

homespun

DEDICATION

To J. Stanley Johnson, affectionately known as Jabbo, physics teacher and school store keeper, whose interest in this magazine and whose generosity lit a fire under a crowd of lazy (We admit it!) Quill and Scrollers.

Homespun

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THE TIME THE BEES CAME

Nobody had ever paid much attention toward that ol' dead tree out ahind the cow barn until one blustery night it came thundering to the ground; then all u hell broke loose. The whole barnyard was in an uproar. Chickens squakin', hogs squealin', and cows bawlin' caused Pa to wake me up, telling me to grab hold to a lantern, shotgun, and my pants and come out to the barn cause something was dead wrong.

I traipsed out after 'im, carrying my lantern in one hand, shotgun in the other, and tryin' to buckle my pants at the same time, a not too successful maneuver. All of a sudden Pa let out a yell like a cut pig and came running my way as spry a step as I'd ever seed him use. Just as I heard him go by I also heard a zzzzzzzt and felt a sharp pain over my left eye; then a couple more zzzzzzzt's hit me where I shoul'da had a shirt on; then one hit my ear, and I knew then Pa weren't none too lively cause I beat 'm to the door.

It seems that ol' dead tree what nobody ever paid no attent' on to had just about the biggest galdurned bunch of wild honeybees in it that I'd ever seed. It was plum chock full of 'em and they wasn't any too happy about their tree being blowd down. Since they didn't know who did it, they just naturally taken it out on the first thing

they saw, but knowing that didn't make them whelps any smaller or sting any less. Pa said there weren't nothin' we could do about it anyways so we both went back to bed.

The next mornin' we peered out of the kitchen window into the barnyard. It looked about as unnatural as it could git. There were no chickens scratchin' in the dust; there weren't a hound dog to be seed anywheres; and there was a big hole in the fence where the cows had got out. Besides all that, the busted tree seemed to have a movin' cloud hoverin' around it.

About this time Pa saw Lacy Moore from across the crick driving his one-horse wagon just as bold and brave as if there was nothing going on. Pa raised the window and started yellin' to 'im about the bees, but he didn't get to finish cause a bunch of them varmints started comin' in the window and Ma made 'im shut it. All of a sudden Mr. Moore grabbed his hat and started beatin' the air with it while his ol' horse started bitin' his hide and makin' all sorts of weird contortions right there in his harness. Mr. Moore leaped from his wagon and ran across the pasture flailin' the air, but his horse just sat down, pawin' and bitin' at the dark cloud of bees hoverin' around and crawlin' on his body, and made no effert to run away. I'd always heard that some animals would act that way, but I never laid up any faith by it until then.

That ol' horse musta struggled there for half an hour tryin' to fight those bees. Finally he just laid down and died, still in his collar. It was the darndest sight I'd ever seed. His body was

covered with big bumps like warbles and his stomach was swelled up something awful. I knew right then that I wasn't stepping out of the house until it was all over and the bees were gone.

Pa laid the law down after seeing that ol' horse die; I guess it made him realize what could happen to us. None of us kids were to leave the house until the bees were either gone or quieted down. Bees buzzed around the windows all day long; a few got in through the cracks, but we killed them with a fly swatter.

God musta realized how bad off things was cause that night there came a gullywashin' rain. With their tree busted open to let the rain in,

those bees didn't stand a chance. Every one of 'em musta drowned that night cause the next mornin' the ground was covered with soggy, dead bees; musta been several bushels of 'em and barrels and barrels of honey, but most of it wasn't fitten to eat.

The next day we found one of our ol' hounds under the house with its tongue swelled up bigger'n its mouth. Pa said it had been crazy like that ol' horse and had snapped at the bees stead of runnin' away; he had swallowed so many that they stung him to death on the inside. It musta been true cause there weren't many lumps on his hide. What a way to die! I guess that it was just lucky that it wasn't one of us.

Walton McNairy

A Day In Time

A day in time went slowly by, and all the work
that
Day saw done was marked upon a cloudless sky
and
Witnessed by the sun;
A day in time rolled slowly by and saw men
born and
Saw men die;
Said not hello or not goodbye, kept moving;
A lazy day moved on through time and wished
hard for
The night;
A day in time grew old toward noon and eve-
ning came
And then the moon;
It moved on into night;
So rolled away a time worn day and slept for all
Eternity and never once was sad or gay;
Kept moving on consistently.

—*Ed Little*

Diary

June 21, 1962 — The white hot desert glared through the tinted cockpit canopy and reflected the dancing heat waves into evasive images. As I fastened the countless belts and straps of my harness and seat, a white overalled mechanic finished the last preflight check and withdrew the hose and ladder that connected me to the outside.

June 22, 1962 — The majestic Earth rotated below in a never ending cycle — first the Atlantic Ocean, the Pole and the top of Russia, finally the Pacific and the barren Antarctic. Next time a little more to the right and the next time a little more still. Always to the right, a never-ending revolution of day and night blended together like sand — always a beginning and never an ending.

June 23, 1962 — I have given up all hope of returning to Earth. My supposedly fresh batteries are dead, and I have no means of navigation or communication. The Earth seems a distant planet indeed — now that I know I am forever isolated from it.

June 24, 1962 — The darkness is maddening. Without light I can't even see the control panel. In the predawn glow I saw the Russian human rocket of several months ago. The dead pilot was visible through the plastic window, still grasping the control column. I'm not afraid now; I know I won't be alone.

David Raynor

Bi-cycles

The purple grape lies
In the path alone.
The others have been
Picked and eaten, and
Their souls are once
Again insoiled.

Yet here beside the road
Lies just this one.
And travelers do not
Lay it flat with feet.
From across the mountain
A wind howls down
Upon the grape and it
Is rolled into the path
Of trotting mares.

At last the purple grape is
Swallowed by some
Obliging oxen—and
It too, grows up again
To fall beside the road.

—Barry R. Cockman

MIXED FEELINGS

He stretched out full length in the luxurious grass under the old oak tree. Lying on his stomach, he appeared to be engrossed in the study of the honeybee that was jumping undecidedly between the clover blossoms, but actually he was far more interested in the activities across the street and was scrutinizing them through the long green blades. Ted, his best friend and the object of his scrutiny, seemed to be having a wonderful time with a new girl in the neighborhood. There — they went behind the house. Curiosity was a little bug whispering in one ear, and Temptation in the other. How he wished he could join them! Why did *they* have to be so super-cautious? Why, he could cross that street, and maybe they'd never know. Giving a surreptitious look around, he ambled toward the curb. Ted and his new friend came back to their front yard and called for him to come over and join them. Temptation was positively shouting now, but still something held him back. What if they found out? They'd wear him out, for sure. The street he was facing, Maple Street, seemed quiet enough now, but there was a blind curve right in front of his house, and one time he had been slightly injured by a passing car. Since that time, he had been absolutely forbidden to cross the street by himself. Suddenly he could stand it no longer. He started out into the street. There was a deafening horn blast, and he looked around just in time to see a large red convertible bearing down on him. He stood rooted to the spot by fear, staring at the oncoming Death.

The teenagers in the red convertible were on their way to a picnic. They had a new car; the weather was perfect, and maybe their exhilaration made them drive a little too fast. At any rate, they didn't see the small brown dog crossing the street until it was too late.

Peggy Colmer

Peter Piper, The Peck of Pickled Pepper Plunderer

*"Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
A peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked.
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
How many pickled peppers did Peter Piper
pick?"*

This little verse is truly a falsehood, for Peper Piper did not pick any pickled peppers. Here is the actual story to back up my theory.

Peter Piper parked his pop's purple Packard in the posterior of Peter's Place, a peddler's pad in Pumpernickel Park, and pushed the petite pistol into the protruding pants pocket of his pink pedal pushers. He then procrastinated profoundly but positively proposed that he could possibly easily pick the pungent peck of pickled peppers from the prehistoric peddler, Peter Pee-pee's pepper pot in his profuse pantry. Peepee peddled his possessions of potatoes and poultry to any prosperous patron who proceeded to pass into his portal of poverty. Peter Peepee also picked people's pockets of their private, personal possessions. Proceeding past the portal of poverty, Peter Peepee picked the pudgy pocket of Peter Piper's pink pedal pushers and then prodded the previously primed petite pocket pistol progressively into his perfectly postured profile. Peter Peepee presently announced that he would proceed to phone the pudgy policeman of that particular precinct providing that Peter Piper could not procure a plausible probability for porting that petite pistol in his poor penniless place. Peter Piper professed to Peter Peepee that he had plotted to pick up a peck of pithy pickled peppers for his pop from Peepee's profuse pantry (which is painted a puny pink), to put the pickled peppers in his pop's purple Packard and so to perform the perfect pickled pepper plunder. Peter Peepee proceeded to phone the precinct policeman to penalize the punk, Peter

Piper, the pithy peck of pickled peppers plunderer.

So now do you ponder over how many pecks of pickled peppers the punk Peter Piper picked? Do not ponder profoundly, for Peter Piper picked only a penal punishment in Ping Ping Prison for attempted peck of pickled pepper plundering.

Monty Stokes

School Fever

Why must I go down b'low the D's again,
the lowly D's I despise,
When all I ask is a tall mark and a par average
or else I die;
For my father's kick and his windy song
leave my shirt tail a shakin',
For there's a grey mist on his season'd face,
and a black dawn for me a breakin'.
I must not go down b'low the D's again,
for the call of my runnin' hide
Is a wild call and a clear call that hurts way
down inside;
For all he'll ask is a windy day with my white
hide a flyin'
With the flung spray and the blown steam and
my dear ol' soul a cryin'.
If I go down b'low the D's again, I go to
vagrant gypsy life,
To the cull's way and the failer's way, where
there's a wind of endless strife;
Where all I'll get is a merry yarn from a laughing
fellow-failer,
And a quiet sleep and a sweet dream like a poor
ol' drunken sailor.

—Francis McNairy

Winter Mountain Sonnet

*The snow is lying on the mountain deep,
And yet it comes with blustery wind and ice;
The coldest tears the heavens now do weep,
But in my tiny room, is Paradise;
Because you're here to speak, to sing to me.
Yes, you are here, my sweetest, gentlest bard.
My soul is lifted up and I am free,
Your voice against the cold my only guard.
What matter if the wind doth howl and scream?
What matter, when you sit and hold my hand?
For then my world's a rosy, golden dream.
And I am on a far, exotic strand.
You hold me close in gentle, warm embrace,
And weep to see cold Death upon my face.*

—Martha L. Gibbs

SLEET

Softly the lambent sleet,
The softly scintillating sleet,
Drops from a shedding sky.

While inside, while I see
And hear,
Inside, nothing and I sit
Alone by the window,

Upon the solid snow,
Upon the solid frozen snow,
Frozen as a wet, spread sheet,
Birds and a solitary squirrel
Eat the sprinkled seed.

The wintery, winding way,
The waiting, delaying, white day
Spreads open in frozen faith.

And again and again the dead and the moribund
Under the snow, the living and the moribund
On the surface, those not seen,
The dead, the living, the moribund
See, sink, die, sleep
In the softly scintillating sleet,
The softly radiant, lambent sleet.

Soft is the sleep,
Softer still the sleet,
The softly, softly soporific sleet.

Peter Weltner

Japanese Haiku

The Japanese *haiku* is a tiny verse form with which Japanese poets have been working for hundreds of years. *Haiku* is an outgrowth of a five line poem called the *tanka*. It is composed of three lines and contains only seventeen syllables. The first and third lines contain five syl-

lables each and the second line contains seven. The most striking thing about a *haiku* is its extreme expressiveness. Each word must fit perfectly in order to express the deep emotion and vivid pictures in the poem.

Cascading waters
Pink lace mountains capped with snow
Gently brushed with silk.
Priscilla Caulde '60

Cedars, white smothered
Eyes full of tears for lost years
Buried in the snow.
Peggy Colmer '60

Singing shell on sand
Play for lovers who come
To weep their salt tears.
Martha Gibbs '60

World coming to end,
"Doom's day here," man stand and say,
Last chance buy peanuts.
Tony Moser '60

O amorous cat
In the depths of life's mood,
You need amorous mouse.
Charles Jernigan '60

Clouds of rain at night
Watch the storm from warm dry hut;
Gone when daylight comes.
Edd Little '60

Threatening, darkling clouds
March in step across the sky
Soldiers on parade.

Dark moon in the sky
Just because my love is gone
Must you hide your face.
Leonna Jones '60

Jeepy, Jeepy jeep
Beepy, beepy, beep, beep, beep,
Conky, conky out!
Libby Cook '60

Cool stream through dark woods
I am alone and birds chirp.
Suddenly, soft silence . . .
Don Long '60

I nice and warm now,
Nobody dead but people,
Nice for funerals.
Tony Moser '60

Warm night, twinkling stars
Pale moon, soft petals, clear pool
Lantern hung with care.
Priscilla Caudle '60

Tintinambulate,
Bells whose ringing calls me forth
Your sound is treasure.
Bob Foster '60

Shadowed rolling moon,
Misty breeze and perfumed flow'ers,
Soft still summer night.
Jeanie Deese '60

Home Is The Sailor

The air at Clinton High School was charged with breathless excitement which made studies impossible. On the last day before the Christmas holidays there was no room in a student's mind for thoughts of school work. Even the teacher seemed to have forgotten her lesson plan and had turned clock-watcher along with the pupils.

Jerri restlessly shifted her position at her desk. For her the past three months had meant turning down dates with high school boys, watching the mailbox, going to movies with girls, and waiting for Christmas, when Steve would get his first home leave from the Navy. "Tomorrow!" she thought. "By tomorrow I'll know if the waiting was worth it."

The jangle of the dismissal bell and the ensuing whoop of delight from her classmates brought Jerri to her feet. As she gathered up her books, Ginny, her best friend, scurried toward her. "Gosh, you must be excited!" Ginny laughed, each red curl dancing with enthusiasm. "Steve's finally coming home, and I'm so glad for you I'm about to bubble over!"

As the girls jostled through the halls, they echoed gaily each cheery "Merry Christmas" they heard.

"Pick you up at seven tonight for the sleigh ride, Ginny," called a husky football star from across the hall.

"Sure!" sang out Ginny, her eyes sparkling with anticipation.

"See you there too," he shouted in Jerri's direction.

"I don't know," responded Jerri dubiously. "I'll have to see what Steve's plans are."

Ginny addressed her friend above the hubbub; "You're coming to all the dances, aren't you, and the Coke parties?"

"I guess so," frowned Jerri, "but I don't know if Steve will want to go to high school parties after three whole months in the Navy."

"Of course he'll want to," Ginny reassured

her. "He'll be anxious to see the old gang."

Jerri nodded, but her gaze shifted uncertainly from Ginny's face.

At the front of the school the friends exchanged Christmas wishes before turning toward their homes. "And don't forget to wear your new dress when Steve first sees you," Ginny called back over her shoulder. "Black hair, fair skin, and dark red — that's a combination that'd make any sailor flip!"

A chilling wind swooped down from the gray sky disheveling Jerri's dark curls. She pulled her coat close around her small form and began her homeward walk. The scrunching of old snow beneath her feet reminded her of last winter's walks with Steve — wonderful Steve — and other memories of her junior year with him flooded over her — enthusiastic cheering at a local football game . . . slapping paint on a beloved jalopy . . . zany harmonizing with friends around a beachside bonfire. She recalled serious times too — Good Friday spent together at church . . . long discussions on politics and religion . . . companionable silence on an awesomely star-filled night. Did he mull over these moments too, or did her precious memories seem childish to him now that he had graduated from high school? Could she be mistaking fun for immaturity?

It was a perplexed young lady who plodded up the familiar walk and into her house. Skillfully avoiding her parents, she retreated to her room.

She plunked her books down on her desk and replaced her skirt and sweater with comfortable blue jeans and a rumpled shirt. Carefully she extracted her new red sheath from its protective cover, and, holding it against her for inspection, she scrutinized her reflection in the mirror. She concurred that Ginny had been right; this was the perfect outfit for Steve's first glimpse of her. "Though looks," she told herself

matter-of-factly, "will not be the problem." Actions and words were the things that had Jerri stymied. Would he have changed completely? How does a service man expect his girl to act?

She had hastily mental images of Steve casually blowing smoke rings from an imported cigar while discussing nuclear-powered motor scooters with her father. "Run along and play, child," Steve would dismiss her.

Or perhaps he would bring home a friend for her to date — a skinny, awkward boy with freckles and buckteeth — while a tall, sophisticated blond would cling to the arm of Jerri's former steady.

Shaking herself loose from fantasy, she set about the task of rolling up her hair. Seated at her dressing table, she neatly wound each strand of hair around a wire curler in a way calculated to produce a casual, always-looks-like-that appearance. Her thoughts, however, did not remain on the job. She glared into the mirror, and her image returned the gaze. "You must act enchanting and adult," she muttered menacingly into the glass.

Suddenly she tossed her reflection a Colgate smile and crinkled her dark eyes into mere slits in an imitation of the tactics she had seen Ginny use to devastate boys. She cocked her head and ruffled her hair with the back of one fluttering hand. When this process dislodged a strategic curler, Jerri decided that the Ginny-method was definitely not for her.

While she finished setting her hair, she attempted a bored, sophisticated look composed of drooping lashes and hollow cheeks. A sailor would certainly be attracted to a woman of the world. This "new look" was also discarded, however, because of its resemblance to the advanced stages of malnutrition. Steve would undoubtedly rush out and purchase a dozen hamburgers for her before he had time to be impressed with her worldliness.

As she dabbed a few nonexistent pimples with Clearasil, she decided that a sensuous approach would be more likely to appeal to an old salt of three months. She moistened her lips and arched one eyebrow alluringly. Then, oozing to her feet, she thrust her head out and shifted her pelvis forward in a first-rate imitation of a model's slouch. As she undulated across the floor, she mentally replaced her jeans with an iridescent black sheath. She flipped ashes from an imaginary pearl inlaid cigarette holder while, with the other hand, she fingered the lapel of an invisible Steve's jacket. "Dah - - ling," she croaked huskily, "it has been an eternity." Her hand traveled seductively up the back of Steve's neck. "Come into the gah - - den with me and . . ."

The ringing of the front door bell saved Jerri from a "fate worse than death." She grinned sheepishly at her foolish play and bellowed, "Doorbell!" for the benefit of the household in general. By the third ring she had concluded that she was alone in the house. "Coming," she yelled to the impatient visitor as she clattered down the stairs and flung open the door.

A tall, well built sailor stood grinning down at her. The uniform was strange, but the crooked smile was wonderfully familiar, and the sandy hair peeking from beneath the white cap definitely belonged to Steve.

"What can I say?" she thought as her hand made a panicky movement toward her disgracefully evident curlers. "What in the world can I say?" Miserably she thought of the red dress and the sophisticated plans that were wasted. Mentally she bemoaned her lamentably adolescent state.

Steve, however, seemed unperturbed by her appearance. His hand reached out for hers, and she saw his eyes grow mellow in the old, remembered way. "Hi," breathed Jerri smiling. The rest was simple.

Jess McFarland

MEMORY

At first it was a soft laugh. I could barely hear it.
It came from somewhere deep within me.
I knew, but I could not face the truth.
I feared it.

"Go away," I whispered.

"I will not let you out. I cannot let you change me."

The voice spoke.

"Go away? Away where?"

Away home, home, home . . ."

"Don't," I cried.

"Don't make me go back. I don't want to remember."

My inner self laughed.

"You want to run away as badly as I do.

You want to go back with me, to become a part of me."

I covered my ears. I sought escape from the harshness of her voice.

There was no escape.

I listened as she laughed at me.

"You could never be a part of me. You are only the outer shell,

The mass of bitterness and hatred that sears your burning brain."

I cried out, for I knew she spoke the truth.

"Go away; leave me."

Tears fell as I pleaded.

Even while I begged, I knew it was not she,

But the truth from which I sought escape.

Her laughter rang louder, louder, still more loudly in my ears.

"You'll never be set free. I have your heart."

Her cry was Triumph.

I screamed.

I could bear no more.

"Then go! Go and take my heart with you,
You mocking devil!

Who are you, what are you, spirit,
That haunts me even in my dreams?"

I lifted my bowed head and looked wildly about me,

Searching for the nymph who strove to claim reality.

My eyes saw only the desolate emptiness of the room.

My voice echoed back at me in all its depths of anguish.

From within I heard the answer of the unseen victor.

"I am Memory."

She spoke again, her voice more gentle.

"Why do you hate them so?" she asked.

"Why do you long for home?"

My sobbing ceased. Suddenly I understood.

Though my eyes were blurred by tears, I saw.

Light shone through the darkness of my blind hate.

"Life's beauty lies in its simplicity," I told her.

"But earth strives so hard to capture beauty that it loses all simplicity.

The supreme element of the simple is God.

When man has lost sight of God, he has lost himself."

"And have you lost sight of Him?"

I heard her question, felt my heart break as I answered her.

"Not only lost sight of Him, but turned against Him.

I left Him no room in my shell of bitterness and hatred."

My hands were wet with tears that carried more than sorrow.

Drop by drop, they drained the poison hate from my heart.

My head was bent; my body drained, defeated.

"Close your eyes," she said.

Her voice was a soothing caress to my aching soul.

"Sleep."

My eyes closed, expecting empty blackness.

Instead, I was lost in eons of transcendent brightness.

I slept,
At peace.

—Jeanie Deese

History Lesson

To the student-Understanding ancient history, especially the history of civilizations before The War, is usually quite difficult. The authors suggest, therefore, that the following material be understood before continuing in the textbook.

Due to the great destructiveness of The War and the time lapse before any relics could be appreciated, much of the following materials is based on theories and assumptions, but it is believed to be reasonably accurate.

As early as ten years before The War, the many different peoples of the earth had merged into two all inclusive groups, the Reds and the Whites. (The exact significance of these terms is not clear, but it is thought that they refer to two races of man.) Historians cannot understand how the Whites, or US (as they called themselves), who were very inefficient in government and business, were able even to compete with the Reds. One Ancient, KKK (pronunciation uncertain) Faubus, suggests superior intelligence.

The two groups did not get along with each other, so they began to build up huge armies. The term "Mafia" seems to have been used for the White army. Most historians believe the emblem of the Reds was the "Red Cross"; therefore their forces must have been called the "Salvation Army", since the two terms seem to have been closely related.

When war threatened, the leaders of the two groups met on top of a mountain to try to make

the other side surrender without fighting. However, a man by the name of "Berlin" seems to have broken up the meeting.

War came. It started out slowly, with tactics known as "cold war"—believed to refer to type of weather control used to weaken the morale of the enemy. Later, however, open battle broke out with a kind of biological warfare, the planting from the air of the "Deadly Mushroom." This was a giant fungus that destroyed everything around it with heat and sent forth a cloud of poisonous spores that fell out over a wide area. These fungi were dropped from crude flying machines at first, but were later carried to the enemy in rocket driven craft called "missiles." (The name is apparently derived from the unreliability and inaccuracy of the weapon.)

Each side about the same time discovered a defense against the missiles, so new weapons were developed. Just exactly what these were has never been determined, but it is known that they spread a cloud of poison over both peoples. (The obscure terms "cranberries" and "cigarettes" are thought to be connected with this.) Gradually The War ended; neither side was able to continue fighting.

At the end of The War the world was thrown into a Dark Age darker even than that vague period in this history of the Ancients; there were no humans left to see.

WE were now free to evolve.

Chuck MacDonald

No Harbinger Here

Spring jetted in from Miami this morning; she and several companions always spend the winter there. The plane, which had been delayed by snow storms in the South, finally arrived and taxied to a stop before the official welcoming committee.

Of course, the mayor was there to make one of his long, stilted speeches; it lost a little of its dignity, however, when that capricious March Wind, one of Spring's close friends, made her presence known by blowing the mayor's grave, gray bowler right off his bald head.

The press corps was on hand in full force. Gabby gossip columnists wanted to know if the rumor about a rift between Spring and Winter while worried weathermen begged to know if she were really here to stay. Nosey newsmen pried into her plans for her visit, as photographers dashed about setting off explosions of ribbons. Fashion editors, scrutinizing her green garb and the fragrant flower garden upon

her head, concocted in their mad little minds the brew for the next day's column.

The motorcade into the city eventually got under way with Spring riding in a sleek convertible. The scenes along the way were not at all unique: young lovers strolling hand in hand in the park and tomorrow's Mickey Mantles slugging away in the corner lot; nevertheless, Spring was pleased and smiled warmly on everything.

The day would have been perfect if April Showers had not been so jealous of Spring's popularity. The tempestuous Miss Showers lost her temper and in her rage drenched everyone who had turned out for the occasion. Spring was a little embarrassed by her friend's behavior, but she need not have been, for everyone forgot the sudden soaking by evening when Spring gave a gay garden party and announced her intention of remaining until summer.

Priscilla Caudle

Equality Zone

I am the seer of the Equality Zone,
An eerie shadow-land of isonomy where
The code is unmistakable. The lives
Of all men are originated and ended
In this land.
Every being is compelled to dwell here
At the beginning of his life and
At the end of his living. No matter
How high or how low he goes after first
Leaving here, he returns as an equal of
The next. After first leaving here he
Has a choice of directions to take, but
His degree of success has no bearing on
His standing when he returns. No degree of
Decadence affects his position, for this is
The Equality Zone.

—Francis McNairy

MAN TO MAN

"Good evening, friends, Romans, and Countrymen. This is your host Claudius Maximus, welcoming you to 'Man to Man', the family show of Rome. Tonight we are going to speak with Julius Caesar, on his ship off the coast of Gaul."

"Mr. Caesar - - Mr. Caesar - - Mr. Caesar! "Sorry, I didn't mean to disturb you while you were getting a sandwich. This sure is a nice comfortable ship."

"It rocks too much."

"Well, I suppose your men are in top shape for the coming battle."

"They're all below, seasick. They won't be able to fight for two days."

"What about the officers?"

"They, too, are sick."

"At least you have your faithful, tough, and alert cavalry."

"They forgot their horses."

"Tell me, sir; why did you decide to attack Gaul and Britain?"

"I didn't; my first lieutenant suggested it. He thought it would make a good story for Latin students."

"Caesar, could you show us around your ship . . . What a nice galley."

"That's no galley; that's the W. C."

"What the abode of pluto is a W. C.?"

"It's the Watchman's Cabin."

"That's nice. What is this next room?"

"The galley."

"Rather small, isn't it?"

"That's inflation for you."

"Why is it so dark?"

"Chronic bulb snatcher."

"Wow! This next room sure is bright, and it's large, too."

"It's the deck, Dummy."

"Caesar, the coast of England is ahead, and the British don't seem happy about our arrival."

"Why, they're greeting us with extended arms."

"But those arms are spears, swords, and clubs — Caesar! Look out for the boom!"

"We shall continue this exciting interview after a word from our sponsor, the 'Round the Clock Sundial Company'. A 'Round the Clock Sundial keeps perfect time in all weather. It's as dependable to you as Brutus is to Caesar. Now back to Caesar."

"Great Caesar's Ghost! Julius has just been knocked overboard by the boom. He is presumed drowned, so I return you to Rome."

"This is Channel XIV in Rome. The preceding program was filmed before a live audience of MMMMMMMMML people. Reactions were disgustingly augmented."

Henry Deal

THE DRIFTER

Born of the urge that brought him there;
Out of the night from who knows where;
Swift and silent, tall and lean,
Searching eyes of far away green;
He came and talked and warmed by the fire;
Wished not to stay, was not for hire;
Cold like the wind that brought him there;
Sunbaked face and sandy hair;
The tales of adventure far and wide
He told of the world he'd seen outside;
How strange and far away his smile,
The well worn look of each place, each mile;
Only a moment and then away;
He'll always drift and never stay;
Only the wind knows where he'll go;
It leads him on - - they're friends you know;
Into the night from where he came,
Just a drifter, no home, no name.

Edd Little

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LANDSCAPE

The valley is incredibly ancient, and yet, to all outward appearances it might have been torn from the ground only yesterday. Craggy peaks, completely barren, their fleshless stone ribs cracked and fissured by some vast internal contortion, march like sombre, grey uniformed soldiers shoulder to shoulder in ragged formation. Spikey outcroppings, almost literally sharp enough to cut, protrude like the teeth of some prehistoric reptile, ever ready to shred some unwary victim to homogeneous protoplasm. But no victim comes, for as far as the eye can see, there is no hint of life; no plant, no animal, no insect, no living creature save we who are but spectators in this world of primeval sterility. The valley floor, caught between the frozen jaws of the mountains, is a level plain of fine flour-like dust broken only by four battered monoliths standing in a row, reminiscent of the columns of some ruined temple. Overhead, a white sun burns with incandescent fury in a jet black firmament splashed with waves of countless stars. Low over the horizon, almost impaled on the drunkenly staggering peaks of a distant mountain range, hangs a gigantic crescent mottled by various shades of aqua-marine on a blue-white background.

Though we listen intently, there is no sound to be heard. The entire world is enveloped in silence, utter and complete silence. A jagged boulder, rotted by eons of blazing heat by day and brittle, absolute cold by night, crumbles soundlessly from its precarious ledge on the face of a cliff and begins a weird slow-motion descent. Dropping like a piece of dandelion fluff, the huge stone, many tons in actual mass, bounds silently from crag to crag, and lands in the powdery soil of the valley floor with a thump that is felt rather than heard. No wind stirs the cloud of dust which rises from the impact and

settles as quickly as it rose. Just as there is no air to carry sound, there is no air to carry dust.

This is the rotting corpse of a still-born world. This is the lonely satellite of the planet astronomers label Sol 3. This is . . . the moon.

Donald Long

PEACE

Snuggled softly like a blanket
Peace enfolds the sleeping world.
The soothing silence of serenity
Is reflected in the rhythmic breathing of the dog,
Curled warmly in his smooth pine-needle bed.
With pleading whispers the pine trees sway and
beckon to me.
"Come up," they call entreatingly.
"Come up," and lose yourself with us,
High above life's trials and trivialities."
Their topmost branches, bending, begging hopefully
Are hidden teasingly, then suddenly revealed
Through wisps of mist that glide with all the
airiness
Of fairies dancing gracefully to unheard
melodies.
Nature's sweet perfume overruns its leafy holders
And splashes silently to lie in luminescent drops
On spring's first short blades of grass.
As I stand, surrounded by all nature's boundless
beauty,
A calm, yet warm and vibrant feeling creeps over
me
And makes me whisper to the watchful, waking
world,
"Oh, God! How wonderful to be alive!"

Jeanie Deese

La Promessa

The rose may die while on the vine
And fall upon the virgin snow,
The day may languish for the night—
Rest my love, the sun is low!

* * * *

The snow falls deep above her breast,
There gentle death hath laid her;
The north whispers round her lest
Its furious sound should wake her.

Blow soft, thou oft-times roaring wind,
Leave her peaceful slumber still,
And with thy might and fury blend
Caresses for her snow-swept hill.

Shine on, O suns of day and night,
Cast thy rays upon her tomb,
And with thy softest, warmest light,
Dispel from her all trace of gloom.

The wind consoles the lowering limb,
The moon doth rise and pale the sky,
The stars their misty aura lend
Both life and death to purify.

But things of earth and life are brief,
Temporal things so soon are fled,
The happiest sigh may turn to grief,
The sweetest love may soon be dead.

The brightest flower must fade to sight,
The purest snow must melt away,
The loveliest day must turn to night—
These things are short and cannot stay.

My life, too, will not long last,
And I, in time, so soon shall die,
My days, my joys, my sorrows past,
Then I in peace shall also lie.

* * * *

That day, my love, I long for,
With everthing I am,
When we may be rejoined
In the lasting life of man.

Charles Jernigan

Glass

Glass lies all around
Shattered, Splintered, on the ground.
Minute pieces of glass from the sky,
Nature's silver glass floats by.
In April, sunny, laughing, shining;
December's glass is frozen, whining.
Old as Earth, unconquered still
The glass — unfettered by man's will.
It brings nostalgia, joy and pain,
Mixed emotions flow with the rain.

Kathy Ware

DEMOCRACY

"Eisenhower's not a Republican; he's a golfer," spoke forth the man in the barber shop. This "witty" remark was followed by a gloating look of self-satisfaction as he looked around for an audience. He was rewarded by several heads turning, eager to hear more. This guy seemed to know what he was talking about.

"You know what I think?" he continued. "I think Ike's made more good Democrats than Republicans."

"Yessiree," he repeated as if he were so pleased with the statement that he couldn't bear to let it pass too quickly, "Ike made more good Democrats than Republicans." The men chuckled. The statement didn't make sense to them, but if the man could speak out so surely, he must know what he was talking about.

"You know, it was a shame the way the steel strike was handled. Them guys really suffer in those mills—sure they do! Why else would they strike? Anyway, they'd finally gotten other people to suffer with them, and ol' Ike pulled that court

conjunction, or whatever it's called." At this point he was greeted by grunts of approval as his audience made mental notes to repeat to their friends this little gem of wisdom.

Encouraged by the response, the speaker rambled on. "You know, I'll bet those men will go back on strike after the 86 days are up. I certainly wouldn't go back to such long working hours with such lousy pay.— That reminds me. You know why Eisenhower didn't make them people in Henderson go back to work? I'll tell you, 'Cause the owners of the mills didn't help him with his campaign!"

A stunned silence came over the shop, with each customer contemplating the revelation he had received and feeling completely disgusted with Democracy. The speaker left, congratulating himself on the favor he had done his country by bringing those men The Truth.

"Next", called the barber.

—Chuck MacDonald

Sea Song

Softly, silently, slowly singing,
Breaks the wave upon the shore.
Calling, caressing, coming cat-like,
Blows the wind through the open door.
Laughing, loving, lightly leaving,
I follow the wind out to the sea.
Weeping, wailing, willingly walking,
I go, and the waves sweep over me.

—Martha L. Gibbs

Day

Up the sun and morning, yawning through the
once star twinkled sky;
Dawns a new day, fair and young yet, stirs the
first breeze warm and dry;
Waking people rise and meet now, each new
problem, each new chance;
Wakes the world with business humming, fac-
tories tall with confidence;
Ends the morning, falls the moon now, half the
day has ebbed from time;
Gone the day as evening light fades, hail the
night with darkened skies;
Softly, slowly rise the moon now, count a million
starry eyes;
Home the people, home from working, home
from toiling weary ways;
Rest and sleep now while the night stands, till
the sun comes, bright new day.

Edd Little

Night

Gently falling, black veil curtains covered over
everything;
Stole from all a day of working, brought the
night to every being;
Walked across the eyes and minds of everyone
and wide and grand;
Like a shadow spread its shelter vigilant across
the land;
Shown one glowing eye of white light, sparkled
diamonds, crystal clear;
Let the earth know night had fallen, children
prayed and God bent near;
Fell across the paths and sidewalks, turned the
roads to eboned strands;
Touched the night breeze with its magic, stirred
It with long shadowed hands;
Yet only stayed to rest the weary, cool the earth
and then move on;
Stole away and just as quickly, day had come and
night was gone.

Edd Little

BEDLAM

See the insane—gaping, wild eyed;
See the keeper—sneering grin.
See the broken, covered mirror,
See the iron bars closing in.
Hear the laugh, the scream of terror,
Hear the clang of lock and chain.
Hear the sound a dying soul makes
Hear the drip of dreary rain.

Touch the body—it is warm yet.
Touch the cheek—the pale rose there.
Touch the hand clenched tight in horror.
Touch the tangled, silken hair.

Smell the wood of new-made coffin.
Smell the graveyard, vulture-preyed.
Smell the black of one lone mourner;
Smell the death and be afraid.

—*Martha L. Gibbs*

The Red Shoes

She had left him. How could she! He loved her more deeply than he had ever loved anyone. Now he knew loneliness for the first time. It was painful to him — this sensitive young man. As he sat on the stool looking vacantly at



Awakening

Warm sun sneaks through the trees
And the world stretches from a good
Night's sleep; birds announce the
Coming of the morn to those awake
Enough to care. The ones who care
Sit in their window-seat and love
And laugh at the tricks the sunbeams
Play on the sparkling dew.

Peggy Colmer

Yike!

Twinkle, twinkle
One-eyed car,
How we wonder
Where you are!
On the right
Or on the left?
Which side has light,
Which one's bereft?

Susan Stentz

the bottle, the fellow across the counter was drying glasses with a smudged white cloth. In the course of an hour the young patron had downed three bottles of the soothing liquid. He felt better in a foolish sort of way, but the emptiness was still there. He could bear his grief no longer, and he bowed his head on the bar and sobbed convulsively. The fellow behind the bar walked over to the lone customer and gave him a friendly pat on the back. He said sympathetically, "There, there, now. It's not all that bad."

Slowly the young man raised his head and stared with glassy eyes at the proprietor. He spoke as if he had a mouthful of cotton as he mumbled, "Gimme another bottle, Buddy."

Why did she do it? I loved her, Lord knows how much. He fumbled with the bottle and shakingly poured the cool liquid down his throat. This time his head fell to the bar, and he wept silently.

In a few minutes he heard a woman's footsteps. They were her footsteps! He'd know their sound anywhere. The click of the heels stopped beside him. He peeped between his arms at the feet. Those shoes! Those red shoes! He closed his eyes and thanked Heaven that she had come back to him.

"Herbie, I'm sorry I left you at the nursery too long, but I had to pick Daddy up."

The little boy flung himself into his mother's arms. She reached in her pocket and paid the soda-jerk for the bottles of Pepsi. She turned and wiped the tears from her son's freckled cheeks, picked him up and carried him out to the car.

Karolyn Jones

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