

# fioretti



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# Lament de La Mancha

I keep on seeing rainbows made of gold  
And my thoughts keep turning back to days of old  
When times were good and knights were brave  
and bold

Oh, I keep on seeing rainbows made of gold.

I look around and don't like what I see  
A world where people are content just to be  
And the thought of which entirely saddens me  
As I look around and don't like what I see.

But I keep on seeing rainbows made of gold  
And my thoughts keep turning back to days of old  
When times were good and knights were brave  
and bold

Oh, I keep on seeing rainbows made of gold.

I tried my best to aid my fellow man  
As I looked for adventure in our land  
I found many in need of a helping hand  
And I tried my best to aid my fellow man.

And I keep on seeing rainbows made of gold  
And my thoughts keep turning back to days  
of old

When times were good and knights were  
brave and bold

Oh, I keep on seeing rainbows made of gold.

But alas, my friends, I feel I've grown too old  
To keep chasing after rainbows made of gold  
And the thoughts of our time are quite a load  
And yes, my friends, I think I've grown too old.

But my eyes still see rainbows made of gold  
And my thoughts still turn back to days of old  
When times were good and knights were brave  
and bold  
And all could see the rainbows made of gold.

The days are gone when giants roamed afar  
And now I see them as they really are  
As windmills turning slowly under stars  
And my giants no longer roam afar.

I can hardly see my rainbows made of gold  
And it's hard to think back to days of old  
When times were good and knights were  
brave and bold  
And it's hard to see my rainbows made of gold.

Now my friends are gone and I'm alone  
And it's sad to see how old that I have  
grown  
And all my dreams from me have sadly  
flown  
Leaving my soul empty and alone.

And gone now are my rainbows made  
of gold  
My thoughts no longer turn to days of old  
The times are gone when knights were  
brave and bold  
And I miss seeing rainbows made  
of gold.

L.A. Edwards



# *On Being Late*

*by Sara Bozzelli*

I have discovered that there are many talents I have been blessed with. My wonderful variety of talents varies from some artistic abilities, cooking, and repairing sweepers, to my greatest of all... being late!

This is neither a common talent, nor a mere habit, but a gift. I feel that I have just recently obtained my full potential in this area. It has taken me years of practice to reach the point I am at today. Even now, I find myself slipping, and occasionally arriving on time. These mistakes are disappointing to me, and I realize I must practice more self-discipline. Either I should find some excuse to be late, like making a last minute phone call, or drive around the block until I am sure to be late.

To maintain the rareness of prompt occasions, I have developed several methods for tardiness. Some very effective measures are to prepare dinner five minutes before you planned on leaving the house, and hem your jeans at the time you planned on arriving at your destination.

To help develop my technique, I have designated several "don'ts" as well as "do's"! Don't ever leave the car keys where they can easily be found; other essentials to misplace are umbrellas, scarves, and gloves.

Don't set the alarm clock early, but do hit the "sleep" button for two fifteen-minute periods. Don't go to bed early, but do stay up late, and while you are at it, watch the academy award winning movies at 11:30 on channel four. Don't start the car early on sub-zero mornings, and don't decide to

wear a coat until you are half-way down the street, "and the heater doesn't work." Never plan on leaving ahead of time to a movie to purchase your tickets, but instead, leave just in time to be late for the second show and, of course, wait in line.

Fortunately, lady luck and other outside forces support my talent, yet take away some of my creativity. Convenient circumstances like trains, or police cars pulling along side of you restrain the weight on the pedal to an easy-going 55 m.p.h.

I could expound further on this delayed talent, but as is par, "I am running late."



## *A Special Afternoon*

*by Katrina Knarr*

As I sat in the park amid the bright flowers and the pine trees swaying lazily in the afternoon breeze, I noticed an old man coming toward me. As he came closer to me I could see him more distinctly. He looked to be in his eighties; he had white hair which reminded me of a fresh snow in the wintertime. Upon his back he wore a brown coat which looked as though it had seen many seasons. He came up and sat down beside me, and for a moment I thought maybe he didn't know someone was sitting beside him. Then quite cheerfully he said, "Good afternoon", and I quickly returned

his polite greeting, and we began talking, just about simple things. I asked him if he agreed that it was a beautiful day. He said that he agreed completely. We talked of the colors of the flowers, of the sweet smell and beauty of the tall pine trees, the birds and sunshine and how beautiful they all were.

After what seemed a short while, I asked if he would enjoy a walk around the park; he smiled and said he would. As we walked, he told me how he came everyday to just sit and listen to the sounds of nature. The afternoon was quickly passing and as it passed, I came to have a new friend. The old man was a unique person. When he spoke it was softly but cheerfully. He walked slowly, as on an eternal road, but he walked this road very steadily, somehow knowing something great was at the end of it. He seemed a very peaceful man.

The sun was setting now and as we walked into a clearing, a mother and baby rabbits were munching quietly in front of us. I stopped in total awe and said to the man, "Do you see them? Aren't they beautiful?" He looked slowly at me, a smile on his face, and he said, "Yes, I see them with my heart, but not my eyes." He didn't say it angrily or with jealousy, but just simply and honestly.

As we walked on, it suddenly struck me that this kind old man was blind. As I turned to leave him he softly said, "Thank you for sharing your eyes with me", and I saw his blinded eyes were wet with tears. I turned to start homeward quickly, afraid he would see my tears, but then I realized he couldn't.

# The Glory That Was Camelot

Did ever a robin sing so sweet  
or a diamond shine so bright;  
Did Shakespeare ever put pen to paper  
or Bach create a work to reach  
the height  
That would compare to the glory  
that was Camelot?

Did the hanging gardens in ancient  
Babylon  
have either the beauty or the grace;  
Or can man find splendor enough  
in an Elizabethan gown of satin and  
lace,  
As to compare to the glory  
that was Camelot?

Can excitement be found in the  
travels of Odysseus  
or brave Dante's journey through hell;  
Or can it be found in the flight of  
the arrow.  
shot by the marksman Tell  
That would compare to the glory  
that was Camelot?

There can never be another such  
as she  
to whom the poets have sung  
their praise,  
Nor can mere man ever hope again  
to build upon a dream  
and with it to the heights  
ever rise  
To the glory that was Camelot.

But I can hope and pray, and  
continue doing so  
until my dreams are tattered  
and worn;  
But alas, I know that my prayers  
will be for naught  
and it would be best for me  
to mourn,  
For I know that the glory  
that was Camelot  
will never be reborn.

L. A. Edwards

# Time~

by Fran Long

Alan Kenneth Sollus lolled in bed enjoying the relaxing warmth of the covers as the rain pounded upon the roof over his head. It was nearly twelve o'clock when Alan's slumber was disturbed by the heavy rain and thunder. He could not remember when it had rained so hard for so long, as he sat in bed savoring the silence of the still house. An unexpected chill ran through his body as if for a split second he was drenched in the rain outside. "Strange," he thought; but in another second that momentary dread had passed.

Pleasingly, he remembered the reason for the house's quiet on this gray April morning. His parents, the elite Mr. and Mrs. Jon H. Barlett, Jr., were to attend this evening a formal business dinner-meeting, some sort of mini-convention for executives and their socially prominent wives. The meeting was over three-hundred-miles away which Mr. Barlett had chosen to drive; thus, they had set off early that morning. Alan would have the whole enormous house to himself for more than twenty-four hours since his parents had planned to spend the night at their destination. "Silence in this house is heavenly," concluded Alan to himself, "since it so rarely happens. Today there is no one to talk at me. Poor Mother, she didn't have a chance to squabble with me about anything."

Eventually, he arose and dressed. Hunger was always a good reason to rise and shine. Downstairs in the kitchen, he found that he had been mistaken. If his mother could not talk to him in person, she left a note as if he were a ten-year-old child. It had the same effect that her words would have

carried:

Dearest,

We left at eight o'clock this morning and you were still sleeping. You are going to sleep your life away. We will probably already be at the hotel when you read this. We will call around fourish to see if you are up and if everything is all right.

Love, Mother

Since it was still raining and he had the house to himself, he decided to make good use of this time alone. He worked on a project that he knew, unfortunately, would please his mother. So he could only work on it when she was not around to hang over him. The project was repairing her favorite prayer plaque which had hung in her kitchen all his life until a careless maid shattered it while dusting. He became so wrapped up in the piecing and mending of the porcelain that the day flowed into late evening. Finally, it was back together as a whole object. Alan stared at the plaque in his hand. It was the first time that he had ever really read the prayer which said:

Lord,

Let time pass swiftly for hands  
that are busy;

Let time pass slowly for hearts  
that are linked by love;

Bless my family as we discover  
each other before time ends.

Amen

As he laid the plaque down to dry thoroughly, the same shiver of apprehension shot through Alan again as it had that morning. Glancing to the clock, he was shocked to see that it was past seven as a foreboding feeling crept over him. His mother had not yet called. It was still drizzling rain and

not a nice day to be out driving. "Well, why hasn't she called?...She left that stupid note saying she was going to call. She's not one to say fourish and mean eightish...They took the new car so nothing could be the matter there...or could it? ...Father should have flown, three hundred miles is a long way to drive...Why doesn't that phone ring? ...Maybe I should call somebody?...Who? Who could help?...I never dreamed I'd be waiting for a phone call from Mom and Dad." Alan thought all this to himself as he heard each minute tick away separately without any other sound to disturb the stillness. "Silence in this house," he concluded anxiously, "is hellish."

After a time of staring at the phone, he said aloud, "Damn you, phone, ring." His voice and words had a quality of desperation to them that he had never before expressed.

Turtle-like the minutes expired when suddenly--  
B'ring! B'ring!

Alan's hand shook as he lifted the receiver. "Hello."

"Alan, dear," replied his mother in a steady voice.

Just as the first chill had rushed so many hours ago, relief rushed through his being when he finally heard his mother's voice on the other end.

"Is everything all right, Mother? It's almost nine o'clock. You said you were going to call around fourish," answered Alan, trying to sound peeved at the inconvenience of waiting for a call.

His mother's voice remained steady as she said, "There was an accident."

"Are you and Father okay?"

Steadily his mother continued, "The car was demolished; I got a few bruises but I'm fine," then her voice broke, "Your father was killed."

\* \* \* \* \*

The next day flew by swiftly, for funeral preparations keep a person busy doing this, then

doing that, calling here, then calling there. His mother was surprised at the way Alan took charge. She realized at once that he was no longer a boy, but a man. And she needed to lean upon a man's strength at the moment.

Alan had never talked with so many people as he did the following day at the mortuary. Though he found the courage to speak, he also discovered the wisdom to listen. He learned many things about his long dead father, about his step-father, and his mother which otherwise he might never have known. To himself he wondered, "Why does time have to stop for someone before we realize who they are?" It was good that there were so many others with whom to talk because that left little time to think. Before his father's death, a funeral home had been to him a place where people came to gawk at the dead; but now he knew that it was the only place where people can come to say 'I care' when they cannot express the words. And he knew what it was like not to be able to express in words one's inner feelings. Watching his mother move and converse with old friends and relatives, he saw the ease with which she dealt with people; but when she stood by herself, he saw the tremble as aloneness crept over her. She seemed to disintegrate if silence surrounded her for more than a few minutes. Alan resolved, "I'll help her to understand solitude while she can help me to learn to chat. She can talk eternally."

\* \* \* \* \*

After the service, at home alone with his mother, he remembered the plaque that he had mended just three short days ago. It was the one object that she treasured more than any other. An unknowing person could hardly see where the cracks were, and there were many cracks. Alan wasn't quite sure how to give it back to his mother. She thought that it was lost forever as his father was. His only method for giving it back could be a straight forward approach. She was standing

with her back to the sink facing the wall where the plaque once hung, staring into space. Alan handed her the plaque.

Never before could Alan remember his mom speechless. She always had something to say. But she just stood there with tears in her eyes looking at the prayer and at Alan. Time seemed to pass as slowly as a single tear rolling down his mom's cheek. Never had Alan felt about his mother as he did then. A feeling so warm and close, one that immobilizes speech and movement; yet, binds people together.



*Equiv* by Larry Atwood

Understandably  
I find virtue  
a rambling occupation  
of little use--  
and much dispute--  
and dreadful cogitation

On the other hand  
I look at vice  
in trembling agitation  
and wonder why--  
with much chagrin--  
I never reach satiation

The flails have failed  
and my hair shirt  
is no longer mortification  
but when I lie  
my soul is ruddy  
and beams with gratification

# ~Jim~

by Eileen Herbertz

His name was Jim... and I never knew him.

He wasn't the tallest man in town, but his shoulders were broad and the muscles in his strong arms rippled whenever he moved. Farming was in his blood. Seemingly without effort he could throw a bale of hay across the barn and it would land exactly where he had intended it to every time. His legs weren't long, but they were quick and made him more agile than most men. Perhaps his most outstanding characteristic was his smile. One moment his fine square jaw would be set in concentration and suddenly the next moment a broad grin would break its surface. The smile was warm, just as the man was warm.

He was gentle and understanding, this man. Hard work never bothered him. It was just a part of life that he made the best of. When doing a favor, no one ever had to ask him twice. It was part of his nature to do favors. Giving was what he did best.

Some people would say he was a quiet man. I prefer to call him thoughtful. He could tell a joke as well as the next and his own laughter was hearty and spontaneous.

His name was Jim... and I never knew him... but I loved him just the same. For Jim left a child. His name is Joe... and I know him, his father's son.

# "When Will They Ever Learn"

by Katrina Knatt

"We're here, we're here" came the shouts of the children from the bus. They were all very excited, even though the trip had been a long one, to get their first glimpse of the ocean. Everyone piled out of the bus onto the hot sandy beach. The children took off in all directions, their curiosity overtaking them. As I neared the water's edge an unfamiliar smell caught my attention. I had been to the ocean a few times before, but this time something was different. I gazed out upon the water and I saw what I had smelled. There was a black layer of oil on the water, and as the waves broke on the shore a smell of dead fish and oil made my stomach churn with nausea. So this is the ocean, I thought to myself. My thought was interrupted by the shouts of my schoolchildren down the beach. As I reached them, what I saw made me cry inside. A once beautiful and magnificent seagull lay helpless on the beach. Its wings soiled with oil, the seagull breathed heavily, giving a pitiful call as it tried to fly, but failed. Many of the children were crying; and as I tried to comfort them, the brave seagull, giving one last attempt to fly, fell limply onto the sand, dead. I tried to think of words to explain the gull's death to the children. I could think of none. How could I explain to them something I would never understand. As we walked away, I

knew I would probably not return to the ocean. Later, as the bus started down the highway, a chorus of voices came to my ear. "Where have all the birds gone... when will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?" I turned my face away, so they would not see my tears.

## ~ The Four Seasons ~ A Haiku Sequence

First crocus of spring:  
a green serpent emerging  
from the warming earth

Dry summer lightning  
flickers behind distant clouds...  
where others have rain

In autumn's last days  
my beautiful garden grows  
only stakes and string

I awoke to hear  
wind sharpening my window's  
icicle teeth

Drew Appleby

# Poetry Essay~

## Reflections on the Romantic Expression: Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper" by Mary Ellen Wieland

To value Wordsworth's emotions is sometimes difficult. They are at times disproportionate to the knowledge, values, and anticipations of all classes of men. Wordsworth allowed feeling to give importance to the action and situation. The feelings developed in "The Solitary Reaper" are appropriate and this poem as a whole is successful in conveying these feelings to the reader. Wordsworth invites the sudden emotion to invade and renew his mind instead of reducing the emotion by an act of mind.

This poem is William Wordsworth's reaction to an ordinary incident. A simple scene which others might have passed by produces a strong emotional response in him. He gives the commands:

"Behold, Stop here, O listen!"

He longs for others to share the beauty of this moment with him. His response rather than the image causing it is his subject, yet he keeps the latter in mind and returns to it, especially in the last stanza, so that our attention is drawn to a continuous yet indefinite relationship between mind and image, each of which retains a certain autonomy.

The poem does not directly record a personal memory on the part of the poet. It is a remembrance of a line written in a friend's manuscript. It reflects an analogous fact, that the imagination was revived from an unsuspected source. Such is the beauty and capability of the imagination!

Knowing that his relation to nature is unpredictable--that whether or not he has responded fully--the encounter has a secret life that may strike again and renew his feelings. "The Solitary Reaper" is not a brooding, analytic inquiry into the source of an emotion. The poet does not explain why he responded so strongly to the Highland girl but takes advantage of the strength of his response. After expressing the fact that he is moved, he allows the emotion its own life and delights in new approaches to thought and feeling. The poet is rejoicing in the spirit and life within himself.

Some burden of mystery is present and linked with the initial mood of the poem. Surprise also plays a role in the primary scene. Though the poem begins in surprise--an ordinary sight is modified by an unusual circumstance: the harvester is alone and her song heightens the solitude. Surprise turns into something pensive. There is an inward sinking, as if the mind, having been moved by the Highland girl, is now moved by itself. The mystery lies in that sudden deepening, or doubled shock. The poet himself is made to stop, reflect, and listen, like a traveler who has come upon the scene by chance. An image has singled him out and invited him to enter into a communion.

The poet's feelings, pleasures, and moods can be traced stage by stage. In the second stanza he has already traveled, as if magically, beyond the immediate scene. Upon his return, in stanza three, even the question he asks is significant:

"Will no one tell me what she sings?"

This is a sociable gesture revealing how the song has spread beyond itself to cause this fanciful appeal. His new address to the reader blends outward-directed feeling and inward-going thought.

The third stanza continues to advance through the solitary to the social. It is asked if the song flows for sufferings associated with the past

or does it treat familiar things. This return to the familiar, and from the fixed past to the more open:

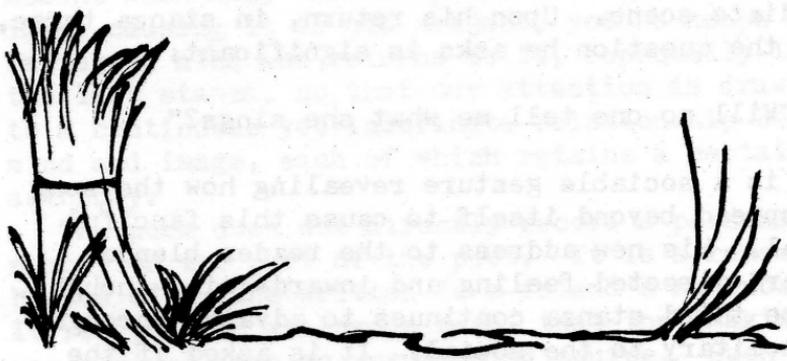
"has been and may be again"

This line is characteristic of Wordsworth, anticipating the eternal note on which the poem rests. The actual in some way is the potential.

The question why the poet is moved is subordinated to the fact that he is moved, that his mind overflows under the influence of the song. While the poem begins with a girl who is alone in her work and in her song, which she sings to herself, she and her song reach across the valley to halt the traveller, who then resumes his journey with music in his heart. The last lines of the poem,

"The music in my heart I bore,  
Long after it was heard no more"

have a literal and a deeper meaning which work together to express response, repercussion, overflow. The poet heard the girl inwardly after he had passed out of actual range of hearing. "The Solitary Reaper" is evidence that the song has survived in his heart.



Can You Breathe the Names  
of Those You Love? (To D.E.)

Can you breathe the names of those you love  
Out into the brisk night air,  
So that they walk beside you, hand-in-hand,  
They they may lighten the load you bear?

Can you see the sleeping shapes among  
the stars,  
Smuggling warmly throughout the sky,  
Emanating the peaceful bliss and serenity  
You once lost hold of and let slip by?

Can you hear the whispers of the  
forgotten ones  
You tried but never touched  
In your endless trials of wandering  
and restlessness,  
While even then their presence was hushed?

Can you see the silent shadows behind  
the trees  
Smile as you quicken your step  
And march with eyes forward past  
them in the dark  
Not noticing, not even caring, if you slip?

Larry Atwood

# *In Honor of Jonathan Livingston*

*by Pam Bertolasi*

I used to sit and watch the seagulls along the beach. All day long I would watch them, for they were more fascinating than any circus I had ever seen. I would watch them as they gathered one by one to play, forming a kaliedoscope of pink and white, catching the sunlight and jewelng the sky.

To me, those birds were the air itself. But that was back then, when I used to watch them all day long. Now I can barely hear them when they call my name from some invisible place. And when strangers stop by my porch to inquire where the best place might be from which to photograph the birds, I pretend to smile, telling them that I don't know. I do not tell them the truth, that the birds will never come again. I know it, of course, for a long time ago it was I who killed them all.

It was my own grandfather who first told me about the gulls. Gradually, it became a habit for me to accompany him down to the docks every summer afternoon. I was allowed to arrange his pencils and ready his paper for him, a sure sign that he found me acceptable in spite of my young age. Then, as if somehow I had melted into the sun like a popsicle, my grandfather would proceed to draw those wonderful creatures. He worked with what I thought was a kind of madness, never talking, only drawing, calculating every feather, every

arch, every swoop of the wing.

And such beautiful drawings they were, magnificent, glorious, worthy to be framed and hung in the galleries of heaven. I think I loved them as much as I loved the old man. That is why, I suppose, that when he died, I collected all the drawings myself and found a safe place for them among my comparatively meager belongings.

I have been told often and by many that it was from my grandfather that I acquired my artistic attributes. I can't say whether this is a correct notion; I imagine his activities were part of what compelled me to pick up a drawing pencil one day and begin my first sketch. Certainly I never maintained to be as good an artist as he was. However, my training was far more sophisticated; I was fortunate to have parents who could afford to send me to an excellent art school in Cincinnati. Four years later I was equally fortunate to receive a degree, and by the age of twenty-five I had become assistant art director for a luxurious advertising agency.

Such it was that I neither went to bed with any exasperations, nor woke up with any hesitations. If I had kept closer contact with my elders, I'm sure they would have flaunted their obligatory pride over their son; had I made any friends, they would have been hopelessly envious. What else could be said except that my life was perfectly monotonous? I, myself, did not notice this, of course, until the day when I dared to depart from my enchanting daily routine by bringing down my one and only box of mementos from its resting place

in the front hall closet. Halfway through the trip to the bottom of the box, I found the drawings of the seagulls. So long forgotten they, like some buried treasure. I wondered if the Renaissance had begun this way. I didn't count, but I conjecture it was only within a matter of seconds that I decided to return to the beach.

My request for a month's vacation caused no problem as usual, and I left two weeks later on a Sunday morning. The sun had only begun to show itself. Occasionally, a set of headlights would appear along the dampened highway, pausing for a moment as if to capture my attention, then slowly dimming into the misty distance behind me. It could have been a lonely drive, but my only thought was that finally I would rid myself of the mechanical migraine that afflicted my existence.

The trip to the the coast took a total of sixteen hours. I had called ahead for a motel reservation, knowing that my grandfather's small house, shut off for so long, would be in no condition to welcome company at such short notice. I planned to move my things out to the beach in the morning, and so went to bed immediately. The sad, white sheets were far too thin to protect one from the early summer chill, the pillow far too flat for comfort. Had I cared to keep track of my spendings, I would have known that the room was not worth what I paid for it. Yet it was only my sleep that I cared about for the moment.

If it had been with childhood curiosity that I first cherished the beach, then it was with sacred reverence that I finally gazed upon it that next morning. Perhaps

it was my hopeful imagination, but it seemed as if nothing about the place had changed. Surely the docks must have begun to rot by now. With the absence of swimmers over the years, it could only be expected that weeds would have grown up in the shallow water along the shore. I felt, however, a sense of eternity, not easily explainable, yet wonderfully haunting.

Although I had brought my grandfather's drawings along with me, I had left behind any false hopes of collaborating upon a repeat performance. It would have been very nearly sacriligious, or at the least, profoundly arrogant. I would paint instead. That first day was perfect for what I intended to accomplish, and so was the next, and the next. I worked with an unexpected vigor, for once not measuring the final product, exalting only in my power of creation. The seagulls were my only companions for several days, a state of affairs I found to be satisfactory. Then, on Tuesday of the second week, the walls of my kingdom were blasted through, my castle pillaged. It was the day I met Katherine.

"Long for Kate," was the first thing she said after presumptuously introducing herself.

"I see you're a painter," was the second thing she said. Then Katherine Jennifer Mitchell, who was only seventeen, wore long brown hair and blue jeans, and who was staying with her parents two miles up the beach in the old Wheeler cottage, proceeded to critique my work.

I was utterly appalled, but I found my compensation by informing her that she was no expert on art.

"I know," she replied nonchalantly. "I was only trying to sound impressive. It's a nice painting, really. I don't have an artistic bone in my body."

Obviously, I thought.

\*\*\*\*\*

"How often have you visited the beach?" I was asking her several days later.

Kate shrugged. "As long as I can remember. We used to stay at one of the resort motels, but last winter we heard about the cottage going up for rent so we decided to try it out this summer. It's spiffy enough. I think so anyway."

"Spiffy? I haven't heard that for a while. Rather archaic, isn't it?"

"I know. About as bad as 'peachy keen'."

"You were just trying to be impressive again, right?"

"Right." Her laugh reminded me of the flight of a seagull. "I've found that if one wants to be good at being impressive, a summer vacation at the beach is a nice opportunity to practice."

I prepared to mix more paint. "Do I detect a hint of sorrowful remorse in that statement?"

"Well," she said, "it's not that I don't like the beach. I really do. I enjoy coming here. It's really wonderful and beautiful. But...well you know how frumpy parents can be. I never have anything to do."

"And I suppose I am nothing?"

"You," she laughed again, "you are a

super-talented painter who because he might be famous one day is going to give me his autograph. And you'd better watch it, because if you're not careful you're going to get blue paint in with the red."

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm not exactly sure when it began, or even why, but one morning I actually found myself waiting for Kate to arrive. I would set up my equipment in our favorite spot at the far north end of the cove, away from the docks. Like some kind of saintly ritual I would mix and stir, thin and prime. Then I would wait.

On one such morning I had to wait slightly longer. When Kate finally appeared at the top of the rise, I understood why. She carried with her a rather tattered picnic basket; I admitted to her later that the egg salad was the best I had ever tasted, and that the chocolate cookies were exquisite.

"Compliments of my mother," she replied, benefitting from my generous insistence that she devour the last one. "I can't cook either."

"How big of you to confess to such an awful crime." Thinking that she might interpret the remark as an insult, I added, "But don't worry of course. Someday you'll be the most splendid cook in the entire universe."

The paintbrush that Kate had been twirling between her fingers suddenly stopped. It was a deadly gesture, for at that moment it seemed to me that life itself had stopped. Kate looked up at me and on her

face was a look that I had never seen before, nor, I was certain, would I ever see again.

"Someday," she whispered, "yes, someday."

The seagulls had long begun to gather; in the twining silence which followed, I realized my neglect of their presence over the past days. Kate, too, took notice of them, as if by magic she had read my thoughts. One creature in particular caught her attention. The bird seemed to be dancing, or perhaps it was conducting the seashell symphony. Whatever, the bird's antics caused Kate to laugh in her wonderfully familiar manner, temporarily easing my guilty conscience.

"I rather gather m'lady, that you find these minstrels to be thoroughly amusing."

"Oh, not so side-splitting as you, my faithful knight."

"Faithful, but you'd hate to have to depend on me to rescue you from Fluff the magic dragon, or whatever his name was, right?"

"Puff, you goon, Puff. I think you better stick to painting. Hey, why don't you paint the seagulls? I think that would be the neatest thing!"

I smiled to myself. I had not shown Kate my grandfather's drawings, though I was quite sure she would have been equally thrilled. Feeling inadequate to explain the situation clearly, I merely said, "I appreciate the inspiration, but I believe I'll stick to boats and waves."

"Well then, I hope you get seasick."

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Unfortunately, my vacation was drawing to an end. As if to remind me of this detestable fact, a rainy spell set in, postponing further work outdoors. Where before I would have welcomed the solitude of the old house, I now fell victim to a dreary irritation. Had I not pondered over Kate's suggestion, I truly think I would have gone mad. As it was, I finished the painting in two days. The rain continued for two more; and when the golden warmth finally appeared again, it was all I could do to suppress my boyhood impulses to race down to the beach.

It was with a fresh anxiousness that I waited for Kate this day. It did not bother me that she was late. I was almost thankful for her absence, as it gave me an opportunity to put the finishing touches on the painting. When, however, she did not appear after three days, I took it upon myself to pay a call to her own humble abode.

I found her sunning on a small patch of sand behind Tim Wheeler's cottage, a structure which, as a boy, I had seen a total of one time. Kate saw me approaching from a distance; to describe her reaction as rejoicefully elated would have been an understatement.

"I was wondering when you'd get here," she scolded. "I knew you didn't have a phone so I couldn't call you."

The same observant Kate. "Obviously you couldn't," I replied. "May I inquire what dastardly deed I committed to deserve being stood up three times?"

"Oh nothing, silly. I wasn't feeling

well, that's all. I got over it quick but...well you know how frumpy parents can be. They called the good old family doctor long distance. He said it would be best if she remained inactive for several days. And that's a direct quote. Ugh! He makes me feel like a germ."

"Such colorful interpretation. I suppose, then, that I could not interest you in a short walk?"

"How about to the front porch? It's getting awfully hot out here."

I don't know what prompted me to such action, but in one gracious gesture I offered Kate my arm. She took it gratefully, and like any southern gentleman would do, I escorted my belle to the porch.

In the shade of the overhang I discovered what the sun had been able to hide. Kate was pale, her face listless, her hair lifeless. Only her eyes seemed untouched, and they told me now that she was oblivious to the contents of my thoughts.

"Hey, you finished 'Cove in Morning Mist'," Kate philosophised, indicating the manly-wrapped package under my arm. I had nearly forgotten the main purpose of my visit.

"It's for you." I handed her the painting. "But it's not 'Morning Mist'." I suddenly felt as though I was a spectator at the unveiling of Michelangelo's 'David'. Kate's reaction couldn't have been more joyous.

"You did it! I'm so proud! Now I really want your autograph. Oh it's really nice!"

"Well I'm glad you like it."

"Oh I do. Seagulls are my favorite."

They're really beautiful birds, don't you think?"

"HMMMMMM."

"But they are. They don't have a care in the world. It's like they live only with dreams."

"I suppose living with dreams is okay."

"But it is," she persisted. "Dreams are everything. Even if you're rich and famous, if you don't have dreams, then you really don't have anything at all, do you?"

That was the moment in my life when I first found myself at a loss for words. Perhaps Kate sensed my discomfort, I don't know. I suspected, however, that she had astounded herself even more; for immediately after this remark, her eyes shot to the floor.

"Come on," I said, nervously lifting up her chin. "Do you really like the painting?"

"Really, I do."

"Really, really?"

"Yes, really really." She paused. "Thank-you...thank-you very, very much Danny." Her eyes searched for the floor again, but I wouldn't allow it.

"Look at me Kate." And she did, with those crying eyes of hers that did not shed a tear. Beautiful eyes. I gazed into them for what seemed like eternity, until I finally realized.

It was a quick, almost invisible moment, but I had read her secret.

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The fire sputtered and lurched, arguing between life and death. I leaned over and added more newspaper. The night

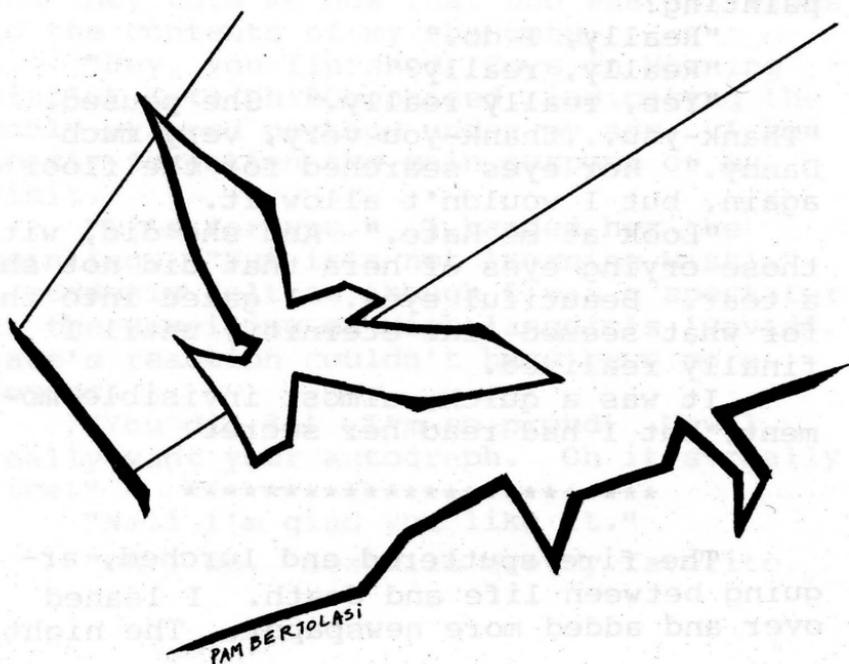
was not unusually chilly, but I had felt a sudden cold. I had thought I would enjoy drawing next to the fireplace, yet my pencils remained untouched, my paper empty.

Gradually, drowsiness defeated me. When I woke, I found the fire had once again begun to die out. The wood and newspaper were gone, so improvising, I hunted in my portfolio for any scraps that might be available. The first papers I drew out were my grandfather's drawings.

I studied them again, as I always did, but I knew that they were no longer mine. They were her drawings, they always had been.

Perhaps she was right, I thought, perhaps dreams were everything. Perhaps without their dreams the seagulls wouldn't be able to fly.

I took one last look at the drawings, then one by one I laid them into the fire.



# *The Autopsy*

*by Larry Wood*

How shall I describe such a horrid sight? The heavy shelves ranged against each of the four walls, from floor to ceiling, displaying their burdens in a most ghastly, brazen manner. No unoccupied niche for the eye to rest upon. No empty corner of the room in which to escape the stare of the broken spines. Row upon row upon row of books of all sizes and shapes and colors. Some of the more aged specimens placed behind glass, creating the illusion of their rising and falling in the reflections from it as you pace back and forth. Millions and millions of yellowing, crumbling pages filled with words--dead words. Endless combinations of sentences composed of words--dead words. Dead, I say! Dead words!

Lately I've felt that I've been losing my nerve. Maybe I should pursue some other profession, but, ah, too late now for further reverie--here comes Dr. Schofield.

"Good morning, Nathaniel."

"Morning, Doctor."

"Well, I hear they've unearthed a large cache of books at one of the diggings. Looks as though we'll be busy awhile, eh?"

"Hopefully"--though the word expressed no hope and the doctor seemed to notice this judging from the wary glance he gave me.

"What is it, Nathaniel? The little wife troubling you again? Try to give poor Lisabeth a little time to get used to you. After all, you are a bit curious what with that tallow face of yours and those indelible furrows along your forehead. You make one think of a worm sometimes" (here he goes again, hauling out that tired old joke which never

fails to amuse him) "a bookworm, as the Ancients used to call such chaps. Heh, heh, heh. Well, enough of this tomfoolishness. To work! To work!"

He sat down heavily behind the desk, seized pen and paper, and thus we began the dissection.

"Meter?"

"Iambic."

"Feet?"

"Four."

Iambic tetrameter, he scrawled.

"Rhyme scheme?"

"a, b, c, b, d, e, f, e, g, h, i or g..."

"Tut, tut, tut."

"...h, j, k, l, k."

"Metonymy?"

"'holy Lamb of God,' 'Countenance Divine,' perhaps 'Satanic Mills.'"

"'Satanic Mills' harumph! Onomatopoeia?"

"None."

"Synecdoche?"

"None."

"Litotes?"

"None."

"Seems that we've run upon a barren harvest, eh, Nathaniel? Well, how about imagery?"

"'...my bow of burning gold,' 'my arrows of desire.'"

"Gracious me--spoke too fast."

"'...my chariot of fire.'"

"What ho! What ho! Splendid! Simply splendid!"

"'Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand.'"

"Ah, the good old sleeping sword. Superbly meaningless to us, you know, but quite a powerful nostrum to the Old Ones."

Such was a portion of my day. It dragged out much longer and when at last it came time to go home, it was with feverish haste that I closed the door behind me. Walking down the quiet village streets is usually very relaxing for me; however, tonight those lines rang through my head like the refrain of a boisterous drinking song.

"I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand."

and again,

"I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand."

Bah! Damned words! Damned dead and ancient  
words! Damn them! Damn...

"I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand."

## *The Death of Nol*

*by Larry Atwood*

Nol was dancing in the mouth of the cave. He had not done that for many times of darkness past. He cried and sang at the great white god which looked down at us from its perch in the sky and Fa and Lok were full of fear. We all felt dread. Nol is one that is not us. He does not weep when the gnawing hunger is upon him. He does not fear the earth-moving horned gods. Once the gods caught him and tore his foot. We found him in the glade singing. Fa made us bring him back though we were afraid. In the cave we saw darkness and felt he was no more. He was quiet and struggled many

## *The Death of Nol (cont'd.)*

times with the Evil Ones. Fa brought him berries and herbs. We gave of our warmth in the darkness and awoke when he struggled. He came back from the dark and was Nol once more. With a forked stick he began to hunt again. Lok laughed at him hob-hobbing after rabbits and lizards. Nol too laughed.

Once Nol sat silent by the fire. He rubbed his legs with the black burned wood. Some was on his fingers. He touched the wall. We squatted, watching him. He waved his fingers and made many things. Lok laughed and fell in the fire. We pushed him out and laughed. Many things did Nol do on the wall and we became silent and slept. Nol did not hunt. He made things. Great angry beasts out of the wood and clay. And many men fighting the beasts. We did not laugh. Ke threw a stick at the beast. Nol smiled. We stoned the beast and sang. Nol went out of the cave and pointed to the beast's ground. We danced and felt the strength of the gods behind us. We hunted the beast and killed it.

Nol smiled and made many things. We stoned the beasts and killed them. Nol had strength with his things. He led us and was a god. He sang to the great white god who disappears. He did not laugh. Fa makes that it is because Ke is no more. The angry beast turned on him and he could not run. The strength of the things is no more. Nol will be no more when the light comes.

We must find another not like us.

# Just Today

by Paula Giesting

In our family I was always considered the "tomboy." This summer I've become somewhat domesticated; I now help with the yard, gardens, and the ever present housework, instead of the usual corn, soybeans, and the ever present chores and milking. Just today I did something I haven't done for a long while; I rode on our combine. Everything around me took on an old, yet all new glow. As the tractor roared and the combine rambled working to harvest the wheat, I looked down. The guide rod conducted the wheat in, seeming to say, "This is all we can take this round, but we'll be around again," while the paddles of the reel seemed to scurry the wheat in, like a mother hurrying her children in from play on a stormy day.

It all came back; my mind wandered just like when I was a child. I remembered it all, the first time I sat on my father's lap driving the tractor, riding on the back of the corn wagons, doing the milking all by myself for the very first time.

I closed my eyes, listened to the sounds all around me, took a deep breath, and thought, "This is what COUNTRY is all about!"

I watched brother Lee steadily maneuver the combine with his faithful tractor. I looked at his face; it was young, yet worn, and it glowed with a special kind of love--love for farming. I pictured him in forty years from now, looking almost exactly like my father. Maybe Lee's hair is a little longer, but they both have the same look of determination in their eyes, and the same glow of love on their faces. I couldn't help but smile.

The sun began to set over the half harvested field; the wheat began to sway with the evening breeze, as Lee drove our harvest home. I let my

eyes wander around our farm; corn stretching up toward the sky, alfalfa almost ready for its second cutting, and finally to where the hustle and bustle of farm life takes place, the barnyard, with its two tall silos, a huge barn, the machinery shed, and all the other buildings. They seemed to be corralled and watched over by the house where I grew up.

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#### Editors' Note:

In an effort to provide the maximum opportunity for literary expression to those students with the talents and guts to display it, we are publishing two issues of the Fioretti this year. Prior to this issue there was some question (and a bit of seething resentment) as to why we had chosen to exclude photographs. The major reason was the ghastly expense involved in reproduction. Secondly, we felt the space could be amply filled by publishing someone who might otherwise have been bumped by another sepia study of the eaves of the Allison mansion. Hopefully, you can, in some measure, agree with our aims and applaud the product. If not, abuse us to your heart's delight. In any case, the deadline for submissions for the next issue is March 23.

The Editors

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