



Grade

fall

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FALL ISSUE

1955

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-- AS WE SEE IT

The age of silence now speaks with redundancy. In classrooms, in lectures, in sermons. Nothing new, nothing blue. Only the same incessant chatter that the cave man heard in different dialect. In classrooms we hear teachers' notes quoted, read and rehearsed since 1862 and from them we are to get a great feeling of newness and intellectual curiosity. Yes, it is curious, isn't it? So it is new to us, because we have never heard it before. So we've never heard the roar of the ocean and someone tells us it sounds like trees when there is a wind storm passing through them. We get the connection, but it is not the same as the salt air clinging to our skins. And these words true, yet not having the saltiness that sticks and will remain until time has washed it off. Time cannot wash off that which was not in the beginning.

And the famous men who come here to give us these inspiring lectures. These men come here smoking their pipes, wearing their tweed suits with the-crossed-the-ocean salt still sticking to them. And what do these great people tell us, we who have been waiting so long for the fresh new breeze of wisdom. This is philosophy; this will wrinkle your brain; this will make you go out of the lecture room tripping hand in hand with Minerva. So we get the facts, only the facts, the facts we already knew, but had failed to categorize them in our non-wrinkled, youthful, innocent brains. Ah, Yes! These tweed suits and smoke rings categorize our thoughts for us so they can wonder unified through our vacuums. Nothing is as thrilling as an erudite category.

And then we go to church. We get Christianity's history divided into five spoon-fed illustrations. Long ago our first grade preacher told us all the history and stories and parables of Christ. In fact we heard them from our second grade preacher and our third grade preacher. We have not learned yet. They think not?

A confession. This is a highly exaggerated generalization. The point of this exaggeration is this: Is there nothing new under the sun? Breathes there a professor with wit alive to jumble those ancient notes and sprinkle them with vitality. Is there not a lecturer strolling through the countries who can tell us something new? Is there not a preacher who can tell us something that is not so simply illustrated? Is there not an editorialist who does not exaggerate to prove a point?

If there is anything new under the sun or even something old given a new thought, rest assured convention will not let it break through. Sometimes our professor speaks spontaneously; sometimes our lecturers talk truly; sometimes our preachers illustrate intellectually. They almost tell us what we have breathlessly, restlessly been waiting to hear, but it trembles on the wrinkled paper edge, it seeps through the pipe stem, it falls mumbling from the pulpit. Why does it not come more often? Because convention is not to be disturbed. Who wants our complacency disturbed? And those great people could disturb our complacency; they could make our vacantness ripple, but they don't because they are afraid. Afraid, because only the very rare dare to break through the dusty wall of convention.

DJG

NOTE: *There has come the "voice of one crying in the wilderness;" arousing intellectual curiosity by complexity of thought, usually presented by others in maudlin manner.*

O'CONNOR

A Good Man Is Hard To Find

a book review

Harcourt, Brace and Company--1955

by Doris Etheridge

From a roadside Tower a tune, smoked flavored and dense, laments the scarcity of a good man. The bawdy notes blare out across an expressionless landscape, singularly ornamented with one glaring, hostile, metallic sun.

Suddenly bombarded, the music reverts. A voice shouts. "Listen to what I got to say, you people. There ain't but one river and that's the River of Life, made out of Jesus' Blood. That's the river you have to lay your pain in, in the River of Faith, in the River of Life, in the River of Love, in the rich red river of Jesus' Blood, you people."

And the people listen, fat, grotesque, pink, blue, orange, sweat-shirted, their feet mired down.

Thunder rolls: a hand touches a shoulder; the voice of Flannery O'Connor, unemotional, light, comments: "This is the South, Mr. Jones. Why don't you put away those faded magnolias?"

With her second publication, *A Good Man Is Hard To Find*, the author of *Wise Blood* again speaks, and not ingratiatingly, of a depraved South—that South of "poor-whites," subjugated negroes, revival religion, no longer softened by perfume or luxury, no longer resplendent with chivalry or wealth—that South in which the peacock now walks alone, the last link, shedding its plumed integument, feather by feather, at the mercy of one-legged Ph.D's, insane criminals, self-righteous "ladies", illiterate schoolteachers, and freaks of nature—that innocent South with its "good country people" who are the salt of the earth. This, in essence, remains the world of Flannery O'Connor's latest volume of ten short stories where, in strains ranging from the brutal to the pathetic, the humorous to the grotesque, she creates ten variations of an original theme, each complete in itself, each provocative, each disarming in its motley of character extremes. There is General Sash, only one hundred and four years old, who lives with his granddaughter Sally Poker Sash, a stupid teacher of sixty-two "praying every night on her knees that he will live until her graduation from college," to incite laughter. There is five year old Bevel Ashfield, the "unwanted" child of alcoholics, with his black satined, barefoot sandaled, red toenailed mother, to impel a tear. There are innocents like the pink-haired Lucynell, a thirty-two year old distimore "angel of Gawd," and Manley Pointer, the Bible salesman, so dull and genuine with his valise and its hollow Bible, a pack of cards, a flask of whiskey, and the blue box labelled "To Be Used Only For The Prevention of Disease," to occasion horror. These are those "good country people" whose highest ambitions are to own an automobile and remain snug within the world of the coke ma-

chine or the comic book, whose historical vision extends so far as to blame England entirely for "the way things are now," whose only criteria emerge from the latest movie short or the personal misfortunes of teeth pulling or "misery in the face."

Of such does America's most acclaimed young author write until the reader gasps with contempt rising to match that apparently underlying her pen. Beware, therefore! These sketches are no writer's sugared pills to engender complacency, but rather so many satiric capsules to show a contemporary society that has been thrown off balance, one in which "there's nothing to see" because there is nothing to believe—one in which existence itself is torturous because, happen what may, there is "no real pleasure in life."

Armed with this volley, Miss O'Connor achieves best exemplification in her stories, "The River," "The Artificial Nigger," "Good Country People," and "The Displaced Person." Both in the first and third of these narratives the total degeneracy of humanity is manifested in unusual directness. Why would a five year old boy, baptised in the Stream of Life by a radical revivalist, decide to lose no further time in reaching the Kingdom of Christ and give himself to this stream unless, even in its shimmering muddiness, was mirrored more promise of happiness than that offered by a loveless atmosphere of olives, cream cheese, ashtrays, glasses, and tinkling ice? Why would a one-legged Ph.D change her name from Joy to Hu'ga and climax years of study with the conclusion that "there's nothing to see," and this itself a kind of salvation, unless in the duplicity of an apparently innocent Bible salesman was manifested the truth that there are no longer beings worthy of the epithet, "Good Country People"? "The Displaced Person" and "The Artificial Nigger," too, in attacking the fundamental question of salvation, prove that mercy itself is extinct, capable of resurrection only when common suffering brings the recognition of artificiality.

Thus, beneath the surface of fantasy and distortion is laid bare the perversity which, to one individual, epitomizes the real South in its attempt to preserve what it has, even though life without love or beauty or enlightenment remains in essence an existence of "no real pleasure." Writing simply, stabbing deeply, the author of *A Good Man Is Hard To Find* develops her opinion to the point of horror. To what result? The reader must either don a suit of mail to ward off the force of so-called O'Connor truth, or, in persisting in a belief in the "good," leave himself vulnerable as he goes his way picking up the fast fading feathers of a bird of paradise.

IT WAS ONCE

by
dure jo gillikin



margaret mcCrary

The memories come surging in like the moonlight-splattered waves.

The waves that wash the sand taking it back into the night-depths and bringing it back to the clear shadows of the pier and the buildings.

Memories come and memories go,
But the mind goes on with the realities of the moment.

A wave surges, slides, crawls and rushes back into the past.

A man tall and weak stands behind the counter looking across at me with dizzy eyes.

His cheek bones are rounded and brown.
Pink flesh scraped by the cement mars the once brown temple and chin.

The gray hairs almost conceal the dead black of the hair on his forehead.

His face is swollen and it has the vacant look of the face of the dying.

My eye hurts as it follows his sluggish steps.

One eye red, staring into the darkness,

The other finding make-believe light.

It comes back, the wave,
Hurrying to bring yesterday to meet the seeking eyes of today.

I open the door of my home and walk in.
My mother rises and comes to greet me.
Her face is as round as usual; it is warmly wrinkled;
It is smiling, happy to see me.

After her embraces of homecoming,

I turn looking for my father.

He is behind me stretched out on the blue and white striped sofa.

A white cloth is folded and squarely placed over his left eye.

He lifts up the top half of his wilting body, still holding

the cloth with his hand.

He says,

"Hello, Jerry, how come you're back so late?"
Looking at Mother and then back again at Father,
I inquire,

"What's wrong with your eye? Did you get something in it?"

The cloth comes off; the eye, red and swollen cares not for the light,

Dim as it is,

And waters.

"Put it back, put the cloth back on your eye,"

Stepping back and asking Mother

"What's wrong with his eye; has he been to the doctor?"

How long has the eye been that way?"

Mother sits down in the wicker rocking chair;
Father lies down on the sofa.
I sit down on the footstool in front of the oil stove,
Leaning my back against it slightly.
I look straight at Mother, worry in my eyes and my
heart unsteady.
"Have you had the same trouble? One of your eyes
looks a little weak.
Are you well?"
I ask fearfully.
Mother puts her elbow on the arm of the chair,
Her hand in the smooth hollow of her chin,
She gazes calmly at me, and replies,
"No, nothing wrong with my eye.
Frank won't go to the doctor,
Says it's only a cold in his eye."
Father interrupts her,
"My eye is the way it is for a reason.
It can see in darkness.
A doctor's no good for that. What could he do,
Make it see?
Jerry, leave my eye this way, Jerry."
I look at him,
"Can't you see darkness in light? You must go
Find out. Find out what is wrong—is wrong.
You will go and trade that red
For white.
I'll go with you."

Standing up, I look at both of them and declare,
"I've never seen such a family in all of my life.
Both of you! Sit here; get sick
And won't go to a doctor.
You just sit here and suffer.
Why don't you, don't you take care of yourself, self?"
I cry out in the night.

They don't say anything. I sit back down.

Mother asks, "How's your job getting along? Expect
to be home after Christmas?"
"Yes," I reply, "I've got two weeks off; I go back
the new year.
Oh! I saw a picture in the paper I thought maybe
you'd like to see.
When I saw it, I thought I'd surely die laughing."
I reach into my pocket and open the paper, point to
the photograph with my finger
And hand the paper to her.
She holds the paper up to the lamp-light,
The lamp-light shining through hand and paper.
She laughs, putting her hand to her mouth.
She comments,
"Yes, the preacher would like to see this. He'd get
a kick out of seeing himself laying the corner-
stone of a big colored church."

He's such a kind young man, a nice young man."
"Yes," I agree laughing with her, "I thought both of
you would like it."

Mother yawns and gets up,
"There's some popcorn in the cabinet if you want
to make some.
I'm going to bed;
It's been such a long day."

"I'm going to stay up a while and read. Sleep good.
Goodnight.
I've got a surprise for you tomorrow."
The tide continues to come in.
Pier shadows and building shadows drown as the
waves stretch.
The moon moves, leaving the center of the night and
bends as it casts darker shadows.

There is a pain in the man's eyes as he moves to place
the hamburger and french fried potatoes on
the counter.
He stumbles off for a minute into a side room.
He returns with his pink sores of flesh painted a dark
red.
There is a smell of medicine as he walks by.
The white apron clings to his hips as he walks by.
He is limber floating.

It is night.
There are quick gasps for the stifled air.
The breathing has holes in it.

I sit at the foot of the bed counting, yet not counting,
Every sound that is made.
I watch the heaving of the body as it draws every
breath.

The doctor comes in and takes the pulse.
He tells the nurse to give a life right away.
They go out.
The door swings silently to and fro.

Mary, my oldest sister, enters on one of the swings.
"How is she?"
"Better, but not much better."
She leaves calling softly, "Let me hear from you if
anything gets worse."

Ether and sickness sticking in the air, clinging to the
walls, the clothes, the furniture, and the body.
The breathing slows down.
The struggle for air becomes less intense.

I lay my head on the foot of the bed and wait for
morning.

Low tide, the sun high in the sky,
Shoals bleached showing their ribs to the gulls that
fly overhead.

The pier house rests in silence.
Beneath the pier, the water reflects the sky
And the bottom of the pier without any ripples.

The clouds slip across the sky with the wind.
They are moving out to sea.
Below them, the trees sway in the same way.
The metal ringing of an old church bell
Swims its way up through the almost spring air
And catches on to the wind.

Flowers—red roses standing there with yellow
chrysanthemums
Whispering past the pink gladiolas
Weeping on the mouths of the white snapdragons.
Flowers

A large black car drifts up to the church.
There is no one around.
Four men emerge from the car, open the back door,
And carry the fifth passenger into the church.
They carry her to the altar and arrange her before
the burning candles
Between the flowers—
They breathe their fragrance into her white-veiled
face.

A man walks slowly down the country road and
turns into the churchyard.
He takes off his hat as he enters the church and carries
it in his
Constantly moving hands.
This is the first time he has seen her like this.
He goes up,
Searches her face,
Calmer and younger.
He smiles as he looks at the manicured hands.
He is pleased with the blue-pleated dress.
He tells her so.
Her hair is combed back and parted on the side.
It is glossy and smoother than usual.
There is no wedding ring on her finger.
He remembers it. He wishes he had gotten another
for her.
It was so long ago—grey in memories.

No voices shrilling regrets; she hummed silently.
He vibrates a silent goodbye and goes back to his
home,
Where the other members of the family wait until
the proper hour.

More cars walk tiptoe and sit sadly on the shoulders
of the country road

Waiting.
People glide easily up the road,
Go through the door
Pause in midair
Wave goodbye briefly,
And move off again and spread themselves on the
bench.

The time comes.

The family enters with the black and the tears.
Reluctantly, they mourn their way to her and gaze
Quietly
Into her sleeping face.
They fall back and slip into the proper pews.
They are forced to listen to hymns once known, now
forgotten.

They listen finally.
The preacher gives his recommendation to God and
the people
They agree with him.
A prayer is offered through the white ceiling of the
church.
The prayer rises up and escapes the wind as it goes
out to sea.

It is over.

They roll her out to the sleeping car.
They drive off down the country road
Surrounded by cars
Framed
With yellow tasseled hair now orange with frost.

Dreamily, the family follows after them;
Into the appointed cars
And slowly chase the shadows moving face.

They travel the beautiful road—
The road where houses bow and bless;
They pass the tree-lined road,
Where the oaks bend with their mossy locks straying
through their own limbs.

At last,
They stop at the wood
Where the squirrels play
And drop the visitor off at her new home.

Chairs are there for the rest of the family,
So that they may sit comfortably on the threshold.

The visit over,
The family wipes its feet on the carpet
Lifts a hand swayed by the wind.

The tide comes in again
The moon rises.



carolyn harris

Sonata for Violin and Piano

(First Movement)

Rachel Shannon

Andante

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is for the Violin and the lower staff is for the Piano. The music is in 3/4 time and begins with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The dynamic marking 'mp' (mezzo-piano) is present in both staves. The violin part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving bass lines.

The second system continues the musical piece. The violin part has a dynamic marking of 'f' (forte) in the fourth measure. The piano accompaniment continues with a steady rhythmic pattern. The key signature remains one sharp.

The third system shows the violin part with a dynamic marking of 'p' (piano) in the second measure. The piano accompaniment features a prominent chord in the right hand and a moving bass line in the left hand. The key signature remains one sharp.

The fourth system continues the development of the themes. The violin part has a dynamic marking of 'f' in the second measure. The piano accompaniment maintains its harmonic structure. The key signature remains one sharp.

The fifth system features a dynamic marking of 'p' in the violin part at the beginning and 'f' later in the system. The piano accompaniment has a dynamic marking of 'p' in the first measure and 'f' in the fourth measure. The key signature remains one sharp.

The sixth system concludes the page. The violin part has a dynamic marking of 'f' in the second measure. The piano accompaniment continues with a complex rhythmic and harmonic texture. The key signature remains one sharp.

Handwritten musical score system 1, consisting of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *fz* (forzando).

Handwritten musical score system 2, continuing the vocal and piano parts. The piano accompaniment maintains its intricate rhythmic texture.

Handwritten musical score system 3, featuring dynamic markings *p*, *f*, and *p* with accents. The piano part shows a change in rhythmic intensity.

Handwritten musical score system 4, showing the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part continues with its characteristic rhythmic complexity.

Handwritten musical score system 5, with dynamic markings *p* and *f*. The piano accompaniment features a mix of rhythmic patterns.

Handwritten musical score system 6, concluding the page with dynamic markings *din.* (diminuendo) and *rit.* (ritardando). The piano part shows a final flourish.

I

Mad, mad, mad I tell you
 I'm frustrated, mad.
 Thwarted at every turn!
 You can't live your own life.
 You have to live your life as
 others want it lived.

No matter what you do,
 You are sacrificed. A
 Human sacrifice. And yet
 Inhuman.

Inhuman in that perhaps—
 Perhaps in the confusion of being
 Crossed you might slip,

Slip on a wet cabbage
 Leaf and end it all.

To end it all—
 Aye, there's the itch, so
 Why not rub it?

Ah yes,
 We might sit in a tub . . .
 A tub of insignificant water,
 Then, then take the
 Gleaming, shining razor
 Blade and slash, slash
 Your wrists!

Don't worry the water won't
 Let the blood clot.

ann
 carroll
 sallie



frustration

by

Helena Frost

II

Ah yes
 I have many reasons . . .
 Reasons for not committing suicide.
 I have a box of
 Bonbons.
 A fresh box of Whitman's
 Chocolates.
 I couldn't bear to die
 With having eaten them.

And besides that, we
 Have company.
 I don't think it would
 Be very genteel, or savoir—
 Fairish for
 The company to have to toilette
 In the
 presence
 of
 a
 corpse.

THE FOULIA

translated from the Greek by

Xenia Syrrou

A small city, by the sea, is my country. It was. I spent there only my earliest, my childish years. I cannot discriminate whatever I remember. In the same turbid picture, remembrances and dreams are mixed together. Something that started in the real world—the one they called real—extends in the dream and there it melts. Another that started in the dream—but yes, this also happens—completes its existence in the world of reality. Everything co-exists. This is how I take them and it is better.

Across from our home, some Jews lived. I cannot remember how many the men were and how many the women. I always mixed them up. Their house had a narrow facade but a tremendous depth. In front, it had a balcony, and two windows with green shutters. On the back it looked into a yard or garden. I had never gone to that side of the house. How could I have gone alone, as young as I was? I only dreamed . . . I dreamed many things. The silence spoke to me, and the shadows with signals and nods. From something small, accidental, I guessed innumerable things which I completed and I was filled with them. For instance: I scarcely saw the sea, but above, in the air, in the calm wind of the night, in the sky that becomes opaque, I heard her breath. As if wings—large, frothy wings were jolted; the odor, light in the morning, heavier in the afternoon roved always above us. The sea was there, present alive and unseen, dominating the city.

Then in the afternoon there was the bell of the vespers, from a church which might have been in the neighborhood; and then later, in the darkness, the remote and dragging voice of the watchman coming down from the castles, high, as from the sky, "Watchmen, be awake." It passed with re-echoings imperceptible, palpitative, and passed by, far away with the light of day. "Be awake!"

I was feeling cold.

. . . These are what I can say. The others are the unknown. The "foulia" for example. You know, of course, foulia: some sensitive, white flowers, like jasmín, but incomparably finer, more precious. A silk smell, like a baby's skin, this. They grew in the pots, caress. We had them in the yard, in the inner court of our home. In the evening, all together they began to smell, to breathe. What do the foulia sing? They resemble a chorus of seraphim.

Above was the blowing air of the sea. Lower was the breathing of the foulia. And in the house the smell of the incense.

Saturday evening, vespers and mother, Saturday evening . . . The watchman shouted from the castles: "Be awake"

"Foulia" is a short story taken from a collection of short stories having as a general title OF LOVE AND OF DEATH. Mr. Terzakis is director of the Play's Repertoire of the Greek National Theatre.

I was sleeping in a separate room; I was looking from my window to the house across the street. The balcony door opened often, but no one came out. The right window was almost always open. The left never. The right one was across from mine.

I was seeing a young woman passing behind the window. The neighbors were many—men and women. The father, of course, the mother, the children—boys and girls. I don't know exactly how many they were. The one that passed behind the window, opposite to mine, was one of the daughters, perhaps the oldest. She had black eyes. Big, austere eyes. I used to look at her, often, from behind my window shutter. I liked to look at her, like that, secretly. She wore a thick, amber necklace. Her hands were heavy, strong, and beautiful. My aunt used to say:

'—But, Ruth is a nice girl.' Ruth was her name.

I found it in my school's Old Testament book: "Only death will separate us. Wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God, will be my God. Wherever you die, I'll die, and there be buried . . ." As if I had made a great invention! The chapter has as a title, her name, Ruth; and in order not to lose the page I had put in a pressed foula. Whenever I open the book to this page, the foula smelled.

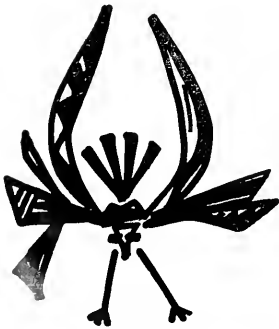
But it was not pleasant to neighbor with Ruth. In the evenings, with the darkness she closes her window, leaving the shutters open. Then, she turns on the lamp that has always a very weak light. And the room, Oh! what a room! The walls are very high and painted red, a very deep red; the light is weak and yellow; the flame flickers and the lamp smokes. The floor—so narrow is the street that I can hear it—creaks and Ruth's shadow passes over the walls. At nights, she works somewhere in the corner of the room and she never shows. Her shadow, only, comes and goes. I count her steps in the room. Once when she passed in front of the window, I saw her, for a moment, naked. Her figure glittered—white, cold flame in the thick darkness. And she had around her neck, the heavy, yellow necklace. Who had spoken to me about their God? Perhaps no one. But I know how he is, and this will never extinguish my thought. I cannot see his face; he is always in the shadow. But I see his hands, his big palms that are found in the strong light, and nod slowly down from the dome of the night. He holds in his right hand an axe. A big, fulminant axe. He visits Ruth's room at night and he must stand somewhere high on the ceiling which I cannot see, but I can see his robe hanging down in the darkness.

(Continued On Page 20)

T
H
E

BUG

Alma Graham



xenia syrrou

The floor is cold and hard under the rug,
Knees are taking a hurt from the rug,
And out of the hurt climbs a question
And into another hurt climbs the question
And you are the question, yourself.

But it is pushed back and you are pushed back
And you are pushed under a lump of words—
Shapeless, meaning nothing at all,
Sliding over what is really there.

Why ask? Why ask, anyhow?
Now you have said it; now you have done it—
Why ask? The sound of it is good in you
The sound of it is you,
You who think, who can figure things out for
yourself,
You who know already—Why ask? Who ask?

But you must, for you have always and forever;
You must hide beneath the words because it is the
thing to do,
A formal'ity—you don't listen to it yourself—
Words for the record, thoughts with a record of
their own.

For you know your answer; you answer yourself
And resolve yourself in you.

There is a buzzing and a buzzing
And it is all around you—almost through you
And back and forth it buzzes over you—
Some bug which should not be here and must go
Or bother you all night and through forever.
The knees with the hurt in them straighten . . .
A light. And the bug, flying, flying—
Beating its buzz into one wall and then another
Until at last it is frozen on a green curtain
Waiting for something—you.

And you will squash the bug as you have always
Because it is the easiest thing to do
Because it is the only sensible thing;
You will squash it in a tissue,
And carry it between two fingers
To the window, and flick it out—
And that will be all; that is all that is needed . . .
A step and a tissue in your hand
And the bug still frozen black on the curtain.

But it is you—you—you there on the curtain
You there, motionless, small and black
With the hurt of the walls in you
With the buzz, silent now, throbbing you
And nothing to do but wait, wait
Nothing else that you can do but wait.

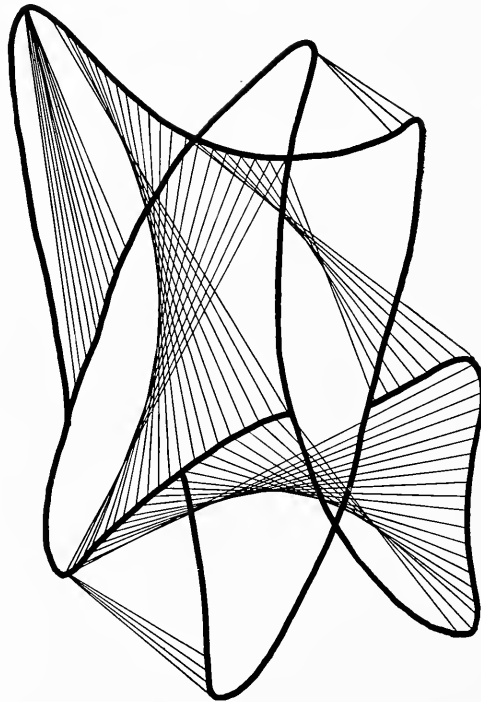
It wasn't going to be like this, was it?
It couldn't end like this, could it?
You rushed and flew and buzzed
And hit things and didn't care.
For you could get out; you knew you could
You had to—you had got out of things before
Never like this—but things; and what was this
But something else; and so you flew
And it didn't matter. You were heading for,
Demanding something
Bruising yourself through your shell for something
But—you couldn't get out.
But—there was no way out.
And you were tired; and you are tired now
And now it matters, here on the curtain
Now, here, alone on the curtain
Lost, quivering the tight, tight shell
Now it matters, doesn't it?

But now you can only wait
As a moment, longer than time, bites into you
And something says: die for a minute, just a minute
Die for a minute—there's nothing else to do;
And so you die—for a minute
You die and wait and there is a pause
And—on a sudden whim
In a minute's decision
A hand raises the window and unlatches the screen
And there is a white tissue and you are in it
And you are out in the air and it is cold and wet on
you
You are hard on the brick; the minute is up
You shudder, and the minute is gone
And you crawl off the tissue and the window is closed.

The floor is cold and hard under the rug
And human knees take a hurt from the rug
And the creature of whim, the strong one of a
moment
The good protector, holder of dominion
In humanness—deciding in humanness
Shudders in himself and cries and falls asleep
In a God Who is more than human.

Through the open mouths of doors
Glowing in spacious solemnity,
We race, little caring, and stop—stare.
Before us in triumph, a pasted form:
Harlequin smile in halved black,
Beckoning with halved white hand.
We follow—
In the twilight quiet, Harlequin ushers.
Behind and ahead in chattering mutation
Like nervous squirrels on stretched wires
Sit variations of us. Each seeking
His own escape from raucous existence.
We listen—
In careful turbulence, the serenity lost in exhilaration,
We catch the sound and whisper among ourselves.
The rustling of searching mice sweeps by us
With myopic sense, and heightened by a single note,
starts.
We feel—
The symphony played on false instruments
Grates with unchanging monotony;
Harlequin smile before us grins wider in mocking
exultation.
We sink—and grasping, rise.

Betty Shuford



Lucy Jeffries

The Eighth Day of Christmas

by

MARY ANN BAUM

Mother and Father sat at the small ends of the dining room table and Paul sat on one of the long sides. He wasn't quite sure why he had a long, broad side all to himself, while Mother and Father were cramped up at the short little ends. But he liked it, because he was the only one facing the wall paper, and he liked to watch the green and brown and white squares form funny shapes. When Father sat down, Paul pulled the big folded white cloth out of his sterling silver napkin ring, and put it neatly in his lap. The napkin ring meant today was Friday, because the only time Mother used it was on the Sabbath Eve. "Paul Greenberg" was engraved on it in flourishing letters.

He liked to run his fingers over the napkin ring when Father read the blessing over the wine, but his Mother always frowned at him and formed "no, no" with her lips. So Paul put his hands in his lap, bowed his head, and wished his Father would read a little faster. After the wine and bread had been properly blessed, they said, "good Shabbos", and Mother got up to bring in the dinner. Then Father, having no one else to talk to, would say to Paul, "And what did you do in school today, my boy?"

"We read about our Pilgrim forefathers."

"That's interesting. Tell me about them."

"They landed at Plymouth Rock and came over on a boat called the Mayflower that wasn't as big as the classroom. And we celebrate Thanksgiving by eating turkey."

"Um-hmm." Father was looking at the pot roast Mother had just set before him. "Thanksgiving is this Thursday, isn't it?"

"Yes," Mother said. "I've bought a fifteen-pound turkey and placed it in the freezer."

Paul watched Mother pour him a big glass of milk and said, "I know something else that happens on Thanksgiving. The Macy parade. Remember, Jimmy's daddy took us last year, and they had floats, and balloons, and Santa Claus, and everything. Miss Lafferty told us about it in school. Will you take Jimmy and me this year, Father?"

Father carved the roast and slowly lifted his eyes to meet those of Mother's, which looked as though they had anticipated this moment for a long time. He straightened himself in his chair, laid down the carving knife, and said, "Paul." His next words came gradually, cautiously, "We're going to do something a little different this year. You're getting to be a big boy now, and . . . well . . ."

Mother picked up Father's broken speech. "Paul, do you remember the book I read about Hanukkah,

last month? Remember how we read that Hanukkah is the Jewish Christmas?"

Paul thought and nodded. He remembered the pink book with the pictures of strange things.

"And remember you learned that Christmas lasts only one day but Hanukkah lasts eight? And children who celebrate Hanukkah get a different present every night?"

Paul bit his finger nail. He remembered.

"Well, Father and I have decided that you're getting to be too big a boy to celebrate Christmas, since we're Jewish; so this year we're going to celebrate Hanukkah instead."

Mother looked at Father and smiled. She passed Paul a plate of meat, peas, and mashed potatoes, and prepared to eat.

Paul, who had slumped down into his chair so far that now just his eyes appeared above the table top, sat up and looked at the well of gravy Mother had made in the potatoes. He dug his fork into them and took a swallow. "No more Christmases ever again?"

"No," said Mother, "Jews don't celebrate Christmas, Paul."

He knew that he was Jewish. He knew that Jews did not celebrate Christmas. He remembered that Christmas was the birthday of the Christ Child, and he knew that Jews did not believe in Christ. But he didn't want to think about Christmas being Christ's birthday. He wanted to think about presents and Santa Claus and Christmas trees. He remembered the big green tree last year. Father had cut the top off it so he could get it in the living room. "No Christmas tree?"

"No, Paul," said Father, "You'll get used to it." And then, as he looked across the table, "We're getting in some new blueprints next week, dear. That's going to keep us busy for quite a while."

Thanksgiving Day came and the big turkey was transferred from the freezer to the oven. The Macy parade was on television, but Paul did not want to see it. After dinner he went out and played in the snow.

He was making a snowman when Jimmy came running up and yelled, "Boy, Paul, that was the best Macy parade I've ever been to! You should have seen the balloon of the strong man! Why, he was as big as that tree over there!"

Paul didn't say anything, but packed the snow round the snowman's head. "Five hundred times as big!" cried Jimmy.

"Aw, I betcha this old snowman's a heck of a lot stronger," retaliated Paul, "and he isn't stuffed with air either!"

"Ah, this old thing!" said Jimmy, rubbing his finger across the snowman's back so that it left a small ridge.

"Get out of here!" Paul yelled. He threw some loose snow in Jimmy's face and began chasing him.

"I didn't do anything to you!" cried Jimmy, running through the snow and across the street to home.

"You did so! You ruined my snowman!"

"Ah, you're just jealous 'cause your Father wouldn't let you go to the Macy parade! Sore sport!"

"I am not jealous! I didn't want to go anyway!" He stopped, as Jimmy disappeared into his house. He had wanted to go. He had wanted to see the strong man, and the Santa Claus, and the funny men with big faces, and the horses. He stomped onto Jimmy's front porch and yelled so that he could be heard inside, "That's all right! Just wait 'til Hanukkah!"

"Han-noo-kuh? What's that?" came the other boy's voice.

"That's the Jewish Christmas! And it's a lot better than your old Christmas. It lasts eight days and I get a present every single day! So there!"

"So what?" came the retort. "So maybe Christmas only lasts one day, but I get a heck of a lot more than just eight presents on that one day! So there, yourself, Smarty!"

"That's all right, that's all right. Just wait!" Paul said. He left Jimmy's porch and dragged across the street to his own house.

During the next two weeks, Paul tried not to think much about Christmas. The day school let out for Christmas vacation, Miss Lafferty gave the class a party. First she let them paint pictures about Christmas. Then she had the children stand up and tell what their pictures were. Jimmy had painted Santa and his reindeer. "Why, he's only painted six reindeer and there's supposed to be eight!" laughed Peggy Jo, leaning forward in her desk.

"There ain't neither," Edward said through the vacant space where his teeth should have been. "There's just one reindeer and his name's Rudolph, and he's got a red nose, not blue, like you've got it!"

Jimmy explained, "Well, this isn't the regular Santa. This Santa has only six reindeer. Different Santas have different numbers of reindeer."

"There's only one true Santa! And he's got eight reindeer!"

Miss Lafferty told Jimmy that he had described his picture very nicely and that it was Paul's turn.

"I drew my presents," he said. He held up a big white sheet of paper. In one corner there was a gun and seven unopened packages. "The Jewish Christmas began last night," he said, "and this was my present. These are the presents I'm going to get the next seven nights. You see, I have eight days of Christmas and you have only one."

Miss Lafferty spoke before any of the children could recover their thoughts. "Paul is Jewish," she explained. "And Jewish boys and girls have a special Christmas known as 'Hanukkah'. Paul says that his

Christmas started yesterday, and that means that the eighth day of his Christmas will be the same day that our Christmas is."

Paul sat down. He felt hot and red and different. He didn't want to celebrate "his Christmas." He wanted to be part of "our Christmas."

Later, Miss Lafferty and two mothers brought in some candy and cookies and everyone had some. They listened to a record of "Dickens Christmas Carol" until school was dismissed.

Jimmy and Paul left the school yard together. At the gate, Jimmy said, "I'm not going home right away. I'm going shopping. Want to come with me?"

"Yeah, I guess so."

They clomped through the snow to the shopping district. "What are you going to get?"

"A present for Momma and Daddy," said Jimmy. "I've been saving my money since Thanksgiving and I've got fifty cents. Momma says all the fun in Christmas comes from giving."

They came to a man in a black uniform who was jingling a bell. Jimmy stopped. "I think I'll spend a dime right here," he said, "the Salvation Army needs money. You got any money to give, Paul?"

Paul had two dimes and a nickel in his pocket that he had gotten Wednesday for his allowance. He dropped a dime into the squat caldron.

They went into Woolworth's. "Gosh, look at all the Christmas stuff!" they said together.

They pushed around bundles and packages and bags and people. Jimmy bought his Mother a bottle of "Exotic Patee" perfume and his Father a key chain with a rabbit's foot on it. They looked at the toy counter for a long time and then shoved on to the Christmas trees and ornaments. Paul found a very little Christmas tree with a red wooden base. The tiny green needles were touched with snow at the ends. It was fifteen cents. He counted out the remainder of his allowance and gave it to the salesgirl. She was busy and didn't give him a bag. The boys pushed their way out of the store and started through the street for home.

Paul was careful to keep his new treasure out of sight when he entered the house. He called, "Hello, Mother," and ran on back to his room to look for a place to hide the tree. He put it in the drawer with his socks. Then he went to the kitchen and watched Mother ice a cake.

During the next five days of Hanukkah, Paul got a monopoly set, a doctor's kit, a silver dollar, a box of candy bars, and some soldiers. By the time the seventh day rolled around, he had begun to like the idea of Hannukkah because Jimmy hadn't gotten any presents yet. This seventh evening yielded a model plane kit.

"I'll help you put it together," said Father, and they went down to the workshop in the cellar.

"Where's Jimmy tonight?" asked Father.

"He had to go to bed early, so he can get up for Midnight Mass."

Father turned on the radio and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" drifted into the room. He switched the dial to the news. They worked in silence for a few minutes, Father cutting the narrow wood, and Paul watching. The news commentator announced that a number of highway accidents had already been reported during the Christmas weekend. Father turned off the radio and the cellar was quiet.

"I don't think people should die tonight," Paul said suddenly, "because it's Christmas Eve."

"Mm," Father said, checking the instructions.

At nine o'clock Paul went to bed. He lay there a long while, thinking. He saw the Christmas tree in the house next door. Lights and wreaths decorated the houses across the street. He pulled back the covers and tip-toed over to the window. A full moon had turned the fresh snow into a heavenly kind of blue. He opened the window a bit to look out. Far, far away he could hear carolers singing.

He saw a big yellow reflection on the snow and he knew that the light was on in his parent's room next to his. He heard a strange whirring noise and went out in the hall. He put his ear by his parent's door. What was that noise?

"I can't wait to see Paul's eyes when he sees this train."

It was Father's voice. Paul looked through the crack under the door and could see a beautiful electric train running on shiny silver tracks.

"Do you think the train will be enough for him?" Mother was speaking this time.

"What do you mean?" Father queried.

"Well, I was putting some socks in Paul's drawer today," Mother explained, "and I found this."

Paul saw the little green and white and red tree and felt his stomach get heavy and sink down to his

feet, weighting him down, and not letting him run away.

"A Christmas tree!" came Father's voice, making Paul jump. "Where did he get this?"

"I guess he bought it with his allowance."

There was a long pause.

"All he's talked about for the last week is Christmas," said his Father.

"Do you think maybe we took it away from him too suddenly?" Mother said.

"I guess we should have waited another year or so. But it's too late now."

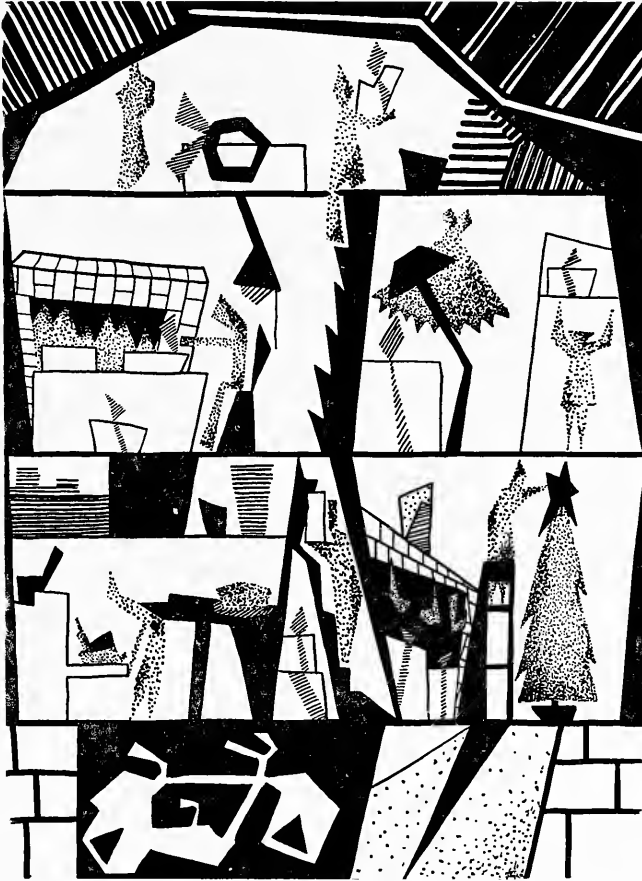
"Not necessarily," Mother replied. "When I was shopping today I bought a little plastic tree at the dime store. We still have the ornaments from last year to decorate it. And I picked up some candy and fruit to fill a stocking. I even bought a couple of tiny odds and ends so that the train won't look like the only gift."

"I don't know," Father said slowly. "It doesn't seem right. After all, we've told him that there were to be no more Christmases, and now . . ."

"Yes, dear," Mother answered, "but this way we'll be breaking it off gradually. Next year he'll be old enough."

"Maybe so," Father said. "I guess I'd better go look in the attic and see if I can find those ornaments."

Paul tip-toed back to bed. As he lay there, he heard the carolers again. They seemed to be much nearer. He could even hear their words. They were singing about a star, a star of wonder, a star of light. He wondered if there really was one star that was bigger and brighter than all the others. But he didn't know. He shut his eyes and fell asleep.



THE FOULIA

(Continued From Page 13)

The floor doesn't creak anymore. Everything becomes silent, and the watchmen go to sleep in the castles. This is the time when a quiet, imperceptible song, like a psalmody begins. It emerges like a thin thread, and slowly becomes thicker, lifeless like the night wind in the leaves, and then again it faints. Is it a song or isn't it? You cannot say. But even when you don't hear it, you feel its existence.

The weak light of the lamp is kept on; but the shadow doesn't pass anymore over the red walls. Nothing . . .

How can a person live in the world when he has such a fearful God?

The things were different during the day.

Sometimes Ruth came and stood in the window, leaning on the sill and smiling at me. When she smiled she half-closed her eyes which dimmed, then extinguished. I answered her with a frightening politeness. She didn't ever speak, she only stared at me. Then she went in again.

The rest of her family, spoke loudly, shouted, made a lot of noise. But she, herself, lived alone, separately.

Then one day, one of her brothers died, the middle one. I remembered him . . . a blond boy with dull, blue eyes. It was Saturday evening, and in our home the incense smelled again. The windows of the other house were closed. Inside, they had a corpse.

I saw the light of the lamp, again, that night. But the shutters were closed. I got down from my bed, and tiptoeing, barefooted and shivering, I opened my window. A sweet night, the spring is coming. I listened; the night air, the air, and then again, quiet the secret psalmody.

God Gracious!

The sky above flaminates. A bright shudder all over as if the axe glittered. The foulia swelled heavily.

Our old maid said next morning, "—Do you know? Ruth committed suicide." And she clasped her hands with terror.

We opened our windows and saw the windows of Ruth's house closed. We didn't hear either a voice or a noise. She had hung herself from the lamp in her room. They opened her room door in the morning and found her dead and naked.

They didn't shout that day at all. For the first time there was such a silence, a deep undisturbed silence.

How will this night pass? Midnight. I awake as if someone has called my name. I am listening. Then I get up from my bed on my tiptoes. The floor is cold and I shiver. But I must, I must see! It is impossible to do otherwise. I open my window and look. The shutters of Ruth's house are closed, but—God Almighty! the light of the lamp is on. The light of the lamp is always on. I hear the unrestful sea. From the castles above, unseen, the watchmen shout:

"Be awake! . . ."

THE WAITING BROOK

A brook that cannot help but giggle
Trickles down and down and
Down to fields in yesterday;
The brook that must be breathing still
And waiting, listening for toes,
Pressed on mossed rock,
To whisper, "Water--fall!"
A butterfly lost, yet quite at ease
To flutter and waver
In a heated craze;
And a silent flapping,
Moving across the morn
To challenge a heart
And a few more eager wings;
Minnows treading through currents,
Capsized in finger-nets;
Tints of children's laughter
And strains of their songs untamed,
Distinct a gay gathering
Of minnow schools soon back,
Thrown to the waiting brook,

carolyn harris

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