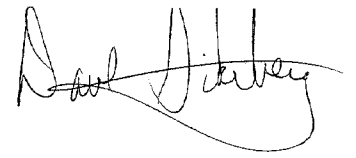
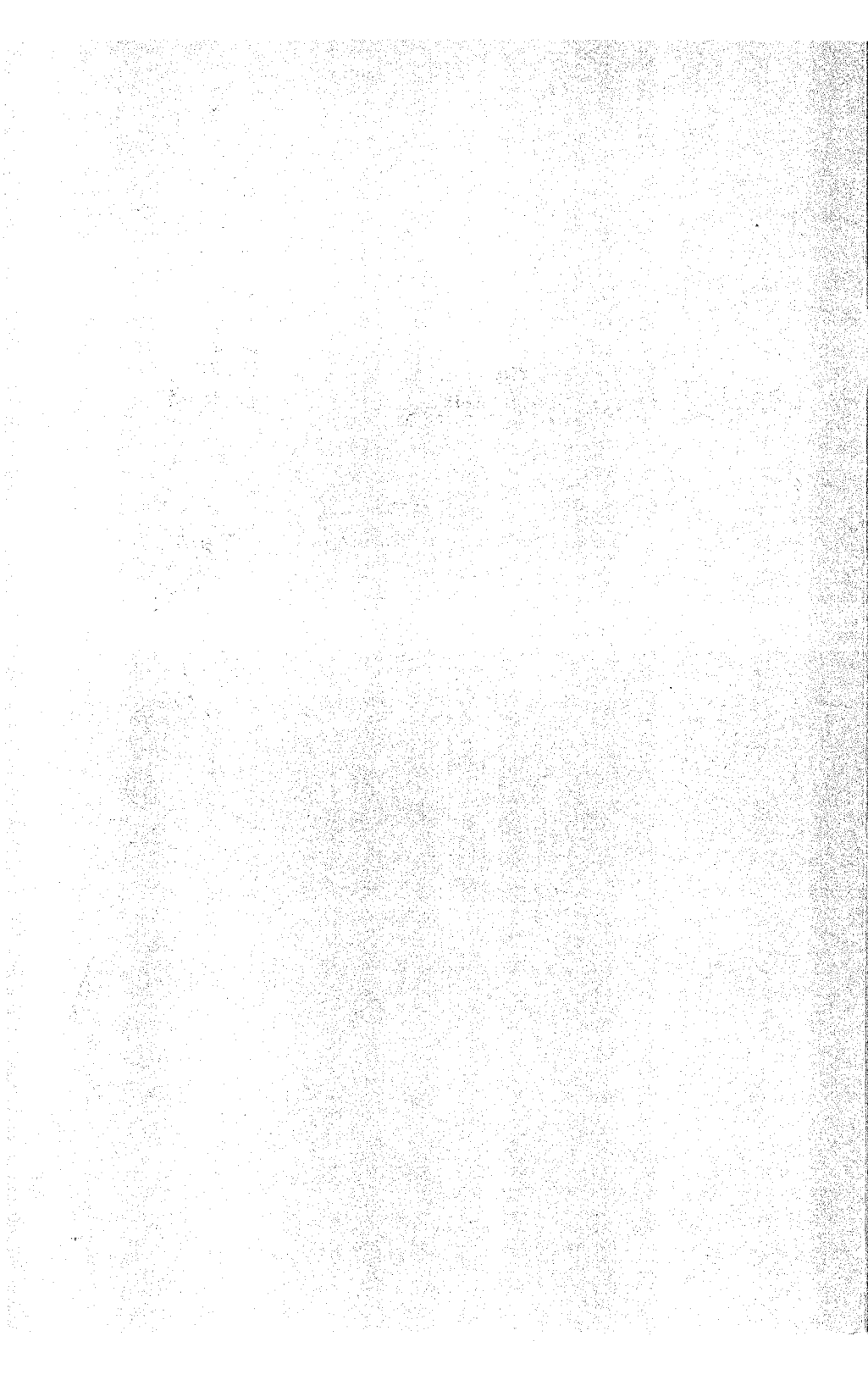




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PREFACE

"The U. S. Navy last week asked Lockheed Aircraft Corp. to submit a program definition bid on the next step in its Polaris submarine development program — a rocket known as Poseidon."

—BUSINESS WEEK

February 20, 1965

Steel-grey child of vanity,
You shall return to the sea!
You shall crumble
Like the ancient Tower;
And your broken clay
Will float on the shores
As a monument to your maker.
From sea to stars
You soar through silent skies
To a vast, new emptiness.
But you share tire of your journey
And search for your home.

Poseidon —

God of the sea,
Your own son has returned!

—Cynthia Goldin

Death of a Town

First Day

Strewn o'er the slopes of the hills surrounding the town are trees, trees bursting forth their beauty with exuberance. Their splendor is matched in dignity only by the flowers which cover the grassland. The country is fresh and vigorous, reflecting the life and vigor of the town below.

The town and its people are teeming with the sheer joy of life itself. It is poetic justice to say that this town thrives on "Brotherly Love." People sing in the streets, almost amazing themselves with their own delight. Each person is enthusiastic about being able to help his neighbor. He thinks his neighbor no different from himself. There are no fools in this town, this town of infinite wisdom. The people think and do right. Contentment is as plentiful as the water in the lake. People never argue with each other, they have no time for such fatuity. The minds of people are occupied instead with plans for the building of schools and hospitals, so as to make the town better for all who reside there.

It is Spring and the air is sweet where the trees triumphantly stand and the flowers majestically sway in the cool spring breeze. All is well.

Second Day

The heat has taken some of the vigor from the trees and some of the flowers have wilted and died. The grass has become parched by the sun and the slopes of the hills o'er the town are covered with blowing dust.

The people of the town, too, have lost some of their vigor and have become tired, almost lazy. Outwardly, the people continue to show good will, but inwardly, something is missing. The people have lost the compassion for their fellow man. They have begun to distrust each other, resentment has begun to mount as they start to notice the faults of their neighbors. The talk is strained. It could be that the people are trying too hard. It may also be that the people are not trying hard enough. There is less talk of hospitals and schools than before. Something is wrong. The people just don't seem to care.

It is summer and the air about the trees and flowers is not so sweet. The heat of the sun is becoming too much to bear, and there is no rain in sight. All is unrest.

Third Day

Along the slopes of the hills o'er the town, the trees and flowers have about them, a strange scent. The vigor is gone now, so to, the dignity. More and more flowers die, leaving behind indis-

tinguishable, wilted, stems. The leaves on the trees are uneasy and are falling to the ground.

Contentment is gone from the people of the town. The situation has become too tense, the people argue among themselves. At any time there will be a violent outbreak. The end may be near at hand.

It is fall and the air is filled with the smell of burning leaves, leaves that were full of life and vigor only a short time ago. The dead flowers are not burning, they are merely blown away with the wind. All is ill.

Fourth Day

There are no leaves on the trees. The slopes of the hills o'er the town are bare. All flowers are dead, none grow in their places.

The people have reached their end. They can no longer hold back their emotions. Men fight each other with the sole purpose being self-preservation. In their violence, the people have destroyed the schools and hospitals. There are fools in this town, this town of infinite blindness. One man falls. Another man falls. They look alike dying, why were they so invidious to each other living? Fools. All fools.

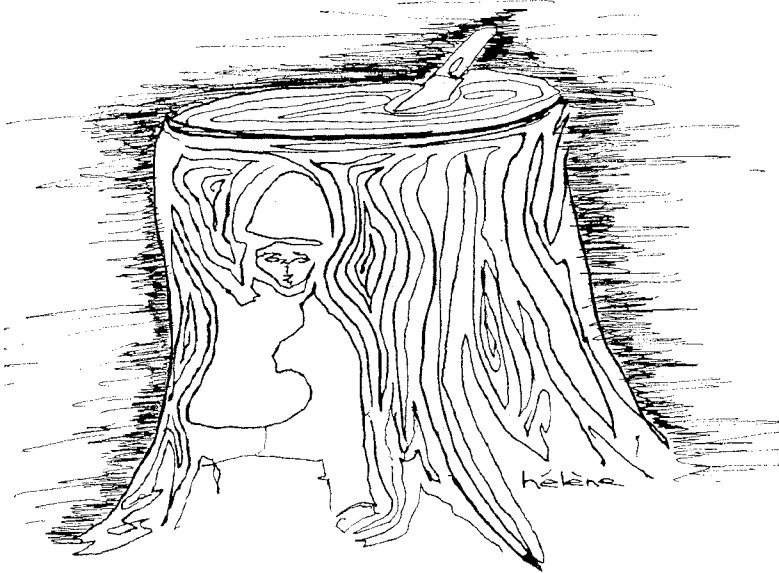
It is winter and there is nothing. There is not a leaf on a tree nor a flower on the ground. The icy winds make the bare land hard. Everywhere there is stillness. There is no sign of Spring. All is gone.

—Stephen Groll

Confusion

Running as far as he can,
Obnoxiously altered, oppressed, installed
Fettered and fauning a viable ventage,
A great brooding burden himself
Flirted his rusted physique by the way
Perverted pat pestilence, folded, a dud.
Phrenic philosophy mauling more matrons
Than mistreated mothers can budge.
Calefaccion
He gathers his gaffs
Guadron with glad gab around.
How corroded, cantankerous, ambling amuck
Falling — a festering fervid fiasco
'Till then . . .
Neurasthenia, so much pain there.

—Meryl Becker



An Old Man's War

It was a beautiful day. The birds flew low, singing of the warmth that the sun cast down upon the green meadows. It was June and the trees were in full regalia. The grass by this time was waist-high and still sweet with the spring rains. The only sounds were the carefree singing of the birds and the rustling of small animals. The sun was already high when suddenly a tall, lean boy appeared.

Anyone else would have been violating the sanctity of the area, but this boy had been there many times before and the delicate warning system that nature has, had grown indifferent to his presence.

His name was Jack Barnes, though at school they still called him "Frog" because of his long legs and big eyes. He was taller than most of the boys in his class and pretty well-built, though he could have filled out a little in spots. His eyes were big, brown blotches that dominated his whole face. There were no other outstanding features you could point at in particular, but for some reason he was considered a handsome boy. He was no extraordinary athlete either, but there was always a place for him on whatever team was playing. The thing he was known for was his intelligence, the highest in the class.

As he shuffled through the green paradise, he wandered back over the years and into the scenes of youthful happiness. He stretched out on the grass and chewed a long strand of grass as he recalled his first camping trip with his friends. He smiled broadly as he thought of their sitting there in their poor, sagging tent telling each other they weren't afraid. Then his mind journeyed through his childhood years, discovering long-forgotten ball games and dates. As he thought, he unconsciously reached into his pocket and fidgeted with the scout knife he had always carried since he was eight. His wandering mind slowly crept up on the present and his high school graduation. It was a sad time but the sweetness of sentimentality made things seem almost pleasant. Suddenly a chill swept the whole length of his spine as it suddenly occurred to him that he would have been going to college next September if it hadn't been for the war.

"Jack! Jack!", the harsh voice of his father calling from far off shattered his day-dreaming. As he sprang up he pulled the hand out of his pocket, still holding the knife. Slowly he climbed the hill toward the house. It was time to go.

He saw his father at the back of the house and Jack was suddenly faced with reality in all its grim solidarity. As he climbed steadily up the hill toward the house his mind filled with questions. When he finally reached the boundary of the trimmed lawn his father said to him, "It's time to go."

"Why me," he asked innocently.

"What do you mean," said his father.

"Two days ago I was playing baseball. Why am I suddenly an adult?"

"We are at war."

"Do I have a responsibility to fight the wars of old men and politicians whose pride is the cause of all this?"

"You have a responsibility to Democracy, Freedom, and your Religion."

"Can you strengthen democracy by killing your youth? Can you foster Freedom by enslaving nations? Can you believe in religion while annihilating whole populations?"

"War is not to be discussed. They are to be fought and won. Just remember that our cause is just."

"Every cause is just until that side loses."

"It is time to go," the father snapped as he quickly turned and walked into the house.

Suddenly the boy realized that he still clutched the knife. He opened the blade and in a sudden surge of resolution he thrust the knife into a stump at his side (with all his power) and suddenly rushed into the house. He caught up with his father in the kitchen. As his father turned to face him, the young man said solemnly,

"It's time to go." . . .

The dust swirled all around the mass of hard, dirt-encrusted soldiers as the truck droned steadily on. There was complete silence among the men and only the occasional thud as the truck fell into one of the pits from the countless bombings broke the dull rumble. Just as this was only one in a seemingly never-ending line of trucks, so Jack Barnes was just one in a mass of faceless, hard-bitten men. In their dirty uniforms and with the helmets worn low over their eyes, they little resembled the gay, young men that left home three months ago. After three weeks in the field they were all hardened veterans, as efficient at throwing a bomb as at throwing a ball and as conditioned to kill as to smile.

Suddenly a bird squawking high above him shook Jack Barnes out of his unconsciousness and he instinctively gripped his rifle. As he relaxed he thought to himself that they would soon be there. In the cold, gray distance he could hear vague bursts of artillery fire. He didn't know exactly where there was but he already knew what it looked and smelled like. For no particular reason he suddenly felt his beard and realized that he hadn't shaven in eight days. It really didn't matter, though. All that mattered was living. Death, something he had always read about and heard about was now sitting right next to him and it made him uncomfortable. The truck, seemingly droning eternally onward, suddenly interrupted his thoughts with an abrupt halt.

"Everyone out of the trucks," called a gruff voice. "Spread out and start for the hill."

They all automatically piled out of the truck like so many machines, and started walking. They all walked crouched over and cautiously low, like hungry cats. Walking straight and tall was now just part of their childhood. Out of nowhere came the sharp rattle of guns. They all dropped immediately but continued to advance on their stomachs. Mud doesn't bother you when you're having problems staying alive.

Toward the front of the irregular line of crawling creatures was Jack Barnes. As he crawled closer and closer toward death, he thought to himself, just two more years like this and he could go home. But how could you ever again play baseball again after this? Or go to a simple dance? Young men grow up fast during wars. If they survive they're old enough to start causing wars and stop fighting them. "This was no time to think," he said quietly to himself and he crawled on, and on, and on . . .

It was a beautiful day. The sun beat warmly and evenly upon the earth. There was silence except for a stray bird and a slight breeze rustling through the tall grasses. For the big, silent house,

the only evidence of the polluted civilization was an old rusted knife stuck in the top of an ancient tree stump. In its time it had been used by a little boy as he hacked his way through rows and rows of Indians and soldiers, even a few stray Martians. Boys grow up, though. If they're lucky.

—Jeffrey Berg

Poseidon is proud to present the winning entry in the first Junior High Literary Contest.

Element Of Fear

I REALLY don't see why I am writing now. I guess it's become the only way I can understand myself—to see my words become immortalized when written down on paper. I know now that it is the only thing I have that is mine and will never become a part of anything or anyone but myself. My writing is only a reflection of my inner self—to say something—to have the ability of "hearing" it again—over and over until I am thoroughly convinced that I have written what I know is my own and what I know is true.

I don't think I like to talk about it much—it only reminds me of misery and this I feel is not me. If I can remember correctly, for in my mind so many facts have become distorted and then I am lost for words, trying to finish what I have begun. I know I was always happy with my family and the people I could truly say were my friends. I know, really, that I can never obtain that happiness again—for in the state I am in now, this vacuum of nothing I alone can exist.

My conception of this "thing" was really quite unrealistic. When I first thought of it, I would frighten myself and then begin again—but I never forget it completely—not really. Perhaps everyone thinks of it at one time, at some place, but I felt I was something important, someone special to everyone who knew me.

Fallout in the rain—that among few ideas remained really clear. I never went out, not if there was the slightest possibility of rain. I guess at times people thought me quite foolish—but why couldn't they realize the danger?

I'm not sure what time it is or where I am, but I think it's about to rain. Don't worry, nothing can happen to me now—I understand. But why can't they?

"Sir, over here—what are you doing? No! There's nothing wrong with me. Miss? Please, you'll be safe here. Can't anyone understand? Please . . . why don't you listen? . . ."

—Linda Schiffman



Drops of lemon midst
plumes of swans
A majestic gown that
nature dons
To please God with a
sweet array
Of perfume and colors in
a tiny bouquet
Of a single flower, a regal
bower,
Its many petals
dovetailed together

And suspended from an invisible tether
Forming a perfect symmetry
and repeated endlessly.

—Jason Wanger

Thank You for a Lovely Evening

"SHALL WE WALK down by the river?" he asked, pulling his coat closer around him. "There's a full moon; you can see every thing as clear as day."

Watching her easy acceptance of the idea and the approval of it on her pretty face, he thought to himself, **Ha! I really want it as bright as day!**

"Good movie, didn't you think?" he asked her. He hadn't been watching.

"Oh yes," she answered lightly, "especially the part played by the moths!"

He laughed loudly at Emily's joke, although his thoughts were elsewhere. He looked down at her shiny hair and almost touched it. He turned away. Emily was, well, wonderful. Tonight he would tell her so. They would sit on the bench by the river and he would say, "Emily, I'm crazy about you!" And she would smile tenderly and he would lean over and . . .

"Did you really enjoy the movie?" he heard her ask, turning quickly around in confusion.

"Uh, did you?" he fumbled.

"It was awfully romantic."

"Oh. Oh yeah," he grinned, regaining his control. "All that mush."

A little line formed between her eyebrows and she looked at him sadly. "I thought it was rather nice." He almost agreed with her but pulled himself back. He shrugged.

Ooooh, don't you ever think of anything important! she thought, looking into his smooth young face. **Romance is important. To me. One day I'm going to shew you! I'll say, "Paul, do you ever think of love?"**

"Did you do your geometry homework?" she asked, looking into his dark eyes.

Handsome boy.

Geometry! He winced inside. **I'll make you forget about geometry!** He stopped walking as he turned to her with burning eyes. She stopped too and stared back at him. He again began to walk.

"All but the part about bisecting angles." **Chicken, that's what I am!**

"It's going to be murder when we get to circles," she sighed. She pushed her hands deep into the pockets of her coat, clenching them tight. **Take these hands and put them on those wide shoulders of his, she told herself. Tease him, flirt with him.**

Just then a girl and boy came up, arm in arm, and called to them. "Paul! Emily! Going down by the river?"

He looked at Emily and then away. **Yes, he wanted to say, we're going to the river to sit and hold hands and whisper together.** "Yeah."

She looked hard at them. **Oh, the way she's looking at him! I'll look at Paul that way on the beach. He's romantic underneath, I bet. He's a sweet boy, just shy that's all.** She looked at his averted face and disgust rose in her. **It's all his fault!** She turned defiantly towards the couple and it came out loudly in the still night. "If Paul has the guts!"

He looked at her, shocked.

Me? Guts?

The newcomers looked at each other and the girl giggled. "I hope you do, sugar!" she teased. He laughed promisingly and the two strolled on down the road.

Emily stared at him, aghast. As her anger disappeared she was

horrified at what she had said.

That look on his face.

No guts! No guts no guts no guts. Rage boiled up in him. This time he did what he wanted. Stepping forward he gripped her by the shoulders and said softly but forcibly, "Want to try me?"

Her eyes dilated and she pulled out of his grip instinctively.

"I'm sorry," she said nervously.

So sorry! And so scared!

"I—I didn't mean it. I was only kidding."

He felt drained, as if he'd just lost his final chance. He sighed, sticking his hands in his pockets.

"No, that's all right," he said flatly. "I'm sorry too. Forget it." He glanced at her and her lips were trembling. He looked again; then suddenly as joy rose in him he almost felt good. She had been scared of him! Of him! He turned to her in excitement.

"Emily . . .!" he began happily.

She was trying to quiet herself when she heard him say her name.

Is he angry? Maybe not! Her spirits soared. Maybe not!

"Yes?" Eagerly.

Looking at her anxious upturned face, he lost his nerve. She expected something. What?

"Emily," he repeated. "Do you, uh, still want to go down to the beach by the, uh, lake?" he asked nervously.

Well, he'd ruined that.

She sighed and relaxed. "No, I guess not, Paul. Maybe you'd just better take me home." **Do I really want to go home? No. But nothing will happen. I'm the one with no guts.**

"Okay," he said resignedly. Why okay? We could sit on the bench and I'd say . . . no, I wouldn't. He looked at her already distant face. No, I wouldn't.

—Meryl Becker

To An "Instructor"

Treat not with such wanton disdain

The title of which you're possessor,

Nor sorrow, because you remain

"Instructor" instead of "Professor."

Content you should be to be known

As one of enlightenment's doctors,

Rememb'ring how oft we bemoan

Professors who are not instructors.

—Pat Lockwood

The Dead Poet

I dreamed of him last night, I saw his face

All radiant and unshadowed of distress,

And as old, in music measureless,

I heard his golden voice and marked him trace

Under the common thing the hidden grace,

And conjure wonder out of emptiness,

Till mean things put on beauty like a dress

And all the world was an enchanted place.

And then I thought outside a fast locked gate

I mourned the loss of unrecorded words,

Forgotten tales and mysteries half said

Wonders that might have been articulate,

And voiceless thoughts like murdered singing birds

And so I woke and knew that he was dead.

—John Ramahlo

All Is Right

A silvery sphere rests on a hill,
near a tall, straight pine tree.

Among its branches a hoot owl sits, his eyes luminescent in the
moonlight, his body warm and still.

Upon the hill, a couple lies looking up into the night,
beyond its earthly borders.

Lovers to whom the night belongs, forget all within your
bliss, but remember the stars which shine tonight.

The night is dark, yet it glows
with a pearly light where death holds no holds.

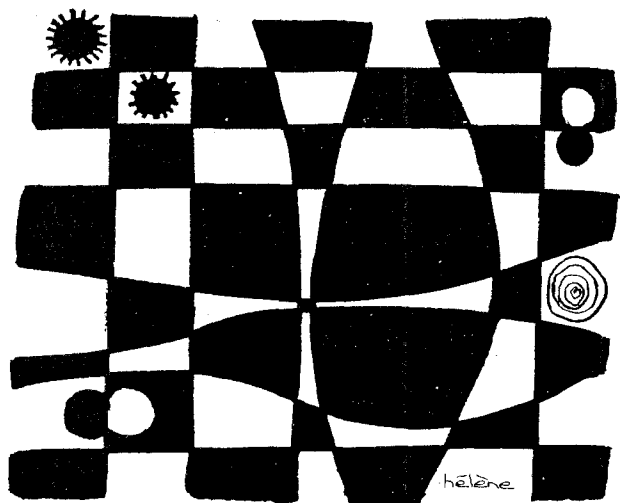
If we are walkers upon a plain, seeing each other,
touching the stars, then . . .

Then all is right, all is dear
the moon sees, but has no fear.

—Dave Sack

When September's days yield to November's
 And the cold autumn rain wets the embers
 Of Indian Summer, and when the icy blasts
 That drive out swiftly the wind of past
 Seizes parched branches and hurls them aghast
 High into blue sky turned to greyish delight
 Then those are the days for wintry flight,
 Before the reticent midwinter's night.

—Jason Wanger



The Island

TWO MEN dressed in spotless lab coats entered a windowless room. Electronic equipment covered one wall and two wooden chairs were placed against another. On a table was a jar containing a gurgling liquid which suspended a grey mass cluttered with a nest of wires. One of the men activated a machine with a magnetic tape labeled "memory" which began to stir. The other inserted a wire marked "awake" into its receptacle as a blue light next to the word "dream" ceased glowing . . .

. . . The sun had established a firm position in the sky above Hilldale by now. Its rays trickled through the atmosphere to warm the bed in which Tom Osfield rolled over. He instinctively shot an arm toward the direction of his night-table where an insolent alarm sliced its way through a silent room, and then extinguished it as feeling surged into his body. Surrendering to the prodding of morning, Tom sat up and yawned with as much zeal as he could

summon at the time. His wife, already downstairs, was preparing bacon and eggs. Tom popped out of bed and began a jubilant rendition of Osfield's first concerto for whistle in E-flat minor . . .

. . . Rows of multicolored pilot lights flickered for awhile and then glowed steadily. A shining toggle switch labeled "happy" was chosen from several switches in the "mood" section of the control box and was flicked on. A dial was rotated past "fortunate" through "unlucky" to remain on "unevenful." A motor started humming . . .

. . . Tom ran out of his house, walking through a brisk, clear morning a few blocks past rows of houses, and was swallowed by the orifice of a subway entrance. He felt happy, but could not say why as he waited on the platform that was temporarily filled with silence. Within a few minutes a train accompanied by a crescendo of thunder rumbled from an endless cave to his station. He boarded it and took a seat opposite a man reading the *Times*. A smiling young lady on a poster suggested that Tom try her brand of canned peaches. Tom chuckled at a mustache and goatee scribbled on her face by a vandal. She was flanked by a poster advertising insurance, and by an appeal from a local charity. On the seat next to Tom a several-day-old copy of the *Hilldale Dispatch* lay yellowing. The headlines proclaimed "EMT Asks for Tax Hike." Tom crossed his legs and covered his lap with the paper which he opened to the editorial page. One editorial favored increasing the amount of foreign aid being sent to a nation on the other side of the Earth. And it was entitled: "NO MAN IS AN ISLAND" . . .

. . . With ties loosened and their collars long opened the scientists finished up their duties. Two cups whose bottoms were covered with stale coffee waited on a chair. Several cigarette butts which were trampled until they merged with the floor lay all around. Their day was over and the two men ended their experiment, or work, or game. The "dream" switch was turned on and the "awake" switch was retracted. As the men departed they looked back at the lettering above the door which read: "Human Being: Thought and Emotion Control Center." The world went on, hurling from infinity toward infinity, carrying with it several beings—or perhaps one . . .

— Jerry Silver

The Senior

The Senior comes
 On noisy flat feet,
 And sits
 Looking over teacher and blackboard,
 Learning nothing,
 Then moves on.

—Pat Lockwood

An Early Bird Gathers No Moss

THE WIND blew violently by the seashore, and the waves were fierce. The branches of trees swayed in the breeze, while the sand washed away with the tide. The warm bright sun warmed the chill of the wind. Not too far from the shore, dwelt a large community of birds. The gulls composed a large percentage of the community. Whatever the gulls did, the rest of the birds would imitate, as in the game of Follow the Leader. When the gulls ate, the robins would eat, then the starlings would eat, and finally the sparrows would eat. The father of every family went to seek food in his own manner to feed his family, although all knew where the best "hunting grounds" were located. All went well as far as the gulls, robins, and starlings were concerned. However, the sparrows had troubles in the community. They were the smallest of the birds, and had trouble finding food. You see, they knew where all the fine feeding grounds were, but by the time they got there, the gulls or robins, and sometimes even the starlings had already been there. They left the last worm to form a new colony. Besides this fact, the gulls never ate the last worm, so the robins never ate the last worm, the starlings never ate the last worm, and the sparrows never ate the last worm.

One day, a mother sparrow said to her husband, "I fear we have no food for the children."

"I shall find something," he said to the mother sparrow, and flew out the window.

He knew of a place not far from their home, where the soil was moist and there was a variety of tasty dishes.

When he arrived, however, all was barren save for one plump worm trying to bore its way underground to hide from the sparrow.

"I see you," said the sparrow, "and I must take you have to feed my children."

"Oh, please don't do that," said the worm. "I do not want to die. Besides," said he, "I am the last survivor."

"My children do not want to die either," said the sparrow, and he picked up the worm in his beak and took off for his home.

On the way, he met a starling.

"Where did you get such a plump worm?" asked the starling.

"Where the ground is moist by the stream. But there are no more there now," said the sparrow. "They have all been eaten."

"You are eating the last survivor?" cried the starling. "You are cruel indeed!"

"I do not want to be eaten," said the worm.

But the sparrow continued his journey, and soon met a robin.

"Who goes there?" asked the robin in a deep, husky voice.

"It is but a mere sparrow," said the sparrow.

"Where did you get such a plump worm?" asked the robin.

"Where the ground is moist by the river," he answered.

"But that place was raided only yesterday," said the robin.

"This is the last one," said the sparrow.

"You are eating a last survivor?" cried the robin.

"I do not want to be eaten," said the worm.

But the sparrow continued on his way, when he came upon a gull.

"Where are you going?" demanded the gull.

"To feed my family with this worm," answered the sparrow.

"Where did you get it?" he asked.

"Where the ground is moist by the stream," replied the sparrow.

"But we raided that place only yesterday," said the gull.

"I know," said the sparrow. "He is the last one."

"You are eating the last survivor?" cried the gull.

"I do not want to die," said the worm.

But the sparrow paid no attention, and flew off.

When he arrived home, his wife was delighted by the sight of the worm, and so were the children, to say the least.

"I found him where the ground is moist by the stream," said the proud father.

"Wasn't that place raided?" asked the wife.

"Yes," replied the sparrow. "He was the last survivor."

"I do not want to die," said the worm.

"Do you want to disgrace our family?" cried the wife. "Take him back right away."

So the poor sparrow returned the worm, who didn't want to die, and started home to his family.

During this time, the gull, robin, and starling had been spreading the news of the capture of the last survivor. Each told their wives, who told other wives at their coffee clotch, who all told their friends and relatives in the community.

On the way home, the sparrow met a group of starling women spreading the news.

"There he goes now," said one.

The sparrow turned toward the women, and thought that they

must be praising him for returning the worm that didn't want to die.

So he continued on, with his head raised high.

He came upon a group of robins, who all watched as he went by.

"I saw him carry the worm," said one.

The sparrow turned his head with a haughty gesture, and said, "It was nothing," and continued on his way.

"He said it was nothing," said one.

"I must tell Selma," said another, and they all quickly dispersed.

The sparrow family lived from day to day with uneasiness, for they knew they were being watched and judged. They felt the eyes of the gulls, watching them . . . snide remarks behind their backs . . . eyes watching and staring . . . they could bear the strain no longer.

One day they decided to leave the community. So, they packed their belongings, sold their nest, and moved to a new community.

—Shirley Goldin

To ride into the night on horse that flies,
The cavalier rides forth to try his pow'rs.
He is at home when roving — has no ties
With home life. All he searches for is Tow'rs
Where he can find himself wrapped up in dreams;
His world complete. Adventure is his aim,
And striving, always striving through the years
For glory, hoping that an evil flame
Will never eat his deeds with brighter light.
That he will never find the Maelstrom where
All trace of him is gone, as if a blight
Had swept the land; left nothing but a prayer.
In any age some men are only men
Who die, and dying, are not born again.

—Pam Johnson

Free Verse Poem

I live to die.

Why?

They claim that life means.

I know it doesn't.

Life cannot mean.

Too destructive would be the power of death,

If life meant.

We would be flames, in terror

Of the mortal wind.

We would be flowers, cringeing

From the frost.

Death's power of annihilation would be

The supreme irony.

Why

Do they have to make it mean?

They gasp, in death's grasp;

Life means

If it bestows life.

Don't they know that the life

Bestowed will

Die?

And not all men can bestow life.

Where is the meaning then?

They wheeze:

Life means because God

Is.

But God may not be.

Where is meaning?

It is mercifully absent

For without it

Death is deliverance.

—Melanie Sollog

Chocolate Covered Cherries

The snow fell softly on the Park Avenue pavement. The March sun fought its way through February's leftover clouds.

A five-year-old girl sat on the yellow gingham window seat, beneath the huge casement window.

Her pink organdy was marred by the marks of chocolate fingerprints.

"They never let me have any chocolate," she said to her best friend, Raggedy Anne, who sat on the tippy top shelf in the room, in solitude.

As she popped another chocolate into her mouth, she heard Selma, the maid, answer the front door.

"They're home," she thought, as she stuffed the box of candy beneath her bed.

When she awoke it was about 2:45 the next morning. She lay on the floor, as she glared at her canopy bed.

"Hah, they don't, or won't, know I slept on the floor. Good work, Raggedy Anne, you are a wonderful guard.

"Ya know what, Raggs? The only time I remember them letting me have chocolate is when Grandpa died, and lots of people, loads of people, brought boxes and boxes of candy.

"Caramels, fudge, buttercrunch . . . chocolate covered cherries."

She crept out of her room and into the kitchen as the grandfather clock struck three.

She opened the third drawer over the stove, slowly. That was the drawer that squeaked.

"Darn it, whenever Selma opens this drawer it always makes that funny noise," she thought. "This is the drawer where they keep the knives, isn't it? Oh, yes, there it is."

The glistening knife reflected the little girl's bloodshot eyes.

Whenever they had steak, Selma always used this knife to trim the fat.

She crept past her room to the last door on the right.

"Granny," she whispered, "are you up?"

There was no reply.

Granny still wore a lace night cap.

"How queer," she mused, as she slowly, carefully plunged the knife.

—Lynda Hurwitz

Reflection

The freezing fire turns
Winter blue
And white
Hot snow burns
Frosty fingers
Barely touching
Black bones
Of naked trees.
The melting ice forms
Blue pools
Of warm tears
And deep blue eyes
Search the sky
But scarcely find
The floating forms
Of cold smoke.

—Cynthia Goldin

Thoughts

On a night when the world is still
and the cool breeze is so gentle
that it doesn't even stir the leaves,
When the Summer Honeysuckle and grasses
perfume the air
and the moon is full, and there is
a pale light everywhere,
Then it is not really night at all,
But rather Heaven descending on the earth
for a few short hours.

* * * *

God gave the day to the mind, but the night
he gave to the senses.

* * * *

Where love has departed,
there stands a whimpering child,
naked and lost in the darkness.

—Vivienne Collins

POSEIDON

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