him it was just the weather and all with all the heat. Heck, we're pretty darn sticky and uncomfortable, and we don't have fur coats on in the summer."

"We don't even have fur coats in the winter," Mary Upton wryly remarked. Seriously, though, come over and see if you can tell what's wrong. He makes noises, scratches and bites, and when I left him, the poor thing was taking some sort of a fit on the back lawn."



"Let's get over there fast, right now," Tony calmly but forcefully declared as he led the way over to the Upton's yard.

As Joey Upton casually skipped toward his house, a loaf of unneeded bread under his arm, he heard the sound of voices coming from his backyard. It was getting close to lunchtime and he was getting hungry, but out of curiosity he continued to skip around the side of his house and into the backyard. Several people were gathered around Tony. They were watching a strange and horrible sight. Tony was shoving Tiger into a pail and taking him out again and then shoving him into the white pail again. Now Tony stopped. He grabbed the orange and white animal, drenched completely through, by its tail. The cat's fur was disheveled and ugly. He said he would call the people at the Dog Pound and not to worry.

The people began to leave. Some shook their heads in sadness, others said nothing, still others went right on talking. Joey thought it funny that people, especially big people, would waste their time watching a cat die. He wondered if people stood around and watched a Jap die. He turned around without being noticed and skipped quickly around to the front of the house. As he skipped he counted his fingers. The sun's glare was in his eyes and it was hard for him to count.



## Haiku

The sun beats down

Changing white to a sometimes brown

— The coming of spring.



## SURFACES

Mabel's hand paused over the box of candy, her eyes moved over the chocolates; the hand swooped greedily to a fat one with an almond on top. She bit into the chocolate-covered cherry; the sweet, pink juice dripped over the front of her dirty, gray jersey. She swiped hastily at the sugary drops with a pudgy hand.

Mabel rifled through the pile of magazines lying beside her on the overstuffed sofa. She let her hand glide over the shining surface of a *Good Housekeeping* with a sweet, pink little girl on the cover. A *True Romances* with a bosomy blonde clasped in the arms of a handsome, raven-haired man caught her eye. She pulled the magazine from the pile and flipped absently through the pages until a story captured her attention. "I Was Bored With Life Until —" the story was catchily titled. The illustration accompanying the title was rather similar to the one on the cover, except that the bosomy girl was a brunette this time.

Mabel pawed through the box for another piece of candy. She selected one and squirmed in the chair, settling herself to read. The grandfather clock in the hall struck three, and she started guiltily. Joe would be home in two hours and the breakfast dishes still sat in the sink, soaking under several inches of dirty, gray water. She thought distastefully of doing the dishes, of putting her hands in that dirty water to find the stopper. The thought of the greasy water on her arm almost made her sick. She hastily grabbed another piece of candy. "If I read for an hour," she thought, "I can still do the dishes and put T.V. dinners in the oven before Joe gets home."

"Joe'll be mad if I have T.V. dinners again," she thought wearily. She imagined how he would be when he saw them on the table — the tasteless little potatoes in their beds of greasy gravy, the chicken legs with texture of sawdust, the grayish peas reclining soggily on the shiny aluminum. "My God, not again!" he would shout, his fat, little face growing unpleasantly, unhealthily red. His round, piggish, little eyes would narrow, the muscles of his cheeks would twitch right up to his ears. She knew what she would do then, too. She would begin to cry. It would come on slowly, the tears

trickling down her pasty, pudgy cheeks, trailing to her chin and dropping slowly onto her spotted jersey to mingle with the stains from the chocolate-covered cherry. The sobs would come from deep inside her as she grew more and more sorry for herself. She would probably develop hiccoughs, which would increase in intensity until they shook her fleshy frame. Her several chins would shake soggily, the tears and hiccoughs becoming almost too much for her.

He would be contrite then. His little face would fade back to the mottled brown that it had been before his fit of anger. He would say haltingly, "Now, Mabel, now, Mabel," until the sobs and the hiccoughs had ceased. He would pat her hand, and they would sit to eat the now-cold T.V. dinners. Joe would eat every bite of his to show that he hadn't meant he didn't like them; Mabel would pick at hers. Later the pangs of hunger would tear at her stomach and she would get out the ice-cream and the sweet rolls, those little sticky, sweet rolls that Joe brought home for her every night, just like the ones they sold at the diner.

Having prepared herself for the ritual of the tears and the forgiveness, she dismissed her worry about the T.V. dinners. "One more night won't matter," she thought. "Tomorrow — there's plenty of time." She turned eagerly to the *True Romances*, ready to throw herself wholeheartedly into the trials of the bosomy brunette.

"His eyes swept her, greedily, hungrily, devouring her. She felt herself melting into those eyes. He came toward her slowly; she sank to the bed —"

The doorbell rang loudly, insistently. For a moment her mind remained wholly filled with the image of the brunette on the bed, but slowly she wrenched herself back to reality, back to the buzzing of the doorbell. She was annoyed. "Bill collector," she thought acidly. Her eyes swept the room — its cheap, dusty, over-stuffed furniture ballooned out to meet her glance. Everything about the room held a gray fatness — the gray-flowered fatness of the sofa on which she sat, the gray-blue fatness of the overstuffed chair, the gray-white fatness of the ugly floor lamp. If it were a bill collector at the door, the aspect of the room would not cause him to be confident of his success.



She heaved herself from the chair. The fluted candy papers in her lap fell to the worn gray rug unnoticed. She walked slowly to the door, scuffing her runover shoes as she went.

She opened the door slowly, peering around the edge before it was fully opened. A young man stood on the cluttered porch, a black-haired young man with a yellow flower protruding jauntily from his button-hole. She noticed the buttery yellowness of the flower almost before anything else. Her eyes went to his face. He was clean-shaven. His black hair fell over his forehead in a soft wave. "Yes?" she said.

The young man smiled, showing even white teeth. "Good afternoon, m'am," he said pleasantly. "I represent the Leader Brush Company and I'd like to give you a little gift."

She stared at him uncomprehendingly. "If we can just step inside," he said, "I'll get it out of my case."

For the first time she noticed the small black suitcase sitting at his feet. Since she made no move to object, the young man stepped across the threshold and into the gray living room. Mabel turned and followed him in.

"Now which would you prefer — the sachet or the hand cream?" he asked her, holding out two little packets for her inspection. Mabel touched one of the packets gently. "The hand-cream, is it?" said the young man, smiling gaily. "Well, now I assure you, you won't be sorry. That's one of our fastest moving products."

"I'd like to show you a few more things," he said. "Here we have a handy little item." He reached into the suitcase and brought out a bottle on which was printed in large black letters, "Leader's Oven Cleaner." "I'd like to demonstrate this on your oven, if I may," he said.

Wordlessly she led the way to the cluttered kitchen. She glanced at the sinkful of dishes standing in the gray water and thought, "I should have washed them before."

The oven was greasy and gray-black inside. The young man shook out a cloth which he had extracted from the case. He touched an oven-cleaner-soaked edge of it to a spot on the oven. The gray-black grease disappeared and the spot was miraculously clean and shining. Mabel blinked at the transformation. "Hey," she said, "not bad."

The young man smiled engagingly. "It really does a good job," he said.

He led the way back to the living room and reached into his bag for another product. Mabel said to him, "Do you sell much of this stuff?"

He looked up at her. "Sure do," he said. "I'm working my way through college selling this stuff, and if I didn't sell, I wouldn't be there. It's a simple case of sell or drop out of school."

Mabel noticed that he didn't call her "m'am" all the time the way the older brush salesman did. As he bent over the suitcase again, the black wave of hair fell over his forehead. Mabel's hand moved toward him, then stopped. She had almost pushed the hair from his eyes before she had realized what she was doing. Joe was getting bald; his hair had already receded to the middle of his head.

The young man was talking fast now, he was getting into his stride. Suddenly, Mabel interrupted him. "Look, buddy," she said, "I don't have any money and I won't have any for a long time, maybe never. I couldn't buy your stuff if I wanted to. There's no use wasting your time here. Go somewhere where you can sell something and get that college education."

The young man looked up at her; he knew she was serious. He put his samples back into his case; he stood up and picked up the suitcase. His eyes were several inches above her own. "Thank you," he said gravely. He turned and walked out the door.

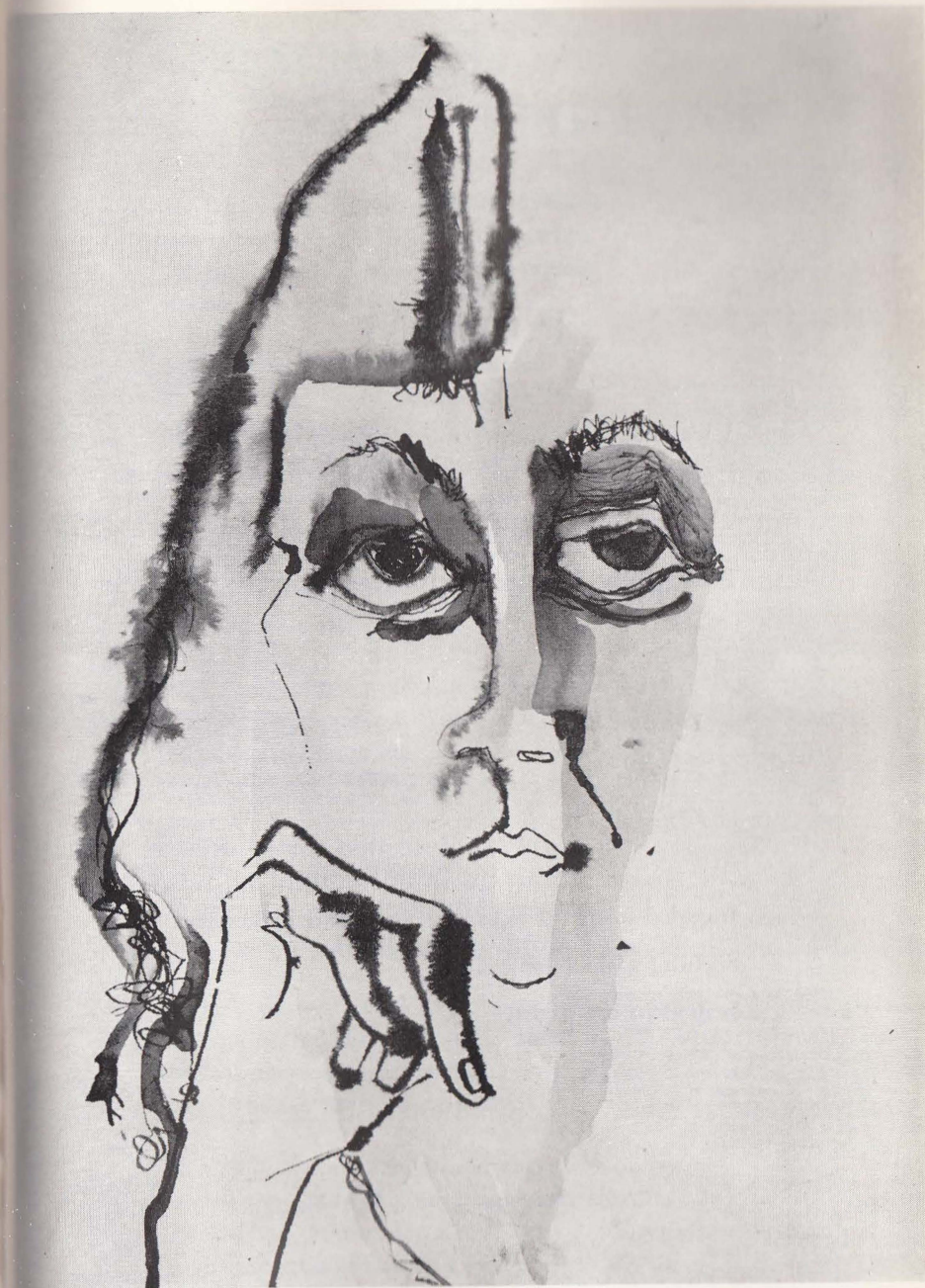
She stood where she was for several seconds. Then she walked slowly to the door; he hadn't bothered to close it when he left. She



looked out. On the cluttered porch she saw a spot of buttery yellow. She moved to it, she bent with a grunt and picked up the yellow flower. It was just a little wilted. "It will do to put on the table at dinner," she thought. "Maybe Joe will ask where it came from and forget about the T.V. dinners."

She walked slowly to the kitchen to get a cheese glass full of water for the flower. As she walked past the stove, she glanced at the oven door, standing open. The cleaned spot gleamed at her, winked at her.

She stared at the spot. Suddenly she ground the flower in her hand. She could feel its juices wetting her hand, staining it. She threw the flower against the wall — she didn't know why.



STEPHEN SCHWARTZ



## P O E M

I watched the evening mist approach  
silently . . .  
stealthily.

It caught its foot on the river bank and  
s

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u l

i

n

g

Impaled itself on trees and posts and picket fence.  
Sighing a slow long sigh,  
It died in the night.

## THE SCIENTIST AND THE INSPECTOR

He was working out tangential ratios  
when they came and took him away.  
In the car on the way to headquarters  
he audibly praised the day.

His captors led him to an office  
and not too gently ushered him in,  
and left him to stand before the desk  
where the inspector sat, pouring gin.

He said, "Bob," he said, "cooperate  
and tell us who else is to blame,  
for we know you've had others to help you  
play your deadly game."

Bob reached for a glass and the bottle  
and poured out some of the gin.  
"I have only done my duty," he said,  
and fondled the tip of his chin.

"I can see you're the sensitive kind,"  
said the inspector, drinking his gin,  
"but you're going to die as a traitor,"  
and his eyes grew bright and slim.

"These papers tell your life story,"  
and he patted the pile on his desk.  
"We know everything about you,  
but it hasn't been an easy task.

We can account for your every glass of beer,  
and we've tapes of you taking your shower.  
We've had men under all of your windows  
and your phone's not an ivory tower.



Our agent sold you that topcoat.  
We've even samples of tears you have cried.  
You know that woman you spend your nights with?  
Well, she happens to be on our side.

So just sign that statement in front of you."  
The inspector's face became grim.  
"The press will be here in an hour,  
till then we can enjoy this gin."

But Robert's eyes grew brighter  
than they'd ever been before.  
"Save your voice and pray for an hour," he said,  
"for today we're starting the war.

I've given them enough secrets  
to turn this building to ash,  
and tomorrow we'll all be forgotten  
along with the rest of this trash.

Now you know what will happen,  
so you'd best begin to pray.  
My computations tell me  
they're only an hour away."

"You're lying," said the inspector  
and slapped Robert twice in the face.  
But his eyes were the eyes of a hanging man  
with his feet dangling high in space.

The inspector raged and ranted,  
then suddenly became quite calm.  
He stepped quickly across the room  
and pushed the button marked ALARM.

But all was quiet, nothing was heard  
except Robert humming the end of some hymn.  
It's a pity, thought the scientist,  
that we've no olives for this gin.

"We also have agents," said Robert,  
"and as you see the wire's been torn.  
Now there's no way at all to stop this,  
so why not just sit down."

The inspector sat down and poured some gin,  
for half his fear was gone.  
Then he said a dozen Our Fathers  
with his face religiously calm.

Each man was thinking his own thoughts.  
Almost an hour went by that way.  
Nothing was said of the atom  
nor the country in which it was made.

The scientist played with equations  
and the inspector was thinking of Christ.  
Although both were delving in abstracts,  
both felt their gin needed ice.





# THE CANE

## I

Once upon a time, there lived an old man. He was a lonely man, stooped over with age and round of shoulders from the work he had done in the field. The old man lived a quiet life in a small wooden hut by a stream.

His only function in life was to live it; rising at six in the morning to tend his small field, and retiring at eight, to bed. Everywhere he went he carried with him a cane of solid ivory, with a gold ball at the top, encrusted with all the rare and precious gems of the world.

Now, to those of you who read this story,, you will wonder how a man of such petty nature and drab existence came by a cane as wondrous and as beautiful as this.

Indeed, it was a wondrous cane. Not only was it wondrous and beautiful, but it was a magic cane too. How the old man came by the cane is not known, but it is a fact that he had it.

Some say that he found it laying in a swamp, propped up upon a stone, and pointing in the direction of the rising sun. Others say that it was given to him by a weary traveler who once stopped at his hut seeking food and lodging, which he obtained. Still others say that the cane was passed down to him by his ancestors, who dated back to the beginning of time.

Now it came to pass, that on a summer day, while the old man was plowing his field, a small boy came running through his field and trampled down all the young shoots which he had planted. The boy did not stop to look after the thing he had done, nor say any words to the old man. The old man, however, did not notice what the boy had done, nor even that the boy had traversed the width of the field, trampling down the young shoots.

As the old man plowed and hoed and picked the weeds from the field, he came upon the devastated area. "Ho!" he cried, "Why has this happened?"

He looked about, but as his eyes were of poor vision, he could not see anything that indicated the willful destruction. He contented himself by saying, "Because I do not care for them, they die."

Thus he went about trying to raise them to life through care and love.

## II

At half past seven, the old man, leaving his plow and hoe at the field, picked up his cane and started walking back to his hut. Since it was summer, and the still warm sunlight made the land visible, his walk was not difficult. As he entered his hut, he saw a small boy sitting on the floor, holding his head in his hands and crying.

The old man entered, saying, "Why are you crying, little boy?"

The small boy drew back in terror at the sight of the old man with the rounded shoulders and stooped back. "I am crying because I was running and hurt my foot today," he answered the old man. "Where were you running?" asked the old man.

"Across the field where the stream bends," the boy answered. "Ah, so the plants did not die because I was not caring for them," said the old man.

"What?" asked the boy, who had stopped crying when he saw the old man and became afraid.

"Nothing, boy," said the old man. "Here, let me see your foot."

The old man bent down and gently took the boy's foot. "Where does it hurt? Here?" asked the old man pressing the boy's toe.

"No, over here," explained the boy, pointing to his ankle.

"You have no doubt twisted it. I will have to bandage it," said the old man.

"Will it hurt?" asked the boy fearfully.



"No, it will not hurt," said the old man kindly. "I must go around back of the house to get the bandage. I will not be long." The old man picked up the cane and started walking toward the door of his small hut.

Darkness had fallen outside and as the old man stepped foot out of the doorway, he commanded the cane to glow. Suddenly, as a streak of lightening illuminates the sky, the cane glowed and lighted up the land around it.

With the cane to light his way, the old man walked around to the back of the hut. The water in the stream looked silver in the glow of the cane. The green leaves of the trees took on a strange, but beautiful hue. The grass now looked blue.

The old man returned to the hut. The boy, who had been rubbing his foot in the darkness of the room, now looked up, for the light of the cane had illuminated the entire room. His eyes beamed with excitement, with curiosity. He looked about him for the source of the light. His eyes darted into the corners, crevices; he looked at the windows. Then he turned to the old man and saw the cane. "The cane, it's, it's glowing!"

"The cane?" asked the old man. And as he looked at it, he said, "Ah yes, so it is."

"Why is it glowing?" asked the boy.

"Because it was made that way," answered the old man.

"Will it glow for me?" asked the boy, filled with curiosity at the wondrous sight he beheld.

"I do not know. For some it does, and for others," the old man shrugged his shoulders, "it does not. But come, lie down on the bed and rest your foot," added the old man, pointing to his small bed.

The boy limped slowly to the bed and climbed upon it. The old man moved across the small bare room to a table and sat down by it. "Cane," he commanded, "go out!" and the light of the cane died and the room was pitched into darkness.

The old man sat for a long while watching the boy. Soon the boy fell asleep and the old man, feeling very weary from all that

had happened during the day, let his head fall to the table and he too, went to sleep.

### III

Later, the boy awoke. Light had just begun to creep up from behind the trees, and gold streaked clouds settled themselves in the sky. The boy looked about the room, and saw the old man sleeping by the table. His foot did not hurt anymore and he got off the bed and walked up to the old man by the table. The boy's eyes wandered again over the small bare room that the old man called home. His eyes came to rest on the cane. "If only it would work for me!" thought the boy.

The boy stood for a long while looking at the beautiful cane. Then he put out his hand and touched it. It was smooth and round. The boy lifted it and said softly, "Glow, cane, glow for me!" Nothing happened. The boy tried again. Still nothing happened.

The old man opened his eyes but did not raise his head. The boy did not know he was awake. "Glow, cane, glow for me!" commanded the boy for a third time. The old man smiled to himself. "I hope it works for him," he thought. "I hope so." But it did not. Suddenly, the boy clutched the cane and ran out of the hut.

The old man did not move for some time. Finally he rose, and walked to the doorway, watching the fleeting figure of the small boy.

### IV

The boy ran past trees and bushes, up hills, through valleys, across fields. He clutched the cane tightly, lest it fall from his hand. "Wait 'till the kids see this!" he thought. "Boy!" he murmured.

He reached the road that ran to the town. He ran until he was out of breath. He had to stop running, but he continued to walk quickly. He stopped and looked behind him, fearing that the old man was following him. No one was there. He stood there, and feeling confident, resumed his walk to the town.

The dirt road ran through the center of the town. Just before he came to the town, the boy walked off the road onto a little trail



that led to the back edge of town. He walked slowly, thinking about what he would tell his friends. He passed the backs of houses, all in a line, very precise, very old. He climbed over fences, cut through backyards, pushed through hedges. At last he was in a dirty, cluttered back yard. Some boys were there, playing marbles.

His face widened with a grin. "Hi, fellas!" he cried when he saw them. "Look what I got!" The other boys did not look up. "Hey!" cried the little boy. "Look what I got!" One of the boys stood up and turned his head. "What?" he asked.

"Look!" said the little boy, thrusting the cane in the other boy's face. The other boy's eyes opened wide at the sight of the beautiful cane.

"Gee!" he said. "Hey, fellas, look what Shorty has," he called to the other boys still playing marbles.

All the heads turned to look at the two boys. "Gee!" "Wow!" "Boy!" they exclaimed. They all clustered around the small boy with the cane.

"Where'd you get it?" asked one.

"I stole it," announced the little boy with the cane, feeling very proud.

"Who from?" asked another boy.

"The old man over by the woods," he answered.

"Gee!" It must be worth a lot!" said another boy as he fingered the gold top.

"At least ten *rillas!*" said the little boy, as he pulled the cane away from the boy who was touching it. "And you know what else!" he said. "It's magic, too!"

All the boys laughed. The little boy with the cane felt hurt. "Show us," said one boy. "I can't," he said slowly. And the boys laughed at the little boy with the cane.

"It's magic," one mimicked. "Yeah!" shouted another boy gleefully. "Show us, show us, show us!" chanted the boys.

The little boy lifted the cane. "Glow, cane, glow!" he commanded. Nothing happened. He cupped his hand over the cane to shut out the light. "Glow, cane, please glow," he cried. He peeked inside his cupped hand. Nothing happened. The little boy with the cane got mad. "It glowed for the old man!" he shouted. He picked up the cane and banged it on the ground. "Glow, cane, glow, glow, glow," he yelled as he banged the cane again and again on the ground.

All the boys laughed at him again. "The old man went out with the cane before it glowed and crossed the stream, and when he came back the cane was glowing," he said to the others. "Maybe if I pour water on it, it will work," he said, proud of himself for having thought of the idea.

"Get some water," someone said. A boy ran into the house and a few minutes later he came out with a glass of water. The little boy with the cane took the water and spilled it on the cane. "Glow, cane, glow," commanded the boy. Nothing happened. He cupped his hand over the cane but he saw only blackness.

"It's magic, it's magic!" the boys called, and then they began to laugh again. Someone ran into the house and came out with a bucket of water. "Maybe water will work!" mimicked the boy with the bucket. He took the pail and spilled it on the little boy. The boys broke into laughter. "Glow, boy, glow!" someone called and the others took up the song as they chased the little boy with the cane into the street.

## V

The boy walked through the streets. His bare feet hurt from the walking and running he had done during the morning. "It has to work," he thought. "It has to." Tears ran down his dirty face.

The boy walked through the streets. He walked past houses and shops, past yards and buildings. Finally he stopped walking. He sat down in the road and began to cry.

"What's wrong boy?" asked a gruff voice behind him. The boy turned and saw a huge man towering over him.

"Who are you?" asked the boy.

"Me? I'm Smally, the blacksmith. You lost?"

"No. The cane, it won't work," said the boy as he stood up.



"What cane?" asked the blacksmith.

"This one," said the boy, producing the cane from behind his back.

"Well now, this is some cane. Worth a hundred rillas, at least. Where'd you get it, sonny?" asked the man, his eyes appraising the cane.

"I took it from the old man over by the woods."

"Hmmm," said Smally, rubbing his jaw with his dirty hand. "I just think I'll take it and give it back to him. Yes, that's what I'll do." The blacksmith grabbed the cane from the small boy and started walking off with it.

The little boy ran after the man. "No, you can't, it's mine!" yelled the little boy.

"Get outa here, kid," said the blacksmith as he pushed the boy aside.

The boy watched the blacksmith move on again. He ran up to him. "Give me back my cane!" he said.

The blacksmith stopped. "Get lost kid."

"Give me back my cane!" shouted the little boy as he ran into the man with his fists flying wildly. The man started laughing. "Oh, so you're a tough little man," he said. "Well, here's your cane!" said the blacksmith and with these words he hit the boy hard across the mouth and knocked him down.

The boy sat on the ground stunned. He watched the man walk down the road holding the cane.

"You big bully!" he yelled. The man did not turn.

The little boy sat in the road and thought. "What will the old man do to me? I didn't mean to keep the cane. I wanted it to work for me," whimpered the boy as he started to cry.

The little boy sat in the road a long time. He was very hungry. He decided to go home.

## VI

He entered a broken down shack on the other edge of town. "Pa!" he called, but he received no answer. "Pa!" he called again. No answer.

He went to the closet and opened it. There was nothing there. He turned and went out of the shack. He walked back through the town. From a bar he heard laughter and talking.

". . . And then this kid says, 'Give me back my cane!' There was a lot of laughter. The boy knew they were talking about him. He walked to the door of the bar and peeked inside. The man who had taken the cane was leaning against the bar talking to the other men. He held the cane in his hand. ". . . So I says, 'Get lost kid,' but the kid tries to fight against me." The men began to laugh again.

The big blacksmith turned away from the men and ordered a beer. He turned back to the crowd. ". . . And then, after I bashed him one, he yells, 'You big bully!' The men could not control themselves. They broke into such laughter that they were convulsed. Some fell to the floor, others found seats. The big man at the bar laughed so hard that he dropped the cane.

The boy, who had opened the door to hear better, ran into the room. He picked up the cane and began running out of the room. The blacksmith caught him. "A lot of spunk for a little boy," he yelled above the laughter. The men started to laugh again. The boy turned around and faced the man holding him. He lifted the man's hand and bit down hard. The man let out a yowl and let go of the boy. The boy was out the door in a flash, as the man cursed after him.

## VII

The boy ran down the street clutching the cane tightly. Dusk was falling, and the little boy was tired. He slowed down and began to walk.

An old woman approached him. "Young man? Why are you out so late? Don't you know you should be in bed? My, what have you there? Let me see it. Give it here, boy," said the little old lady without pausing for breath.

The little boy with the cane didn't know what to say. Silently, he handed the woman the cane. "Lan' sakes! It's a beautiful cane!" exclaimed the old woman. "Where'd you get it boy? You steal it? Hah! I thought so! Well, I guess it's up to me to give it back. You run along to bed and don't go stealing anything that doesn't belong to you. You hear me, young man?"



"Yes, ma'm." said the boy timidly. "But —"

"No 'buts' about it, young man. You go home now. I'll take care of the cane."

"I'll return it," said the boy.

"No," said the woman "I'll return it."

"No, I'll give it back. You want to keep it!" protested the little boy. And he grabbed the cane from the old woman's hand and ran.

### VIII

It was dark as the little boy with the cane made his way back to the old man's hut. He still held the cane tightly in his hands. His eyes were moist with tears as he trudged up the road. His little body quivered in the chill breeze that blew. His head was down and his eyes watched his feet.

He turned off the road and cut across the now dark field. He walked through the woods and crossed over the stream that ran by the old man's hut.

"Old man," he called, when he reached the door. There was no answer.

"Old man," he called. The old man appeared in the doorway. He did not say anything, but just looked at the boy.

"I took your cane," said the boy.

"I know," said the old man slowly.

"I brought it back."

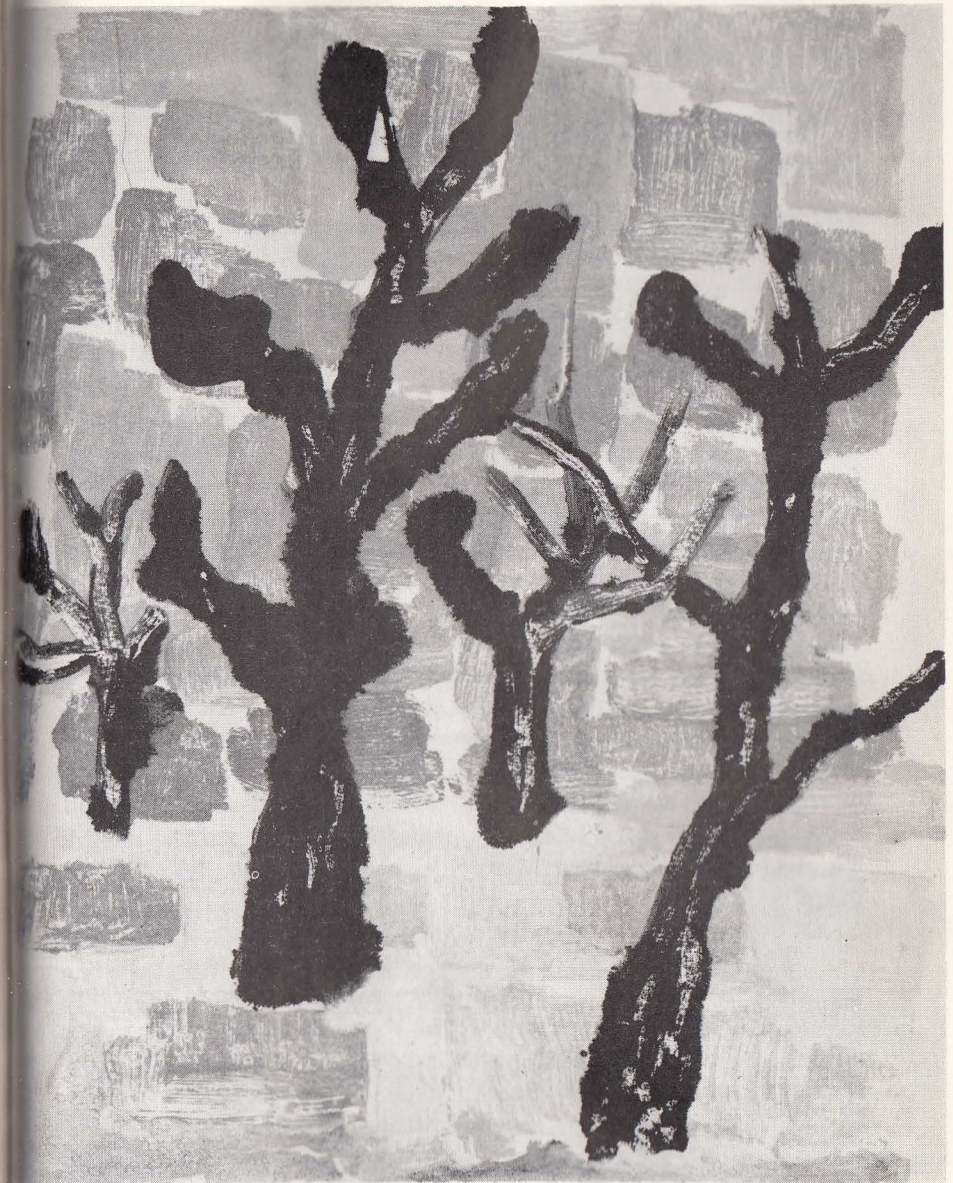
"I am glad. I hoped you would," said the old man softly.

"It does not work for me."

The old man stepped forward. The boy extended the cane to the old man. As the old man touched it, the glow appeared, more brightly than ever, casting a warmth on the old man and the boy, both still holding the cane. The boy's eyes filled with wonder and tears ran from the eyes of the old man.

"Do you understand?" asked the old man, letting go of the cane.

The little boy nodded, staring.



ANDREA CREASE



# A Bowl of Flowers

Cass ran up the porch steps, shook her umbrella and rang the doorbell.

"Oh Cass, it's you, dear," Mrs. Lehman said as she opened the door. "Would you wait for me in the living-room? I'm on the phone."

Cass took off her wet shoes and padded into the living-room. "She's wearing black again," Cass frowned. "She told me last month that she wasn't going to wear mourning for Margo anymore. Isn't it enough that she dragged those out?" Cass thought, looking at a framed set of pictures that depicted Margo at various ages. "Well, she used them to advantage, at any rate," thought Cass, remembering the part these pictures of her friend played in all of these visits.

Whenever she came, Cass tried to limit the conversation to harmless small talk. But, at the first lull, Mrs. Lehman would look at Margo's pictures and begin a series of reminiscences that would lead to the details of Margo's illness and death. But the Margo she cried over in these reminiscences was not the fun-loving best friend with whom Cass had grown up and who had convinced Cass' parents to allow Cass to board at school when they had decided to move. Instead, Mrs. Lehman pictured Margo as a saintly martyr who had been taken away from her by a cruel, yet somehow loving, God.

"This is the last picture she had taken," Mrs. Lehman would say, indicating a studio shot of Margo in school uniform. "She looked so well," Mrs. Lehman would continue. Then, with a dramatically lowered voice she would conclude, "Who could have known . . ." And always, this last statement would be followed by an avalanche of tears and a series of mea culpas: "I should have taken Margo to the doctor sooner . . . I should have been more careful." Then, following the recriminations, would be the inevitable, "It was the Will of God."

"Of course," Cass thought bitterly, "she was even better when there was an audience. I remember the day her cousin was here. Mrs. Lehman didn't need the pictures then, she just threw her arms around me and cried, and then she said, "Cass is so like Margo. I've come to count on her for everything. I almost feel as if Margo is here when Cass comes."

Cass visited Mrs. Lehman rarely after this incident, and then mostly because of Mr. Lehman. "It does her good to have someone young in the house, Cass," he said, "you're doing me a great favor." Cass knew what he meant when she recalled Mrs. Lehman saying, "I know I should do my crying while he's at work, but after all, it seems that you and he are the only ones I can talk to." However, Cass managed, through the help of her roommate, to be "away" most of the times Mrs. Lehman called.

Cass sighed and shook her head. Suddenly, she froze. "What are those flowers doing there?" she thought, furiously glaring at a bowl of dark, formal flowers which stood beside Margo's pictures. "Is Mrs. Lehman setting up an altar?" Cass sat down and sighed heavily. Her head was throbbing and she could feel the anger within her growing. "My God," she thought bitterly, "hasn't Mrs. Lehman anything to live for but to mourn Margo? It's not as if we haven't tried to help her," she continued, remembering the day she had asked Mrs. Lehman to go to a concert with her. "Yes, why don't you go with Cass?" Mr. Lehman had urged his wife. "It would do you good to go out, and you know how much you enjoy music." "I just couldn't," Mrs. Lehman had answered, her voice shaking. "The last concert I went to was with Margo, and now . . ." her voice broke and she rushed out of the room sobbing. "Thank you for trying, Cass," Mr. Lehman had said, "and thank you for letting her lean on you. I know how much she depends on you and sometimes, she demands too much but . . . well, maybe she hasn't had enough time."

"Time," Cass thought, her gaze returning to the bowl of flowers, "she's had enough now. I'll talk to Mr. Lehman tonight. We'll do something about this — we've got to . . ." her thoughts broke off as Mrs. Lehman came into the room.



"Why Cass, what's the matter? You look so funny; are you ill?" Mrs. Lehman asked.

"It's nothing," Cass said. "What time is Mr. Lehman coming home? I'd like to talk to him about something."

"I tried to call you to tell you, but your roommate said you were away." Mrs. Lehman sank into a chair, took Cass' hand and, pattingly it gently, said, "Cass, dear, Mr. Lehman died last week."



?

## (In Opposition to Kit Dunlap)

How does a man become a child?  
How can he deny himself  
For something that does not respond  
Nor care, nor love, nor really help?  
How?

When does man become a child?  
When does he disply his heart  
To someone who does not come  
Nor stay, nor go, nor even start?  
When?

Where does a man become a child?  
Where can he strip all his clothes  
For someone who has no form  
Nor life, nor mores, nor even vows?  
Where?

How much does a man become a child?  
How much does he dissolve the wall  
For something that cannot tell  
Nor ask, nor judge, nor really call?  
How much?

Why does a man become a child?  
Why does he give away his soul  
To something he cannot define  
Nor grasp, nor be, nor ever mold?  
Why?



## The Legacy of Empiricism

On a road outside the city  
is a tree grown brown in autumn,  
    amber in the autumn,  
    whose branch is a scythe  
    to bring men to the golden wheat —  
of this can be made the mast  
to hold her shoulders up,  
    unbow her head,  
for of such things is made a ship.

Further on where the road is lonely  
and flowers seldom picked or trampled,  
    and the grass stands upright,  
    is that tree from which a lover  
    cut his ring, and an archer his bow —  
and of this is made the planks of her deck  
and her keel, arched like a backbone below,  
for of such things is made a ship.

And last in the dead of the wood  
where the trees are dark-cloaked  
in living mantles,  
    and toadstools grow unhindered,  
    is a hangman's tree fresh used,  
    still strangely swaying without the wind —  
and from this shall you make  
the coffin she carries in her hold  
and the cannon  
    to fire her keel away;  
and she'll never sail these seas.

There's never a boat as would sail  
with her keel shot away.

## Miss Esme

Miss Esme sat motionless on the dull, green bench facing the ocean. She watched spellbound as the tiny sandpipers scampered lightly out to meet the waves, leaving minute, three-clawed prints on the damp sand. They moved almost as if blown by the slight sea-breeze, but always stopped just short of the foamy water which rolled toward them.

"They never let the water touch them," thought Miss Esme. "They go right up to it, but they never let it touch them. They never get caught. How very clever they are."

The tiny birds scampered back and forth, playing tag with the waves. Their game of tag was indeed one of which a child would soon tire, for they never allowed themselves to be touched by the sparkling gray-green water.

The early morning sunlight was reflected from the ocean with such brilliance that it seemed it would certainly blind all onlookers. Miss Esme could feel the heat reflecting from the white sand and from the smooth boardwalk on which the bench rested. She sat unmoving, soaking up the sun. Several cooing pigeons pecked at bits of popcorn dropped by careless passers-by of the night before, but the pigeons and the sandpipers were the only signs of life on the boardwalk at this hour. On weekdays, hordes of people would desert the hotels and rooming houses to crowd the boardwalk and the beaches with screaming, writhing humanity, but now, at this time Miss Esme liked best of the whole day, she and the birds shared the view unmolested.

She glanced down the beach, down toward the commercial section of the boardwalk. King's Cove was a religious resort and allowed no concessions on its small stretch of private beach, but Surf Center, just down the coast, was highly commercialized to make up for the Cove's inactivity. As she watched the beach, a small boy emerged under the boardwalk, a small boy making inevitable small-boy noises. "He should be in a playground," thought Miss Esme. She had no aversion to small boys who remained in playgrounds where they most certainly belonged.



"Chug, chug, toot!" he muttered. He was followed by a capering, black dog. The dog's attention was drawn to the sandpipers. He trotted toward them, barking short, sharp barks, scattering the birds. The uneven game of tag that Miss Esme loved was finished for a time, interrupted by this dirty, noisy little boy and his equally dirty, noisy little dog.

The small boy looked at her. "Chug, toot!" he said. Then he ventured, "Hi."

"How do you do, young man," replied Miss Esme.

The small black dog came galloping back, having scared off the last of the sandpipers. The pigeons took flight at his return. Both the boy and the dog regarded her with serious glance, heads cocked to one side.

"Well?" Miss Esme said sharply, fixing them both with her piercing, black eyes, her little chin thrust into the air. Actually, she, herself, was not much larger than the small boy. She was tiny and delicate as a china figurine; her shoulder blades stuck out like little bony wings. "My little angel with wings," her pappa used to call her.

At the sound of her voice, the little black dog trotted up to her and put a small paw into her lap. Miss Esme leaped to her feet. "Get out of here, you dirty little mongrel," she shrilled.

The small boy stared at her red face uncomprehendingly. "He won't hurt ya none," he said uncertainly. "He just wants to be friends."

"Get him out of here," shrieked Miss Esme. "I don't want him putting his dirty paws all over my dress."

The little boy glared at her. "C'mon, Spike," he said sourly. "Leave that mean old lady alone." He marched up the beach. Miss Esme could hear him muttering, "Chug, chug, toot!"

"Mean old lady," she thought. "That stupid child." Why, ever since Pappa had first brought her here as a tiny baby, folks had thought she was the sweetest little thing around. And with a mind of her own too. Why, Pappa — God rest his soul — had always

told stories about how when she was just a tiny girl she didn't like to be held and had always amazed folks with her courage and independence. There had been the time when she was only three years old and she had gotten up early in the morning and had gone down to the hotel dining room for breakfast all by herself. Her folks had been frantic looking for her, Pappa had said, and finally they came running into the dining room. There she was, big as life, eating her breakfast with Isaac standing proudly beside her. "The li'l lady ordered her own breakfast," Isaac had announced to the relieved family, his brown face beaming, "An' ah brought it to her. Don' she beat all?" She thought she could remember Isaac as he had been then, a young man, very tall and slim, with his white waiter's uniform and his gleaming white teeth.

The ringing of the church bell interrupted her reverie. "That child should be in church somewhere instead of galavanting around calling decent people names," she thought severely.

She rose from the bench, walking slowly toward the huge, wooden edifice which was the center of the little community of King's Cove. The interior of the building was cool. A lighted cross gleamed from behind the pulpit, and the words, "Thine is the glory" stretched in neon splendor over the cross. "The auditorium," as the building was known to the frequenters of King's Cove, was renowned for hundreds of miles for its great pipe organ and its dedicated speakers. The auditorium was filling rapidly now, as the time for the morning worship service drew near.

She moved down the aisle toward the special seat which was reserved for her. Only people who had been coming to King's Cove for years and years rated seats of their own. Miss Esme's seat, as she often thought with satisfaction, was in a very good spot.

When she reached the row in which her seat was located, she noticed that a young man had taken the place next to hers. She stared at him unrecognizingly for a few seconds until she remembered triumphantly, "Why, he's in the choir. Yes, he sits in the fourth seat in the last row of the choir loft. That's where he should be." She wondered why he would be here when his place was in the choir loft.



"Good mornin', Miss Esme," said the usher respectfully as he handed her a paper containing the order of worship.

"Good morning, Mr. Davis," she said. Then, leaning toward him, she hissed, "Why is that young man sitting there? Doesn't he belong in the choir?"

Mr. Davis peered nearsightedly at the young man. "Why yes, I believe he usually sings in the choir," he replied. "But he's been sick lately, and he's sitting down here with us today. That seat was his grandfather's years ago, and I thought it would be nice if he sat there today."

"Of course," replied Miss Esme. She moved through the row to her own seat, gathering the skirt of her crepe dress about her so that it did not fall on the young man's seat.

She stared straight ahead throughout the service, moving only when it was time to sing the hymns or to drop her dime into the collection plate.

Miss Esme knew by heart the words to almost every hymn. She thought of this with pride as each number was announced. She could sing the right words without even glancing at her hymnbook. Her black eyes scampered over the other church-goers, sitting in their places. Many of them had been coming here to summer for years, but almost none for so long as she.

After the service Miss Esme walked rapidly toward the hotel, her thin little legs under the black crepe outlined by the sea breeze. She had skipped breakfast this morning and she was unusually hungry, possibly, she thought, because of the fright engendered by the small dog's jumping on her that morning.

She entered the sunny hotel dining room, heading straight for her table by the big front window. Isaac was there ahead of her, bowing slightly as she smiled at him. He pulled out her chair and greeted her. "Mornin', Miss Esme. Ah missed you at breakfas', ma'm."

She smiled again, that charming little smile which had endeared her to so many people. "Yes, Isaac," she said, "I decided that if I'm to remain slim, I must cut down a little on my calories."

Isaac laughed, the still-white teeth flashing in his lined, brown face. "Why, ma'm," he said, "You'll nevah git fat. Why, you ah jest lak a little bird. Fust good wind'll blow you away."

She smiled. She was satisfied; it was the answer she expected. Isaac had been giving that answer to her since the time when she was seventeen and had decided to diet. It had been the thing to do at the time. Pappa had been angry at first, then amused. "If my angel diets," he had said, "her wings will grow larger than ever," and he had run his big hand over her thin, protruding shoulder blades.

She frowned suddenly as she remembered the other time, the other person who had touched her shoulders. She tried to recall Jim's features, but they blurred in her mind, jumbled with images of the many other suitors who had begged for her hand. Jim had been different, though. She remembered that he was tall. They had been sitting on a bench in the park, and she had been wearing a thin white dress. He had looked at her for a long time. He had touched her cheek gently and then withdrawn his hand. Then — she shuddered as she thought of it — he had said, smiling, "My little angel." His arm had gone around her, brushing those fragile, little bones . . . She hadn't seen him again. There was just something about him that repelled her.

"French onion today, ma'm," said Isaac as he set the golden broth in front of her. The sunlight caught the bubbles of fat floating on the top of the soup. The bubbles held the sun, then, captured by their transparent surfaces.

Miss Esme enjoyed the meal thoroughly. She noticed that some of the new people had trouble getting good service, but Isaac was at her side if she so much as glanced up from her plate.

She got up from the table, dropping her white glove as she pushed her chair away. Isaac was there immediately to pick it up. As he bent before her, she noticed with a little sense of shock the extreme grayness of his kinky hair, the fat crease at the back of his neck. "Why," she thought detachedly, "he's old."

She walked to the boardwalk again. It didn't get so crowded on Sundays as on weekdays; King's Cove didn't allow swimming on



its beaches on Sunday. She found her bench and sat down, observing happily that the sandpipers had resumed their endless game of tag.

She watched the sandpipers for some time before she became aware that someone was watching her. She glanced over her shoulder at the tall, stooped old Negro in street clothes who was regarding her with a curious glance. She had turned back to the ocean again when she realized that it was Isaac, without his uniform, who stood there surveying her so gravely.

Seeing that she had recognized him, Isaac moved closer. "Beggin your pardon, ma'm," he said, "but it peers to me that you ain't changed a mite since you was a young gal." He gestured with a large, wrinkled hand at her back, at her shoulders. "Why, you is just as straight as you evah was. Ah hope you don't mind, ma'm, but ah been meanin' to ask you —"

He broke off as she rose suddenly. He was alarmed at the bright red color which had suffused her face and neck. For a moment she stared at him, tears coming to her eyes. She raised her hand, reached out as if to trace his long figure, then withdrew her hand and stepped back.

"Go away," she begged, her voice quivering. "Please go away." She turned her back on him, her shoulders hunched and shaking.

He stared at her small, thin back for a moment, then he turned and wordlessly walked away.

Miss Esme seemed not to notice the tears coursing down her cheeks. She watched the sandpipers scampering toward the waves. "How clever they are," she thought.

A small boy's pounding feet echoed hollowly on the smooth boards. "I don't think I'll come back next summer," she thought wearily. "Emma says that Sandy Bay is lovely in the summer." "Lovely," she said aloud, "and not so crowded." The small boy turned and stared at her, then ran on.

The sandpipers raced to meet the water, then turned and fled from the gray-green wave which seemed sure to overtake them. "But they'll never get wet," thought Miss Esme. "I know them."

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