

Rollins College

Rollins Scholarship Online

The Flamingo

6-1-1940

Flamingo, June, 1940, Vol. 14, No. 4

Rollins College Students

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.rollins.edu/flamingo>

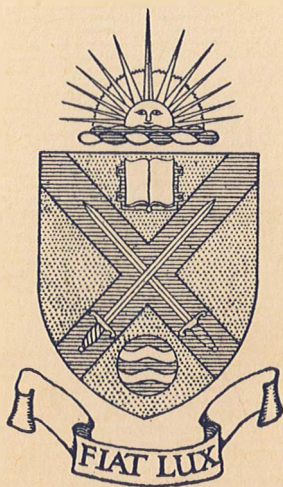


Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

10.4
ROLLINS COLLEGE LIBRARY
WINTER PARK, FLORIDA

THE FLAMINGO

JUNE, 1940



ROLLINS COLLEGE
WINTER PARK, FLORIDA

THE FLAMINGO

ROLLINS COLLEGE



Vol. 14

WINTER PARK, FLORIDA

No. 4

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

LOUIS B. BILLS

Editor

JESS GREGG

Associate Editor

DOTTY BRYN

Assistants

CHARLOTTE CHAPMAN, JANE BALCH, GLAD EVOY

MAJOR HARMON, *Advertising Commissioner*

ALFRED SWAN, *Business Manager*

EDWIN GRANBERRY, *Advisor*

CONTENTS

Story

April Brought No Gladness	3
JESS GREGG	
The Lunch	17
SALLY McCASLIN	
The Music Teacher Goes Home	45
FAITH ILLAVA	

	<i>Play</i>	
A Suit of Clothes	-----	29
JOHN WILLIS		
	<i>Article</i>	
Conception	-----	37
NANCY LOCKE		
	<i>Poetry</i>	
The Grape, Souring	-----	16
PEGGY HUDGINGS		
"Hepsibah"	-----	26
DOROTHY BRYN		
Once Upon a Dream	-----	27
DOROTHY BRYN		
The Holy One	-----	28
GLAD EVOY		
Dream of Death	-----	28
JANE BALCH		
Man and Woman	-----	36
ELIZABETH MILLER		
Requiem	-----	43
DEJAY SHRINER		
"Two Ghosts"	-----	44
JANE BALCH		
Sleep	-----	55
JANE BALCH		

APRIL BROUGHT NO GLADNESS

JESS GREGG

"ONCE upon a time, a long time ago" — began Christine, perfectly confident that Peter knew the story by heart, anticipating every word before she uttered it. Not only had he heard it read aloud countless times, but the pages were grubby and a little tired, where he had earnestly challenged the intricacies of print. However, the warm little head snuggled at her side made the reading a pleasure. And, too, it took her mind off those ever recurring thoughts.

" . . . there was a little girl and her name was Cinderella—" How Peter's brown eyes pounced on the name, his whole being devouring the fantasy. Funny little boy with his intense mouth and uninhibited hair that swooped to his eyes like a ski jump. He looked like his father—

" . . . so-called because she always sat in the cinders and soot of the hearth . . ." It was strange, she'd never thought of it that way. Did she love Peter because he looked like his father, or the other way around? She hadn't liked either of them at first. Thought Peter a precocious, over-impressionable brat, and his father rather too sombre, too morbidly drenched with memories.

"I was hired as governess to the child. Now it looks like I'll be nursie to them both," she had ranted to her sister. But that was three years ago, and you couldn't hate Peter and you couldn't hate David Paget. No, you couldn't hate David Paget.

" . . . Her mother had died when she was a baby, and she had to take care of her father . . ." What it was that had first drawn her to David, Christine did not know. Maybe it was the patience, dominant in his personality. Maybe it was his loneliness, which, God knows, she could understand and share. Maybe it was because she was thirty-nine and he treated her as she had forgotten a man could.

" . . . Who was a very good man, indeed. But one sunny morning . . ." She had tried to keep it buried deep beneath the waves of her consciousness, where she wouldn't come across it too often. "But you can't put your heart in your pocket and forget it," she said to her sister.

"You can do anything when you have to," Olive had replied.

"If you're suffering so, Chris, why don't you leave the place? There's a marvelous position open next door to mine."

"Olive, listen." She'd taken her sister's hand. "I've never had anything real in my life. Always on the outside looking in! You remember when we were children. Watching other children having fun at that private school. Watching them thru the wire fence."

"I know," said Olive softly.

"Then working through college — and for what? To live in other people's homes, taking care of other people's children, watching them having fun, living beautifully. I want more than that! And I've found it here."

"There's just as high a fence here, my dear."

"But I know the password now. Oh Olive, I feel something inside me for the first time in my life, and I won't give it up. Do you think I'm being sentimental-sixteen?"

"I think you're in for more unhappiness, dear," said Olive, tugging on her gloves. "I wish you'd come with me . . ."

But that was Olive. She'd never been in love and how could she know what Christine felt. Besides, maybe David had sensed it. Maybe that was why he had gone around for the past weeks with some secret so blatantly advertised in his smile. Maybe that was why he had once again mentioned that Peter needed a real mother. And hadn't she been a mother to Peter? To Peter's father too.

"Why have you stopped reading, Christie?" demanded the gamin face pushed close to hers.

"Had I stopped, Peter? I must have been thinking of something else."

"What?" demanded Peter, who was never content unless adding an interrogation point to her statements.

"I was thinking what a lot of questions my little boy could ask," she said, burying her face in his unruly loft of hair.

"A very fetching family scene," said a warm voice beside them. It was David in the doorway, with that same crinkly smile that was etched on her memory forever. Peter ran to him, throwing his arms around his father's thighs.

"We'll play later, Peter boy," David said. "I want to talk with Christie for a while — that is, if the story book can wait—"

Maybe this was it! Oh, this had to be it. This was the time, with April golden and ripe in the gardens. He had to tell her today. Once, ages ago, she'd hoped it would be in a moonlit

conservatory, and she'd be wearing something soft and white that hid her sharpness beautifully. But now at last it had come, and she could laugh at those silly lines she'd written in college:

—*And April brought no gladness*

Cruel April brought me sadness.

"Hurry back, Christie," Peter shouted down the stairs after them. "If Daddy talks too long, tell him to stop, 'cause I want to hear the rest of the story."

"Let's walk around the lake, shall we?" he said. "There's something on my mind."

They stepped out into the bright afternoon, where in a setting of pine trees and shadows, the lake shores embraced an imitation sun. Crackling over the pungent pine needles, they walked while he seemed to shuffle his thoughts. She glanced up to see if, in the luxuriant silence, he had heard her heart beat. But of course that was adolescent nonsense, and she was being a fool.

"I need scarcely tell you this, Miss McBribe," he suddenly began. "You yourself must have felt it. Peter has a beautiful home, and these grounds and the lake make a magnificent playground for a six year old boy. Yet for a long time, I've felt he needs more than just a lovely home. He needs the stability of family life."

"You're quite right," agreed Christine, trying not to sound too vehement.

"Peter is so — so impressionable, so imaginative, so high strung — just like his mother was. She could handle him, but she's gone. And I — well, I'm not much good."

"Peter adores you," said Christine loyally.

"I know. But now he's growing older, I realize I can't be both father and mother to him. He needs the background and tenderness a mother can give him."

She tried to look casual, but the palms of her hands were damp, and one finger kept agitating a hangnail on its neighbor.

"Here's what I have in mind," he was saying. "You remember while Peter was having tonsils, a young lady, Wynn Stuart, visited us? I've asked her to be my wife, and come here to be a mother to Peter. What do you think?"

"*Wynn Stuart! and not me!*" careened thru her being. "Wynn Stuart! He's asking her, and not me. He doesn't want me. He's asking Wynn Stuart and not me!"

Words whirled and tangled themselves in her brain, but they

were not the words she was saying. A smile torturing her face, she was mumbling something about "I'm so happy for you." And then her voice said something she had not planned.

"Does Peter like her?"

"He's never met her. But I'm sure he'll love her. Frankly . . ." He grinned at her. ". . . I don't see how he could help himself. However, I'm going to give him a chance to find out. I'm going to bring her down here for a week before we're married."

Noticing her strained expression, he forgot his smile an instant.

"Of course, this will in no way affect your position here. I want you to keep right on with Peter. He's terribly fond of you — we all are."

She didn't reply, but tried to make a smile.

"I'm leaving tomorrow," he continued. "We'll be back in about two weeks. I'd like you to have the house spick and span for us. And Miss McBride — would you start checking Peter's table manners a bit? He eats like a little troll."

"I've tried, Mr. Paget. But Peter doesn't do anything well he doesn't want to do. I'll try again, however," she said crisply. "Now if you'll excuse me — it's getting chilly out here."

Senselessly, she trudged up the back stairs, and pushed open the door to Peter's room.

"Why were you gone so long?" he demanded with mock solemnity.

Christine didn't answer. Mutely she sat down in her customary chair, taking the book Peter thrust into her hands.

"Go on, Christie. Go on, read! We were where the father married again." How the silly words danced up her backbone! "Well, I'll have to tell you the story if you won't read it to me," he announced, watching from the corner of his eye to see if this brought any reaction. But Christine sat staring at the wall.

"And so Cinderella's father married a woman who had two daughters," Peter decided, "and they were awful ugly. And her step mother was ugly too, and real cruel . . ."

Suddenly Christine caught his two hands in hers.

"Yes, Peter, yes. The step-mother was a cruel woman. A cruel, cruel, wicked woman, Peter, like all step-mothers . . ."

And she pulled him to her, crying without sound.

Monday came and Tuesday, then the two weeks were up.

The whole day seemed to conspire toward the persistent tick of the clock, and the scrape of the rake over the garden paths. Their relentless rhythms formed a chant in her head and though she tried to dam it up with new thoughts, it seeped back with sadistic precision.

"Today she comes. Today she comes. Today she comes. . ."

Restlessly, she turned on the radio *fortissimo*, and let the warm bright music pour over her, defeating the chant in her brain. But there was no antidote for the thoughts that pounded at her.

"Remember how pretty Wynn is?" taunted her memory. "And how young? Everyone admires her pretty hair, her charm and her youth. No one notices you."

Her fingers laced themselves more tightly.

"I don't care," she countered. "Maybe I am tall and sharp. But my eyes are beautiful, and Peter loves me. He loves me more than he does anyone else. Just let Miss Wynn Stuart and her pretty clothes and auburn hair do what she can. Peter will never love her as he does me."

She snapped off the radio angrily, and once again the rake-clock duo waved the baton to her mind.

As the horn sounded in the driveway, the dogs romped to the door, whimpering and scratching at the panels, until the butler hurriedly let them out. Christine walked to the door, and stood there, a smile grafted to her face. David came up the path greeting the butler, smiling as he came toward her.

"Hello Christine," he called heartily. "Glad to see you."

And then Christine saw her. She was walking in front of the bag-laden butler, the sunlight exploring her bright hair. So trim in her tailored clothes, with all those orchids. They would wilt soon anyway, those orchids.

"Shouldn't you carry me over the threshold of your home," said Wynn, her young laugh slicing thru Christine.

"That's after the ceremony, you hussy," David returned, kissing her chin. "Darling, you remember Miss McBride."

"How nice to see you again," Wynn said, her face glowing with happiness and youth.

"I hope you'll be very happy here," Christine lied.

"Where's Peter?" demanded David and Wynn simultaneously. They stopped to laugh, and he squeezed her hand.

"He was here a minute ago," Christine said hurriedly. "But

you know Peter. He can't be still a minute. He's probably up stairs. I'll go call him."

He was in his room, standing by the window.

"Peter dear," Christine said, "Daddy's back with your step-mother."

"I don't want to see her," said Peter, almost imperceptibly.

"But dearest — she'll be angry with you —"

"Hello Peterkins!" His father walked into the room and caught the little boy up in his arms. "Peter, you remember what I told you at the train? Well I've brought you home that present." He motioned for Wynn to come in. "I've brought you a new mommy."

Smiling, Wynn walked up to him and leaned over to kiss him. Peter drew back, turning his face away. Bewildered, Wynn glanced at his father for help.

"Peter," David explained, "This is to be your new mommy. Daddy thought that you and he —"

"I don't want her," Peter cried furiously.

"Peter!" His father's lips tightened momentarily. Then gently he let his son down. "Boy, don't make me ashamed of you."

"Never mind, Dave," said Wynn softly. "It's all right. Don't force me on him. He'll come to me when he wants to."

"Didn't he understand, Miss McBribe?" David asked quietly.

"I don't know, Mr. Paget. From the beginning he has resented the idea of having a new mother," Christine whispered back.

"I really can't understand the boy." He closed his hand over Wynn's apologetically. "Maybe you'll have to woo him as you did me."

They went to the door, and David turned to the little boy.

"I want to have a talk with you, Peter. Come down to my study in a little while."

A few minutes later, Peter paused before his father's library door then went in. David pulled him up on to his knee.

"Peter boy, you made Daddy very unhappy just now."

Peter nuzzled into his father's necktie.

"You want to make me happy, don't you?" his father continued.

Peter nodded.

"Then I want you to be nice to the girl Daddy's going to marry."

"I don't like her," said Peter resolutely.

"How can you say that? You don't know her. What makes you think you don't like her, son?"

Peter reflected a moment, then brushed his cheek into his father's crisp shirt front.

"Daddy — Daddy, tell her to go away. I don't like her. Please, Daddy, tell her to go and I'll be good."

"Peter, I can't. We'll all be happy here, if you let us. Will you?"

David tilted-up his boy's small face and smiled into his eyes. Peter grinned back. "Will you be nice?" his father repeated.

Peter climbed to the floor and ran over to the door, turned to his father and made a face, then without answering, ran from the library.

"Daddy says she loves me," he told Christine.

"Of course he told you that, dear. He loves her so much. And you've got to love her too, because she's your mother. She's the one with Daddy now. She's so lovely, I imagine he can't take his eyes off her, and she's so young. And when you see her tonight at the table, it'll be just like she's your mother. With your own mommy's table cloth in front of her, eating from your own mommy's silver, holding hands with your daddy, and all of them belonging to her. You'll belong to her too."

"No I won't" Peter cried.

"You'd better be nice to her, or she'll be angry, and that'll make Daddy hate you, because Daddy loves her more than anyone in the world."

"More than — me, Christine?"

For a moment she hugged him close to her hard body, and her grey eyes were compassionate.

"Don't you worry, dearest," she said gently. "Christie loves you anyway."

Dinner was a cruel preview of eternity. Somehow all attempts at chatter failed, and only the candle light in the baroque candelabra showed consistent expression of gaiety. To David and Wynn spoken conversation was not necessary. None the less, they were conscious of Peter's silence.

"Aren't we the magpie tonight," said Wynn.

"I'm taught to speak only when I'm spoken to," said Peter in a monotone.

"Peter!" warned his father.

"But Daddy, I don't have anything to say," Peter replied.

"All right, boy," David said kindly. He smiled at Peter and then at Wynn. Wrinkling her nose, she smiled back at him, the love shining in her eyes as bright as the candle light. He reached over to touch her hand, when Peter suddenly interrupted.

"Daddy, I need a hanky."

David took the immaculate handkerchief from his pocket and tossed it to his son with a grin.

"I've never yet known a little boy who had a hanky," laughed Wynn.

"I'm not a little boy," said Peter. "I'm six and a half, going on seven."

"I'm sorry, Peter," she apologized. "You see, it's been seventeen years since I was six and a half, going on seven."

"Oh dear, oh dear," moaned David. "I feel a veritable grey-beard."

"Thirty-one, my dear, is indeed ancient," Wynn laughed. "And that reminds me of a poem, which you can't get out of hearing."

The butler set her plate in front of her, and she picked up her knife and fork, as she sought the first line. After a minute of waiting, David looked up, noting the bewilderment on her face.

"What's the matter?" he said. "Forgotten it?"

"It's nothing," she said.

He looked at her shrewdly, suddenly noting the dull kitchenware knife and fork she held.

"Very picturesque," he said with an embarrassed laugh, "but not particularly appropriate for your first evening here. Alexander," he addressed the butler, "will you get Miss Stuart some silver, please?"

Bewildered, the butler took the utensils from Wynn.

"I can't understand it, Mr. Paget," he murmured. "I set this table myself, and I'm sure it was all right."

"And it is all right," said Wynn graciously. "The food looks so delicious I could eat it with an egg beater if I had to."

The pantry door swung close, to be reopened almost immediately by a smiling Alexander.

"Cook says it must be one of Mr. Peter's pranks. He borrowed the knife and fork from the kitchen before dinner."

As the door closed again, David turned to his son.

"I think you owe us a little explanation, Peter," he said.

"Let's talk about it tomorrow or the next day," suggested Wynn. "I'm sure it was just one of Peter's jokes."

Peter's sullen expression did not particularly verify her remark.

"Son," said David, suddenly, "if you can't be pleasant, you'd better run up to your room."

"I don't care," said Peter suddenly.

"Peter, you promised to be nice." The little boy did not answer. "See here, young man," his father's voice was very quiet. "I think this has gone far enough. You may stay in your room until you can be nice."

Peter rose, trying without much success to control the emotions that tumbled over his face. He glared at Wynn furiously, then bolted from the room.

Christine hurried up as soon as dinner was over. Peter's room was dark, and she could hear his muffled crying.

"You didn't eat much dinner, dearest," she said, "so I've brought you some bread and milk."

"She made him do it," Peter wept. "I hate her. I wish she was dead."

"Darling, darling," hushed Christine. "That's no way to talk about your mother."

"But she's not my mother," the child whimpered.

"She'll tell Daddy on you if you're naughty anymore, and what will he say to that?"

Peter surveyed his wet pillow ruefully.

"I don't think Daddy likes me very much anymore. He likes her. He doesn't really like me anymore, does he Christine?" he begged, tugging at her hands.

She kissed his swollen face and pushed back the damp swoop of hair from his eyes.

"It's not that he doesn't love you, Peter. But he loves her. She's your step-mother."

Peter began to sob again, hiding his head beneath the pillow until the only way she knew he wept, was by the quivering of his body. Gently she stroked his back, her eyes clouded with sadness.

The second day passed, and still Peter stubbornly kept to his room, seeing no one but Christine, who brought him food and sympathy.

"Christine will know how to handle him," said David Paget,

pacing the floor. Wynn nodded and turned, looking out into the sun-hungry April garden.

"Tell him he can come out if he wants to, Christine," she said. "He won't have to see me if he doesn't want to."

"I've told him that, Miss Stuart," Christine replied, surveying Wynn's dressing table, a festival of perfume bottles and dainty cut-glass. "But he only says he won't come out until — if you'll pardon me — until you have left."

"By God," exploded his father, his patience cracking at last, "what he needs is a good spanking. I should have given him one in the first place." He ran his hand thru his hair. "I must have been a pretty rotten parent, or this couldn't have happened—"

"Don't, Dave," said Wynn gently. "Let me talk to him. Maybe I can ease away whatever bitterness is eating out his heart."

"It won't do any good, Miss Stuart," Christine said briskly. "Why, he won't even listen to me. He'll just work himself into a fury if he sees you."

"If you don't mind, I'll try anyway," Wynn replied.

The two women stood looking at each other, then Christine, with a little smile, opened the door for the young woman.

Peter turned from the window seat, as Wynn entered his room, staring silently, then looking away.

"Peter," she said, her voice intimate, friendly, "your Daddy tells me you like stories. I know lots of them. I used to tell them to the children next door."

Peter shifted in the window seat, but he did not look at her.

"Or if you'd like," she continued, "I'll read you some stories. You see? I brought you this book all the way from New York."

The little boy did not answer, but his eyes strained at the corners to catch a glimpse of the book she held. It was big and red, and she fanned it back and forth alluringly. Slowly he turned his head and looked straight at it. Encouraged, Wynn shuffled the pages, showing the bright illustrations. He leaned forward.

"What shall I read, Peter?" she tempted. "Hans and His Luck? Snow White and Rose Red? Cinderella —"

At that, Peter looked up sharply, suspiciously.

"Go away," he mumbled. "I don't like you very well."

"Peter, please —" Wynn dropped the book, and sat down beside him. "All this is making your Daddy very unhappy."

"We were happy before you came," he accused.

"We can be happier now, if you let us be, my dear." She tried to take his hand. "Oh Peter, why won't you let me in? Why won't you let me come near?"

"Because you're cruel and wicked. And I don't like you."

Biting her lip, Wynn got up and started for the door. Then remembering the book, she stooped to pick it up. Peter, realizing the new treasure was lost, suddenly kicked it, sending it skidding across the floor, crashing half open into the wall.

Straightening up, Wynn marched up to him, her young cheeks crimson. She looked into his eyes for a second, then slapped his face with all the power her anger could muster. Peter looked at her aghast, then screaming, threw himself on the window seat.

"I guess I've ruined things once and for all," she said helplessly to David a few minutes later. "I slapped him."

"Maybe it did him some good," David murmured, furrow-browed.

"I'm afraid I'm not bringing about that spirit of charm and love to this house, am I darling?" she said, pushing away a tear with the bend of her wrist. "Maybe we'd better give it up."

"Don't even talk of such things, darling. After all, this hasn't been exactly what a bride-to-be would expect at her new home," he replied, pulling her to him. "I'll tell you what, Wynn. Let's leave it all for a while. You go up and take a rest, then we'll go out for a canoe ride. How'd that be?"

She squeezed his hand, and then passing Christine, ran up the stairs. David turned to the governess as she came in.

"I've got to do something about that boy, Miss McBride," he said. "He's wrecking our home. If we let him go on like this, God only knows what kind of a man he'll turn out. I can't understand it — why, I can't even talk to him now." Then suddenly, "I'm convinced what he needs is a good sound spanking."

"No," cried Christine breathlessly. "No, Mr. Paget. He's too emotionally torn. Don't thrash him now."

"I don't know what to do," David said wearily, covering his face with his hands.

Hesitantly Christine reached out her hand to him. Then turning hurriedly, she walked away, closing the door behind her.

Peter was lying on his bed, looking at the new book, when Christine entered.

"You shouldn't have hurt your step-mother's feelings, Peter."

"She hit me," said Peter.

"Oh no, Peter! Poor darling. I can't believe it!"

"I guess I was bad, Christie. I kicked the book —" He sat up straight. "She said she wanted to like me, and then I was bad. Would she love me, Christie, if I was nice?"

Christine twisted her belt, her face painfully immobile.

"Maybe it's too late now, Peter," she said abruptly. "She became angry with you and told Daddy. And he became so angry, I had to beg him not to beat you."

"He wouldn't beat *me*, would he Christie?"

"Poor darling—"

"Would he? Would he, Christine?"

She knelt down by his bed, putting her arms around him.

"Poor little boy," she soothed. "Daddy used to be with you all the time. It was you Daddy always took walking. It was you Daddy always took canoeing. You were the one he loved most of all. Isn't that what hurts so?"

His assuring sobs stabbed at her, and for a moment she was too weak to attempt to answer Wynn, calling for her. Patting his head, she rose.

"I've got to go now, dear. She's calling me." She turned and looked at him sadly. "She and Daddy are going canoeing."

"In my canoe?" demanded Peter incredulously.

Christine nodded, and wiping her eyes, went out.

Peter slowly leaned back against the bedstead, tugging at the pillow cases. Suddenly, he sat up, giving the red book an angry shove to the floor, and ran out.

Christine returned some minutes later, and picked up the book. She called for him, and when he didn't answer, knocked on the bathroom door, even looked behind the portiers where he sometimes hid. Uneasily she sat on the window seat, tapping her foot, studying her nails. As the minutes trudged by, she kept glancing at the door, listening for his footsteps.

"Oh Peter, come back before your father finds out," she said aloud.

Once or twice, she stared out into the garden, drumming her long fingers against the pane. There was a fly buzzing monotonously somewhere. It was warm outside, and the garden was brilliant. How funny the way the flowers obeyed the slightest impulse of the breeze. And how funny the way the

gardener ran, all stiff-legged. He was coming into the house. A moment later he was out again, running stiff-legged, not even stopping to pick up his cap when it dropped. Then David came running out, with that woman behind him. Something inexplicably cold traced her spine, and then she was out of the room, racing down the stairs with great strides. There was no memory of running down to the lakeside. She only knew she was there, beside the other people, gazing incredulously at the limp, dripping bundle David held to his breast.

"What is it?" her mind thundered, and the red canoe drifting capsized in the lake answered her.

"Oh no," something whispered in her brain. "Oh no!" it shouted. "Not Peter. Please not my boy. No, he was too young and good. Oh God wouldn't want him — he was too young —"

Her clasped hands clamped to her lips and her eyes were wide, blind.

"I guess this was my fault," she heard Wynn say thru the haze.

"Yes! Yes, this is your fault," Christine wanted to scream. "If you'd never come here, I'd be reading to Peter now, and tonight I'd put him in bed, and tuck in the covers and kiss him, but now I can't because you've killed him."

Blindly, she turned up the pine-bound path, and ran, ran until she was safe, alone in the shadows of the great black trees.

THE GRAPE, SOURING

No kin of mine, the accessible grape
Low on the vine.
I claim no brotherhood with core
Or pungent rind;

Nor is my bursting tastiness
Shining and warm.
No barely lifted hand will find
That I conform

To laws, provocative and coy,
That others know
(Of lifting higher for a space,
Then dropping low,

All sweet and gushing with a sigh
Of yielding leaf,
Never learning that the bliss
Is swift and brief).

I have waited long, and now
My heart hangs high,
Too distant for a finger's grasp.
And often I

Make clearer, stronger yet the taste
That lips will know
When, weary of the easy-gained,
Up from below

One climbs and seeks at last,
With muttered vow,
The ruby-lighted globe that swings
Upon the highest bough!

PEGGY HUDGINGS

THE LUNCH

SALLY McCASLIN

THE smaller of the two figures turned and waved at the gaunt woman and her milk buckets standing under the walnut tree. The larger one did not. The strap of her cotton sack had slipped down, pinning her arms to her sides, and anyway she was carrying the lunch. Their legs disappeared over the hill, then the limp print dresses, and last of all a dark brown head because Matty was the taller.

It was early, six o'clock, and the transition from night to day was chilly and depressing. The gloom of night pushed back with clammy fingers the light of the rising sun and the weeds dropped too readily their load of icy wetness. To Mat, the dawn was frightening, weird in its powerful foreshadowing of another day and another day's fears, of its backaches, its broken down fences, the thin official looking letters which came in the mail, the slam of a car door when Mr. Anderson came to collect the rent. The season itself was pregnant with winter and whispered secretively behind its hands of coming snows, of small square holes chopped in the ice on the pond, of stiff cornshucks that cut Mat's hands, of sooty stove pipes and great pans of ashes, of frostbitten fingers, of painful baths, and of smoky steaming breaths. It was the in between month . . . September, September in Tennessee when the singeing breath of Autumn was so shortly removed and the hazy peppy days of October were yet to come.

The cold was damp, vacuum like, devoid of personality, and it turned Mat's brown skin white and Belle's white skin, blue. It caused Belle to wrap her cotton sack more closely around her shoulders, and Mat to rub the insides of her arms together as she carried the lunch. It kept the two little girls on the hard brown path away from the biting dew. Walking with light bare feet almost mechanically sensitive to anything sharp which they stepped on, Mat thrilled with the darkness and the strangeness of the situation, and started once more at the beginning.

She had awakened suddenly and once awake, she seemed never to have been fully asleep. She could not remember the absence of her parents' mingled voices in the kitchen, of the band of yellow light which crept under the door, of the insistent noise of frying food. She seemed to have heard it for a long

time, and she had sat up in bed and listened until Belle with a sudden jerk had taken the cover and had left her surprised and shivering sitting on the edge of the bed. Mamma was saying, "It ain't right, and you know it ain't to send them little girls way over there by themselves. Mat's not well from that calf running over her and Belle's just a baby." She had opened the door then, her shoes in her hand, and had blinked at the yellow light and the warm rush of heat that met her. It was when she started to put on her shoes, that Mamma had spoken from the stove, "Don't put them shoes on, Mat." She had thought Mamma was going to make her go to school barefooted again, like they did on warm days and saved their shoes. She had said, "It's cold, Mamma. It's real cold." And Mamma had answered, "You don't have to go today. Dad wants you and Belle to start that new patch for him. He cain't get no hands, and Lou and Dick both got tests. And Lou's been sick so much already I don't want her to miss any more. I'm afraid she won't make her grade as it is."

It was funny the way Mamma had gone on explaining and rubbing her hands over the stove until Dad had exploded with his mouth full of gravy, "Good God! Quit bellyaching about them having to pick a little cotton. Mat's ten ain't she, and Belle's eight. Why Godalmighty, when I was that old I was picking 150 pounds a day and never thought a thing about it. Treat 'em like damn babies. Both of 'em eat, don't they?" And when Dad had gotten up and gone on over to Mr. Yeats to run his sorghum mill, Mamma had cried a little, rubbing her hands over the stove and then she had started fixing the lunch. She went down to the barn to look for eggs because she had fried the ones at the house for Dad.

Belle wouldn't believe it at first when she had told her they didn't have to go to school and were going to have a lunch to take over in the cotton patch. Belle had said, "You're just trying to make me get up" and had rolled her warm steaming body into an even more complete monopoly of the covers. She had gotten up finally when she heard Mamma tell Mat she could peel the eggs. She had come in whining, "Let me peel 'em, Mamma" and Mamma had laughed and called her a sleepy-headed cotton top. That was because Belle had white hair. Mamma said Belle was a blonde, that she took after Dad's side.

It was a beautiful lunch. They cut the heads off matches and pinned the stuffed eggs together. Mamma had stirred up

a little batter and baked heavy white teacakes and coated them with sugar. She had opened a jar of cucumber pickles and she let Belle and Mat take out all the little curly ones and leave the big split ones in the vinegar. She had fixed biscuits and jam, and had even let Belle parch corn meal on the back of the stove and put it in a bottle. Belle had wanted to make some snuff with sugar and cocoa but Mamma was out of cocoa. It was a beautiful lunch and it was the first one they had had, that is wrapped up. They ate in the W.P.A. kitchen at school, but this was a picnic lunch all wrapped in the tissue paper that came in the boxes with their new shoes and then put in a sack.

Walking swiftly in front of her sister, Mat felt again the curious thrill, the sense of the unusual. She noticed how swiftly the light had come, felt the warmth of the lunch through the brown sack, and squeezed it gently, warming her fingertips. When they had passed the pea patch, the path was not quite so good and the weeds began to burn her legs and the blackberry briars to catch at her sack. Once when she jerked the sack loose, a briar flew back and cut a tiny gash on Belle's hand. Belle sucked it in silence.

It was funny about Belle. Belle never squirmed on the ground in happiness when their new shoes came from Sears and Roebuck and Belle didn't get sick at her stomach when she stuck thorns in her heels, and Belle didn't turn brown, and she had white hair and was fat. Belle wasn't afraid of dogs or cows like she was either, but Belle was afraid of snakes and she wasn't afraid of snakes.

It would have been fun if they could have had some chicken. If Mamma had sold some yesterday they might have had some. If she had sold them already dressed, they could have kept the gizzard and head. Mat liked the gizzard and Mamma gave it to her because she said gizzards made little girls pretty; and she gave Belle the head because she said brains made little girls smart. People said Belle was prettier than she was. One time when Mrs. Crosby came to see them, she had said, "Belle's a beaut with those blue eyes and blonde hair. She'll have a beau on every corner when she grows up." And Lou had said, "Pore little Mat's as ugly as a mud fence." And Mama had said, "Handsome is as Handsome does." "Handsome is as Handsome does," she repeated to herself. Anyway one time Dad said Belle was so lazy she wouldn't work if she was in hell with

her back broke. She said aloud, "If we had a gizzard, I would have bid it."

Belle said, "Let me carry it a while, Mat, Mamma told you to."

Mat said, "We ain't half way yet. The hickernut tree is half way."

She held the lunch far out in front of her, stretching her arms, and then walked on her toes to give vent to her excitement. They went around the end of the corn field, and Belle saw a pumpkin far up the row, its vine already dying, its sides turning to orange.

Belle said, "That punkin is near 'bout ripe. We can have some punkin pie."

Mat said, "I like tea cakes better."

They came to the hickorynut tree and she handed the small stained parcel to Belle, who said, "The jam's comin' through the paper."

Mat said, "Don't squash the eggs."

Relieved of the bundle, Mat wrapped the sack around her and breathed deeply, dramatically, of the early morning air. It cut her nose with its cleanness and freshness. She felt gingerly for the lump on her back where the calf had stepped. It had gone down some. She touched it gently, somehow liking the cool pain that raced over her back. It wasn't much of a knot any more. It had been a big one; Old Buttercup had run right over her and stepped on her back when she tried to head him. It was still sore though. She had put the pickle on the bottom of the lunch because pickle always leaks. The tea cakes were on top.

Belle said, "I hope it ain't mashed."

Mat said, "Shut up, Belle." Mat always told Belle to shut up because she liked to make stories in her mind and Belle interrupted.

They reached the cotton patch and Mat's eyes questioned the overgrown fence along the end of the field. Belle voiced the question, "Where are we going to put it?"

They walked down the fence row and first Mat wedged it securely between the wires of the fence, then changed and placed it in the forks of a small bush, because she liked it with a background of green.

Belle said, "I hope the ants don't get it."

Mat gently caressed it where the jam had come through the

paper, and then licked her fingers and straightened up and wrapped the cotton sack about her shoulders.

Loud and clear in the early morning air rang the long deep wail of a hound dog. It was the hunting cry, excited and exciting, the herald of fall, a warning to mankind as well as to rabbits. The death cry of summer. the note of the approaching winter, it made men go out and gather corn all day, their ritual for the passing season. Mat felt its significance and stood on her toes again, stretching her muscles, contorted her face and said, "That's old Frank a-chasin' a rabbit."

Belle was looking at the lunch in the forks of the tiny bush and her usually bland face was no longer expressionless. Mat saw and recognized the longing in her sister's face and hated her for it because it pained her. She remembered the time Dick had come home with the lollypop and she had sat on the floor and had watched him eat it. When he had almost finished he had looked up suddenly and had seen the pitiful longing in her face and eyes and had said, "Come here and you can have some." She remembered her horror and embarrassment at his having seen inside her, and she had refused, ashamed of her weakness, pained more by his kindness than by his indifference; and then when he had eaten it all and thrown the stick with a careless gesture into the fire, she had gone away and crawled under the corn crib and cried because she wanted a lollypop. She hadn't let them see inside her again, not any of them; and she spoke sharply to Belle, "We gotta pick ten rows 'fore we can eat it."

They went to the farthest side of the field for Mat knew to start on the farthest side so she wouldn't have to carry her sack so far home. She looked back once before she bent over the first stalk. How nice and sweet and clean it looked sitting securely in the little nest of green. It looked like she felt when she crawled to the top of the maple tree behind the barn and sat a long time in the crotch of the trunk, concealed by a leafy curtain.

She adjusted her strap and bent over the first stalk. We got to pick ten rows, she thought. Maybe there'll be some skips. She loved skips. Then you could really go up the row fast when you had skips. Daddy said it was how many pounds you got that counted, but they had a lunch today and they could eat it when they picked ten rows. She shivered a little and said, "God, make the sun come out and make it warmer and make

some skips." She started out swiftly, her small brown hands working in perfect coordination as they stripped the mass of damp fibers from the sharp stiff boles. She did not straighten up or lift her eyes beyond the stalk on which she was working. Even the background of brownish red dirt was rather vague. She did not turn her head as she felt for the opening of the sack, and gradually the sack began to mean something. A pound, she said to herself mentally. She started out ahead of Belle. Belle didn't pick so fast but then Belle's back didn't hurt and she didn't have to stop and rest. And Belle didn't pick her's as clean as she did. There was a thrill in a job all by herself, and her hands flew unmindful of the sharp red scratches the bolls dealt. She was cold and the cold bit her with a sweet fierce pain. She was dimly aware of the changing of the seasons, and she thought with a warm feeling around her heart of the tiny package wedged in the little bush. She hoped the pickle didn't get the tea cakes wet. They could eat it in a little while. The mystery and the excitement of the fall filled her again and she stood up and looked back at the distance she had covered and wriggled her shoulders. Her sack was beginning to drag a little trail down the middle of the row. She lifted it with one hand and thought four pounds. Belle was behind, picking steadily. She couldn't see the bush anymore.

Belle, catching up with her sister, said, "Mat, I think old Frank's treed."

Mat answered, "He ain't either. He's just a-smellin'." She knew the sharp staccato bark when he treed.

Belle found two grasshoppers on a leaf. She called Mat and Mat stood and watched them for a long time. A woolly worm humped his way swiftly across a twig on the ground and when he had almost reached the end, Mat stooped and turned the twig around, and the worm retraced his steps. Then she let him go, watching until he disappeared under the brown crumbled edge of a leaf. Belle had caught up with her now.

She said, "I hope the ants don't get it."

Mat did not answer. She began to pick swiftly again. Some of her earlier elation had worn off. Her back was beginning to ache, not from being tired, but the same old ache, low down. Thinking of her back, she thought fiercely to herself, "I'm not sickly though. Walnuts make me sick at my stomach and my teeth and eyes are bad but I have good tonsils. Belle had bad tonsils."

They reached the end of the row, Mat a little ahead of Belle. Mat turned back to help Belle finish her row out. Belle said, "How long 'fore we eat?" Mat said, "Shut up and git to pickin or I'll not help you out."

Belle said, "We gotta go down and come up and go down and come up and go down fore we can eat."

Mat, thinking of the little bundle in the forks of the bush while slowly rubbing her back, weakened and said, "It'll be time, time we pick eight rows."

Belle, remembering the argument, said, "Frank did tree too."

Mat, engrossed in her own pain, said spiritless, "He never." Belle was silent and she began to get unreasonably hungry. They had to go down and come up and go down and then they could eat it. Eight rows. And then she could lie down and put the sack of cotton under the sore place on her back and eat her tea cakes and egg and jam.

She would lie in the shade of the persimmon tree and close her eyes to the light.

Belle spoke, "Let's eat the jam and biscuits first and save the best till last."

Mat answered, "I tell you what, Belle, let's take two rows apiece down and then we can eat it when we get there."

Belle grinned her delight. Mat stood up and let the sun gently massage the place where the strap had rubbed. The sack was getting heavy. She looked back and saw they hadn't gone very far. It was hard picking two rows. You didn't get any place. Belle wasn't picking very clean. She'd count to a thousand before she looked up and then see how far they'd come. Maybe they could see the top of the bush where it was. A little green bush. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, and so on. Belle picked in silence.

Eight hundred seventy, counted Mat, and finally a thousand. She looked up. They hadn't come very far. Belle wasn't picking her's very clean. Her back hurt and she wished it weren't quite so hot. Old Frank was raising sand somewhere up in the corn field. He sounded like he was coming this way. She could lie under the persimmon tree and the sack of cotton would be soft against the hollow pain of her back. She would eat her jam and biscuits and then her pickle and then her egg.

A thousand two more times and she could see the bush; and a thousand two more times after that and she could see *it*, small and round and sittin' in the forks. She got down on her knees.

Belle was picking fast, but Belle wasn't picking clean. Dad would fuss at her for not making Belle pick clean. One time Belle put a brick in her sack to make it weigh more. They just had to go down. A thousand two more times. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. She did not look up.

Belle did not move rapidly. She was like a slow fat woman and her pudgy hands pulled the fibers methodically. It was her steadiness that put pounds in Belle's sack.

Belle said, "I hope the ants don't get it."

Mat was counting and so she said, "Shut up, Belle."

When she had ended the second thousand, she stood up and she could see the bush, low and green, greener than the other weeds. It wouldn't be long now. And she could lie in the shade of the persimmon tree and eat it, and then later on they could go to the house and Dad would get some hands in the afternoon and they wouldn't have to pick. Just that much to go. She stepped over the row and helped Belle up with her.

She said, "I ain't going to help you any more, Belle."

She wasn't going to help Belle when they got to the end of the row. Her back hurt. She got down on her knees. The briars and sticks cut her legs but it was better than her back. It wouldn't be long now. She said, "It won't be long now, Belle." Belle had taken off her sack and was picking in the lap of her dress, going back and forth to the sack. Mat's lips worked silently as she counted.

It was Belle who saw him first, saw him as she turned from the sack and she screamed to Mat. It was a scream of wrath and disappointment but it wakened a horror in Mat's soul that molded her legs into leaden weights as she ran sobbing down the row.

Mat had placed it securely in the forks of the tree, and Frank jerked viciously. "God," Mat prayed as she ran, "Don't let him get it, God. If you do, God" She could think of no adequate threat. The row seemed longer, longer even than it had looked, and the futility of the struggle stamped itself on her brain, yet she could not stop. Belle ran too, thudding behind her. Her throat was tight. She could not call to him. She could only run, run with pain and indignation while the cotton stalks rapped with malicious insistence across her scratched and bleeding shins and the small bush danced wildly with the body of Frank for a spring.

As she rounded the end of the row, he leaped clear, bounding over the fence, the sack fastened neatly in his mouth.

"Head him off," Mat screamed. Belle climbing awkwardly over the fence, hung her dress and swung upside down above the ground until the cloth tore through. She fell on her head and when she got up, Mat and the dog were both streaking down across the old oat field. Once Mat fell and Frank stopped and tried to gulp down paper and all, but Mat threw a clod of dirt at him and he got up and ran on. Belle sat down under the persimmon tree and began to cry. After awhile Mat came back too, her legs bleeding, her dress in tatters.

Belle said, with suspicion, "Didn't you catch him?"

Mat did not answer. They lay under the persimmon tree a long time and later when Frank came crawling toward them in apology, Belle whipped him with a cotton stalk until he yelped and howled with the pain. Mat kept her eyes closed to the light.

When Mat no longer straightened up but dropped in a heap on her sack, and when Belle's shadow was a little ball under her feet, they turned wearily toward the house. Back over the same path, now scraggly and commonplace in the mid-day sun. The sacks were heavy, unwieldy and awkward. Mat thought of the beginning, of her Mother's hands twisting over the stove, of her father's voice, heavy and profane. She whispered fiercely to Belle as they came over the hill. The woman was shelling corn to the chickens with rough square hands. She spoke with a strained smile, "How are my good little workers, my smart little girls? Did you like your lunch?"

And Mat with the experience of the lollypop behind her, did not falter as she said, "Yeah, it was so good. It was wonderful, Mamma."

TWO POEMS

DOROTHY BRYN

"HEPSIBAH"

She walked alone in shuttered night
Through Pincheon's cursed halls,
The joy of living's precious light
Ne'er crept within her walls.

The chapel'd stillness noticed not
Her tired, weary tread,
Nor heard the echoes, long forgot
Of hopeful promise, dead.

None knew her as she once had been,
Beauty, born to love.
But called her "maiden's punished sin"
Wretched, unbeloved.

She wept alone in Pincheon Hall
For none believed the truth,
The shaded curse of ancient Maul
Had likened her to Ruth.

Not wrong, but great, her love had been
'til man betrayed his brother,
Then on her fell the brunt of sin
Committed by another.

And this was Hepsibah, in tears,
Who laughed at tragedy,
Laughed not again in twenty years
But wept, for comedy.

She walked alone in shuttered cold
With memories for friends,
Her book is closed, her story old,
But like all, never ends.

ONCE UPON A DREAM

Once upon a dream I saw you,
Lovely phantom of delight;
'Twas but fit that I adore you.
Mistress of deceptive night.

Like all dreamers who behold you
Standing there, on foreign shore,
Knew I then that I must hold you,
Make you mine for ever more.

Now possessed of dreamer's power,
Passed I through impregnate wall,
O'er wild sea, to reach your bower;
Followed I your aery call.

Ever tempting, you eluded,
And, as I reached out my hand,
Dream's strange obstacles intruded,
Held me back in shifting sand.

And, like all dreams, you were blended
With the vast infinity;
Never were my strivings ended,
Dawn awoke reality.

Still in dreams I've sought you, learning
Never may I see you more,
Sad, I know there's no returning
To your promise-littered shore.

Of such stuff are dreams created—
To succumb with dawn's first smile,
And, to know the joy related,
One must dream a long, long while.

THE HOLY ONE

He was a servant of God,
Therefore he was good—
A shining light.
He could have sinned,
But he never would.

He fell in love.
It was Heaven not Fate.
She laughed at him.
God had forgotten
Now he is a reprobate.

GLAD EVOY

DREAM OF DEATH

I must leave this room, being tired of walls
And Whisp'ring willows.
I still hear Death stalking empty halls
In vivid yellows.
Shadows break forth with dusky calls.
Haunting fragrances cling around pillows.

Voices caught in the folds of the drapery
Still have no pardon.
Moonlight comes in, fantastic and spidery.
Moonlight will harden.
I know that Death will be lovely and silvery,
Dripping with light as the mist on a garden.

JANE BALCH

A SUIT OF CLOTHES

JOHN PAUL WILLIS*

SCENE: Interior of a low ceilinged log cabin. Near the center of the room is a table and two chairs. A kerosene lamp and a few tin pans are on one end of the table. On the right wall is a sink and beside it a greasy black stove. Along the left wall is a huge fireplace full of dying embers and facing the audience and attached to the side of the fireplace is a small cloth closet, for hanging clothes. A tall, rangy man in his late twenties is bending over the sink, shaving. He wears nothing but long wool underwear and logger's boots. A sound of frying comes from the stove, but the man pays no heed. He finishes shaving, rinses his face and dries it, gingerly feels it for cuts. Satisfied, he crosses the room toward the clothes closet, reaches inside, then stops short, assuming an attitude of listening. Jumping back from the closet, he rushes back to the sink, plunges water over his face, noisily begins to rewash it.

The back of the room has one door, to the left of the back wall. It opens, admitting a patriarchal old man with a heavy beard, massive build. He menacingly points a rifle at the young man.

Old Man: Well?

Young Man: (Looking up from his washing.) Howdy! Come in. (Gives a wide sweeping invitation with his arm.)

Old Man: (Still pointing the rifle.) What'cha doin' here?

Young Man: (Looks amused.) I'm shaving.

Old Man: What'cha shavin' for?

Young Man: (Grinning.) What'cha pointing that gun at me for?

Old Man: Hummm-m-m. (Lowers his gun a bit, crosses the room to the stove, still dubiously eyeing the youth.) Where's your clothes?

Young Man: (Turns, pointing toward the fireplace closet.) In there drying.

Old Man: (Sits down at the table, eases the gun into his lap.) So you say! Now look here, son. You'd better tell me

* JOHN PAUL WILLIS, a senior, was recipient of the second prize in the drama division, for "A Suit of Clothes," in the Allied Arts Contest of Florida this year.

straight how you happen to be here in my cabin making mighty free with my stuff. Step out here in the light so's I can see ya better, an talk slow. I don't like a fast talker.

Young Man: (Deliberately puts his towel down, turns and squarely faces the older man.) Look here, old timer, that gun's gettin' mighty heavy, ain't it? I kinda feel it bothers you too much. (He pauses, but the older man remains motionless.) As I was saying, seeing as how I ain't had a chance to explain why I'm here, I seggest that you lay that pump to side. I ain't getting smart, but I don't warm up to no such language as you found fit ta use on me a moment ago. I ain't claiming that I ain't intruding, cause I am and I'll leave right now if its too stuffy in here for ya, which feeling is mutual, but meantime take your thumb offen that hammer, if you please sir. After all, I ain't no criminal.

Old Man: (With narrowed eyes.) What makes ya say that, son?

Young Man: What makes me say what?

Old Man: That you ain't no criminal.

Young Man: Christ in the foothills, you hermits is all alike! Whatsa' matter, am I the first white man you seen since the last freeze? Can't a man use a — figur of speech without you thinking he's gonna steal your damn soul lessen you keep an eye on him? For the last time, take your finger offen that trigger! (He turns, and vigorously begins to lace up his logger's boots.)

Old Man: Whew, you sure are a talker, now ain't cha? (At this the young man, who is facing the audience, smiles faintly.) All right, son. (Rises, and lays his rifle in the crook of a chair.) To keep ya calm and to keep from offering ya a drink, I'll be a mite more neighborly. Folks hereabouts call me Charlie and sometimes Frenchy, seeing as how I speak it a little, but I can't say truthfully I've ever seen your likes in all my thirty-two years of trapping. Fresh from the lowlands, ain't ya? You got that Yukon drawl. What's your handle?

Young Man: (Takes Charlie's outstretched hand, gives it a brief shake.) Howdy. (Grins a little.) Reckon I was a mite hasty in my thinking and it got into my speech. Sorry. (He turns, crosses to the stove and flips something in

the frying pan.) My name's Bierce. I'm up from Yukon, all right. Pulled up stakes in Ketchataw little over two weeks ago. Figured I might as well starve to death trapping as clerking in a hardware. Brother, that's just one job that just ain't got no money in it! And I gotta have money for a fling now and then. I don't care much about a home and all that truck, but when I blow I like to have plenty of lettuce to do it with. Wimen, too, they like a man with money. Do ya follow me?

Old Man: Only too well, son, but go ahead.

Young Man: As I says, it's all or nothing with me. So I took all the money I had and some I stolt from Janice — you wouldn't know her, of course, but she was — never mind. Bought all the trapping stuff and grub the money would fetch and left with the full moon. I managed to shoot a couple of rabbits the first days out, but since then things went worse, and I had to go into my canned goods.

Old Man: Came up from Ketchataw, eh? That's funny. Thought the breakin' in of the ice was too soon for safe paddling.

Young Man: Yea, that's the trouble. If you noticed my canoe outside you'll see she's been patched. This morning she filled up when a weakened seam busted, and I lost all my traps, lines, decoys, pack rifle, the whole Goddamn ka-boodle in that swift rush. After hunting and salvaging what I could and gettin' soaked clean through, I'll tell you your cabin looked pretty good. Then you come in and start stump speeching. (He gives a short, amused laugh.) I dunno, Charlie, what I'll do now.

Old Man: Hummn, son, you got yourself in a pack of trouble, ain't'cha? What'cha got in the frying pan? (And he crosses over to the stove.)

Young Man: Trout. Caught 'em before you came. You hungry?

Old Man: Well now son, I can't remember the time I couldn't eat some fresh caught trout. (Gives the youth a warm, friendly smile.) (They sit down at the table, the young man serving the fish, while the *Old Man* gets some biscuits, water and a cold leg of meat.)

Old Man: Gonna keep moving north, huh?

Young Man: (After a pause.) Yes, I reckon so. This morn-ing when the canoe was leaking so bad I figured maybe I'd

stop off at Barrow upstream near here and perhaps find a job for a while, till I could make a little to go on with. You ever go into Barrow much?

Old Man: Twice-three times a year for vitals and ammunition. Barrows ain't much on looks, son. If that's the way you're looking at it, I think you'd be better off back in Ketchataw. (He pauses, and takes another bite.) On second thought, I don't believe I'd go to Barrow at all if I was you. Just keep paddling till you hit the fork and head into the pine country. That town ain't in no mood for strangers right now.

Young Man: Yea?

Old Man: (Slowly.) No, son, it ain't. Seems a stranger there murdered a store keeper an got away. No one seen him, but folks hereabouts said they could identify him by the clothes . . . (He pauses, staring hard at the young man) by the clothes he was wearing.

Young Man: (After a short pause.) What's unusual about that? It ain't the town's first murder, is it?

Old Man: No, son, I can't say it is, but this was a particularly important murder, as murders go. You see, Mark, the fellow who was shot, was by far the best liked man in Barrow, which you can take for meaning a great deal, since most of these places don't waste no affection. There weren't a woman or man who'd hit that town broke and down and out but what Mark would help them back on their feet, with no cost to them. Easy, some folks said he was. He had no woman of his own and of course no family, and so he just kinda took to the whole town like a father, sort of. I 'member when Jock McFarland's kid took down with pneumonia something awful. Jock was a sight for a strong man, I'll tell you. Wouldn't sleep, wouldn't hardly eat, just hung outside that kid's room all the time. Well, sir, old Mark gives the money to have some of this here serum flown up from Fairbanks and it saved the boy's life. That was Mark all over. Another time he —

Young Man: How'd it happen?

Old Man: Well, it was on a Saturday night, I believe. Old Mark was just closing, it being eight o'clock, when a fellow walked into Mark's store shouting he wanted a suit, a snappy suit to get married in. It was pretty evident to Mark, I guess, that the fellow was drunk, but instead of

shoving the bum out, Mark waited on him. The fellow found what he wanted, all right. A loud checked suit for twenty-five dollars. The vest with the price tag still on it was found out behind Mark's store later on. Anyway, this fellow argued it was too much money, and old Mark must have gotten sore at this and talked back cause all at once the stranger upped his rifle and shot Mark clean through the belly with a 38-40. Folks heard the shot, and Mark's clerk also, who was in the basement at the time sorting stock, but by the time they got to Mark, the feller was gone, and after gasping something that only the clerk heard and didn't understand, Mark went too. That was a while back and I'll tell you Barrow's a mighty mad town.

Young Man: What they doin' about it now?

Old Man: Nothing. Right after it happened the Mounties sent a man down to look it over, but nothin' came of that except he married one of the town belles. (He pauses, and lights up his pipe.) One thing's sure, though. Unless some skunk helped him out, that murderer can't get far with only a handful of shells and a checked suit. And that son, is a comforting thought. (He nodded his head vigorously as he said it.)

Young Man: That's tough.

Old Man: Yes, I reckon folks kinda felt personally insulted when old Mark was shot. They're still mighty anxious to fix the blame on the right party.

Young Man: I wasn't thinking of that angle. Mark's dead, and no amount of pity and folks gettin' mad is gonna help him much now. I reckon he enjoyed to its fill his life while he was living. That's all any man can ask. I was thinking of the fellow who shot him. (He rises, crosses the room, dirty dishes in his hands and dropping them in the sink, begins to scrape the skillet.) Out in the woods in this weather and no food, no clothes. That's tough. (He finishes cleaning the skillet, hangs it on a nail to the right of the stove.) I don't reckon he'd have shot him if he'd been sober.

Old Man: (Surprised.) How you talk, boy. Some folks is mean clear through. You'll learn that.

Young Man: Hanging a pot, handle down, on a nail to the left of the stove.) Anyone have any idea what this feller looks like?

Old Man: Nary the slightest. Folks only heard one shot. The clerk said maybe he could tell him from his voice, but doubted it. It could have been anyone, I guess. Could have been me, or — you. (He pauses, studying the young man, then suddenly jumps up.) What the hell are you doing. (Crosses over to the stove, jerks the skillet off its nail, the pot off its, switches them.) Always hang the skillet on the left side of the stove, son, so's the grease will drip on my boots. Nothing in the world like warm meat and fish oils to keep boots waterproof. After you been in this wet country awhile, you'll learn them little tricks. (Studies the skillet a moment.) What in tarnation did you do, scrape it clean? Huh! (Shakes his head in tolerant disgust, turns, and crosses the room to the fire, dragging a chair with him. He throws a big log on the embers, sits down with a peaceful sigh, his back to the audience. The young man grins to himself, washes his hands in the sink, dries them.)

Old Man: Yep, son, some folks is so pack full of sin and orneriness they can't be trusted to count their own gold. I know a fellow who owned a store in Chester, back in '98. I was a young 'un then, but as I recall he was the meanest, skimpiest . . .

Young Man: Charlie, how long you been living in this hole? (He casually crosses to the fireplace, turns and leans his back against the wall, slowly begins to edge his way toward the cloth covered clothes closet.)

Old Man: (Absently). How's that, son?

Young Man: I say, how do you stand it here in this one room for a whole damn winter? Every time you turn around, seeing only the same old dirty logs and cold grease on your plates. Never no company but your steel traps, grinning at you in their silent, leering way. Never no color or pretty dresses, never no wimen. Just sittin' here going nutty for a woman—how do ya stomach it? I ain't ashamed to tell ya there ain't the trap line rich enough to keep me long from a woman and all she stands for—not for long nohows.

Old Man: Well, son, you're younger than I am by a great sight and I reckon wimen was made for young men. I can't say as how I haven't missed them, cause I have. I ain't as old as I look, you know. After a while of living short of one particular ration, a man gets used to getting

along without it entirely. That's the way it's been with me. Course, I could get me an Indian, but somehow, I never did relish that idea.

Young Man: Yea?

Old Man: I reckon one winter of a four month's heavy snow and you all alone in this cabin talking to yerself would break ya. (He chuckles at this, pulls off a boot, wriggles his toes at the fire.) That's cause you don't have a sense of serinity, as the preachers used to say. Yes sir, a sense of serinity with Nature, a feeling of one-ness. Now me, I'm content to do nothing but enjoy the life I'm living. Can't say as how I know the meaning of monotony. Living too close to civilization has got your nerves jumpy and demanding excitement all the time. Ain't natural, son, and that's why you'd go clean batty all alone with yourself in this here cabin. This ain't no life for a young man hungering for life like you do. (As he talks, the young man slowly, stealthily works his way toward the clothes closet. Reaching inside he brings forth a long barreled pistol, which he points at his seated friend.)

Old Man: Nerves is what all you young fellows from towns have. Nervous to wimen, money, everything. Betcha you even got a jumpy trigger finger when you're hunting. Betcha . . . (he pauses, then slowly rises.) Son, seeing as how the fire's had a chance to dry it, let's have a look at that suit of yours. (He turns and sees himself covered by the pistol. There is perhaps five seconds of dead silence. Then the old man pushes his chair aside, takes a step toward his rifle.)

Young Man: (In a soft drawl.) It's a little late to start figurin', Charlie. Suppose you jist sit down instead.

Old Man: (Unwillingly sits down, roars.) Hold on thar! What's the idea, son?

Young Man: (Stepping out from the wall.) Why, it's really not my idea, but yours. The game's up, Charlie.

Old Man: (Carefully spacing his words.) What do you mean?

Young Man: You made two mistakes in here this evening, Charlie. The first was telling me what calibre bullet killed old Mark. You recall you said it was a 38-40. Only the murderer would know that. (He pauses. Charlie watches him, mouth partially open, his breath coming in dry sighs.)

The second was switching the skillet from one nail to another so the grease would drip onto your boots. Before you came in this evening, I drove those nails in there to dry my fishin' line on.

Old Man: (Sinking into chair silently studies the young man. Finally, in a low voice.) What'd you say your name was, son?

Young Man: (Reaching into the closet and bringing forth a damp scarlet tunic with breeches to match.) Bierce, old timer, — Sergeant Bierce. Shall we go now?

MAN AND WOMAN

Body to body clings in vain attempt
To bridge the gulf and bind the twain in one,
But soul withdraws from shrinking soul, exempt
From futile fusion, where likeness there is none.

The crystallized mind, to mind alike unplastic,
Reaches unsatisfied in useless yearning
To assimilate by mental toil gymnastic
The unaccustomed lesson of unlearning,

Then wonders why a mutual punishment
Of smoldering discontent their effort mocks,
Not knowing, perhaps, that iron rubbed on flint
Can yield no harvest, save a shower of sparks.

ELIZABETH MILLER

CONCEPTION

NANCY LOCKE

How am I, a typical American college girl of twenty-one, to evaluate my existence—how am I to answer such questions as where am I in the universe; how did my world come to be, and when; what is my relation to other forms of life that I find about me; what am I to believe about it all; what is my purpose in living; what is the right way to live?

I find available in books an immense storehouse of knowledge — work of the world's greatest minds offering, to all who desire them, fundamental truths upon which to build. I study the astronomer's universe — an ordered universe, a cosmic universe with its three great unities — of laws, of substance, of processes. I am thrilled — not overawed — by the realization that my world is one of nine planets revolving about the sun, the center of our solar system, at a distance of 93 million miles; and that this sun, with a diameter of 109 times that of the earth, is merely one small star among billions of others. I find that our solar system, composed of the sun and its family of planets, satellites, and comets, is located in a galaxy or starcluster which we know as the Milky Way, 220,000 light years long by 22,000 light years wide (light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second); yet the entire Milky Way is only one of 2 million such star clusters now visible, — immensity beyond human imagination.

Although man can never prove exactly when or how our earth came to be formed, scientific facts point very definitely to the theory that our solar system is made up of shattered fragments of a mass removed from the sun by the gravitational pull of a large star which passed unusually close to it. Our earth, as are the other eight planets in different form, is nothing but a sort of solidified sample of the sun. Set in motion by the pull of the passing star some 2 billion years ago, these colossal condensed drops of the sun's atmosphere are compelled by the law of gravitation to describe orbits about their original home. So I must marvel at the great unity — the oneness of it all. The same laws hold out there in infinite space even as they restrain

* THE FLAMINGO presents "Conception," a religious manifestation by Nancy Locke, believing it a subject that will have new emphasis in this disturbing period.

us here on our tiny earth, the same processes go on throughout, the same substances are in me that are in the sun. Not knowing why or how, I am — each one of us is — a real part of this great universe.

Delighted by what the astronomer has given me, I turn to the time scale of the geologist to find that our world was about 1 billion, 100 million years of its 2 billion cooling to a point where any life could exist on its surface, and that mysterious chemical compound, protoplasm, came to be. This living substance we believe was the result of a certain chemical combination at a point when many and varied chemical compounds were being formed in little air holes of volcanic ash after the earth had cooled. For purposes of classification, geologists have divided the 900,000,000 years since life began on earth into five periods, as life developed from the one-celled organisms to fish and vegetation, to land plants and amphibians, to land animals, reptiles, birds, mammals, and man. In fossils, in the record of the rocks, we can read our modern book of creation. Now I can turn to and understand the evolutionary hypothesis — the biologist's story of the path of life through the ages. The viewpoints of the astronomer and the geologist have enabled me to make this a composite picture.

It was not until about 1858 that Charles Darwin advanced his theory — that modern forms of life came from the most humble beginnings; that man developed from one-celled life in nine hundred million years, even as the human embryo miraculously grows in nine months from a microscopic cell to the delicate complex structure of the human body; that the record of this growth could be read in the rocks, the shells, and the soil of the earth. How clear, reasonable and persuasive this is. I can see no defects, no reason for doubting this natural development of life, the survival of those innovations that best suit the needs of the organism. Evolution has no anachronisms; the fossil forms are in an orderly sequence; the fact that species are diverse shows that they evolved step by step, as well as the fact that various animals and plants are found only in particular sections of the world where conditions are favorable for such growth.

While I am considering evolution, I must call in the insights of the anthropologist as to the advent of man. Contrary to the deep-seated belief that man was divinely created in the image of God, knowledge forces us to see that man can not be apart

from evolution. Nature is filled with miracles but not supernatural ones — indeed, the greatest miracle of Nature is the law that it follows. Upon investigation we find that man is among the primates (monkeys, apes, lemurs, man) of the class of mammals. Comparison of the skeleton of man with that of any mammal shows a likeness in the fundamental lines along which the two are built, and with a higher ape show a striking similarity. Organs in the human which serve no purpose now (body hair, appendix etc.) are examples of our development and changing needs. Though we are related to the other primates, the thoughtless statement "Man came from monkeys" must be avoided. "It is probable that the highest apes are our nearest relations in the animal kingdom, but they must be reckoned as cousins of indetermined degree rather than as ancestors."¹

We humans should feel proud, never ashamed, of our part in evolution. I cannot but feel more vital for my kinship with all forms of life, more a part of the entire dynamic picture. How reasonably everything fits together, the same substances in different forms comprise all that exists, one step follows another so clearly — we cannot but feel the presence of a great Power. Evolution is but a description of His method. What is my conception of this power — what are the conceptions of others? From earliest times man has been pondering and believing, developing and improving his concepts.

The beliefs of primitive man were simple, crude exaggerations. He saw in everything a spirit — an unknown force. All objects were animate and seething with emotion, now angry, now pleased, but always acting intentionally. Dreams, echoes, reflections, — these things brought forth the conception of formless spirits within objects. With the belief in animism came a desire to influence the spirits. Certain chosen ones became shamans or medicinemen to drive away evil spirits and invoke good ones. Fetishes (objects or portions of objects the possession of which supposedly gave control over that class of spirit) were carried about. Certain fetishes became tribal idols and elaborate rituals of flattery, praise, dances, burnt incense, and sacrifice developed. Some spirits were harmful or taboo — to be always avoided.

Gradually, the spirits within the elements became the more

¹ Wallis, "An Introduction to Anthropology" P. 10

important and others were discarded. A polytheism based upon the gods of the sun, the rain, the wind, and the sea became man's religion. While these things acted in their normal fashion, man was not surprised. Only when something unusual occurred, as an eclipse of the sun or a shooting star, a drought or a flood, did man sit up and take notice. As a child rides on a train without questioning what makes it go, but asks wildly what is wrong if a loud noise is heard or the train stops suddenly; so man was aroused by the unusual, not by the immense moving machinery of the world. Polytheism, in various forms, flourished for many years as it still does among certain races today. Gradually, however, with knowledge increasing, the conception of spirits become restricted to the Heavenly Gods who saw all and would punish in some intangible way those who did wrong.

To do away with polytheism, and all that went with it was to turn the basic ideas into truths rather than to eliminate the things entirely — polytheism to one God of all people; shamans to priests to teach, counsel, and interpret; idol worship to the worship (worthship) of values and truth; fetishes to symbols; taboos to moral laws and motives; magic to law based upon knowledge; and sacrifice to love, service and consecration.

We can trace this evolution of religion by a study of the Jewish prophets in the Old Testament of the Bible. The Hebrews of Canaan, although their hearts and minds were filled with the thoughts of their god, Yahveh, and of themselves as a chosen people, still clung to primitive beliefs and rituals. Their Yahveh was a bloody, hard, and vindictive god — a god of battle. Into this picture came Amos to declare that sacrifice was useless, that Yahveh was a god of justice, that the Hebrews were chosen not for favors but for responsibility. Shortly after, the prophet, Hosea, brought the conception of Yahveh as a merciful as well as just god — a Father of Love. After 722 B.C. when the tribes of north Canaan were driven out and religious development centered around Jerusalem, prophet after prophet came with messages. Isaiah and Micah convinced the people that no sacrifice, no magic, no petition could persuade their god. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God,"¹ With the coming of Jeremiah, a last chain binding religious development to the

¹ Micah, Chapter 6 Verse 8

primitive conception was broken, for this great man declared that their god was a god of peace, and not just a god of the Hebrews alone but God of all the earth — of all peoples. At last to man's consciousness had come that God's "truth endureth to all generations." We have but to form a personal religious conception which is not an abstract term but a real feeling within the individual.

To put into words my conception of God is something I tremble to attempt. Although I know my fundamental beliefs are unshakable and there are no conflicts whatsoever in my mind, I can only make such statements — God is of nature and of life, He is the One who caused it all to be, He is the Creator of whom all nature is the handiwork. His mercy is eternal, His love for all His people knows no bounds. It is He who causes our bodies to heal, broken bones to knit, growth to be isolated from the rest of the body that they may not harm. He is the Power behind everything. Someday, I can more clearly state what I feel within — at present I feel my limitations strongly.

How do I reach Him? Prayer has been to me in the past, as it has been to many others, I feel sure, a combination of thanks and petition with the emphasis on the latter. I have been as childish as a primitive in considering that God might favor me and give me what I asked if I called His attention to it. Now I see that when certain matters turned out as I desired, they were following their natural sequence, and when I received certain honors which I had hoped for, it was because I worked hard for them. Although I hate to admit it, I think that aside from a certain feeling of contentment and well-being that it afforded me, I said my prayers every night with a feeling that God might be displeased if I didn't. Now that I have read and done some constructive thinking on such matters, I feel that I have a different insight. Prayer to me now is communion — to become one with the Holy Spirit. I do not need "to reach" Him at any specific time — for He is ever present. My evening prayers have become meditations closing with a few short words.

Of what use to me are the teachings of Jesus, the Bible as a whole, the church? In my opinion Jesus set a pattern for life. In the interpretations and values that Jesus chose in His life, we find an illustration of what God might desire for us all — an end toward which evolution may lead. I fully expect that con-

tinued study of the life and thoughts of Jesus will open for me new doors to clearer thoughts and higher aspirations. Reading and discussing the Bible have enabled me to evaluate this "divine library," to discount certain inferior parts, it is true, but to find its allegorical teachings delightful and its beautiful thoughts a source of spiritual strength for always.

The church, as such, has played a very small part in my life. As a child the combination of fundamentalism and moral teachings that were thrust upon me, affected me not at all. Stories such as those of Noah's Ark and Jonah and the Whale were merely new fairy tales to me. The idea that anyone should accept them as true was ridiculous. As I grew older, my attendance at church, rather irregular to be sure, was a matter of pleasing the family. I had a rather conceited notion that I understood what God was better than the rest of the congregation, standing there reading responses out of a book and listening to a pastor laboriously pull a moral out of a reading from the Bible. Although most of my religious thought and growth have been outside the church, I do not recommend it. I have come upon barriers too high to cross alone, yet I couldn't seem to bring myself to talk about it with anyone for I had no confidence in their understanding. All the modern scientific insights available today — that background which I have outlined — should elevate religion (surely not oppose it) to a plane of positive understanding and firm belief. To give to people this foundation, to provide a place for community sharing of the beauties about us, to evaluate life and its meanings, to awaken man and help him to really live — these should be the purposes of the church — a church which would never outgrow its usefulness.

These purposes are not limited to the church—religion should be carried into education and into personal living — not as a part of it, but as a basis for it.

What do my fellow men mean to me? We are all here as the result of invisible influences, not of our own doing. The advent of man as a part of evolution is by no means an explanation of his existence. Though achieved by gradual development, man is a miracle of God — many things we take more or less for granted are miracles in themselves. Sex, though often exploited, is a beautiful mystery, a sharing, an awakening, — a basic part of true happiness. Love, that invisible bond that ties one to another — we can measure it. In man are embodied these

mysteries and many others. We haven't the faintest conception of what mind is — we haven't the foggiest idea what an idea is. When I consider that all this is man, can I help but place great value on each and every being — the Child of God—the son of the earth from which he has developed in 900,000,000 years?

I have answered, in broad terms, the questions that confronted me. In a general sense, my personal religion consists of the ideas stated in this paper. I fully realize that many of the things I do from day to day and things I say are very youthful, and I know I often fail miserably to put into practice what I believe. However, with the new insights gained in the past few months as a foundation to work upon, I am finding new significances — in people, in nature — in life, and interpreting them as best I can.

My part in the service of God will doubtless be managing a home for one I love and caring for our children, for this is what I feel I want. I only hope that I may carry this out in the right way.

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer."

REQUIEM

Mankind in its futile way
Has met the twilight of its day
Where once his mighty cities spanned
Is swept by arid, dust-dry sand.
Breathlessly the thin air sighs
Deathlessly, a planet dies.

DEJAY SHRINER

ON READING "TWO GHOSTS" BY HUMBERT WOLFE

"If I'm a ghost and you're a ghost, and both of us
are nothing else
than shadows, a moment lit and then all grey . . ."

Shall we remember other shadows
swept off like wind-blown, shadowed smoke?
Or leave them sleeping in our ghostly minds
as faded letters
written to be read by starlight,
wrapped in pale blue
ribbon of thought?

"Shall we be afraid, ghost, of our ghostliness?"

Even though winter
keeps us in a sleeping dark,
even though we do not understand?
Yet still will spring
creep in on hushed and sunlit feet, sometimes,
like a character
seen briefly on a stage who has no meaning.

"We have met in a mist, and in a mist
have ben together."

A muted whisper
answered to a whispered stir.
But what forgiveness comes to those
treading grey, enchanted ground?

"At least we have touched a second,
at least we have kissed."

And those who know ghost kisses,
feel ghost hearts,
shall creep to a fingered ghostly sea
at night.

"What more had any lovers — ever — ghost?"

JANE BALCH

THE PIANO TEACHER GOES HOME

FAITH ILLAVA*

THE chauffeur at the wheel of the station wagon was driving too slowly. And the window beside him was open almost all the way, so that Miss Lucille Pierce, blue with cold in the back seat, silently berated him for his lack of sympathy. The man was obviously one of those creatures with high blood pressure, who demanded a good deal of fresh air and never seemed to feel the cold as Miss Pierce was feeling it now. Fascinated in a negative way, she watched him, saw how his breath came out in hot, steaming gusts, and saw that his gloveless hands on the wheel were thick and red, seeming to exude a warm vapor. Miss Pierce shivered and tucked the big plaid robe more securely around her ankles, and then sighed bitterly, for the sharp thin cold continued to dig into her very bones.

The chauffeur had been ten minutes late at the station. Because the waiting room was built on the other side of the tracks, the poor woman had been forced to stand in the bitter November wind, in the lee of a tiny baggage shed, rubbing her cotton-gloved hands together and breathing into the furred collar of her coat. She had prayed that the man would bring the big sedan, with its secure warmth and amplitude. (It had seemed only proper that he should, after keeping her waiting.) At the appearance of the station-wagon instead, however, Miss Pierce had nearly wept with anger. The man's behavior had infuriated her further; he hadn't attempted to apologize for his tardiness. Without a word, he had clambered out, opening the door for her by the driver's seat. Miss Pierce had promptly climbed into the back seat. (What a humiliation!)

The short trip from the New Canaan station to the Hough's large estate that Miss Pierce had made every Thursday afternoon for a year now, seemed at this moment, painfully long. Never before had things gone so wrong. George was usually more prompt, and he *always* brought the sedan. Then, too, before she had left her small apartment in the city that day, she had been quite sure that she was about to contract a nasty

* THE FLAMINGO presents the first story of Faith Illava, daughter of the sculptor, Karl Illava. She successfully pursues an English-Art-Music circuit at Rollins.

cold. Her head ached, and she had an awful thirst. "I shall demand a glass of water first thing," she was thinking. "They can certainly afford me such small compensation."

All at once, the big entrance appeared before them, and George was turning deftly into the familiar driveway, now lined with tall, frozen elms. Miss Pierce took an anxious little peek at the mirror above the chauffeur's head, and her forebodings became confirmed about the cold; the large, blue, slightly middle-aged eyes behind the lenses were unmistakably red-rimmed, and her prominent nose looked bluish. With frozen fingers she procured a mentholated handkerchief from her purse and dabbled around her nostrils. The car moved into the circular road and presently stopped under the porte-cochere. With some difficulty, Miss Pierce managed to fight her way out of the plaid robe. George was there to open the door for her. Out she sprang, and up the white brick steps. As she rang the bell, jerkily and a trifle rudely, she prepared herself to encounter Josie, the neat little Irish maid, with a haughty ferocity; at this moment, she felt particularly bitter about servants as a class.

The door, however, was opened immediately. Not by Josie, but by a tall young man, rugged and homely, wearing a suit of rough tweeds.

"Come in!" he greeted her.

She stepped nervously over the door-step and the door was shut resoundingly.

"You're Miss Pierce, aren't you?" he said. "I'm John Hough. Here, let me take your coat."

A trifle awed, Miss Pierce allowed herself to be relieved of her coat. As he left her to dispose of the coat, her mind worked quickly. So this was Mr. Hough, pretty little Mrs. Hough's husband. Odd that he should be so young, somehow. For a reason she couldn't explain, she had always imagined an older, more corpulent person, several years his young wife's senior — a man getting bald, perhaps, with a red face and a loud voice; a true big business executive. This idea had been pretty definite in her mind, (She couldn't imagine why), and when this young man, obviously only a few years out of college, had so readily introduced himself as John Hough, she'd been considerably unsettled.

But now, having disposed of her coat in the hall closet, he was coming toward her again, smiling engagingly. He nodded to-

ward the living room. "Perhaps you'd like to go in there by the fire until I can find my son. You must be cold."

"Why, thank you," Miss Pierce said. "I believe I shall." There was nothing else to do, certainly.

She left him then and proceeded down a short flight of steps into the familiar sunken room, with its tall bright windows and airy spaciousness. The good warmth of the gracious house was already beginning to steal back into her body, and she started to feel better. There was a crackling blaze in the fireplace, and as she breathed in the heavy warmth, she could hear young Hough calling his wife from the bottom of the stairway in the hall. His voice sounded young, almost hoarse, and very boyish. "Claire! Hey, Claire! Where's Mike? Miss Pierce is here. Where are you, Claire?" His face appeared in the doorway then, smiling apologetically.

"My wife's disappeared," he was saying, "and my son's been gone for hours. I'll go find them. Won't you make yourself comfortable?" Then he disappeared again.

A moment later she heard his voice upstairs, roaring good naturedly at his wife. She decided that she liked him. And she realized absently, that the two must be very happy. She liked Mrs. Hough too, she decided. Mrs. Hough was really a tall woman, but her figure was so slim, her bones so diminutive, and her face so very girlish and appealing, that Miss Pierce had always considered her "little." For a time, the piano teacher thought about the younger woman, trying, in her mind, to picture the young couple as husband and wife. Mrs. Hough was a simple young woman, with a quiet manner. Her clothes, too, were quiet, almost too much so. Her way of dressing seemed to Miss Pierce to reflect a certain anxiety never to approach over-dressing. To her keen imagination, this brought an interesting idea; the possibility that the girl's background in no way corresponded to or equalled her present mode of living; in fact, that there was no background at all. In other words, young Mrs. Hough had made a "good marriage." This and many other things she had observed to confirm her notion. There was, for instance, the young woman's habit of walking about the room, plumping the cushions, flicking a finger over surfaces of the furniture to find dust, straightening the objects on the mantel, and exclaiming anxiously over small spots on the rug. These movements suggested pride in her belongings, the kind of pride that is shown over new acquisitions, a prosaic, homely

pride, feminine and unaffected. Then there was the way she spoke; she had a voice too carefully modulated, as though someone had told her that she must always remember to speak in low tones. Her words were well-selected, but most of them were the currently "smart" ones — not that Mrs. Hough was in the least affected. It was simply that she was careful. She was watching herself. She was apparently determined (in a gentle way) to make her life, her conduct, clothes and surroundings, all conform to the basic idea of good taste.

The room in which she was sitting now, suggested, Miss Pierce thought, an interior decorator. It was properly luxuriose with the slightest tinge of informality. The colors (few and well-selected) were blended harmoniously, with the correct amount of boldness. A few paintings by a Mexican modern, hung here and there about the room, their somewhat monotonous tones being carried out in the furniture, drapes and what-not. In spite of this extreme conformity, however, to set rules, there remained a definite charm. The room was an undeniably pleasant one.

Here her thoughts ended because she could hear people approaching the room. Mrs. Hough now came in with her son Michael, aged seven, who was clinging to a large hammer, which seemed to hold a certain charm for him, as he was swinging it in wide circles over his head. "Mike," as his parents called him, was a thin yet strong-looking child. His eyes were like his mother's, blue and direct. He was rather tall for his age, and his hands and feet gave promise of a large man. He seemed a quiet boy but his mother had told Miss Pierce about his athletic prowess at school.

"Hello," the young woman said. Miss Pierce had again to admire Mrs. Hough's freshness and simplicity, the long blond hair, the clear skin and deep-set eyes.

"I must apologize for the delay," she went on, "but Mike and I have been up in the attic, painting some furniture for his room." She smiled and brushed at her face with the cuff of her smock. "We're both pretty grimy—you'll have to forgive us. Mike, give me the hammer, dear. We'll put it in your room." Mrs. Hough took the implement from her son and surveyed him thoughtfully.

"Is your lesson ready?" she asked.

Michael smiled rather self-consciously and rubbed his nose vigorously.

"Yep," he said.

Miss Pierce also smiled. "Michael's lesson is always ready," she said. "He's one of my best pupils." He is, she realized. He works and he's conscientious. But he has no talent. He should study science, not the piano.

"Mr. Hough plays the piano quite well," the younger woman said. "Perhaps you heard him when you came in."

Miss Pierce had not remembered hearing a piano, she said.

"We're so anxious to have Mike learn to play," Mrs. Hough said, "so that at least he can decide if that's what he wants to do. Even if he doesn't eventually choose music, he'll still have it for enjoyment. That's so important. Well," she said as she rose from the arm of the sofa she'd been sitting on, "I'll leave you now. By the way, Miss Pierce, won't you stay and have tea with us after the lesson is over? It will be right here in the living room. John is home early today, you see, and I think he'd like to talk Mike's lessons over with you. You'll probably have a lot to talk about together anyway. He's terribly interested in music. Won't you join us?"

Miss Pierce said she would be delighted. "Michael and I aren't going to have a very long lesson today, anyway. We worked overtime last week."

The piano teacher rose then, and Mrs. Hough promptly left the room. The two proceeded to the piano. Michael drew a chair over for his teacher, and then, jumping on the bench, immediately began to strum away before she could sit down. Miss Pierce had to smile inwardly at his enthusiasm.

The lesson progressed smoothly enough, as it always did, for Michael was an efficient little performer. Though meticulous about fingering, he was, however, careless of shading and interpretation. Under his strong little fingers, the "Turkish March" of Mozart now rolled out in precise, loud jerks, sounding exactly like the "Turkish March," but lacking a certain joy. Sometimes, in fact, it was more than she could stand, hearing this favorite little piece of hers being rammed into the keys like an exercise.

When he had finished, she heaved an imperceptible sigh of relief and asked for the exercise book. As she turned its pages, she became aware of a third person in the room, and looked up to see John Hough standing in the doorway. His face looked thoughtful, almost troubled. His eyes seemed to question hers momentarily, and then he put his finger to his lips and

left before his son saw him. When they had found the exercise, Miss Pierce relaxed in her chair, and, as he played, pondered the sudden appearance of the anxious-faced young father. He had looked as though he wanted to tell her something. Suddenly the lesson seemed too long. Miss Pierce was frankly anxious for the hot cup of tea, and she wanted to hear what John Hough was going to say. Michael's uninspired playing was beginning to pall. She glanced at her watch and was dismayed to see half an hour more.

For the next thirty minutes, therefore, the small pupil hacked away at a little Bach minuet, which was a comparatively unfamiliar piece, so that progress was slow, and wrong notes occurred frequently. She did not attempt to conceal several yawns at intervals. A few minutes before the lesson ended, Josie came in, carrying a big tray. Miss Pierce restrained a nervous impulse to stop the lesson, while Michael finished off a few bars. She then gave Michael permission to call his parents. The boy bounded out of the room and left the woman alone.

She walked over to the fireplace. Stretching her hands to the blaze, the piano teacher felt suddenly alone and old. She looked impulsively at her hands, and she realized their importance to her. But why should she feel this way now? Had she ever doubted her capability for a moment? Could these hands of hers be changing — growing stiff and old? Why was she always so cold lately? Stiff? Old? Perhaps not. She only needed a rest.

She heard his voice again in the library. He was talking to his wife. They were leaving now, entering the hall, and Mrs. Hough was advising her son to wash his hands. They came into the room together.

"John told me he met you at the door, so I suppose introductions are unnecessary," Mrs. Hough said. She sat down on one of the two sofas facing the fireplace. She smiled at her son and turned to the piano teacher.

"We're going to let Mike stay for a while, so he can have some cookies. Then he'll have to go," she said.

Mike seated himself carefully beside his mother. Mr. Hough stood over the fire, gently stoking it.

(This is too formal, she thought. What is expected of me? I feel as though it is I who am to be judged, not Michael.)

"I wanted to ask you some questions about Mike's progress,

Miss Pierce." He finished with the poker and sat down next to her.

Michael was gazing ardently at an inviting array of little frosted cakes.

"No tea for Michael," said his mother.

"Please — " began the boy.

"Can't Mike have some cambric tea?" his father asked. Miss Pierce thought she detected a peevish note in his voice.

"No," said Mrs. Hough finally. "Mike probably remembers what happened last time. Tea just doesn't agree with a young stomach."

"That wasn't the tea," said Michael. "It was that old layer cake. I ate the cake too fast, and so, he went on boldly, "I threw up!"

"Mike!" remonstrated the young woman.

"Well, it wasn't the tea."

"In that case, maybe you'd better not have any cookies either."

"All right," said the small boy. "I won't have anything, and I'll starve to death. And maybe I'll go upstairs and eat the paint up."

"It might be an excellent idea for you to starve to death until supper, at that," agreed Mrs. Hough.

"Claire, let Mike have some milk with his cookies," advised Mr. Hough.

"No, milk will spoil his appetite completely. He can have a cookie, and then he'll have to leave. Don't grab!" she added, as the child reached quickly for the dish.

Michael withdrew his hand and then cautiously extended it again.

"That's better," he was told. "Now run!"

Michael hurried toward the door with his treasure.

"Aren't you going to say goodbye to Miss Pierce?"

The boy mumbled a few words incoherently, and then he was gone. A moment later they heard the door slam.

"He probably rushed out without his coat," commented Mrs. Hough in a worried tone.

"I don't think so," said her husband. "I'm sure Michael couldn't be so stupid as all that."

"Michael is a very intelligent child," put in Miss Pierce before she had decided that the remark was unnecessary.

But the mother was pleased. She smiled as she handed a cup to Miss Pierce.

"Do you really think so?"

"Yes," said the piano teacher. "He has a scientific type of mind. His thinking is clear and quick. I believe he reads music better than any child of that age I've ever taught. He learns extremely fast too."

"What about his playing?" remarked Mr. Hough rather suddenly.

Miss Pierce was taken a little aback for a moment.

"His playing?" she inquired, stupidly.

"Yes—interpretation. Has he any feeling, do you think?"

"Why, his hands are perfect. Strong and sure. But he's so young. One can hardly tell at this age."

"John started to play when he was five," said Mrs. Hough proudly. "His mother told me that he used to hum symphonies before he could walk! And he was already composing at Mike's age."

Mr. Hough laughed nervously. "You know Mother, Claire. Mother claims," he told Miss Pierce, "that every member of her family was blessed with a particular genius. She still swears that Dad really invented the sewing machine, and that my brother read George Meredith in kindergarten. But you see, actually, my father was a bit of an inventor on the side, my brother teaches English literature at an university, and I sincerely enjoy the piano. I wish to heaven I could have kept it up, because I studied it quite seriously once. In a way, I'd like to have my son go on where I left off, provided he's going to enjoy it and that others will too. But first we'll have to know—we ought to know if there's any talent there. I know he takes it seriously. Claire has told me that he loves to practice, never has to be asked. He seems to have a good ear. We discovered it while he was still quite young. He has good taste, apparently. Claire tells me he chooses all his little pieces. And, as you say, he tends to have a scientific leaning, what with Bach and Mozart obviously among his preferences. Those early compositions are charming, but I'm sure you'll agree that they don't allow for much interpretation. (I mean, of course, the earliest works of these composers.) As a matter of fact, they're little more than elegant exercises. Frankly, I'd rather he preferred Chopin or Schubert just now. Their stuff is so sincerely musical—not so academic as the others. It seems to

me that the young pianist should start with a musical thirst. Exercise-pieces should come later."

He paused expectantly, as though he had asked a question, meanwhile, sipping his tea thoughtfully.

Now was the time to tell them. She realized that very much depended on her answer. Mr. Hough would be terribly happy if she managed to convince him that his son had talent. On the other hand, if she told him the truth, he'd be quite discouraged. Should she, therefore, tell him the truth or not? She decided to take a middle course for the time being; there was no sense in being downright harsh. Neither should she intentionally deceive them.

"I do agree with you, Mr. Hough," she said. "As a rule youngsters like to start with lesser composers, who cater to their tastes. Italians and Frenchmen, mostly. Then they turn to Chopin, Schubert or Grieg. As time goes on, they begin to realize that hard work is necessary too, so they start to study Bach. Mozart, Haydn and Liszt, as well as Chopin's more difficult works. At this time, their exercises actually begin to interest them. The academic thirst, as you say should come after the musical thirst. I think it is fortunate that Michael should start the other way 'round."

"But you see, I'm afraid of the implication there," argued Mr. Hough. "Michael is obviously advanced in his tastes, but isn't it quite possible that he'll stick to them? In other words, is the boy musical or not?"

"Michael is so very young—," she began.

"Mike will be eight in a few weeks," he interrupted, almost impatiently. "One can usually tell in a child of three, whether he has any talent of any kind. I don't dare judge the boy myself because I'm his father. I know what I'm hoping, of course, but you're the only person who can tell us the truth. It's odd, isn't it, that I can't decide for myself? The fact is, I'm sincerely afraid to judge one way or the other, for fear I'll turn out to be wrong."

If she didn't like this anxious young parent half so well, it would be a simple matter to say outright: "Go ahead and wish your son to be musical, but he isn't and never will be. There isn't a thing to do about it." But that would hurt. It was a delicate situation. So she hedged once again, by saying: "I could probably tell you in a year or so, Mr. Hough, whether it will be worthwhile for the boy to go on."

"But why not now, Miss Pierce?"

"Because I think that Michael should have more time to prove to us what he can do. He has developed very rapidly, so far—." Here she stopped because she could go no further. She realized that it was useless to make excuses.

"Surely, Miss Pierce."

"John, dear, don't be so insistent. I think Miss Pierce is perfectly right. We should let Mike go on for a while longer—."

"Go on, hell!" John Hough rose then and began to pace the room. He laughed a moment later, apologetically. "I'm so sorry, Miss Pierce. But perhaps you don't understand how I feel—."

Quickly she rose to his defense.

"I do understand," she said. "You see, it was almost the same way in my family."

"My brother wanted to be a doctor," she went on, "but my father attempted to discourage him as much as possible, because he wanted him to be a violinist. His career was nearly ruined."

Young Hough whirled around then.

"No talent then, I take it?"

"I'm afraid not."

"Then Michael is a scientist, not a pianist!"

"Quite possibly, Mr. Hough."

"Thank you for telling me. I'm terribly grateful to you."

"Then," inquired Mrs. Hough anxiously, "he's not going to go on?"

"He is not," said her husband. "When Mike goes to prep school, he'll have a chance to get on with science. Right now, he's venting his true talent out on the piano."

Mr. Hough sat down on the sofa again, this time beside his wife. He seemed to be at the same time resigned and relieved. He was either quite pleased or quite discouraged. But the atmosphere of the room had changed. The tension was gone. Something else, though, was taking its place. The piano teacher felt it and shivered a little.

The young man was gazing at his wife. The two of them looked unaware of the presence of a third person.

"What do you think of that, Claire?" he said. "Our boy will be a doctor some day."

"Or a chemist," put in Miss Peirce. They all three laughed.

There it was again. She felt terribly alone. Something had gone wrong, not with the other two, but with herself. Life with everyone else was such a simple matter, so simple, so simple!

She knew she would never see them again after today.

SLEEP

Softly you come to me in a creamy drowsiness,
With soft, fragrant hair,
Soft robes,
Silently.

Slowly you sing to me dark blue songs with sequin words,
And slow heady rhythms,
Smooth, low
Melodies.

Closely you stay with me through the night's loneliness
With close, heavy perfume
Like a
Misty sea.

JANE BALCH

IN PARTING . . .

The Editorial Staff wishes to extend its thanks to its contributors who were responsible for the success of this year's *Flamingo*. From the four issues, seven features proved to be prize winners. Miss McCaslin received a first and second award in the Allied Arts Contest for "Come Seven" and "Summer Night". Mr. Gregg's dramatized version of his "The Sound of Hate" was awarded a first prize for one act plays, while his "If There's a Way, There's a Will" received the Annie Russell prize several seasons ago. In this issue, John Willis' "A Suit of Clothes," a prize winner in the drama division, is to be found. In poetry, both Elizabeth Miller and Peggy Hudgings were honored with awards, the latter receiving the Ponce de Leon prize for "The Grape, Souring," found in this issue.

Proud of its record, *The Flamingo* feels certain that the coming year will have an enlarged success, bringing the best of the best in Rollins.

THE FLAMINGO STAFF

THE VARSITY

Rollins' Newest Meeting Place

SUNDRIES and
MAGAZINES

Immediate Delivery Service

PHONE 57

GARY'S PHARMACY

Prescriptions — Sodas
Delivery Service
Magazines — Luncheonette

PHONE 96

Just Opened

Rollins' Newest Hang-out

The LITTLE CAMPUS

Formerly Anderson's

Compliments of

COLONY THEATRE

Central Florida's
Finest Theatre

Read the

ROLLINS SANDSPUR

*Published weekly by
Undergraduate Students of
Rollins College*

STATIONERY
FILMS

THE BOOKERY

252 E. Park Ave.
Phone 282-W

Compliments of

ORLANDO COCA COLA BOTTLING CO.

DRINK
Coca-Cola

The pause that refreshes

