

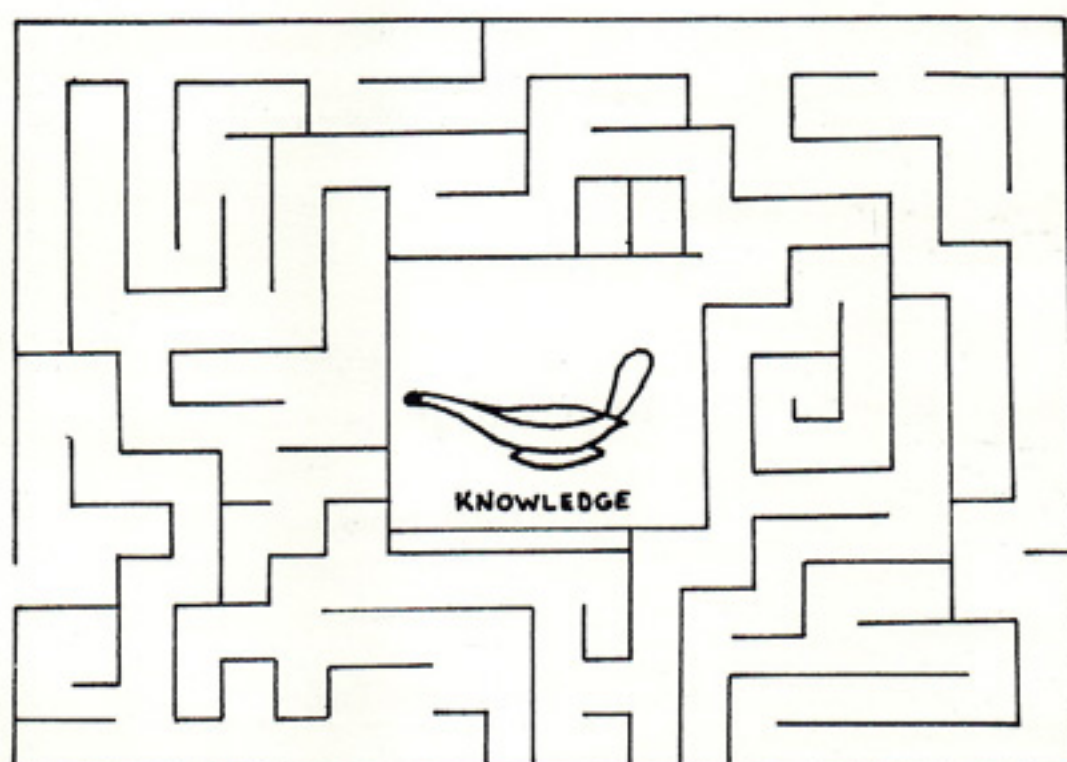
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A black silhouette of a knight in full plate armor, holding a long sword aloft in his right hand, facing a minotaur. The minotaur is depicted with a bull's head and a muscular, humanoid body, standing on its hind legs and reaching out with its right arm towards the knight. The knight is positioned on the left, and the minotaur is on the right. The entire scene is set against a textured, light pink background.

LABYRINTH

the labyrinth



t.C. Williams h.s.
alexandria, Va.

Volume 1

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THE SCHOOL DAZE AFFAIR

First Place Prose

by Karen Gray

'68

The dark silence of the school corridor was broken by a ringing shot. A wounded young man, brunette and freckled, ran into the Language Laboratory. At booth B4, he put on the headset, twisted the microphone head twice to the left and spoke rapidly into the transmitter. As fumes from a gas bomb filled the room, he ran out into the waiting arms of five murderers.

ACT I: *A Visit From the Stork*

In the illuminated basement of a suburban house, five high school students banged out the strains of "Hang On, Sloopy". At rhythm guitar, tall and lean, was Wellington Duet, "Will" for short, a junior in high school. At the drums was Aylli Nikayruk, a charming blond-haired Russian from Brooklyn, whose unpronounceable name had been shortened to "Nick". As the band went into "Henry the VIII," his right drumstick began to glow red, intermittently. "Hey, Will" Nick called, "we'd better go call our dads," and the pair rushed out. Indeed, they were quite right, for Will and Nick were student secret agents for DAD—the Dean's Agency against Destruction.

* * * * *

The two boys came face to face with "S", their superior, in headquarters underneath a neighborhood Top's Drive-In.

"Gentlemen, we received this message from Agent 13 this morning. He spoke from the language lab at school," "S" said as he turned on a tape.

"This is agent 13. I am being pursued by five enemy agents. (Cough, cough) Gas! (Choke) Students are planning to take over the school. (Cough) Their headquarters are (Choke) Click!" The end of the tape.

"Students taking over the school!" Nick exclaimed. "That sounds like the work of—"

"STORK!" Will's voice was deep and solemn, and no wonder. STORK was the Student Terror Organization for Revenge against "Keepers", a junior partner to the fabled Thrush.

"Your mission, gentlemen, is to: one, find agent 13; two, find STORK headquarters; and, three, foil their plan to take over the school."

"And four, stay alive," murmured Nick.

"This might help you," "S" continued. "A shortage in some chemicals has been reported by the laboratory. Begin your investigations tomorrow at school and be careful. We don't know who is working against DAD."

ACT II: *Music To Spy By*

A scream pierced the air, bringing Will and Nick to the rescue, that bright Monday morning. A good-looking brunette stood in terror beside her locker. Inside, on the locked hook was a coat—with a body in it.

"Agent 13, I presume," was Nick's first comment.

"Look over the body, while I take this poor girl to the clinic."

"Why don't *you* take care of the body and let me take the girl?" was the retort, but by then, the brunette was gone.

"Look, Nick, the murder weapon." Will held up a string which had been wrapped around the dead man's throat.

"That's a . . . a violin string!"

Will glanced again at the body. "We're going to have more trouble than we figured. Look at the corpse's right hand!"

"Its thumb is wrapped in tinfoil! The mark of Silverthumb! That red-haired she-devil must be working for STORK as an 'adult advisor' from Thrush!"

* * * * *

During lunch period that day, Wellington Duet followed up the violin string lead, while Aylli Nikayruk went to investigate the missing chemicals.

Will's first point of investigation lay with the music instructor. After examining the dossier on the orchestra director and each member of the orchestra, he found no clues. A spectroscopy analysis of the string, however, revealed splinters of wood lodged in it—wood found only in two places—the auditorium stage floor, and the gym floor.

Will's sixth "spy" sense led him to investigate the gym — and he found nothing. Oh, well, no one's infallible. That left the auditorium. Will approached the stage cautiously. Suddenly there was a noise behind him! He whipped around, drawing his gun from its shoulder holster. He blacked out as a gun butt crashed against his skull.

Will revived a few minutes later, bound and gagged. Through a curtain of pain, he heard a mocking voice taunt him.

"So we meet again, Mr. Duet."

ACT III: *We Try to Economize*

"Take off his gag, boys." Silverthumb leaned back easily in her chair, looking at the DAD agent opposite her.

"Do not struggle, Mr. Duet. There are too many of us for you to fight."

To his dismay, Will found her statement to be true. He desperately searched his mind for an escape plan.

"No doubt, Mr. Duet, you are wondering where you are. We are beneath the stage and the orchestra pit is used as an entrance.

"I thought that before we disposed of you, you might tell me your opinion of our little plan.

"You see, tomorrow morning, when the attendance assistants take around the absentee lists, we will capture them, and substitute our STORK agents. They will carry special lists to the teachers, printed in very unusual ink. When the teacher takes the list from the agent, the ink will be absorbed by his fingers into his system. In three minutes, the teacher will become a child of seven. We will take the administration officials as hostages, by pumping sleeping gas into their offices. During the chaos which will ensue, STORK will take over the school."

"How interesting," Will said unenthusiastically. "What are you going to do with me?"

"Oh, something quite unusual. You will find it a challenge."

Two rough-looking students suddenly appeared, dragging in a ferocious tiger which snarled and snapped at everyone.

"This is my pet, Mr. Duet—Tani. He is used to having a nice, juicy steak about now, but — prices are so high these days and we do like to economize. Tani is being hooked opposite you now, as you can see. In fifteen minutes, the orchestra will begin to practice on the stage above, which you will be able to hear through a microphone. When all of the violins begin to play, together, the vibrations will break Tani's chain and then — well . . . we must depart now." Silverthumb smiled benevolently and disappeared through the orchestra pit, along with her friends.

ACT IV: *You've Been Slipping Lately*

Will found himself alone in the room, confronting the vicious tiger. He swallowed hard and desperately tried to contrive a way out of his tight bonds. He thought briefly of ending it all with the lethal tablet attached to his upper right wisdom tooth, but no DAD agent had ever used that pill except under interrogation. Suddenly, Will grasped a glimmer of an idea. With his tongue, he undid the tablet from the tooth and held it between his lips. As the tiger roared once again, Will aimed carefully, this being his one and only chance. He blew hard, sending the pill through the air into the animal's mouth.

It took only a minute to work. Then Will tipped over his chair and used the tiger's claws to break his ropes. He then left a small bomb behind and quickly emerged onto the stage, with the explosion soon following. To his amazement, sitting in the front row of the auditorium was . . .

Nick!

"I should ask you where you came from, but first let's get after Silverthumb," Will advised.

"Forget it. We rounded up the STORK agents already. Will, my boy, I traced the missing chemicals here with a Geiger counter — because uranium was among the substances. Then I called in DAD re-enforcement agents."

"Then you knew I was in there?" Will exclaimed. "Why didn't you help me?"

"Oh, I felt it would be a challenge for you, and you need some practice. You've been slipping lately," Nick said laughingly, as he dodged Will's punch and raced up the aisle.

* * * * *

In headquarters, Nick stood in front of "S".

"Congratulations to you and Will for a job well done. You not only stopped STORK's plans, but the entire organization in our school was wiped out."

"What happened to Silverthumb, sir?"

"That young lady, unfortunately, overcame her guard at the woman's prison and has flown back to Thrush. By the way, Nick, where is Mr. Duet?"

"Well, sir," Nick hesitated. "He's in D-Hall for being late to his fourth period class after lunch."

The Stars

by Robert Moeller

'67

The stars had always been his friends. They had always been there and always would be. These bodies were constant and unchanging, simply silhouetted against the blackness of the sky. He had always been able to find comfort in the assurance that they would appear without fail every night. He could enjoy them as they accompanied the cooling breezes of evening in summer, bringing a relief from the oppressive heat of the day, or as they were obscured by the gently falling snows of winter. In the autumn, their light beamed weightlessly on the fallen leaves, and in the spring he could ponder them, their infinity, their ethereal brilliance and splendor, while savoring the aromatic scent of the first new grass. The stars never asked him any questions, nor would they ever demand any answers. Still, they were something he could count on; they were something eternal. Yes, the stars were good friends, not at all like people.

Live Life!

by Carol Jones

'68

*The sea isn't always like unbroken glass —
It turns and tosses and ripples.
A bird in flight doesn't straightforward fly —
It soars and sweeps and dives.*

*The sky turns colors other than blue —
It's streaked with darkness and lightning and clouds.*

*Just as in Nature's way, it's true
That our hearts, our minds, must soar and fly,
And feel ups and downs and gladness and sadness,
We must laugh often, but also sigh.*

*Our life cannot be calm as the sea,
Nor our outlook narrow and unreal.
Our horizons cannot forever be clear,
We must feel, feel, feel!*



The Destruction Ball

by Ginny Herron

'67

(This man, Jones, couldn't have committed this crime. He has been unjustly accused, but his defense hasn't supported him either. Just because he looks like the murderer, why should he be guilty? The two eyewitnesses may have been mistaken — or were lying. Jones doesn't seem the type to kill a person in cold blood — over a money matter. This man seems to hold material wealth less important than his life. Thus he would not even think of killing a man for money and as a result sacrificing his life. This man sets his standards higher than that. But why can't these jurors realize this?)

The Foreman asks, "What do you say, Mr. Thompson?"

"Guilty." (He wouldn't have believed him on a stack of bibles.)

"Mr. Cambel?"

"Guilty."

"Mr. Tents?"

"Guilty." (Those two didn't even listen to the testimony.)

"Mr. Samuels?"

"Guilty." (This man can't be trusted himself — why should he have the power to judge someone else?)

"Mr. Bond?"

"Guilty." (He is a noted banker and a Harvard graduate. Why is he voting that way?)

"Mr. Stone?"

"Guilty." (I'm confused.)

"Dr. Clemens?"

"Guilty." (Can I be wrong? Now it's my turn.)

"Mr. Smith?"

"Guilty."

Article V

A Review Of THE MAN

by Jock MacKinnon
'67

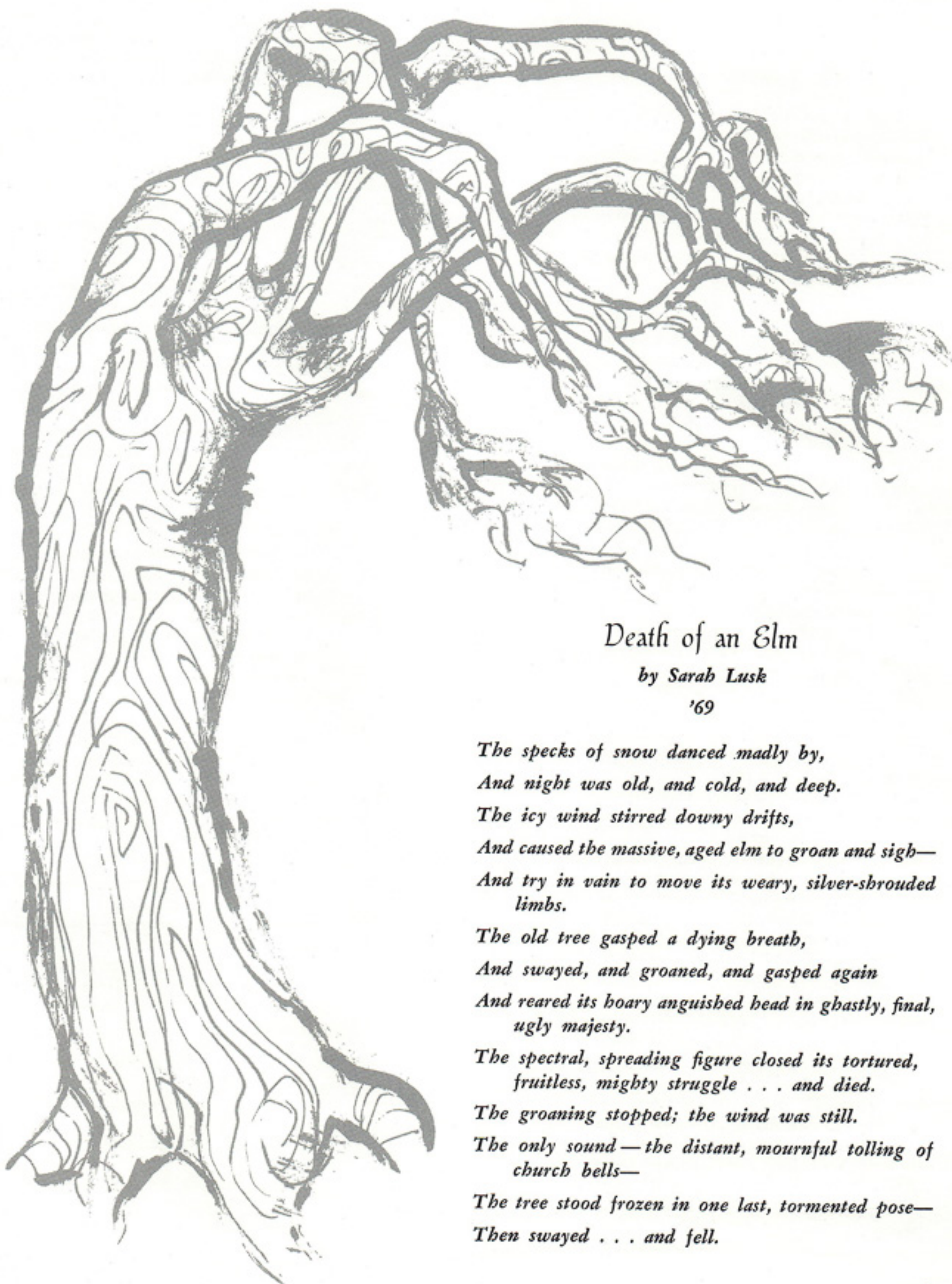
While keeping the reader spellbound with an intriguing plot, *The Man* by Irving Wallace gives him a great insight into the problems of American Negroes. Wallace, a well-known contemporary novelist, was born in Chicago in 1916. As a free-lance writer he has contributed numerous articles to such magazines as *Cosmopolitan*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Collier's*. In addition to his free-lance writing Wallace has written several popular works, including *The Prize*, *The Chapman Report*, and *The Man*. In writing



The Man Wallace's main intent was to imply to the reader the prejudices which are harbored by the American public toward Negroes. Wallace had a secondary purpose which was to campaign against these prejudices. His intents were achieved well, for after reading *The Man* we are able to comprehend better the barriers which face Negroes in this country. Written in a forceful manner, Wallace's message is presented effectively and forces the reader to examine his feelings on Negro equality in the United States.

The Man takes place in Washington, D. C., with the year being about 1975. The chief problems facing the United States are not unlike those of 1966, with the cold war and civil rights at the top of the list. Through superb characterization Wallace has effectively portrayed three main characters. These are Douglas Dilman, the first Negro to become President of the United States; Arthur Eaton, Dilman's Secretary of State; and Nat Abrahams, Dilman's best friend and most trusted advisor. Numerous minor characters are used to develop the plot, but have little significance in the plot itself. The plot of *The Man* is fascinating and makes it hard for the reader to put the book down. After a series of deaths, Douglas Dilman, the Negro President pro tempore of the Senate, becomes President of the United States. In this office he encounters the hatred of southern conservatives who constantly plot to usurp his power. The conservatives finally draw up charges for Dilman's impeachment. These charges consist of four ridiculous accusations and are referred to as the Articles of Impeachment. At the impeachment trial however, Abrahams, acting as Dilman's attorney, introduces the members of the Senate to an unwritten fifth article. This article states that Dilman had committed the crime of being a Negro, therefore making himself ineligible for any position of responsibility. In Article Five lies the major part of a two-fold conflict. The major conflict pits the Negro, in his struggle for equality, against the prejudices of white Americans. The minor conflict is representative of the major one and deals with Dilman's struggle with the Senate. The climax occurs when Dilman forces the Russian premier to withdraw his forces from the African nation of Baraza, for this achievement influences enough senators to bring about Dilman's acquittal in the Senate.

Wallace makes his intent apparent from the outset of *The Man*, where he describes the problems facing Dilman. Throughout the book Dilman and his many afflictions are portrayed realistically with no evident fantasy. Knowing the great problems which face a white President, it requires little imagination for the reader to foresee the tremendous burdens which would face the first Negro President. The mood of *The Man* varies slightly but on the whole it is one of seriousness, for the author's message is profound. *The Man* is thoroughly engrossing and is recommended to anyone who would like to read a thrilling novel with a message of great importance for all Americans, for this message firmly implants in the reader's mind the question of Negro equality.



Death of an Elm

by Sarah Lusk

'69

*The specks of snow danced madly by,
And night was old, and cold, and deep.
The icy wind stirred downy drifts,
And caused the massive, aged elm to groan and sigh—
And try in vain to move its weary, silver-shrouded
limbs.*

*The old tree gasped a dying breath,
And swayed, and groaned, and gasped again
And reared its hoary anguished head in ghastly, final,
ugly majesty.*

*The spectral, spreading figure closed its tortured,
fruitless, mighty struggle . . . and died.*

The groaning stopped; the wind was still.

*The only sound—the distant, mournful tolling of
church bells—*

*The tree stood frozen in one last, tormented pose—
Then swayed . . . and fell.*

View From The Sidelines

by Toni Pitts

'67

This is dedicated to all girls who are usually afflicted with a certain ailment about this time every year, namely cheerleaderitis. Sleepless nights, excited nerves and chewed-off fingernails contribute to the state of frenzy which prevails shortly before tryouts. Indifferent to all the commotion, boys don't seem to be caught up in the swing of cheerleading, but merely the cheerleader's swing! Exposure to this energetic pastime lights a spark of desire in many girls' eyes, but what is it really like to be a cheerleader? What lies hidden under the surface of prestige and excitement. My ideal way of spending a summer is certainly not practicing jumps in a pair of saddle shoes in 90° heat every afternoon for an hour or so. After a while the shoes begin to feel like weights tied to your feet, tempers sharpen to a needle point and the next morning you awaken in torment from aching muscles with only the definite thought that you must repeat the same tedious routine today. Meanwhile you are slowly realizing that you must have not only ability in this medium, but in many others, too. While trying to decide color schemes, patterns and designs for uniforms, the first animosities between the members of the squad arise. All I can say is patience is a virtue. You become an expert at manipulating your parents to obtain money for all the expenses. In other words you get 'em before they know what hit 'em. I'd imagine you could probably manage in a business world, too, after you have haggled with several local merchants over discounts on this or that. Along this line the most exasperating moment comes when in the middle of your well-planned speech, the merchant arrests your efforts by the blunt remark that he has never heard of T. C. Williams High School. At the beginning of the school season, numerous regulations are heaped upon you. Don't chew gum while cheerleading. You must travel to and from games with a sponsor. Don't miss practice. Don't be late. Be neat! Be peppy . . . and smile! DON'T CUSS



OUT THE REFS! Once more, you end up at your first pep rally minus megaphones, pom-poms and letters and also minus a gym!

But there are good times, too! Dripping wet and utterly exhausted you plop yourself into the nearest chair after your first pep rally frantically trying to muster enough strength to move, much less to cheer at the game that night. The magic formula: a simple smile and a sincere remark "Gosh! Ya'all did a great job at the Pep Rally!" Immediately you're off and running again. Humor spices practically every session you spend with your counterparts. To anyone who might be interested, when seeking the rest rooms at Groveton, a helpful factor might be that the downstairs portion at the back part of the gym is arranged just like Hammond's except that the boy's room is on the left and the girl's is on the right. I won't go into any further detail as to how I happened to find that out, though. Each of you knows the satisfaction of a good game, especially if "we" win. Take your feelings and double or triple them and you will know what we feel. The excitement mounts, emotion tenses, your hands begin to shake and in my case, my glasses fog up. Each one of us sits on the edge of the bench trying to watch the game and to watch the clock. Sometimes it's almost a bother to cheer because you're afraid you'll miss something. The struggle finally ends, a victory! Nothing brings as much joy as a victory and perhaps nothing brings as many tears as a defeat. But win or lose, each game wins a place in your memory, a piece of your heart. Like so many other things in this world, though, cheerleaderitis is a passing fancy. If you make it, a new and exciting adventure awaits you, but if you don't, do not despair, for other doors will open for you. What is it like to be a cheerleader? Robert Frost best expresses my feelings in the last stanza of his poem, *The Road Not Taken*.

"I shall be telling this with a sigh

Somewhere ages and ages hence:

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one less traveled by

And that has made all the difference."

Waiting

by Teri Bursik
'69

In the room there was a hush. Complete silence prevailed. The feeling of waiting was everywhere. Everyone was waiting for the time when all would be released from this room.

Some looked around the room, remembering the hours they had spent there; wondering if they should be happy to leave these confined walls and be free or should regret turning another page in their lives. Yet even in these undecided people you could sense their feeling of waiting.

Others looked at each one of the friends they had known so long. They smiled at one another to hide the tense excitement. Yes, everyone was waiting.

Each was thinking of what he would do when he left. To some the future looked bleak and uninteresting. To others the future was bright, full of adventure and experience to be had.

All waited patiently for what was to come.

From somewhere came the familiar shuffling of feet. Someone coughed faintly, the nervous cough which comes only under stress.

In the back of the room one could hear low murmuring, then silence. Everyone was waiting.

When the time came all would leave. What then? Some would leave and would never see others again. Others would leave, but everyone knew they would return.

One could feel the room become tense as the time grew near. One concentrated on the labored breathing around the room to keep his mind off the clock.

Then came the final count. Five, four, three, two, one! In an instant everyone was running for the door. Each person felt free at last. Friends were saying good-byes and how wonderful it was to be free. Above the din one boy shouted at the top of his lungs:

"SCHOOL'S OUT!"



One Of Them

by Amanda Stevens
'68

We stood there on the stairway after school, as always, passing time in the usual way. Ted, the real leader of our little group, monopolized the conversation with the "tragic tale" of how his day had gone. There were seven of us in all, five guys and two girls. Ted was the biggest, and really o.k., I suppose, though a little on the rough side. He always had a cutting remark, a big "put down" to hand out; we thought he was funny, a real gas.

We were known throughout school as the "Swift Seven"—the "elite in group". There were Ted, "big Bill", Don, Arnie and me, plus Judy and Donna, who hung around for laughs. Whatever we did, or wherever we went, it was automatically *the* thing. If we said "thumbs down" to something or someone, everybody avoided it like the plague.

This particular day we listened to Ted tear down the general faculty. Really, *they* listened; I didn't. My mind wandered and finally came to focus on a mousy, little old lady with a load of books that was twice what she could handle. I watched her struggle with them, and as she came closer, into view, I saw her dark gray suit and faded blouse. Her steel gray hair was pulled back to the nape of her neck, and everything from her square framed glasses to her laced shoes accented her age; yet somehow there was something respectable about her. I must have seen her a thousand times before, and she always looked the same; this thought brought me back to reality in time to hear Ted's views on the woman.

"Old lady Marvle — she's the perfect librarian! I mean, libraries are bad enough, but she's enough to scare you out of the state!"

The others laughed as if it were the funniest thing anyone had ever said. I watched as she trudged up the stairs across the way that led to the library and suddenly thought of the book I needed.

"Well, pity me, Group — I'm on my way to the lion's den!" I said, as I started down the walk.

"The lion's den?" asked Arnie.

"He means the library," translated Ted. "What else?"

"Don't tell me you're reading voluntarily!" Don called after me.

"Who does *that*? See ya'!" I replied, as I started up the stairs.

I entered the large room and held my breath for a moment. No one could stand the musty old library, but no one ever did anything about cleaning it up, either. I browsed for at least twenty minutes, and finally decided on a book. Glancing over the yellowed pages, I saw that I was alone with Miss

Marvle. She sat at a desk in a dusty corner of the room, and as I peered at her through the shadows that enveloped that part of the room, I remembered what Ted had said about her. For a moment I thought I could see her as she once must have been; but the dimness was playing tricks on my eyes, and I finally wandered over to her. I signed the card and gave it to her.

"Rich . . . Lucas?" she asked, deciphering my signature.

"Uh, yes," I said, watching her frown.

"Sign your full name, please. You should know the rule." Her voice was cold, but after a moment, as I struggled with the pencil, she said quietly, "Lucas, you said, I don't suppose you have an older brother . . ."

"Who, Mickey?"

"Michael . . ." she paused, "often spent his afternoons here, before he graduated." I glanced up from the card, and noticed her eyes had a faraway look.

I thought about this, and remembered that he did often mention Miss Marvle at home. "Yes, he . . . speaks of you on occasion."

"How kind." Her words were laconic again, and I made no further comment.

As I turned toward the door, she said, "Richard, as you leave, please turn off the light." I reached the door and flicked the switch down. I glanced over my shoulder and saw her closing the windows, being so careful not to harm a petal of the geraniums that balanced on the window sills. The last dim rays of light penetrated the dusty panes, and the final thing I saw was her thin silhouette gazing out the window, with one hand protectively caressing a shadowed flower.

* * * *

It was three days before I returned the book. I had finished it in two, but I guess I just didn't want to go back up there. It was like watching her wilt with those wretched flowers. "Go when there's a big crowd, and it won't be bad; just drop off the book and be done with it," I thought. But somehow it was worse seeing all those kids buzzing about the library, trying to confine their energy until they could leave the "inner sanctum". She seemed even more remote than before; she could have been one of those aging books herself. For some reason I kept the book and returned late in the afternoon.

"Miss Marvle?" I said as I looked into the big, empty room.

"Yes", she said, without looking up.

I entered, walked to the desk, and attempted to appear somewhat proper.

"Oh, Richard. Did you enjoy the book?" she asked as she took it from me. I nodded, trying to find something interesting to say about it; but before I could, she began to tell me about the author



as if he were a special friend. I listened, and I suppose I learned; she then went through her ritual of shutting those dirty windows and fondling the plants. This time I waited.

She picked up a load of books to repair at home, and stood looking at me expectantly. I groped for a sentence, then finally took the books and said simply, "they're heavy. I'll help you." She looked a little surprised, but never said a word until we reached her car.

"Thank you, Richard," she said, entering her car, and then, "You remind me of Michael."

I watched as she drove away. "That, I suppose, was meant to be a compliment", I thought, and for the first time in my life I smiled at the comparison between my brother and me.

* * * *

In the days that followed I went to see her more often. I had a free fourth period, and would skip lunch, or bring something to share with her. We would repair old books (at first they reminded me of her—full of knowledge, but never read); we would eat and talk, not just about books, but about people and places. She had really "been around", and knew more than most of my teachers put together! She would tell me about India and ancient Greece or about the French Revolution or D-Day. (It hurt me when I thought of the other kids; they would probably say she had been in the invasion. I remembered the unkind things we had said and was ashamed to be included in the "we". Lately I had been more inclined to analyze myself than I had ever been before. The things that had been so funny before suddenly seemed wicked and malicious, and I regretted ever having been one of "them". Miss Marvle had taught me so much, one of them being that words can hurt more than anything. I often wondered how she would have felt if she had heard us say those things about her, and how we would have felt if they had been said about any of us.

I didn't see the gang much any more. In the mornings I was always late, somehow, and there wasn't time to talk between classes. I spent my lunch period in the library, and in the afternoons I would wait to carry those old, decrepit books for her. I even managed to convince her to clean out the old room, and together we had it done in a week.

* * * *

It wasn't until several weeks had passed that I met the group again. I had walked Miss Marvle out to her car, and as I stood watching her drive away, I became aware of muffled voices. Turning, I saw them all standing across the lawn by the side stairway. They were watching me, and for a moment I panicked. How would I explain everything to them?

They gathered up their books and walked silently across the lawn toward me. I straightened my shoulders, involuntarily clinched my teeth. They encircled

me and just stood. I looked slowly from face to face, feeling as if I were some sort of alien. I suppose I was, having violated every "BELIEF" of the magnificent seven.

Finally Ted, who stood behind me, put his hand on my shoulder and said, in an over-compromising voice, "Well, well, Richie-boy, long time no see." I turned to face him, and his hand fell from my shoulder. "What's wrong, Rich?" Bill moved in a little closer from behind, and the others did the same. "Don't tell me you're *bored* with our little group!"

I thought of Miss Marvle, and decided to be laconic. "I've been busy, Ted."

"I'm really sorry to hear that, Rich." He brushed some imaginary lint from my sweater, and said, "I didn't know librarians could be so . . . *interesting*." I saw in him something I had always known had existed, a meanness that extended further than his "big-shot" image, and I was ready to break the final ties.

"You're really *funny* Ted."

"Oh, I'm not being *funny*, Rich-boy. I just wondered what you see in old marble face."

I was through listening, and knocked his hand from my shoulder. "You've got time for a retraction, Ted. Take it back."

A look of rage had crept over his face, and he dropped his books purposefully. "What's wrong, are you sensitive about 'The Mouse'? By the time I had thought twice about it, Ted was on the ground with blood pouring from his mouth, and I was opening and closing my fist. I tossed him my handkerchief and walked across the parking lot, not looking back.

* * * *

I didn't go back to the library for several days. I wanted to think about it before I did anything. When I would see Miss Marvle in the halls, I would look away. I think she must have known about it. The word had gone around school, and Ted had a big bandage on his lower lip. Nobody talked about it openly, at least not to me, but everyone knew it just the same.

I knew I'd have to return eventually. She probably wouldn't approve of what I'd done, but it was a matter of personal honor, and the decision had been mine to make. It was odd . . . that day when I had carried the books, I had wanted to be kind to her; but in the long run I had been the one who had gained from our acquaintance. I owed her that much; I wanted to explain that to her.

I guess it was about the fourth day when I finally went back to see her. It was pretty awkward; I was trying to organize all my thoughts, but she never gave me a chance to express them. She glanced up at me as if I hadn't even been missed.

"Oh, Richard, you're just in time. Here is the glue, and you will find the books which require mending in the corner . . ." she smiled a tiny smile, "as always."



On Wings Of Night

First Place Poetry

by Marjorie Emm

'68

*On wings of night the morning comes—
The dawn, the light, the life;
And with the fight the peace shall come
To terminate the strife.*

*But as the morning turns to noon,
and noon to evening flies
Will peace eternal never come
Until the last man dies?*

*On wings of night the morning comes
And with it, each new day;
So with the peace—new hope, new chance
To mend the human way.*

It Happened One Day In Muddy Gap

by Ted Field

'67

The light drone of the warning buzzer hummed its monotonous tune as people spilled from buildings and calmly paraded toward the park. The dreaded fate of the country had finally exploded in the year 1971. An enemy attack was about to open the destruction of the world, but for the eighty-two inhabitants of Muddy Gap, New York, there was no cause for alarm.

As they marched past the few houses of the town, some children laughed and skipped along while the minds of those who had spent half a lifetime there raced. The community shelter, possibly the finest ever constructed, lay beneath these familiar streets, and now after eight empty years it would home the town's people for God knows how long. No one knew what lay within it but by the words of William Rivers, it was a dream. At the head of this mass exodus to the underground was Rivers, who was a native of Muddy Gap and had returned home from Boston, where his shipping industry had brought him fabulous riches. If he had ever done anything good for the welfare of Muddy Gap, this had to be it. Rivers had burned over three million dollars building this shelter and had urged the town to extinguish all fears about the world situation outside its limits.

A bit of a smile crossed River's face, satisfied with the feat of engineering. Composedly he stepped onto the rotting, wooden boards on the floor of the gazebo and began to tear some away. When he had finished, a set of stairs had been uncovered and that fell into an endless pool of blackness. Some of the people stood spellbound as they stared at the gaping hole.

"Don't just stand there," Rivers declared, "follow me. We haven't much time." With the glow of a flashlight hollowing a safe tunnel in the dark ahead of them, the procession continued downward.

Nearly five minutes of stairs, halls, and more stairs passed. The last hallway was brightly lit and led the people into a spectacle which the town of Muddy Gap had never before been offered. An enormous room, its ceiling towering and reaching toward the surface above, its floor buried beneath the softness of pile carpeting, and its massive space filled with all types of furniture, invited them to stay. There was no question that all eighty-two could fit comfortably in this.

Rivers stepped out before them. "My friends, I do hope you enjoy it. I've constructed it with all the necessities of life available, with all the comforts of home, equipped with the luxuries of the New York Hilton at your feet."

"We live here?" a voice inquired.

"No, no of course not. Living quarters are above. This is merely your room for recreation." He pointed to a set of doors on his left. "The library is there. Beyondit, the gymnasium."

Returning to his audience, he searched the faces of each and every one.

"Any other questions?"

"When? When is it going to happen above?"

Rivers checked his watch. "Four minutes, but you won't feel or hear a thing."

Two hours later everyone began to grow accustomed to his new way of life. Blaring music came from a stereo while the steady thump-thump of the basketball sounded from the gym. Two men were taking films and a projector to a darkened room below. While most of them read, some of the shut-ins relaxed with checkers or cards. Rivers sat on the couch with an open magazine in his lap while he talked with Gordon Brewer, who had been Muddy Gap's sheriff.

"I was thinking, Gordon," Rivers placed his hands behind his neck and stretched. "Scientists have estimated that about ten to fourteen months should be long enough. By that time the radiation count will have fallen to a safe level. There will be a lot to rebuild but maybe this world can be saved." He rocked forward and spoke in almost a whisper. "What if they are wrong Gordon? The scientists. Can they be wrong? Maybe fourteen months won't be long enough. Thousands die in their shelters because rations give out. No one is left. It's a shocking thought, I know, but can you imagine no one left on earth . . . except us."

"Us?"

"We have the necessary supplies, Gordon. Enough food to last twenty-one months. Water for nineteen. I imagine the air pumps will stop after the twenty-eighth." He gestured to a girl to lower the volume of the phonograph.

"Well, Bill, it's something to think about. Right now I'm hungry and it's hours until dinner. Where can I grab a snack?"

"Everything's in cans, Gordon. Thousands upon thousands of cans. I'm afraid it's the only way to live." Rivers pointed to a nearby door and then after Brewer had left, returned to his magazine. How proud he felt as the leader of this glorious kingdom for an entire, luxurious year. He glanced about the room where his contented subjects enjoyed their salvaged lives. Haunting him was only the problem of what would be left up there when it was time to attempt living normal ways of life again. Would conditions be favorable. Or would the earth always be plagued with the virus of eternal radiation?

"Bill?"

River's thoughts were broken by Brewer's voice. Standing next to the open door, the sheriff held a can of peanuts in his hand.

"What is it, Gordon?" He was displeased with the expression of extreme doubt across Brewer's face.

"Where's the can opener?"

That Older Generation

by Ann Eutsler

'67

"Mother, it's almost time for everyone to get here, and Daddy isn't back with the Cokes yet!"

"Now Penelope, keep your voice down. Your father will be here in plenty of time."

"But Mother, I'll just die if we don't have the Cokes here when they come. I'll really just die."

"Penelope, for heaven's sake, don't exaggerate. Your father is doing the best he can. I'm sure his contribution to the party will make up for the lateness of the soft drinks."

"Oh, Mother, you don't really mean that you and Daddy are going to come down to the family room for the party, do you? I mean, well really, that's just too much!"

"Penelope Pinwheel, if you think that I would let a child of mine have a party where the parents don't make an appearance, you are very mistaken. The idea!"

"But Mother, you know the kind of things Daddy will say. I'll just die, really die. He won't make an appearance. He'll stay until he has completely ruined me for the rest of my teen-age life."

"Do you mean to say that you're ashamed of your father? Well, I never thought I'd hear a child of mine say a thing like that! There's the doorbell. Now you remember to be respectful to your father tonight."

With feelings of foreboding, Penelope Lee Pinwheel, age sixteen, went to the door to admit the first arrivals to her party. Yes, there they were. The cream of the crop of Green Valley High School walked into her home. How could she stand being humiliated in front of that group? It was just too unfair.

"Hello, Penny. Man, this is a real place you've got here. I mean, it's really real."

"So glad you like it, George. You and the others can go down to the family room and put on the records. I'll stay here and answer the door."

Forty-five minutes later, the whole gang was assembled, and the family room was witness to the usual, unbelievable sights and sounds of a Green Valley teen-age party. Several couples were in the middle of the room performing the very latest complexities of modern dance. The more sedate members of the group were sitting around the room discussing sports and teachers. Last, but not least, was the omnipresent group of young gentlemen who, not having attained a poise with girls or mastered the art of dance, moved constantly around the room and did the most bizarre things that came into their minds. It was into this pleasant and jolly scene that the disaster came marching.

"Well, kids, here are the Cokes. 'Better late than never,' I always say. What do you always say? Ha! Ha!"

"Oh, hello Mr. Pinwheel," spoke the gang in chorus.

"It's nice to see you, Mr. Pinwheel. It was so wonderful of you to let Penny have this great party," added Mary Lou Smith. Mary Lou's father was a diplomat.

"Oh, think nothing of it, my dear. I'm glad to have you, just glad to have you," bellowed Mr. Pinwheel. "Now, Penny, I'll put these Cokes on the table for you. Do we have any ice down here?"

"Yes, Mother has already taken care of that detail." By that time Penny's face was only "Parisian Pink" which was fairly good, considering past experiences.

"Penny, do you have any napkins upstairs? Those chocolate cookies are right sticky," said Fred Broadshoulder, the star of the football team.

Mr. Pinwheel's eyes brightened as he said, "That's all right, young fellow. A shaggy dog will pass through from time to time."

Quickly interrupting the polite but definitely sick laughter which followed this little witticism, Penny exclaimed, "Oh my goodness, Fred! I'm so sorry I forgot them. I'll just run right upstairs and get some."

Having gotten her face color back down to "Parisian Pink," Penny came skipping down the steps with a big pile of napkins. Tripping on the last step, she dropped them. In the midst of the general amusement which followed the disorganized floating to the floor of fifty napkins came Mr. Pinwheel's unmistakable voice.

"How does it feel to be co-ordinated, Penny?"

"It feels just great, Daddy, just great," said Penny with her clenched teeth showing through her artificial smile.



"Now young people, don't let me stop you from having fun. Just go right ahead with your music and dancing."

Mr. Pinwheel sat down beside Keith, the Green Valley High School Romeo, who was concentrating on looking nonchalant. Hoping to ward off any impending disasters, Penny came to join them.

"I really don't know what you youngsters see in those wild dances. It doesn't even look like dancing to me. When I was a kid, we did the 'Big Apple.' Now that was really dancing, but 'Everyone to his own tastes,' said the old woman who kissed the cow. Ha! Ha! That's really funny, right Keith?"

"Oh, it's extremely clever, Mr. Pinwheel, extremely."

"Really, Daddy, must you be so corny?" came Penny's desperate whisper.

Before Mr. Pinwheel had had a chance for rebuttal, Fred Broadshoulder interrupted with a question.

"Mr. Pinwheel, do you know what time it is? We want to see *Football Spotlight* on television."

After consulting his watch, Mr. Pinwheel answered, "It's time all dogs were dead. Aren't you glad you're a pup?"

"Oh, Daddy, please!" cried Penny. "Tell him the time."

"Fred, it's 'turpentime'. Will you have a rub?"

As Penny's face color turned to "Flaming Peach" and the gang engaged in their polite laughter, there was a crash from the opposite end of the room. Twenty-four pairs of eyes gazed upon the figure of George Jones who lay sprawled on the floor. He had tripped over one of the seven empty Coke bottles left on the floor by Fred Broadshoulder. Spread over George's shirt were the remains of the piece of cake

that he had been carrying.

"Now, young fellow, don't be embarrassed," laughed Mr. Pinwheel. "You look nice in everything you eat!"

Penny slept late the next morning. As she slowly regained consciousness on that bright Saturday morning, she tried to remember whether the party had been just a bad dream. Slowly, however, all the gruesome details came back to her. She remembered her desperate call for help to her mother after that last "witty" remark to George. At least her mother had managed to get her father upstairs. She remembered her mother's promise after the party to speak to her father about his jokes. It was so bad. The whole party was so unsophisticated. How could she ever face them again?

That night at supper, Mr. Pinwheel talked about the weather and politics. Finally, after three kicks under the table by Mrs. Pinwheel, he was forced to recite the speech that had been drilled into him by his wife.

"Why, Penny, your mother tells me that I embarrassed you last night with my little jokes. You know that I would not have embarrassed you for the world. I just thought I would add a little life to the party, but I promise that not another pun or corny joke will ever pass my lips."

"Thank you, Daddy. I hope you'll remember that if I ever find enough courage to have another party. You really were too much last night."

Mr. Pinwheel smiled a satisfied smile at his wife. "That was a delicious meal, Emily." Pushing his chair back from the table, he said, "Please excuse me now. It's time for *Bruntley and Hinkley!*"

"Oh, Daddy, you promised!"



Blind Date

by Steve Cooper

'67

*Fearfully you step to the door of her house
All the while thinking, "Man what a louse
Is the guy who arranged this whole night."
"I mean Johnson's got troubles, what with China
and such,
And I'm sure that I know how he feels, in-as-much,
As I'm in a terrible plight."*

*Your strength almost fails as you push the doorbell,
And you act like a salesman with something to sell,
As you stand there and pray she won't come.
Her Mom gets the door and you sigh with relief
But Father approaches and your joy turns to grief
As he says, "Let me talk with you, son!"*

*"Hang up your coat and sit down over there."
Your nervousness shows as you fall off your chair,
Then you both proceed on to his den.
"The show starts at eight and it's now seven-thirty.
Keep your hands on the wheel and don't stop to get
flirty,
And do not be later than ten."*

*Then down the stairs comes your date for the eve;
You make a mental note to write the bereaved
And to check your friend's eyesight.
Her dress is a ten and you think she's a twenty.
If she steps on your foot it's gonna hurt plenty.
You look forward to a wonderful night.*

*When you put on her coat you're about overcome,
You choke and you cough and you stagger some
And you think of the gym locker room.
It takes half an hour just to say good-bye,
Both her mother and her father begin to cry
When she finally mounts her broom.*

*Then she grabs your arm and carries you off
And you try very hard not to laugh or scoff
When she opens the door for you.
You sit in the car in a state of shock.
You kinda sense that you're going to wind up in hock
While you recover from what you've been through.*

*You get to the theater and hunt for a seat
(Finding three seats for two of you is really quite
a feat).
And you wonder if she eats a lot.
She cuddles up close and squeezes your hand.
Her grip's like a vice and you understand
Why an abundance of dates she ain't got!*

*After the movie she wants you to pause.
"I'm hungry" she says. (And that's because
There was nothing to eat in the show).
Your patience is waning and it's getting late.
Right about now you're cursing the blind date
When finally she says, "Hey, let's go!"*

*Finally it's over and somehow you lived.
As you walk to her door she wants you to give
Her a kiss—but just on the cheek!
Then you stand there and watch as she opens the door
And you utter the words said by others before,
"Say, uh, could I see you next week?"*

My Dog The President



by Peggy Langholz
'70

It was January 20, 1999, and a great revolution had taken place in our country—a dog was president. I don't mean this figuratively, but literally. My dog, Patter, was the President of the United States. This event is slightly unusual, so I will tell you how it came about.

One January day in 1998, my brother and his friend, James Robinson, were sitting in our kitchen, talking and drinking Cokes.

"This is going to be a lousy election," said Ricky, my brother.

"I know it," said James. "With the lethargic state the country is in most people couldn't care less who is elected."

Looking thoughtful, Ricky said, "That's the truth. Even Patter could probably win the Republican nomination. The GOP would be crazy to nominate that Prescott."

"I can see it now—Vote for Patter!" James said sarcastically.

"What is this about Little Pupsie?" I asked coming into the room.

"We were just saying," said James, "how Patter could probably win the election if he ran."

Well, that's how it began. Of course no one really took the idea seriously until the next Saturday when I went into Washington to take a poll. Most of the people looked nice enough, so I started right in.

"Excuse me, sir. I'm taking a poll to see if you would vote for a dog if he ran for President," said I to a fat, jolly-looking man.

"Plenty of them have run before," he answered, looking like he thought that was funny.

I laughed politely and went on.

"I mean a real dog," I said. "One with fur, a tail, and four legs. You see, I have a black cocker spaniel, and I was wondering if anyone would vote for him."

"He would be as good as anyone else who might run," he replied, and hurried off.

To my surprise most of the other people I asked answered in a similar way. When the figures were all added up, over sixty per cent of the people I had asked said they would vote for Patter.

My next step was to contact Republican headquarters. The man I talked to there said Patter sounded like a "winning candidate." He said he would talk to his superior and contact me. Ten days later I received a letter requesting me to bring Patter to his office.

The man took an instant liking to Patter, and after that everything seemed to happen at once. James was made campaign manager, and our days were spent in going to see the printer, and telling him how to make up posters, seeing that campaign buttons were right, and having pictures made of Patter.

The convention date finally arrived, and we all flew to Salt Lake City, Utah, where it was to be held. A senator from Ohio made the keynote address, and then the nominations began. A delegate from Virginia made the nomination for Patter, and this act was followed by wild cheers. Other nominations were made, but the people didn't seem to care much about them. When the final tabulation of votes was made, Patter had won by a landslide.

More campaigning followed the convention, but it was pretty evident that Patter had the country in the palm of his paw, so to speak. When election day finally came we stayed glued to our T.V. sets. Patter slept almost all day. That night we made preparations for a gala victory party. Patter slept. When the final returns were broadcast our candidate had won, and there was wild rejoicing.

This brings us back to the present. Patter has been President exactly seven hours, twenty-three minutes, and eighteen-and-a-half seconds. The country is already out of that lethargic state, and my family and I adore life in the White House. It just goes to show that dog is man's best friend.

To Whom It May Concern

by Jim Snyder

'67

To Whom It May Concern:

When and if you get this note, burn it for it is being written with a "hot" (stolen) pen. I started off on my rampage of crime yesterday quite innocently. There I was in study hall in dire need of a writing utensil. My character sketch, which I had not yet begun, was due to be read in English the next period. None of the "cool" guys at my table had pens except one, who had a magnificent example of man's eternal triumph over the pencil, a Parker T-Ball Jotter. By the time I finally got up the nerve to ask for his prized possession, half the period was over and upon asking, I discovered that he was using it to write his own character sketch. After about five minutes, I recovered from this shock and decided that I would have to ask the lowly eighth grader, whom we had adopted as our good will project for our stay in study hall this year, if he could possibly—if it wasn't too much trouble—I mean I wouldn't impose on him—but if he could possibly spare the ink, would he lend me his triumph over the pencil, his pen, preferably a PT-BJ?

Suddenly I thought: should I, a lordly Junior, ask a measly eighth grader if I could borrow his pen? Would this be proper? Certainly not! Then I saw it. His pen was lying there a few inches from my quivering hand. Slowly I moved toward it. Suddenly it was secured in my sweaty palm. It was good; he hadn't noticed its loss. With one minute left, I wrote my character sketch (it was short but I thought that three pages was probably long enough) and rushed to English, paper in hand and pen in mouth, eager and waiting to utter forth my composition.

She called on me. I stood up and tried to speak; nothing but a muffled garble came out. Vainly I tried again; still nothing. After being told that a pen was stuck in my mouth, I ripped it out from between my teeth and attempted for a third time to read my sketch. Suddenly everything went blank! Those wonderful sheets of white with blue undulations going up and down the page faded into nothingness until all that was left in my hand were three sheets of blank white paper with ice-blue lines running horizontally every quarter inch across the page. I opened my mouth hoping that some divine power would move it into shaping out those three pages of wondrous prose. I stood there, my mouth open, but all that came out was the whistle of the wind as it whipped around my tonsils and through the space between my teeth. I closed my mouth and then opened it again hoping that it would this time be shaped into the correct words, and that's exactly what happened. My mouth shaped every word correctly, every one. Unfortunately there were few lip readers in the class that day. I tried to explain to her that there really was writing on those pages but that it had disappeared before my very eyes. As she stood there telling me not to

lie to her, that grubby little pen grew red hot in my hand. I yelled. My hand, now burned, lay limply at my side. The evil pen turned white hot and sank through the floor.

Now I was on the spot. Everyone in the room knew that something was wrong. Finally, I couldn't hold it back any longer. I told the whole story of my shameful deed. Needless to say, everyone was shocked, but Miss Robertson gave me an "A" because she thought that it was the best character sketch of a pen that she had ever heard. I walked out of the room relieved but clearly knowing that my encounters with this desperate object were not at an end.

A Question

by Doug Kamerow

'68

Do you study to learn?

Not I.

No, I must make the grade

To go farther,

But if you go farther,

Do you study to learn?

Not I.

No, I must make the grade

To go farther.

But if you go farther still,

Do you study?

Not I.

For I have no need

To make a grade

To go farther.

The Mouse

by Alison Longfellow

'70

*The trouble about a small brown mouse
Is that he runs all around your house.
He scares your mother half out of her wits,
And steals your cheese in very small bits.
The cat is his constant pest
And never gives him any rest.
It's time to end this tale of woe
Down the cat's gullet he did go.*

The Dodo Bird

by Gil Pope

'70

*The dodo is a nutty bird,
The way he looks is so absurd.
He has wings but cannot fly,
Bye bye dodo bird, good bye.*

A Cat

by Kitty Sibold

'70

*I have a gray cat
Who licks up milk,
He isn't fat
He feels like silk.*

The Monkey

by Mary Medland

'70

*I only once looked up at a monkey
And said to myself "He smells rather skunky."
His fur was brown, and curly, and frizzy,
Just looking at it made the octopus dizzy.
He hung by his tail from every tree;
I'll have to try that on my next picnic spree.
But I think the next time I go to the zoo,
I'll stick to the popcorn and leave the monkeys to you!*

Red Light, Green Light

by Maggie Trueworthy

'67

It all started the fall before last when I turned fifteen. Yes, fifteen; that wonderful age when one is able to secure a small, 3" by 2" yellow slip of paper from the Division of Motor Vehicles enabling one to learn to drive. However, being fifteen is not the only requirement of the future driver. One must also pass a written test and an eye examination. Having had driver's education in my physical education class, I was confident of success as I traveled down to the brick building on the corner of Pitt and Cameron Streets in Alexandria.

Walking in the door holding the yellow and white forms I had previously completed, I noticed a large clock above the door. "Ten minutes before four," said the large black hands. At ten minutes after four I was on a bus on my way home after failing the written exam. Undaunted I returned the next day, only to find that I had filled the forms out incorrectly. Quite embarrassed, I walked out the door, hearing two policemen chuckle and make wise cracks about women drivers. Nevertheless, I made a third attempt the next day. This time I had studied the little white book for approximately five minutes and was positive that I would pass. As I had hoped, I passed — with a seventy-eight. Time passed by and soon, after receiving my learners' license three times, practicing in parking lots for a year, and having two tires replaced and the front wheels aligned, I decided to try for my operator's permit. The written test gave me no trouble (I knew the answers by heart now), but the road test was something else. The policeman who took me on the test was the same one who had made the wise cracks about women drivers. The first thing he did when he got in the car was to buckle his seat belt. (He pulled it so tightly I thought he was going to cut off his circulation). Next, he gripped the door handle with one hand and the dashboard with the other, and solemnly said, "Let's go." I started the engine and signaled left. Everything was fine until I put the car in gear and was about to pull out into the street, when the car jumped the curb and ran into a telephone pole. As the color finally came back into his face, the policeman unbuckled his seat belt and staggered away, mumbling something about crazy teenagers and tranquilizers. Very discouraged I returned home to plan my next attempt to get a license.

About two months later I found myself at the Division of Motor Vehicles again. This time it was a "do or die" effort and since I was too young to die, I figured I had everything going for me. I had filled out the forms again, only in green ink. This was not acceptable because of some rule or something, so I filled out two more forms. This time I put my name in the wrong place so that meant two more forms. After forty-five minutes of filling out

forms, I finally completed one set correctly. Next came the written test. I flew through this test because it was exactly like the ones I had had before. At last there was nothing left but the road test. That same poor policeman got me again. He sat in the car and whimpered the whole time. As I pulled in after my test he asked me if I planned to live in Alexandria very long. I told him I didn't think I would be moving anytime soon. He moaned and told me I had passed and listlessly handed me the forms. I could hardly believe that I had passed (the policeman could hardly believe I had passed either). However, it's true; at last I can drive so I'm warning you — clear the streets!

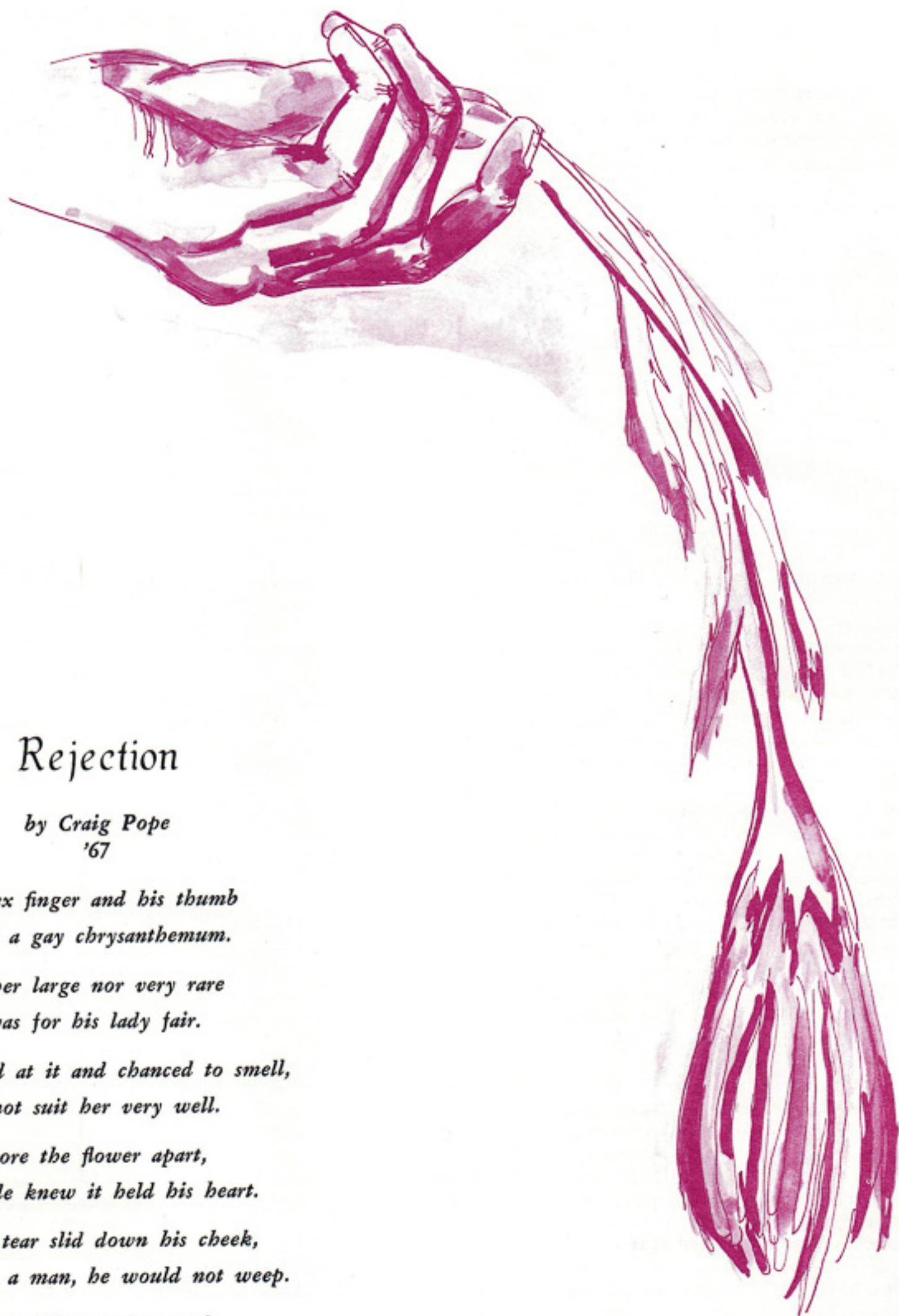


Quiet Place

by Tom Rantz

'70

The day has ended; they have left. Halls that were once full of lively, laughing faces now echo the sound of emptiness. Along this darkened tunnel are the hollow, deserted rooms, with their desks all standing in rows like muted soldiers. The boards are empty, erased clean of their vital teachings. The only sound is the endless tick of time. Outside of the deep set rooms, rows of lockers have finally ceased their symbolic clanging. In ashen darkness stands a silent protector. But soon the veil of darkness will lift, and a strange metamorphosis will once again return life to the empty structure. Until then it will exist as a quiet, lonely place.



Rejection

by Craig Pope
'67

*'Twixt index finger and his thumb
He held a gay chrysanthemum.*

*'Twas neither large nor very rare
But it was for his lady fair.*

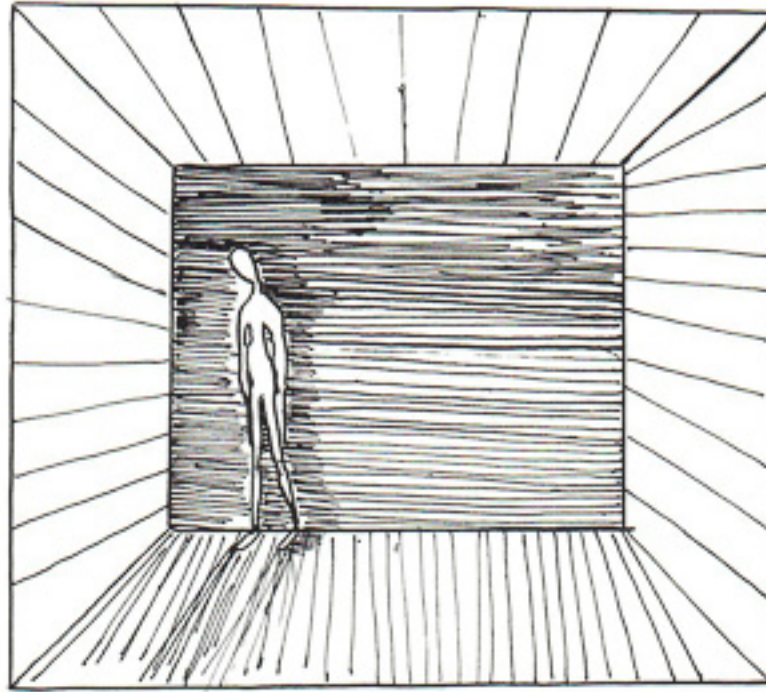
*She glanced at it and chanced to smell,
It did not suit her very well.*

*She gaily tore the flower apart,
But little knew it held his heart.*

*One silver tear slid down his cheek,
He was a man, he would not weep.*

*But what's a fellow going to do,
When he is four and she is two?*

SOLITUDE



by Jeanne Woodward
'68

It must have been late in the afternoon when I awoke—I wasn't sure of the time; it meant so little out here by myself. The sun wasn't as high as it was when I dozed off, but it hadn't sunk enough to cool off the air. Its reflection on the water magnified the heat to an almost unbearable point. I had already burnt and peeled so many times that I was very tanned, but a tan does not keep out the heat. Even my eyes hurt from squinting at the glare of the sun on the water.

I was constantly thirsty, and in order to keep from dehydrating, I slipped into the water often. I wasn't sure how friendly the native fish were to strangers, so I kept my visits few and far between.

Lying here on my small raft, I could see miles of sea and sky. There were no clouds in the sky, and for the first time in many days the sky was a beautiful shade of blue. For days and days the weather had been perfectly miserable! At first it was chilly—much too chilly for this environment—and then the rains came. I really didn't think I would pull through; I have terrible sinus trouble, and wet weather makes it even worse.

Floating around alone out here really gives a person a chance to think and reminisce. The first thoughts that went through my mind were of my three wonderful children. The last time I had seen them they were all dressed in red; the two older girls were truly beautiful. They both have dark hair and tanned complexions (like me), but they have the green eyes of their mother. Little Billie, only four years old, certainly was being a man about being left with his aunt and uncle. He really is a living wonder. Some of the things he asks could be questions from a twelve year old. When we left he told us to get home on time so that I could go back to work on time. He doesn't want me to lose my job! I hope he isn't too lonely. The girls don't stay home much, and he doesn't know any children in his aunt's neighborhood. Loneliness—to me that

is one of the worst emotions. Once a person gets lonely, he starts thinking too deeply about life and starts imagining things; then he's lost. Billie is a pretty smart boy; I imagine he can entertain himself for a while without getting lonely.

Birds certainly can be amusing. This gull has been performing for me for I don't know how long. He probably expects me to throw him some food. Little does he know that I have less food than he does right now. He's probably eaten more recently than I have. I wish he'd throw me a piece of bread. I can still remember that last meal we had at home. Barb had fixed leg of lamb and baked potatoes. My sister and Hank were there to get Billie used to the idea of being with them, and everyone raved about the food. Barb, among other things, is a marvelous cook.

I wonder if she has stopped looking for me. Probably, after all, how long can a wife look for her husband? The time I wasn't on the train I was supposed to be on, she thought I had been lost—not hurt or waylaid—but lost. That woman has no faith in me. Somehow she has picked up the idea that the family depends on her. I've often wondered what she and the rest of the world would do without me. Barb would probably go to work again. My insurance is large, but she soon would get bored with Billie going to school in a few years. With all the business trips I've taken, it's surprising that I have never been involved in an accident. She might do well to sell the extra car; Michele doesn't really need to drive to school, and Barb jr. will be at college. With both the girls away at school next year, she could even move to an apartment in the city. Our yard is much too big for just the women to keep up anyway. Funny, I wonder how long we have lived in that house? Since 1955 I think; ten years!

Well, enough of this leisurely day dreaming. I'd better start paddling on in to the beach. Thank the Heavens we don't have to go to any parties tonight; I'll get at least one full night's sleep on this vacation.

Question?

by Carol Weingarter
'69

*A microcosmic speck of nothingness
Crawling on the edge of infinity
Born out of chaos
Dying a million meaningless deaths
Striving for reason
Achieving disorder
Purposeless struggles, ending in eternity
Shouting an unanswerable question
Against a silent universe*

Why?

Answer!

by Marjorie Emm
'68

*A microcosmic speck of everything
Crawling on the edge of infinity
Born of love
Dying to be born unto eternity
Striving for unity
Achieving, bit by bit
In ending struggles, the
Entity of peace and love,
Shouting in joyous chorus to a listening universe*

The answer — God!

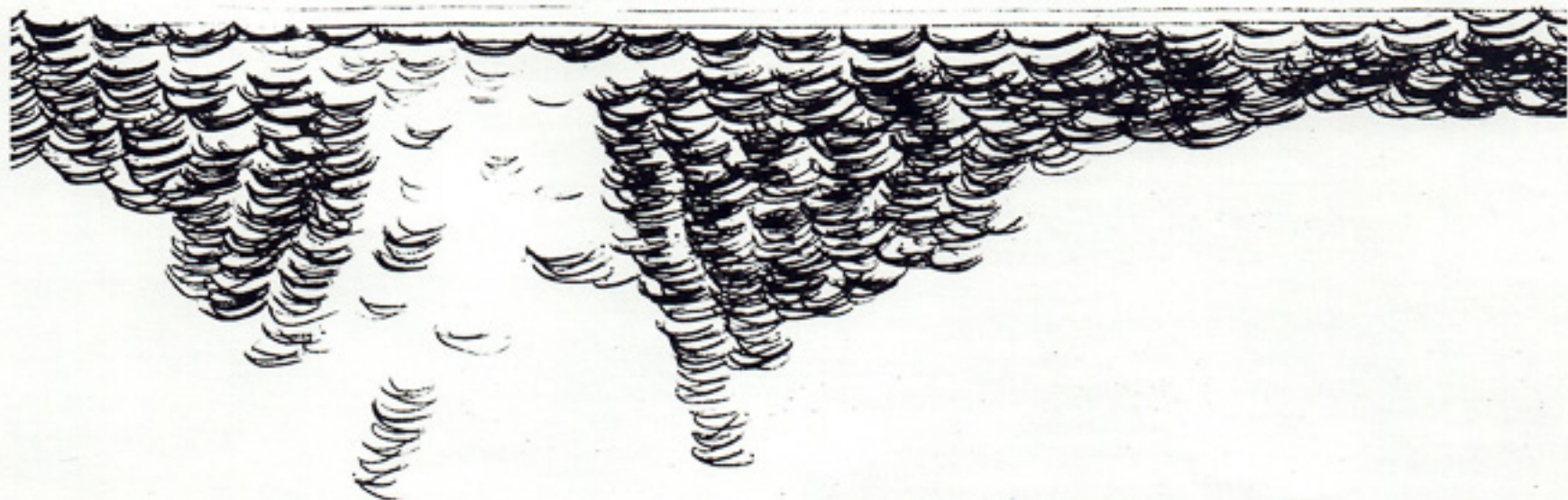
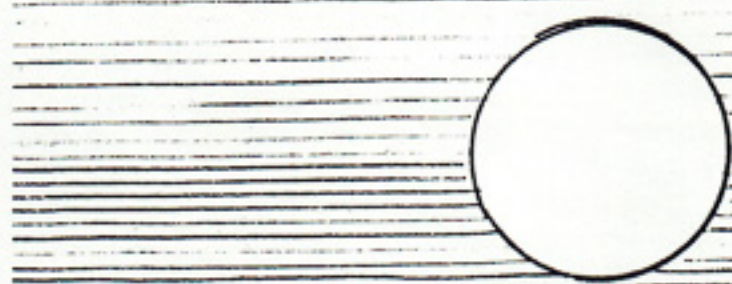
The Ocean at Night

by Bobbi Kreinbuhl
'69

The fire in the ring of stones burns slowly, while I view the ocean. Out across the coarse sand and dark water the moon reflects an alley of light. Contained in this alley of light are waves with silky soft foam. Bubbles and seaweed entangle these waves, while fish jump and play.

This transformation from the rough sea at day to the soft whisper of waves playing with the shore at night goes on. I lie on my bed of sand and watch sandpipers and the waves playing a game of tag. Kiwi birds try for a tasty snack of sand crabs thrown on shore.

All is quiet as I leave this scene of contentment. The moon still shines and the water still flows throughout the night . . . without me.



An Interview



by Mary Ann Horan
'67

On January 19, we of the *Labyrinth* staff had been fortunate enough to obtain an interview with Stephen Spender, the celebrated English poet who is now the Poet-in-Residence at the Library of Congress. After we had been seated in the Poetry Office of the Library, Mr. Spender, a tall white-haired man with a ruddy complexion, entered wearing a blue suit, grey pin-striped shirt, a striped tie and tortoise shell glasses. When we had introduced ourselves and were again seated, Mr. Spender asked us what we would like to have him do.

Miss Margie W. Robertson, the sponsor of the magazine, asked him to read some of his poetry and said that we would ask questions afterward. After thumbing through a book of his poetry, he read his poem "Express," then explained it. He said that it was written while he was living in Berlin, around 1932. During this time there was much revolutionary feeling between the extreme Left and the Nazis, and, of the two, his sympathies lay with the Left. The setting of "Express" was at the time when wooden plows were stylish in Russia and a train caused much excitement. He said that machinery was poetic symbolism and that writing modern poetry was more of a problem then than it is now. Mr. Spender said "Express" fades in effect at the end where it tells of a "blossom breaking with honeyed buds". He compared the cinema to poetic sequence in saying that photographic sequence is similar to naturalistic observing.

When Mr. Spender finish discussing "Express", he was asked by Bob Wood to compare the position of Poet Laureate of England with his position as Poet-in-Residence of the Library of Congress. He said there was no comparison; the Poet-in-Residence is connected only with the Library of Congress while the Poet Laureate—who holds a "joke job"—is appointed by the King or Queen of England. The Poet Laureate is chosen because he "lacks unrespectable views" and is supposed to write poetry for great victories or defeats as has been the case more recently." He said that the trouble with Poet Laureates is that after they're chosen, they never die. When they reach ninety their poems get "weedier and weedier". Occasionally, at an advanced age the Poet Laureate might turn out a few very bad lines



in very large type. He doubts that anyone has seen John Masefield, the present Poet Laureate for the past fifteen years. His personal choices for the job were W. H. Auden who is a "marvelously gifted occasional poet" but has since become an American citizen, and John Benchman, who is a little sardonic.

To the question "How can a young person today become a poet?", Mr. Spender replied that one should write poems, read a lot and imitate the work of a poet that he admires. He should also read his poetry to his friends.

At that point Kitty Comer asked, "What inspired you to become a poet?" Mr. Spender said that question was like "How does something come from nowhere?" He compared his inspiration to his dreams. He thinks dreams come from something that has happened the day before, even from something that one doesn't care about. As an example he told us of his dream about Malcolm Muggeridge, an English critic, who was, as Mr. Spender stated, the last person he would ever think of dreaming about. He added, "Something you don't even know about produces dreams." The very things you think you'll remember, you forget, but in your mind they're labeled and they keep "bobbing up". Adding to his comments about poetic inspiration, Mr. Spender said, "Everything is original and nothing is original". "Words aren't original," but he added "Children say frightfully original things." He defined originality as an attempt to be conscious of something new or something to oneself, while knowing it is only a multiplication of past expressions. He said a poet isn't conscious that all great feelings have been expressed and he expresses for himself.

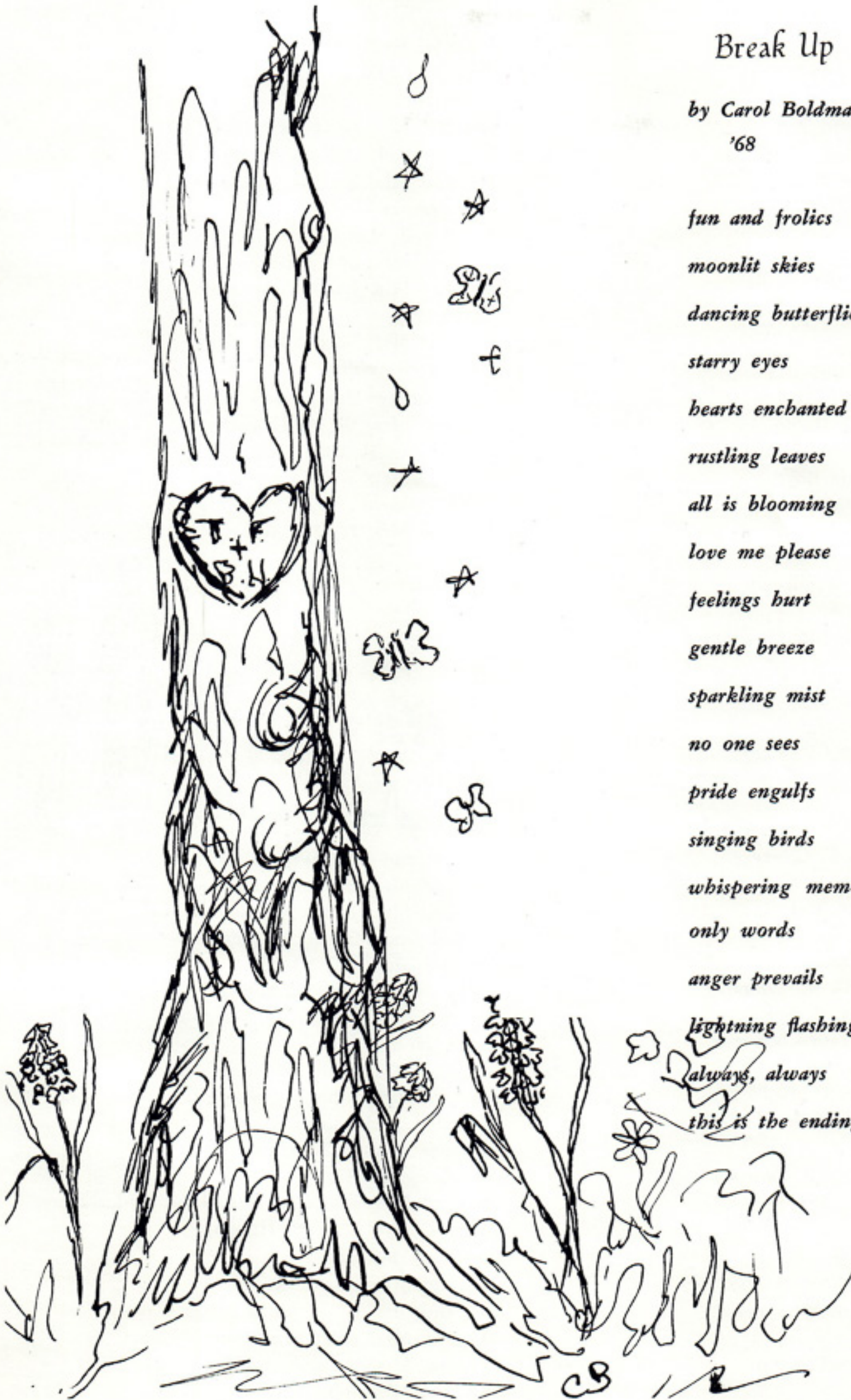
Then Betsy Land asked Mr. Spender to compare the old Russian poets to the new ones. He said the old poets share a hatred of the Russian government and an aristocratic contempt for anything after the Revolution. Mr. Spender said the young poets pretend to be good Communists, although they often criticize their government to the western press. About the younger poets, he said they are like beatnik-Beatles cult because it helps to loosen Russians.

Break Up

by Carol Boldman

'68

fun and frolics
moonlit skies
dancing butterflies
starry eyes
hearts enchanted
rustling leaves
all is blooming
love me please
feelings hurt
gentle breeze
sparkling mist
no one sees
pride engulfs
singing birds
whispering memories
only words
anger prevails
lightning flashing
always, always
this is the ending.



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