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THE FIORETTI

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AN ANTHOLOGY OF
MARIAN COLLEGE
PROSE AND VERSE

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Editor-in-Chief

Eileen Witte, '68

Assistant Editors

Linda Bauza, '69

Ray Brown, '67

Fay Faivre, '68

Ed Fibiger, '68

Illustrators

JoEllen Cuthbertson, '68, for the cover

Fay Faivre, '68, for "Faces of Night," and "Protest"

Carole Fuhrman, '68, for "Retarded"

Bill Malczan, '68, for "Genesis Re-created"

Mary Sherman, '69, for "Run" and "The Night Before Christmas"

Kathy Toth, '69, for "Rain of Oranges"

The *Fioretti* is meant to be a literary expression of student thought, arising from individual study, classroom discussion, and perhaps, more often, personal encounter. It has become a chronicle of self-expression left by those who have been participants in Marian's history.

This edition marks the twenty-fifth year that the *Fioretti* has appeared at Marian. Over these years, it has grown to two issues per year, thanks to the time and effort individuals have given by stopping for a moment in their college endeavor to add to our chronicle of experiences.

The 1966-67 staff wishes to thank all who have contributed to the *Fioretti*, past and present, whether it be poetry or proofreading. Because of the help of people such as these, Marian has a written account, covering twenty-five years, of the individuals and spirit that make her vibrant.

*"A wink of her eye and a twist of her head
Soon gave us to know we had nothing to
dread."*

Not St. Nick, but Sister Marie Pierre, O.S.F., moderator for *The Fioretti*, is the object of our dedication. In the 12 years that Sister has been working on the magazine, her quick smile and warm reassurances have been the guide for many a discouraged staff, and *The Fioretti* always managed to somehow get published in good form. In gratitude for her many hours of help and her personal friendship with every staff member, we would like to dedicate this, the Twenty-fifth Anniversary issue, to our friend, Sister Marie Pierre.

BLACK AND WHITE

RAY BROWN, '67

Last year five films of superior quality were nominated for the "Best Picture of the Year Award," three of which were produced in black and white. Similarly a large percentage of the producers of the films which were not nominated did not employ color. There exists an ever increasing trend among film makers to return to the old black and white process.

Color as a cinematic device was inaugurated for the purpose of further entertaining the film-goer and insure the Hollywood studios profits despite the encroachments of the then infant television industry. A great step forward, color was indeed appropriate to the films then produced. Light comedies, musicals, operettas,

westerns and gaudy epics were then very much in vogue and, to some extent, most of these film types are still popular.

With the emergence of sophisticated drama and the art film of the movie screen, motion pictures assumed an entirely new perspective. Drama fans and cinema connoisseurs, disgusted with the intellectual dearth of television and finding theatrical productions often inaccessible, turned with eager eyes to the cinema. Hence the film-viewer, as opposed to the film-goer, appeared on the scene and motion pictures took upon themselves the appellation—a new artistic genre. People ceased going to movies solely for diversion and began to view films for their content and artistry. Discussion groups sprung up and the motion picture was accepted along with painting, poetry and drama as an art form. An intensive study of the film's techniques assumed the same importance as the study of meter and rhyme in poetry.

It soon became apparent to both the film-viewer and the film director that some films were suited to color while others were not. Operas, musicals, epics, westerns and comedies

demand the use of color, since their success and enjoyment depend as much on visual beauty as on story content. However, in the art film the focus is primarily on the character portrayals and the meaning or message of the film. This emphasis explains the lack of scenery and excessive color lighting employed in the stage drama. Black and white is used in films because, unlike color, it can more effectively convey the mood of certain types of films.

Mike Nichol's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* can be cited as a case in point. The principal theme of the picture is that of sterility—sterility in life, character, occupation and in the reproductive potential of the characters. To get this effect across, the director must use stark, drab sets, costumes and make-up. Color adds nothing to the film and certainly lessens the effect of the film's mood and theme. For example, a color photograph of a wooden fence is infinitely more pleasing than a black and white one. Color tends to give the old fence new life; whereas black and white serves only to emphasize its lifeless nature. In *Virginia Woolf* the use of

color would even detract from the effect of the players' performance, but the use of black and white blots out everything that might be attractive to the viewer and thus forces him to concentrate his attention and emotions on the story.

The use of light as a film technique is another important reason for employing black and white. In the parking lot scene for instance, Taylor and Burton argue against a background of blinking neon signs and moving searchlights. The light increases and decreases in intensity directly in proportion with the players' emotions and dramatic articulations. As Taylor becomes angrier the lights become brighter and as she becomes calmer, the lights wane. Such an emotional effect would have been impossible with color since the brightness would have produced a blinding result or brought into clear view distracting objects in the background.

Black, the complete lack of color, has always been the symbol of death, mourning, tragedy, doom, failure and mental anguish. Since these are the main themes found in the art film, the cinematic use of black and white is certainly justified.

Run

I run

my footsteps lace the water's edge
I am loving the wind beating my face
loving the cries of birds
loving the crash of surf
loving nature; loving myself.

I stop

there is a glimmer on the sand
a lovely pearled shell has caught my eye
As I reach to pick it up I see within it
the union of Sun and Sand and Surf.
For a short moment I hold its warm smooth surface
to my lips
I long to be a part of its overwhelming beauty.
Then suddenly—

I run

As though there were something I'd forgotten,
I run
Bare feet beat the sand in tensioned time
The abandoned shell lies glimmering in the Sun.
Yet—

I run

Never knowing if
I'm running away
or running to—

And I shall always run
Much too afraid, and
Much too young
to walk.



Mary Sherman, '69

A WAY OF DYING

Dennis W. Von Pyritz '69

My uncle liked to die; he did it several times a week—died, I mean. He was past seventy and I was with him a lot during his last few weeks. I had been living with him and my aunt during the summer when I was taking some courses at the main campus. I figured I could be of some help to her around the house and perhaps (I mean she did love him and all) but perhaps she might get just a little bit lonesome with just old uncle there. Anyway it saved me the trouble of renting a place.

The day I got there she made a fuss because I had walked from the bus depot instead of taking a cab. It had been several years since I had seen them. Uncle Bernard had still not fully gotten used to the idea of being retired. Nonetheless he complained about being bothered by calls from the firm asking his opinion on some contract or other. At the time I thought him to be a very important man. My mother mentioned that she didn't think it was true; she told me in her

last letter that he had been getting worse and I think she was hinting that I stay there a while.

It was sunny the day I arrived and I think that it was always sunny there. Aunt Jean wanted to take my bags but I said I'd carry them. She immediately set me down in her little yellow and white kitchen and brought over a coffee cake from the counter. Of course, next came a glass of cold milk. My Aunt Jean, she was really a stereotype.

"How's Uncle?" I asked.

"Peter, I don't know how much your mother has told you, but your uncle isn't the same man that carried you around on his shoulders years ago. He even looks so very, very old now, older than he should. The doctor says we really can't tell."

"Yes, Mom said he was kind of bad."

She hesitated. I had always thought of her as a helpless, wifey type person, but now she seemed to be a strong woman, forced to take on another burden and proud enough to carry it in silence and alone. "Would you like some more milk?"

"No, no, it was good though, cold." I waited patiently.

"Peter, remember when you were young and your whole family would come up for a visit. And if it was winter your uncle would build a great fire. Remember the games you used to play about states, and cities, and how he used to tell you about all the places he'd been for the company. Well, sometimes he got carried away and told you about places he hadn't been and things he hadn't done, never happened at all.

"You see, he's never really grown all the way up. He's a dreamer — oh, such beautiful dreams! But somehow he's an extremely *practical* man. So for the most part he's kept his dreams inside him. He let them out for you kids because he knew you could believe them and see their wonder, and that made all his dreams stronger. Now he's old and sick; he's afraid all his hopes and dreams will die unfulfilled with him.

"Did you know that he's always wanted to become a sailor? Years ago when I first dated him, when he was only an office boy, we went to Atlantic City. So one lovely evening we just sat on the Boardwalk and watched the moon over the ocean. The world was a lot bigger in those days and he told

me about the sea and the faraway places. But since then—in fifty years — he's only mentioned that ambition six, yes, six times." She was quiet and an unconscious smile on her face said that she too loved her husband's dream because they were so precious to him and he had shared them with her.

"Well, I didn't mean to get so involved. Us old folks do get a little too nostalgic at times. You're a good boy, Peter, and I know you must be very intelligent to do so well in school. But I just wanted to tell you a little so you'd be able to understand why your uncle's been the way he has for the last month. I haven't told your mother everything. It's hard to explain. But you'll see for yourself. Come on, dear."

I followed her through the house. It was always the same. Furniture was never moved around. Knick-knacks grown old in their places. There were wine glasses, a silver bell we always rang, German beer mugs, a statue of Buddha, a picture of a Chinese dragon, and a very ornate fireplace. We came to the bedroom. It was the same—a huge double bed in the corner sentineled by a window.

Next to the bed was a stack of *National Geographics*. Uncle Bernard was tapping out some tune on his knee.

"Bernard, Peter is here. He's come to see you."

"Peter? . . . oh, yes, Peter. Well, come in, boy. Come on over here where I can, can see you. Isn't he . . . my, yes, isn't he a fine looking boy, Jean."

My uncle was a thin man. His hair was very thin on top and his forehead was freckled. He wore thick, dark-rimmed glasses, very businesslike. "Have you fed the boy, Jean?"

"Yes, she did," I said, "milk and some of that good cake."

"Good, good," he motioned nervously to Aunt Jean. "G'on, g'on. We've got things to talk over. Peter and I." She left and he looked very serious. "Tell me, son. How's the family? Are they getting along all right? Huh?"

I told him the latest home news. He asked me several things twice. Then we talked about school.

"We're, we're glad you're planning on becoming a doctor, your aunt and I, a *fine* profession." (Actually I wasn't, I was going into market analysis). "Knew a doctor once, great man. It was down in, ah

... in Peru. Yes, yes, Peru. He was a dedicated fellow, worked with the Indians down there. The ship I was on in those days, we brought him there—got to know him on the way, you know—and we made port there every four months to drop off supplies. Then, of course, we . . . how's the family? and school, medical school's pretty rough, isn't it? One thing you don't want to do though, that, that's *overstudy*. You can work too hard, you know. Remember that. Nothing is too important to sacrifice *yourself* for. You don't want to lose your, your grasp of things, the things that make you what you are, boy, your dreams. Don't let them get lost in your books and in your . . . don't lose them.

"Take me, for example. When I was sixteen I made up my mind that I wanted to see the world. So I joined the merchant marine. Those years were the most wonderful and free of my life—till I met Jean, of course. But you have to be practical, I know that. You need to work for your cake, Peter. Remember that. So the firm needed a man of my experience, a person they could send overseas to make a deal, to depend on. I wasn't going to

be tied down to any desk for the entire remainder of my life—no, that itchy foot.

"A doctor, huh, that's good. You ever need to talk to me, you, you feel free, you hear. And, Peter, going to school must run you quite a bit, huh? I know it does. Open that jewelry box — there's some money there."

I protested, saying I really didn't need it. "Go ahead, I've got more than enough — the company's paying me a good pension, you know. Besides I don't expect to be here much longer. I'd like to see other people enjoy my money before I go. G'on, take yourself a ten, go on."

It seemed better not to argue so I opened the box and found three dollars and some change. I took a dollar and Uncle Bernard smiled. He kept smiling as I left.

Aunt Jean was sitting rather demurely on the couch, obviously expecting some sort of judgment on my part. It was pretty apparent that uncle wasn't his old self, although he did show many of his old characteristics. I mean he always was the type to give practical advice. But in his talk I sensed an urgency, a kind of restless

anxiety that he wanted to get out of himself . . . I provided some sort of outlet.

"I'm going to cut some roses. Would you like to help me, Peter?" Aunt Jean was really subtle. She got her gloves and snippers, and we went outside. "How's your uncle?"

"Well, I don't know, Aunt Jean. He's getting older and he tends to forget things — he thinks I'm going to become a doctor. Of course, he gave me some advice on life—he always does that." I stopped there but knew she expected more. "Did you say he was a sailor once?"

"No, he just wanted to be. That's what I mean about your Uncle Bernard. What did he tell you exactly?"

"Oh, just about some doctor he knew in Peru and how about those, his days at sea, were his greatest, about traveling for the company. But he sounded so real, the details; I mean he told them quite spontaneously. And the advice, it really made sense."

"He reads those *National Geographics* all day long."

"Do you think he believes it?"

"I don't know, Peter. He's a very sensitive person. I think, I think down deep inside him

he knows. He's trying to fool himself into thinking he's what he wants to be. He fears he's dying and he's afraid to face whatever he thinks he is; he wants something bigger."

"Yes, but should we let him go on believing, or trying to believe in what he says. I mean it'd be kind of bad to die and not be aware of what's what or who you even are."

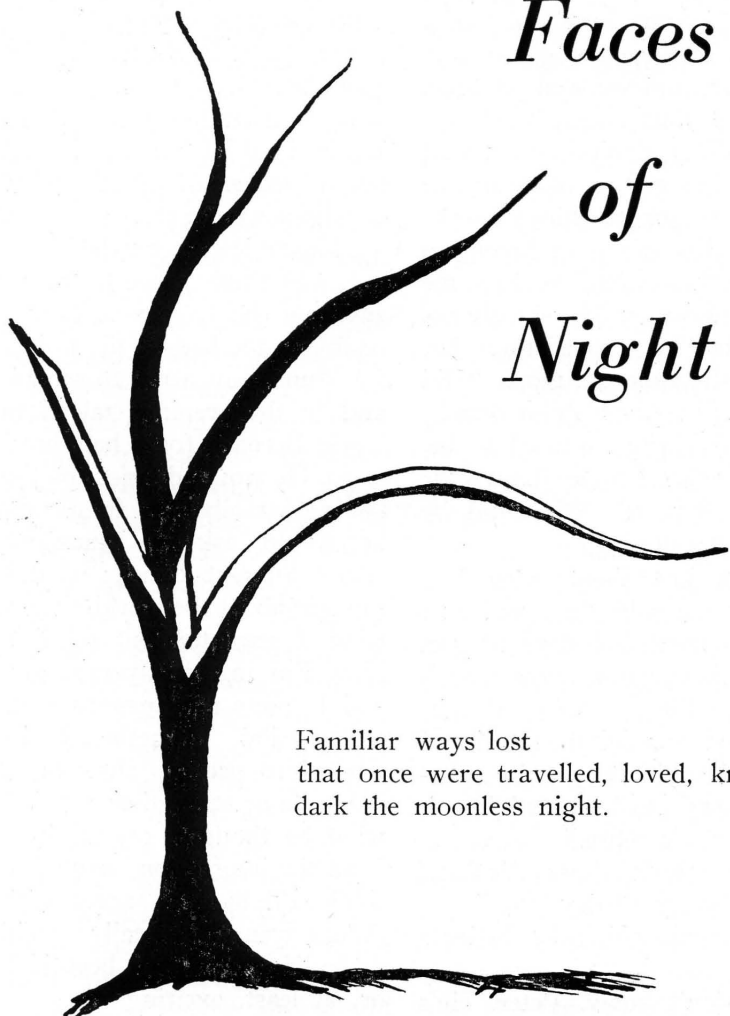
"Maybe, Peter, maybe."

I was there a week before anything else happened. It was really not too bad—I did things for Aunt Jean, went to school, and in the evenings talked to Uncle Bernard for a half hour or so. He would do most of the talking actually, but frequently he would ask me questions about different things: what I thought about the world, travel, what I expected out of life. Now I'm just an average guy and I guess my answers were pretty dull. Nonetheless he seemed to use my answers to illustrate or strengthen a point, what he thought, or, at times I got the impression, wanted to think. I'll have to agree with Aunt Jean, he really could make life seem more beautiful, or, at least, exciting.

I usually studied the rest of
(Cont'd on page 31)

Circle-torn black sky
lets unreal day spill out,
gift exchanged for sun.

*Faces
of
Night*



Familiar ways lost
that once were travelled, loved, known;
dark the moonless night.

Cricket, unseen smile
keeping moods awake by night,
company for souls.



Evening steals the light;
inflamed with too much knowledge
burnt eyes extinguish.

Under icy air
heavy branches crack and groan;
mine your great warm hand.

Round searchlight of sky
wondering, seeking warm laugh
to break cold silence.

Blue dark surrounds me:
is it night or have I died?
Night, since heat disturbs.

Fay Faivre, '68

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

Richard P. Gardner, '69

It has been said that Tennessee Williams is a dirty old man who writes only about sex and really says nothing.

Tennessee Williams may well be a dirty old man, but since any answer depends upon the individual who judges him and upon the moral standards he uses, and since the latter vary from person to person, I shall disregard that point.

On the surface, Tennessee Williams does write only about sex, but it is suggestive of a much deeper meaning; and about that, he says quite a bit.

In *Orpheus Descending*, he shows a world devoid of love, communication, values. Into it he brings Val, a symbol of life, rebirth, good. Through the image of sex, Val transmits his life and love into at least one member of the town and quite radically upsets the structure of existence within the

town. Although love triumphs for a short while, it dies at the hands of the forces of evil.

In *Sweet Bird of Youth*, he writes of the misuse of touch to drown out life itself. He opposes the forces of good and evil, life and death, directly and solely through sex images.

Again in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, we see the same basic struggle, with new variations.

What does he mean? Are they just dirty stories, or do they have a deeper meaning?

If they were intended solely as pornography, they have failed. They are not that well written. They have failed to arouse anything in me that would make me classify them as smut.

Well then, if they are something more than nothing, what are they?

In each, I find a deep desire

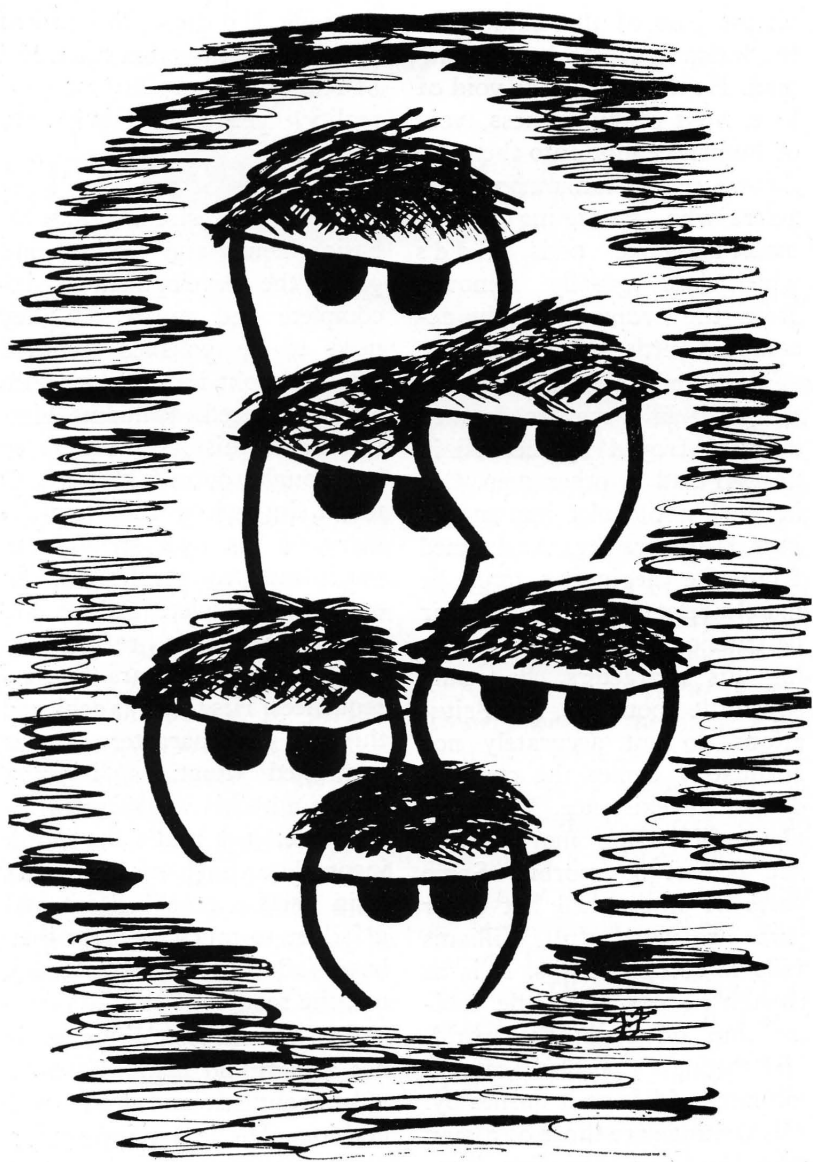
on the part of the author for the human race to become human. He depicts worlds void of love, void of humanness, void of human beings. Into them, he throws equally unhuman characters who, struggling against insurmountable odds, odds which are equally removed from the ordinary, really accomplish little, if anything.

He seems to be saying that the good in a man is doomed to be destroyed by the evil in himself and in other men. But he does not depict human beings. His characters are doomed from the beginning, and he merely relates the tale of their destruction. And in so isolating his characters, he really says little about life. Such situations do not accurately nor adequately depict the struggle of human existence. Williams' plays (life) are morbid, and life is not so morbid. Some parts of it are hell but other parts are wonderful. Williams fails to recognize this. It is as though he sits in a little cubicle shut off from the world, and through a peephole catches glimpses of life as it flashes by. His writings are those of a man who has withdrawn into himself to find this meaning of his life. Life within oneself has no

meaning. To draw into oneself is to draw away from the world of reality. This feeling of non-reality permeates Williams' works.

As works of art, they leave much to be desired. While his basic themes and settings are good, the development is incomplete and confused. They need to be polished, worked over, brought into contact with reality. Indeed, Williams himself needs this same thing: to be brought out of himself, to touch. In each work I find the story of his own struggle to reach out, to touch; and in each, the complete failure. He reaches out but refuses to touch, because he fears the consequences. His touch is achieved through his characters, under controlled situations. I think this is why his works seem incomplete. Yes that's the word, incomplete. Each of his works is in itself a reaching out and a failure to touch, because they have failed to touch, to touch me, the reader.

So, Tennessee Williams is not a dirty old man who talks only about sex and really says nothing. He is an incomplete man who can talk only about sex and really says quite a bit, about himself.



PROTEST

"A crime is what it is to follow him,
To call that man a modern prophet. Ha!
The only thing he knows is monkeyshines,
The way to cause the trouble, blaming us,
As if the way we live is his concern."

"He's harmless, though."

"A waste to even care."

"But just the same, he gets them all upset.
To hear his talk, you'd think the world was doomed,
And we the cause of all of it. It's bad;
And if his speeches weren't enough, this stunt,
This cutting off his hair and burning it
Or tossing little bits around the town.
So what's his point? The rabble eats it up,
And each interprets what he wants, like fools.
It burns me, that's all, seeing tricks like his.
At least he could explain himself to us."

"They come and go, so don't get worried now.
The lower down the people are, the more
They think they need a prophet."

"Always So."

"Oh, I suppose that's true, but still, it's strange;
That man Ezekial bothers me to death."

Fay Faivre, '68



TIME

Time slowly, but quickly drifts by
caught up in those moods that may vary so:
Swinging heavenly high or earthly low,
Belying the truth, but telling no lie.
It swiftly passes, quicker than the eye,
Like a startled doe
That is fleeing from things that really know
How to hurt. A small injured doe will die,
But time continues the survival fight
Waging a wanton war against great odds,
Of persisting future, present, and past,
Which won't let priceless time reclaim its right
Of combatting these paganistic gods,
Who want time sacrificed until the last.

Linda Esterkamp, '70

THE
NIGHT
BEFORE
CHRISTMAS

Plus

Eighteen

Years

Twas the night before Christ-
mas and all through the house

. . .

1949

pretty pretty pretty . . . red
lights, green lights, yellow and
blue . . . lights that bubble and
lights that twinkle . . . glass
balls of color, balls big and
little . . . Grandma and Grand-
pa . . . presents, toys . . . Santa
Claus? he good say Mommie
. . . choo-choo go round and
round the tree . . . Christmas
fun . . . pretty pretty

1953

it's almost Christmas again.
yesterday Daddy and Mommie
and Mark and me went to the
train depot. they have a big
Christmas tree a thousand
times big. they have little trains
and mountains and little houses
and men. the big train comes
on the roof and sounds like
thunder. We hide and wait for
Grandma and Grandpa. Then
we run. at home our tree has
all the pretty lights and a pret-
ty angel on top. on television
Santa says to be good. so many
people come to see. the people

Dennis W. Von Pyritz '69

are nice but sometimes I'm scared. they are loud. and it is hard to sleep but I must try. Santa Claus will not come to-night if I am not asleep. Christmas is fun.

1955

Christmas is here again. It is even more fun than last year. We went to the depot yesterday and it was snowing. This year Mommie let us put icicles on the tree. We went downtown and I bought presents for Garry and Mark and everybody. I got Daddy a special surprise—a flashlight it is all shiny and silver and red with little yellow circles. Downtown Mommie gave me a dime and I put it in a pot with a woman with a bell and Mommie said it was good. Tonight Grandma and Grandpa will take us down the street to see Gene and Irv. While we are gone Santa Claus might come but Mommie says her and Daddy will be down the basement and he will come anyway and they won't hear him. Christmas is the best month of the year, I think.

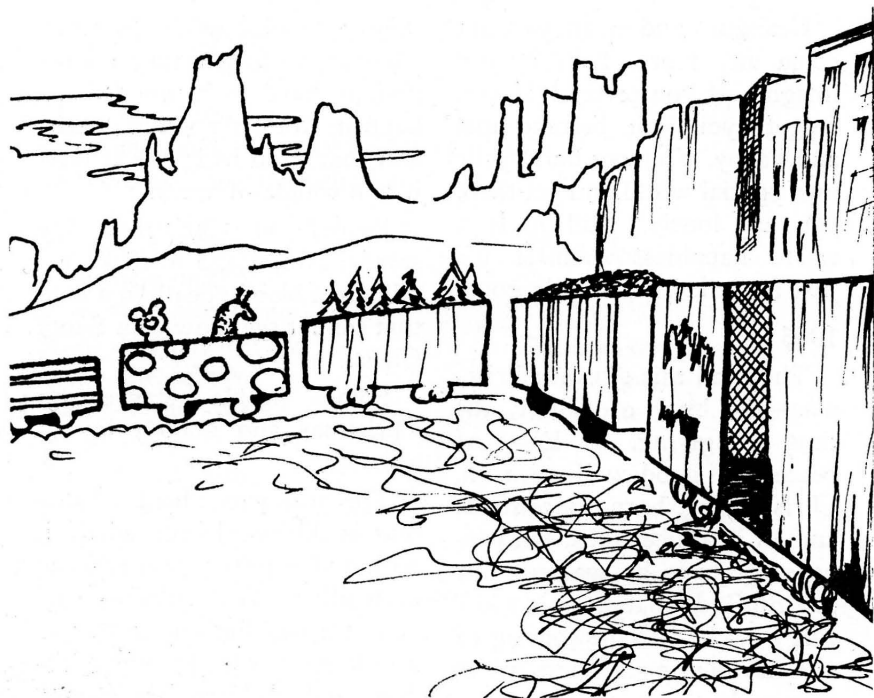
1958

I know that Santa Claus does not really exist, but it doesn't really matter. I can go

to bed and get up on Christmas morning and pretend. This year I had to help Mom clean the dumb old house, and that wasn't fun. I know now that Christmas is a time of giving and that giving should be more fun than receiving—at least that's what everybody says. I put a dime in a pot for some army downtown and it made me feel kinda good but not really cause I wanted some caramel corn. Those guys in the store windows are pretty much fun though. The whole thing's fun, I guess.

1961

I'm in high school now and most of the guys don't think much of Christmas or, at least, that's what they say. They say a lot of it is just a lot of bull. Still I think they like the excitement of it, the atmosphere, I mean. At least they enjoy getting presents. Anyway it doesn't seem to be as much fun as it used to be. Unless it's more like past Christmases, it isn't as much fun or the same kind of fun anyhow. And it can't be like it was somehow. But sometimes I pretend and it's fun, just for a little while. Little kids think about toys and stuff but not about the money



and the people that don't have any Christmas. That's too bad I guess, but I don't know, Christmas is nice, especially if you pretend.

1963

Christmas is really great. Christmas, I think, is people—the warmth, the giving, even if that's the only time there is warmth and giving. Christmas is especially nice with someone you love.

Today a bum asked me for a

quarter. It was cold. Anyway I gave him some excuse and walked away. Then I felt sick because I was so damn selfish; even the lights and displays didn't make me feel better. And all the people with smiles didn't make me happy. It was phoney in a way because they didn't show why they were smiling. It's not their fault really though; they just get caught up in the whole thing and feel good and happy when perhaps they are really not.

Grandma and Grandpa can't come any more. Still if you imagine, if you pretend, if you forget, you can become lost and happy. You can build your own special world and yet there you are lonely. Still it is a warm happiness even if it's just a spark. And this is good.

1965

They call this season Christmas—the birth of Christ, the time of giving, of love, of peace, of good will to men. Christ being born in a stable and all is a nice story, but perhaps, perhaps he was not the son of God, if there is a God. But we celebrate the coming of our Saviour, or, at least, we're supposed to.

People love now and give; but in a sense they are just caught up in the holiday spirit. They feel perhaps a guilt and

they apologize with presents. They try to forget, they try especially hard to be good. This happens for only a few weeks and that's too bad; but at least it is a couple of weeks.

Peace? on Christmas day several Americans just like me will die a bloody death in a land that cannot see snow or a Santa Claus.

Some people starve on Christmas and nobody knows or cares.

The real part about Christmas is the people you spend it with and yet there you are still pretending. You pretend and you forget, but at least you are happy; you become children and children are happy. Happiness is good and Christmas is happiness.

. . . not a creature was stirring.

Life

Nations are made with sweat and toil,
A grave with but a spade.
Men die to live, and live to die
That nations and graves are made.

Dot Mettel, '69

Man

Man—the hypocrite.
Man who calls himself by one name.
and yet acts in contradiction.

Man—the warrior.
Man—the unjust.
Man—the ambitious.
Man—the non-caring.
Man—the selfish.
Man—the unloving.

The race of man,
ugly,
misguided,
world-oriented.

Salvation for *this* race?
Yes.
Some men love.

Mary Fran Beckman '67

Haiku

A life spent alone
A wandering leaf, brown,
Tossed, never resting.

Sheila Mudd, '68

Breakers

The breakers roared
And crashed
And broke into
tiny
minute
drops
like
Crystal-glass
Gleaming on a shelf,
smiling
And twinkling like
tiny
minute
stars
in a
Downpour-wet
And dripping
And shaking off
tiny
minute
sprays,
as
The breakers roared
And crashed.

Dot Mettel, '69



Retarded

Alone she sat, a child of ten, perhaps,
A child of three, perhaps, a child, perhaps.
She sat, while others flailed their arms to sun
Or ran the ground so often run before,
And watched the tree. It never moved away.
She never cried or never smiled but sat
And watched the swaying leaves and sturdy trunk.

The strangest land it was, full of noise
And crowded sounds and smells of babies grown.
They cried and laughed and wailed, except for her
Who sat and kept the vigil by the tree.
Around they tried to speak in doggish growls,
And those that could said nothing much at all
But words they heard but never knew about.

And one could swing and one could sing a bit
And so they did, grotesque in their attempts
But swinging, singing not the less content.
At once they broke and ran, the wind in hair,
And signaled sun to come on down awhile,
Not seeing sun within the other child.

And some could walk and some could talk a bit
And so they did, staggered, swaggered, chattered.
And still she sat, alone and staring past,
Alone amid the reds and blues and greens,
The suits the others wore, to see the tree.
The noise was crowded out so each went on,
Content to be alone inside and see the world.
And those that passed would say, "How sad,"
And never know the pretty tree of peace.

Fay Faivre, '68

The Unfinished Symphony

Crystal, crystal on the wall,
Would that you should never fall,
Crashing on a sunlit hall,
Breaking now for one and all.
And if there should be another,
Pleasantries could not recover,
Another crystal glass shall fall,
Humpty-Dumpty in the hall.
Sold so many times to hold no fill,

To sit upon a window-sill
Designed, imprinted with a fancy curl and
Chandeliers and cabinets with crystal glass,
Notice shining as they glance
So that others passing might perchance
Looking, straining somewhat askance
To see the sunlight do its dance.
now for anyone because they never really had a meaning.

The house was full of empty things that had no meaning
Hallways, stairways, empty closets ;
Upstairs, downstairs, jeweled faucets.
And I like lamb shall walk to slaughter,
Like my mother's eldest daughter
Although she was somewhat bolder,
Knew it all no one could scold her,
Because of course she was much older ;
How I wish someone had told her
Just exactly how much older.

Day by day she grew much colder ;
Died at last . . . a broken shoulder,
And now we all have grown much older,
Day by day we've all grown colder,
Teach me how to watch my shoulder,
File it carefully in a folder
While the others all grow bolder
And I just plain grow older.
Gee I wish that I had told her,
Broke her back or ruined her shoulder.
How I hate to just grow older ;
How I hate to just grow colder.
Broken stairways, winding shoulders,
How they all just plain grow older.

Down the hallway, up the staircase,
On your left you'll find a hairpiece
 sitting on a rubber railing.
Grab the hairpiece ; hold the railing—
This is life and I am failing.
Out the window, through the jailing,
A plane goes by with all its mailing—
Boxes full of rubber railings
Covered all with crystal jailings
And of all the others' failings—
Grab the hairpiece, hold the railing.
See the plane with failing mailing.
See the hairpiece ; see the railing ?
See them all within the jailing—
Rubber hairpiece, crystal railing—
Grab them all, they all are failing.
Failing, flailing, after jailing,
See the plane . . . it's trailing mailing.
Wrap the wires around the bailing,
See the bailing trailing failing.
Grab the hairpiece, hold the railing.

Through the hallway to the basement,
See the cracks along the bracement?
Basement, bracement, jagged gracement,
What's the meaning of our racement?
See the water in the basement,
Splash it on your parched facement;
Touch the water in your basement,
Fill the cracks along the bracement
Fill them with your watered gracement.
Put an end to checkered basements?
Put an end to watered gracements.
How we love our parched facements,
Shoot the gun and start the racements,
Life is just a watered basement—
See the cracks along the bracement?

Richard P. Gardner, '69

POEM

Hush! Hush! Don't tell a soul!
April's in the pocket
Of a Man called Snow.
Across the plain, Snow came,
Took April and tucked her in his pocket.
("April will be back, come again," they say!)
Alas, now he's staying,
Staying the season away.
Adam asked the man called Snow
(Ask and you shall receive, you know.
"Snow went and came again," they say.)
April, be quick!
For never do we know the mind
Of a man called Snow.

Sheila Fillion, '70

(Cont'd from page 13)

the evenings, but Aunt Jean and I would occasionally have intimate little talks over a late cup of coffee. She thanked me for spending time with Uncle and assured me that he really appreciated it. She said that he used me as kind of a sounding board: the more he talked, the more real his new world became. But he was lonesome there and wanted to share it with me. He couldn't with Aunt, she said. That's why she thought that down deep he really knew. She knew the same man he did. I think she was lonesome too.

Then it happened for the first time. This time was really his best; this time, I think, he really thought it was going to happen. Aunt Jean was reading a magazine and Uncle Bernard called me in.

"Close the door, Peter." He did look awfully tired, slouching in his pillow and moving his arms only with apparent effort. "Sit down, boy. I didn't want your aunt here, she . . . I think it's time."

"What?!" I was surprised.

"For dying, son, for dying."

"Maybe I should call your doctor."

"No, no, when the time has

come, it *has* come. And there is no stopping it. Your aunt, she's a little emotional, you know, and I don't want a bawling woman at my deathbed. Besides I'm not sure I want to face her. I'm not so sure. In a way I've failed her, made her feel at times I regretted marrying her. God knows that's not true, I love her, I do. You tell her that."

"Uncle Bernard, you can't let the woman you've lived with for fifty years read a magazine while you die!"

"Maybe you're right. We might bring her in then . . . no, not now—after a bit. First I . . . you know I was just thinking, Peter. I mean the kind of thinking you do while standing watch, or while walking along the beach alone. Twilight thinking — when suddenly you see yourself like you've just, just been hiding for a long time. And then all of a sudden there you are. Not just your face or your body, but *you*. And everything is clear, but way, way in the back of your mind, hiding. There you are like you've never been before. Some of the things you'd expect to find aren't there, and sometimes things are there that you wish weren't.

"So just a while ago I saw

myself there. And I looked back, years back, and then saw now and none of it made any sense, except Jean. It was like I was running for something, and somehow it disappeared, and I didn't see, but just never got there. I felt ashamed, honestly, Peter, ashamed because I knew all I had was your aunt and, wonderful person that she is, that just didn't seem enough. I was at the end of my years and something was missing, no, lost." He started to cough, then sank into his pillow and looked all glassy-eyed. "I don't know, I can't see now and I just don't know."

His eyes closed and I sat still for a while. I really thought he was dead. So I sat and thought and had just about made up my mind to go tell Aunt Jean when good old Uncle Bernard started to snore.

I decided not to tell her because the whole thing really didn't make sense at the time. It would only worry her more. I thought about what he said and what Aunt said. He really *did* know. Something that night had forced him to accept it. I remembered what I said about how he should know when he dies. But he seemed so frustrated, defeated almost and con-

fused. Now I didn't know either.

But Uncle Bernard wasn't going to stop there. The next day before I left for school he called me in and asked me to get something for him—a recording of Spanish guitar music. I couldn't find any authentic stuff so I took a record out of the library—it was some classical numbers by Segovia. I brought it home and Aunt Jean saw it. I asked her if she knew why he wanted it.

"No, but who can say anything about your uncle at this point. Is anything really strange?"

"Well, I'll take it in to him; he's probably been waiting for it all day. Supper about ready?"

"Yes . . . Peter, wait a minute. I just remembered something. A couple of years ago we were watching television—it was about an old Spanish hero, I think—but he was quiet for a while and then said to me, 'Jean, you know if we could choose where we are to die, under what circumstances, if we could do that, it wouldn't be so hard. And in all the world the most beautiful place for me to die would be some old Spanish town, Barcelona maybe. Yes, to die there with guitars

playing in the distance, and knowing that everything has been so beautiful. That's what I'd want.' Peter, I think he's planning to die."

I stood there for a moment. "I'll talk to you later."

I went in. He didn't mention anything about the night before. I put on the record (the player was right outside his room). When I came back he seemed a little confused but as the music played he smiled. The first composition was quite leisurely; the second was slower, more poetic. I asked him if he wanted anything else, "No, thank you, Peter, everything is just fine, just beautiful." He closed his eyes, looking very serene. Oh, no, I thought, here he goes again.

I thought I'd better tell Aunt; she had a right to know. I related the first time and how he had come out for a while to face the situation more realistically. I told her he said he loved her greatly, but not the other. We decided that Aunt was right about the record; he wanted to die only if he had some control over the way of his dying.

Aunt Jean was changing too. I watched her at the desk that evening, playing cards. She

wasn't the same gay, cheerful Aunt she had been. I thought that when Uncle died he would take part of that woman with him. They had shared so much and given so much that I knew it couldn't be any other way. I had always thought that a person is ultimately alone; but that night I realized how close two people could be.

Uncle continued to do the same sort of trick for a couple of more nights. One night he gave me a last bit of advice—"You can go as far as you want to go. Nobody can stop you but you yourself. Don't ever, don't ever give up a chance. Some chances come but once and then they're gone forever. Just don't ever . . ."

It was Saturday night. I had just finished cutting the lawn and, as the sun set, the smell of green chlorophyll filled the air and the house. I sat on the porch and kidded around with Aunt Jean. Uncle Bernard was playing his record. The crickets were starting in and generally it was a very peaceful, very relaxing evening.

"Why don't you go in and open your uncle's window. The air is so fresh tonight."

"Sure." I went in. Uncle Bernard was sitting there very

calmly with a dim smile, and a faraway look in his eyes. He seemed unmoved as I entered but still said,

"Peter, Peter, my boy. What are you doing here? Ah, yes, that ship in the harbor. I'm glad you put in here, I had imagined that I'd be all alone and everything quiet. Still I'm glad. Even in Barcelona a man shouldn't die alone.

"Yes, that's it . . . the window . . . oh, that ocean air, so free. Sit down boy. I know you're anxious to tell me about all the places you've been, all the wonderful and beautiful places. And there's so much to see, Peter. Even I didn't see everything. But no, I'm an *old* sailor now. I'm where I want to be, where the winds have brought me, you might say.

"Peter, you don't know what it's like to have done all the things you've ever wanted to do and to be able, after all that, to die where you want to. Listen, boy, listen to the guitar—it's the girl across the street, she plays for me every night. She will play after I'm dead. That's wonderful, isn't it? At my funeral she will play. And I can die with a very quiet and peaceful mind, knowing that everything is right and, and

beautiful. Isn't that right, Peter, isn't that right?"

I didn't say anything. Then the record stopped.

"She's stopped, she's stopped playing the . . ." he looked around anxiously, then shut his eyes. "Where are we, Peter, where? I think I hear the ocean. Is that leather I smell? It's coming. Tell me where!"

I hesitated. Did he really have to know? I lied, "In Barcelona, Uncle Bernard. The ocean's outside your window and they're making boots next door. We're in Barcelona and you've come a long way. Listen, the girl, she's starting to play again."

"Yes, yes. I hear. It's so soft, a tolling softness whispering so beautifully, so beautiful . . ."

At first I thought he had gone to sleep, maybe he had then but he was so quiet. Later we knew. I wonder if he knew that this was the time. I hope so. He wanted so much to die this way. He was afraid he might not be able to—that's why he tried to die so hard. He knew he was plagued by dreams he could never follow in life; he hoped at least he might reach them in death. He died hearing a guitar and I think I heard it too.

We'd like to add . . .

To celebrate this twenty-fifth anniversary, we have invited some former contributors, names familiar to *Fioretti* pages, to join us. The following portion of this edition consists of essays, poems and stories that have come in from alumni generous enough to share once again with us.

Girl on a Misty Morn

White hairs weighed too heavy
That day and winds couldn't
Chase the crowsfeet away,
When out of puddles and rain
She stepped, and with a smile
And a nudge, swept my
Wrinkles back under the rug.

She asked the way to Walnut
Street, and I, having nothing
Special to do that day, said
Walnut Street was right on my way.
As we walked, she talked to me,
And I laughed, wagging my head
Like a sage, not caring a whit
What I said, only knowing
Her youth was good for my age.

And when we came to the corner
She smiled and thanked me again,
Then crossed the street and was gone,
Lost in umbrellas and rain.
But the weight of the day had lifted
And I had a bright new start,
Glad for the smile of a girl
Who eased the ache in my heart.

Joseph Kempf, '63

Abortion Challenged

As talk about legal abortion becomes increasingly prevalent in the United States, and noted medical, legal, and even clerical spokesmen call for a liberalization of current laws and sanctions against abortion, Catholics find themselves drawn into the controversy on every level of argument. Their position against therapeutic abortion is being attacked from all sides. Doctors speak of physical and mental dangers to a child potentially affected by drugs like thalidomide and by exposure of the expectant mother to German measles. They likewise decry the threat a pregnancy may pose to a mother suffering from any number of chronic ills ranging from rheumatic heart disease and diabetes to epilepsy. Along with psychologists and psychiatrists, medical men point

gravely to the prospects of psychological damage and even mental illness which might be incurred by a woman forced to continue an unwanted or undesirable pregnancy.

Sociologists concentrate their efforts on the plight of the unwed mother and her fatherless child and extend their sympathy to the recent widow or divorcee unfortunate enough to be pregnant at the time of her change in marital status. They too find an approved therapeutic abortion an acceptable alternative to a compromising pregnancy.

Legal men have another reason for suggesting and supporting laws allowing therapeutic abortion under the same circumstances, thereby extending already existing approval of abortion in cases of grave physical danger to the mother. They argue that the legalization of abortion in cases of unwanted or un auspicious pregnancies would reduce the number of illegal and highly dangerous abortions performed in this country yearly. It would likewise obviate the necessity of a woman's traveling to Mexico, Japan, or elsewhere abroad to undergo a therapeutic abortion. Acts which are now criminal in nature would become socially

acceptable by being legalized.

Even some reputable clerics refute traditional religious opposition to therapeutic abortion by arguing that the fetus may not really possess a soul in its early stages of development and need not be afforded protection by the fifth commandment. The Church of England, for example, recently recommended broadening grounds for abortion speaking of the necessity of balancing the competing claims of mother and child.

Arguments are many and varied, as Lawrence Lader points out in his new and somewhat distorted book, *Abortion*. By far, however, most popular support of the legalization of abortion is sought on an emotional level and the battle is waged in popular magazines. Article after article pictures the tear stained countenance of a mother faced with a complicated or potentially dangerous pregnancy. Inevitably her doctor sympathetically suggests a therapeutic abortion while her minister either condones the physician's suggestion or, refusing to commit himself, gives tacit approval to the killing of an unborn child. Those few doctors who are bold enough to suggest that the mother con-

sider her own spiritual welfare and that of her child are chastized for daring to speak on a subject outside their professional realm. Condemnation of the rabbi, minister or priest who broaches the subject of sin is even stronger. He is accused of being calloused and unknowing. The fear and anxiety of a mother faced with a dangerous pregnancy or the threat of a malformed child are beyond his comprehension, claim mother and editorialist alike. Being a male, and in many cases unmarried, automatically disqualifies him as an advisor, they contend. That the doctor is often possessed of these same characteristics never seems to be recognized. That the priest, rabbi, or minister is a professional man in much the same way as the doctor and that often their fields of endeavor overlap is easily discounted by those who want only to hear what their emotions dictate.

Laws are likewise flaunted to the extent that there occur thousands of illegal abortions in this country alone each year. That those laws were intended to protect the mother as well as the unborn child is readily overlooked. That hundreds of women die each year because

of attempted abortions unhygienically performed is quickly forgotten.

Over and over again the appeal which reaches the general public is emotional. Think of the frightened mother, the handicapped child, and other children in the family. Consider the poor father who must worry through such a pregnancy, shoulder bills for consultants, and possibly lose his wife, cry the exponents of the therapeutic abortion. And, admittedly, such arguments are compelling. A threatened or undesirable pregnancy can be difficult indeed. Raising a handicapped or retarded child does present problems for mother, father, and other family members alike. So too can nine months of worry about the woman he loves be difficult for a husband, and the job of raising his family without his wife certainly requires great sacrifices of any man. What is not readily recognized is that all of these arguments put human and material considerations above spiritual ones.

Thus, while it is necessary that we as faithful Catholics be able to offer traditional arguments about the sacredness of human life, and while it is like-

wise necessary that as informed citizens we be able to argue for the rights of the unborn child under law, it is equally important that we be able to counter the all too engulfing emotional appeals bombarding us today. It is here, I believe, that the argument from experience can serve as a bulwark and should be offered whenever possible.

Do all prospective mothers immediately think of abortion when some complication besets their pregnancy? Do they all look for an easy way out? Do they all want abortion laws legalized? A substantial number do not. The unwed mother who courageously accepts the consequences of her wrong-doing gives mute testimony to her belief in the inviolability of innocent human life. The mother with heart trouble, the one exposed to dreaded German measles during the crucial first few months of her pregnancy, or the woman faced with severe Rh factor incompatibility might well speak with some authority. So too does the mother who has already given birth to one or more hydrocephalic children have reason for concern. And certainly the forty-five year old mother of ten

might well be less than enthusiastic about another pregnancy.

Such a woman as any one of these is certainly capable of understanding the many compassionate and realistic presentations of the terror that strikes the heart of a woman whose pregnancy is in any way a "tragic" one in common parlance. Whether exposure to German measles, her own illness, the illness of her husband, advancing age, or whatever the circumstances, she can clearly comprehend the essence of such a predicament. The fear, the loneliness, and even the initial feeling that the decision about the baby's future is one she alone must make are completely understandable to her. Yet her answer is so different from the one most writers would have us to believe is the only possible one. And it is this answer which we must be prepared to offer when the argument for abortion is advanced on the emotional level alone.

Writers, and presumably, many, many doctors as well, tell such a woman that the problem is hers to solve—or she might ask her husband's advice, a few great-hearted souls will grudgingly agree—but the ultimate

decision is one she alone must make. Must she? Can she and her husband not turn to God for an answer?

If she is fortunate enough to belong to a church which teaches that the life of an unborn child is sacred and may not be deliberately terminated, the expectant mother does not have to seek an answer. Her religion provides it and her faith in God helps her through the moments of fear and doubt about her baby's future. Love for the child she is carrying also provides great incentive for facing the future confidently.

Those who would have us believe that abortion should be made "decent, normal, and proper," in the words of the Society for Humane Abortion, must be made to understand that such mothers have also known the anguish of sleepless nights during which statistics challenged their belief that all would be well. Nor did prayer and faith always bring quiet to frightened hearts or sleep to aching bodies. But they did help immensely.

Still, in the moment when labor begins and the child's birth is imminent, the fear such mothers experience is as genuine and intense as any that a

human being is ordinarily asked to endure. It is for her baby that the mother's heart aches: that he may be normal and may lead a healthy and happy life is her prayer. But she does not delude herself, particularly when birth is near and fear is greatest, and she also hopes that should her child be handicapped, she and her husband may help him learn to be a happy, mature, and productive citizen despite his difficulties. The knowledge that many, many families have done so reassures her.

Moreover, such a mother knows only too well that a crippled body still houses an immortal soul, and that a sightless man may yet be the only person capable of leading the world to peace and harmony. She knows, too, that she will love the child soon to leave her womb no matter how well or how badly he is formed, nor what he may someday achieve or fail to accomplish.

This, then, is how many mothers have dealt with the possibility of bearing a handicapped child. Thus have they met challenges to their own health and possible inconvenience to themselves and their families. Looking to God for an answer and

considering the rights of their unborn children they may have said that their pregnancies must not end. They have said that abortion is morally and legally wrong and that no amount of rationalization can justify it. A religion which answers the agonizing question of whether or not to continue a pregnancy seemingly doomed from the start is indeed a blessing. That its teachings can still seem right, and good, and honorable when put to the test gives further comfort, whatever the outcome.

Tragic indeed is the pregnancy that must end. But must it in such cases as we have been discussing? Thousands of women each year declare that it must not and I, for one, say they are correct. Having experienced the months of anxiety and moments of panic that go with refusing to terminate such a pregnancy, my answer remains the same. Such is the rebuttal I offer to those who would put personal feeling and security above the commandments of God and laws protecting human life. This is the argument, emotional in nature, which must be added to legal and theological refutations of legalized abortion.

Walk

with

Me

Nothing excels the beauty of the country
in summer.

Come with me, away from the noise and
bustle of the city, away from the
tensions and troubles of life
in the metropolis.

Walk with me,
down this shady country road and see
God in all His beauty;
breathe the air of peace and contentment
here in His own garden.

Listen!
What do you hear? Nothing?
Listen again.

You hear the crunch of gravel
under your feet. You hear the rustle of
leaves gently stirred by a playful breeze.

You hear the chirping of sparrows, the soft
call of a turtle dove to its mate. And
farther away you hear a woodpecker's
noisy drumming.

Listen again.

You hear
the low murmur of the little brook as it
ripples contentedly on its way to join
another little brook.

And together they tumble down the little
hill, cooling the earth as they pass.

Listen harder now.

Far off
to the right a dog barks.

You can hear the faint dinging of a bell,
the lowing of cattle, a faint cry as the
farmer calls them home for the evening.

What do you smell?

The scent of pine needles mingled
with the fresh moist earth? The sweet
honey-like fragrance of locust blossoms
pervades the still air.

And farther on
the pleasant scent of
newly-mown hay greets you.

We're coming out of the wood now,
into the open meadow.

Let's deviate from
the road for a while and walk barefoot
in the grass.

Feel how soft
and cool it is beneath your feet.

Doesn't the breeze feel cool and refreshing
as it caresses your face?

Sit here, on this mossy log
and let the last faint rays of the sun
overshadow you. Trail your finger in the
crystal depths of this pool.

Pluck a wild rose
from the vine; the silkiness of its petals
can never be reproduced by presumptuous men.

Let us go on again,
and stand on the crest of this hill.

Look behind you.

What do you see?

The thick green forest
out of which we have just come, overflowing
with treasures unseen by our eyes: the bed of
violets at the base of the big maple, the
single trillium basking in the waning sun,
the wild rose with a bee
in its heart, the frisky chipmunk, the spider's
jeweled web, the jack-in-the-pulpit,

the turtle dove.
Now look to your left.

You are greeted by
a trio of spring lambs enjoying the last
precious hours of twilight before settling
down for the night.

A young calf
studies you carefully for a moment, and then
wobbles off indifferently to join its mother.
Now look to the right.

See how the tender green
corn waves gracefully in the breeze.

Ocean upon ocean, field upon field,
wave upon wave of verdant grain
gives evidence of the fertility of spring and a
promise of the harvest to come.

Now look toward the valley.

See the lush train sweeping out before
you, adorned with the pearly ribbon of
road, the sapphire of pool and stream,
the emerald necklace
of forest. A gilded tiara projects amber,
crimson, and golden rays in all directions.
A cloudless sky unites the entire
vista, and a solitary star heralds the advent
of night, calm, peaceful, and
serene under God's
loving smile.

Theresa Meyer, '64

A RAIN OF ORANGES

Joseph Kempf, '63

Jess Winters' face spoke of wisdom and time, though he wasn't really old as old men go, only fifty-three, but his white hair and beard made him look fifteen, perhaps twenty, years older than he actually was. Already at forty his hair had started to turn and his face to crack and line about the corners of his eyes and mouth. Now the lines were deeper, and the skin browner and tougher, like old leather that's been left out in the wind and sun too long.

The premature white of his hair had raised a question about his age. It was the sort of thing the public liked to talk about. He had let them think what they wanted. It didn't matter, though he had to admit that his hair and beard had contributed greatly to his image as the Great American Sage. Some reviewer, he couldn't remember who, had coined the

name first, then the critics had picked it up and now it was plastered on the jacket of every book he'd ever written: "Jess Winters, the Great American Sage . . ."

But Jess Winters, the terribly old young man, was tired. Too tired ever to lift his pen again. How did a literary idol go about telling his worshippers that everything he'd ever written was a lie . . . a twisted dream he'd convinced himself was real? How in a man's fifty-third year could he retract the words of a lifetime and begin telling the truth — whatever that was—but at least the truth as he saw it now? It was impossible. Such a thing couldn't be done.

He chuckled as he rocked, a sound like rusty hinges deep in his throat. He squinted out across the cornfield in the afternoon sun, then spat in the

red dust at the edge of the porch. He watched the spittle recoil, as if shocked, then vanish slowly into the red Georgia dust, leaving a spot the color of blood. He spat again, trying to make a pattern in the dust

A picture of a girl in shorts and ribbons like kites in her pigtails pedalled through his mind, but he chased it away. It hurt to think of her too much.

Oh, yes, he had tried, about

ten years ago, when he still had some energy left and some torn fragments of his dream to piece together. But it had turned out little better than all the rest. Still, the critics had come to bow before the shrine, as they always had: "Jess Winters grows more powerful, more penetrating, with every novel. The man is a phenomenon, the literary giant of the American scene . . ." There



had been more, too, but such tripe couldn't be repeated.

And then six years ago, after Jeannie Benson, he had thought he would really do it. He had even finished half of it—the novel that would banish the stench that circled his head like a carrion halo only he could smell. Magazine agents stormed his doors, wanting to pre-publish chapters “to give the public a taste of what was coming.” He sent them away. The agents left, puzzled, and reported to their editors. More came. Still he wouldn't let them. Perhaps he had known he would never finish that novel, and now the manuscript lay in the desk drawer where he had put it four years ago, its corners curling in disbelief. And there it lay, half of the truth, unfinished.

And even if he were to finish it, how could he be sure it was the whole truth? Who was there to say? The public? The public would never believe it. They didn't want the truth. Much better to sit and rock than publish what nobody would believe. Infinitely better than publishing lies everybody believed.

Off in the distance around the curve a girl came pedalling a bicycle down the dusty road.

As she drew nearer, he could make out her legs, long and tan, outdistancing the cloud of dust that swirled up behind and then settled sluggishly back down on the road or filtered onto the corn. He watched her intently, her long hair riding high in the hot wind, until she passed the corner of the house and was gone out of sight down the road. Then he settled back again, pulled a faded red handkerchief from his pocket and wiped the sweat from the wrinkled face that looked out from the backs of millions of book covers.

His beard parted and a tired rush of breath came out. So tired. Hadn't he given them what they wanted? What he wanted? Wasn't it real in a way? And who knew anyway what was real or unreal, true or false? That was the trouble: no one knew for sure. Man is so alone—no one to tell him about all those things. So utterly stupid, so ridiculously absurd. . .

But still the public waited for Jess Winters to finish his novel. Waited for what they wanted most to hear, but for what he hadn't the courage and energy to finish. Waited for what he had started to tell them six

years ago, but what was now mildewing in his bottom desk drawer . . .

Jeannie Benson was not like the women in Jess Winters' novels. She was young, fresh, untouched. His mistake had been that he couldn't tell the difference. At least, not at first. He had assumed that all women were like those in his novels. How was he to have known they weren't? Hadn't the critics said that his works had "the unquestionable ring of truth about them?" Hadn't they said he was the most realistic novelist on the American scene?

He first met her in an orange juice stand that she and her parents ran in southern California. She was filling a glass with juice when she turned and saw him. She paused and looked for a second, then put the glass on the counter for the other customer. She rang up the sale and then came over.

"Can I help you?" But there was another question in her voice, something more than the words had said.

He ordered and she brought the juice. Then she went through the doorway into the back room and returned with a book. She stood in the doorway looking at the back cover,

glancing up from time to time to study him at the counter. She came over.

"Aren't you Jess Winters . . . the writer? She blushed slightly, even beneath her tan.

"Yes."

"Oh, I thought so." She looked down at the book. "Would you . . .?"

"Sign it? Sure."

She handed him a pen from the cash register and passed the book across the counter, open to the title page.

He sighed. Then he added, as an afterthought, "To the lovely girl at the orange juice stand." He smiled and handed back the book. She read what he had written, blushed again, and took the book into the back room.

The bell tinkled and more customers came in. As she waited on them, he watched her. She was tall and naturally graceful, and so tan he thought she must pick oranges all day. Her hair was dark and she was wearing long pigtails with blue ribbons tied around the ends. After she had served the other customers, she returned.

"I thought you lived in New York, on the Hudson somewhere."

(Cont'd. on page 56)

The Fishers

Like pelicans,
They perch anywhere,
On rocks, banks and piers,
Old boys, young men,
Tossing nets
Of silent expectation
Onto the wind and waves.

Sometimes they sit and wait
Like that for years,
Casting out, reeling in,
Lines limp, backs bowed,
But sinews tense and ready,
Willing up whatever waits below.

Huddled within themselves,
They flex their rods,
Bait their tired hooks
And let them fly,
Spinning arcs of hope
Against a backlashed sky.

Joseph Kempf, '63

And the Band Played On . . .

Thomas Widner, '64

Protected by the panes of glass, he peered through the window and surveyed the landscape which stretched out before him. All was motionless. The air lay still. The trees, bathed in winter white, stood at rest. Nothing disturbed them. The earth, encrusted in the newly fallen snow, could not be seen. Only things of the earth—trees reaching high to touch the sky and bushes gasping from beneath the mounds of snow to suck the air that was not there—only these were visible. And the scene appeared a black - and - white photograph, for the sky, too, clouded gray above it.

His face dulled with the look of sadness, the look of long-

ing. Silent expectation filled his countenance. Then a slight quiver. Perhaps hope? Hope for what? To be free. To be free from fear. But, no. He was not afraid he kept telling himself. Yet—does fear show through the windowpane? Understand—could others understand? Don't feel sorry for yourself, he thought, even though he felt that no one could see or fully perceive his longing. Oh, God, his mind screamed, why am I so afraid?

And again he stared at the landscape. The snow covered and hid all that had been alive only a few short weeks before. The cold. The bitter, killing cold has murdered all life! Nothing grew here. Nothing endured. Not even his own life. Things merely existed. So the snow hid nothing for nothing was alive. It had no meaning. His own life was meaningless. To call this life was to ignore truth—that which is dead does not live. And life that comes from the earth remains rooted to the earth. But what of men? Even so. In death, men too return to the earth.

Suddenly — abruptly — a sound came and the stillness was gone. A sound. A tiny sound beyond the hill in the

distance. It was slight — the sound — yet in the scene of which he was a part, he felt the sound pierce and rattle his entire body. His eyes searched wildly for the source, but he could see nothing. Yet the sound grew and somewhere he heard music being played.

The picture of the silent landscape shattered into frenzy as movement interrupted the calm. His eyes focused on a series of tiny figures that had just appeared from behind the distant hill and were moving across the snow. As they drew nearer the music increased in volume and its happy sound pervaded the atmosphere.

Men—a half dozen of them — were marching across the landscape toward his window. They were laughing and shouting and talking with one another and they seemed to be performing a sort of jazz ballet in the snow. Their music grew louder as it swelled into the thumping gaiety of a brass band. But none of the men carried instruments. The music spewed forth from their laughter and shouting.

It was all there—pipers piping and trumpets blaring; cymbals crashing and drums rolling. Wrapped in their thick

winter clothing, protected from the cold, the men paraded through the deep snow seemingly unaware of the struggle they endured trudging through the snow and certainly unafraid of the forces acting against them. The wind insisted on pushing them backward but they would not cater to its desires.

Now he could see them clearly. He could see their faces and he readily perceived the mirth and elation they manifested. Their laughter prevailed and they were not fearful of looking into one another's eyes. No secrets were sustained among them.

Now the music was at its wildest. It raged furiously with impassioned brilliance. He paid no attention to the fact that they bore no instruments. His heart only beat faster at the sight and sound of such joy.

As if on signal the men stopped before his window. The music played in unending delight and the men smiled in his face. But now he was aware of more. Though they said nothing, they called to him. He became aware of himself as being sought by them. His heart beat faster but only in apprehension of what they de-

sired. He could not run and he could not turn away. He was only able to stand there trembling. He had smiled with them but now he felt his face freeze into a sudden frown as fear once again seized him.

The band paused. The melody had excited him for a few moments. As he listened he was conscious of the lack of harmony in the music. He shook and began to cry for there was nothing he could do. He was rooted to the spot behind the windowpane. He closed his eyes so he could not see them.

The music had not ceased and the men continued to laugh. But they could wait no longer. They moved away in the opposite direction. Within a few seconds they were out of sight. But he did not open his eyes. Very soon he could hear nothing. All became still again. The sound had become silence.

He opened his eyes. The scene was as before except the snow seemed whiter now. From behind the panes of glass, he peered out across the landscape. The cold tightened. The band had gone but he had not stirred. What is more cruel, he thought, than for human beings to reveal their love for one another?

Genesis Re-Created

(or—“*Disarming Is
Such Sweet Sorrow*”)

The Bible is wrong.
In the beginning
There was man,
And he said:
“Let us make War.”
So he did,
And he saw that
It was good —
So he made some more.

On the second day
Came bullets
And lullabys
Of flying lead.
With lovely precision
They sang holes
In men's heads.

On the third day
Man separated
Water from air.
Why? Silly question!
Can battleships
Float without water
Or bombers fly
Without sky?

But man grew bored, alas!
So the fourth day
He added some spice —
With a pinch
Of mustard gas.
Then to perfect

His masterful brew,
He lovingly added
A germ or two.

Wherever we go;
The fallout's quite heavy
In spots, you know.



On the fifth day
The generals said:
“Let us make a Bomb!”
So they did
(But not just one or two)
And when they saw
That bombs were good —
They dropped a few.

On the sixth day
Man made rockets
And ICBM missiles.
Now we carry umbrellas

But even man requires
A little rest,
So the seventh day
He set aside —
For H-Bomb tests.

On the eighth day
Came buttons
And World War III,
Heaving mountains
And burning seas.
(O beautiful Violence!)



On the ninth day —
Silence.

The foe defeated,
The cycle completed,
Man began once more.
He sweated and swore,
Cleaned up the gore,
Bandaged some heads,
Buried the dead,
Cursed the missiles —
Then loaded his pistol
And went to war.

Joseph Kempf, '63

(Cont'd from page 49)

"I'm on vacation. Actually, I'm gathering material for a novel I'm planning."

"About California?"

"Maybe."

She smiled and began drying glasses, then stacked them in neat rows on a shelf behind the counter. He lingered over his juice, got up and left a quarter tip. Later on, as he drove back to town, he remembered and thought it was a stupid thing to do.

But he stopped in again a few days later.

"Hello," she said, smiling.

"Hi."

"Large?"

"Yes, large."

"I finished your book," she said, turning halfway around to look at him as she poured. "I liked it."

"Really?" It was what they always said. He was disappointed.

"But is it really that way?" she asked, setting the orange juice down.

"Is *what* really that way?" He was teasing her now. He liked to see her blush. She did.

"Oh, you know . . . life and rich people. Do they really live like that in big cities?"

He was sorry he had teased her. She really was serious. "I guess so," he said, then added, "At least the critics seem to think they do."

"Oh." She waited on a customer and then returned.

"My parents say they don't."

"Oh? Have they ever been there?"

"A few times."

"Have you?"

"Once . . . Los Angeles."

"You could hardly tell from that, could you?"

"No, I guess not." The bell tinkled and she left. He put a quarter down and headed for the door.

"Goodbye," she said.

"Goodbye."

And that was how Jess Winters met Jeannie Benson. He would drop in for orange juice whenever he happened to be driving by, and soon he found he was happening by quite often. Sometimes she would ask him about people in his books, why they did this or why that. She asked good questions, ones he had never even asked himself, and sometimes he didn't know the answers. Then she would say nothing and go about the little stand with a puzzled look on her face, polishing glasses or waiting on customers.

One time when he was there on Sunday and she closed the stand up early, she asked him if he used to ride a bicycle when he was a boy. He wasn't surprised. He expected questions like that from her now.

"Yes, I had a bike. It was a red American Flyer."

"Can you still ride?"

He laughed. "Oh, I suppose so. Why?"

"Because we can go riding through the grove as soon as I close up." She began to untie her apron.

"Sure," he said, surprised at how natural it seemed. Why shouldn't a forty-six year old

writer go bike riding with an eighteen year old girl? It happened every day, but never in his novels.

She locked up and they walked together up the path to her house. He waited on the porch while she went inside and changed into shorts. Her legs were long and tan, and she moved with a young, long-striding ease.

The bikes were leaning against the shed in back. She pointed to the red one. "That's yours. It was my brother's. Mike, the one in the Army." She waited, already astride, while he mounted.

He was wobbly at first, but pretty soon he got the knack of it again, and they went pedaling off between the orange trees, both of them laughing at his awkwardness. She was faster, but he made heroic efforts to keep up.

It was a big orange grove and soon he was covered with sweat. His legs felt rubbery and he told her so, so they stopped and sat down on the grass beneath a tree and rested. The branches came almost to the ground, shutting them off as if in a cave.

"You're getting old," she said laughing.

"I guess so," he panted.

"How old are you?" She asked it as naturally as if she were asking him what time he got up in the morning, so he answered the same way.

"Forty-six . . . nearly forty-seven."

She looked, wonderingly. "That young?"

He laughed. "Yes. I look older, but I'm not. My hair was nearly all white by the time I was forty. My father's turned early the same way."

She stretched out on her back and toyed with a leaf. "That's funny."

"I suppose so." His eyes traveled the length of her. He marveled at her limbs and the fullness of her breasts beneath the thin cotton blouse. She closed her eyes, and it seemed to him that she must already be asleep, so relaxed she appeared. Then she opened her eyes and searched the branches above.

"The oranges are almost gone."

He followed her gaze. "Yes, only a few left."

"We'll be closing the stand soon. We're only open during the season."

There didn't seem to be anything to say to that, so he didn't. Suddenly she sat up and

looked at him intently. She reached out and touched his hand.

"Is it *really* like that . . . like in your books? Please tell me. I must know." She was astonishingly earnest. It was the question she kept returning to, as if it were the most important question in the world. And in a way he guessed it was.

"Why?" he asked, breaking the mood.

"Oh, I don't know," she said carelessly, removing her hand. "I just wondered, I guess." He followed her hand with his eyes, amazed at its tapering length.

What could he tell her? Would she understand if he said that writing was a way of looking at the world, that an author presented life and reality as he saw it, as he had experienced it? That writers were very much like artists — they painted things as they saw them, sometimes sharp and clear like the Old Masters, sometimes a little blurred and fuzzy like the Impressionists. And who could say which was the right way? Whose eye was so discerning that he would dare to say, "This is reality, truthfully presented?" The critics tried, and he had been

lucky. Most of them seemed to see reality as he did. But what if they didn't? And what about the critics fifty, a hundred years from now? Would they see the world through the same eyes? Probably not, he thought.

Jeannie was still waiting for an answer. Finally he said, "Everything happens, Jeannie, if you could just live long enough and go far enough to see it all happen."

She seemed to think about that for a while. Then she looked up. "I've never met anyone like the people in your books."

He winced. "You never lived in the city."

"No. Sometimes I wish I did, though." She pulled a blade of grass and fondled it with her fingers. He tried to imagine how they would feel on his neck and back.

He was silent. How could he tell her she didn't belong in the city, that people there really were different? That they shouldn't be, but that they were?

"You wouldn't like it," he said finally.

"I think I would."

"You wouldn't. I know."

She pouted slightly for a moment. Then her face bright-

ened and she leaned toward him eagerly.

"Am I as pretty as the girls in the city?"

"Prettier," was all he said, his eyes taking in everything. But he wanted to say more. That she was the most desirable woman he had ever known, that he wanted to kiss her lips and run his hand down her legs and across her back. Why couldn't he say it? Why? The characters in his novels always could.

And suddenly he was filled with a terrible sense of his age. A sense of having been born too soon, of knowing too much. Next to her he was an old man, not so much in years really, but in knowledge, a knowledge perhaps it was better for a man never to have.

"We'd better go," he said, painfully tired.

"Yes."

As they crawled out from under the branches, his legs were stiff and sore, and they ached all the way back to the house. They never stopped. And he never saw Jeannie Benson again.

Jess Winters did not return to New York after his trip to California. He sold his twelve-room house on the Hudson

and moved back to Georgia, where he was born. He bought a three-room shack and started writing the great American novel. It was about Jeannie Benson. He would tell her the truth this time, wherever she was. He would tell the world the truth.

But he never finished. Who would believe him? Who would understand? Not even Jeannie Benson. Not even she would believe that Jess Winters, the living legend, the Great American Sage, had died one afternoon in a California orange grove as the last of the fruit was ripening overhead.

And now, as he rocked there, the girl on the bicycle returned from wherever she had been and pedalled slowly this time back down the road. He watched her till she was lost in the curve, then settled back in his chair to contemplate the dust as it filtered listlessly onto the leaves of corn.

Soon he was terribly tired, and he closed his eyes, resting his beard on his chest. He nodded drowsily in the late afternoon heat, and then he was once again in the orange grove with Jeannie. But now the branches were gray and bare, like the bones of dirty skele-

tons, and the oranges were bloated and overripe and falling about his head. The clouds overhead were purple and swollen, like open wounds in the sky. Jeannie was leaning toward him, her eyes on fire, oblivious of the oranges as they rained down about them. "Tell me," she was pleading. "Please tell me. I must know if life is really like that." He raked the skin and rotten pulp of an orange from his cheek. "I can tell you only this," he said, his mouth full of seeds, "and nothing more: *Man does not live by hypocrisy alone.*" She smiled. "Yes, yes," she said, her eyes glowing, "that is what I had to know. Thank you." She knelt on the brown stubble to receive his blessing. "Go then, my child, in peace," he said, stretching out his hand over her head. But a rotten orange came down and clung to his hand like a leech and he could not shake it off. Then one exploded in his face and all he could see was brown peel and seeds everywhere. And the stench was in the old man's nostrils when he awoke just in time to rock the sun down behind the pines at the edge of the cornfield.

