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V. 40

Winter 1960



FLAMINGO

WINTER ISSUE

1960

Volume 1, Number 1

Editorial Board

Editor: [Name]

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Editorial Board

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WINTER ISSUE 1960

FLAMINGO

VOLUME No. 40

WINTER 1960

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The Flamingo is published at the end of the fall, winter, and spring terms by the students of Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida. This issue was printed by Robinsons — Printers & Lithographers — 2208 N. Orange Avenue, Orlando, Florida.

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THE BOY FROM NOWHERE

ALBERTO SEPULVEDA

Rain slid down the length of the large window and smeared the bright red of the play-time slide. Behind it stretched an alley lined with broken fence and strangely disordered trash cans. They stood together in the damp grey cloud, hostile toward the old maid who rattled their tops and covered her head with a newspaper.

Slowly he came through the light rain and into the soaked alley with light steps, past the paper head maid and the laughing trash cans. He clamped the seam of his trousers in a violent fist and wished with all his might that he had remembered. He hadn't remembered and his mother hadn't known. She had driven away and left him all alone in that stone house with the black eyes. He had forgotten the day before when Mrs. Pug had lowered her wrinkled face close to his ear and slipped the words from her thin, red lips.

"Now Christopher, we'll have no class tomorrow because Mr. Pug's brother is dead."

And Christopher was glad because he had never seen Mr. Pug's brother; only Mr. Pug who always lied about what time it was. Now he had forgotten and he felt lost among the musty furnishings and the remembrance of other children's laughter. He felt as he had when he walked through the empty alley and arrived at the dark house for the first time. The upper stories had glared threateningly upon him as he approached the bulky door. With a warm hand his mother had seated him in a chair and then kissed him twice on the ear before leaving.

From there he had watched the strange children through confused eyes as they danced loudly about the floor. Each new face that peered into his was a shadowy dream, and he longed to become tiny so that he could run and squeeze under a board where he could lie in the cool, dark dust. He closed his eyes tightly and fought against the salty defiance that ebbed with the burning in his throat. He felt their laughter in his ears and he plunged his hands far into his pockets.

That same first day he had stood at the window watching them rush madly about the yard. He had been hardly conscious of the boy named Phillip who stood firmly behind him, pulling his arm. Phillip had an orange head and little bug-like dots covered his face. His white eyelashes beat furiously and Christopher had wanted to ask him why. Phillip beckoned him imploringly and whispered from behind his blinking eyes,

"It's time, it's almost time."

Christopher had blushed and stammered through his hand while watching the intensity of the other boy's expression. Phillip had turned and stomped to the foot of the stairs. He turned his white face up to Christopher from behind the banister,

"It's time, now it's time," and with this he fled out into the yard. Christopher watched the starched white girl as Phillip crept closer to her unsuspecting primness. She had been dancing earlier and Christopher had wanted to touch the soft hair and the ribbon and dance with her alone around and around the room and the piano and Mrs. Pug's thin legs. Now he watched the cunning with which Phillip snatched the daring red from her hair. Christopher followed him as he paraded it on high with a jerky trot under the slide. The starched girl reddened with delight and Christopher saw her as she turned her gaze on his high window. He felt as though the whole yard had turned its eyes upon him and he descended with quick measured steps into the light. Here Christopher had crossed to the boys in the back where Phillip played loudly with his prize. They had all talked without looking and thrown stones heavily against the trash cans and the fence.

The heavy rain swiftly sprinkled the solid faces of the deserted group of trash cans. Christopher watched the rain run with silent steps across the window's murky face. The afternoon tottered slowly and unsteadily through the back yard and no one cared except a small boy who mashed his nose against the minutes. Everyone is away and Mr. Pug's brother is dead. Christopher sat heavily on the couch, and at length pushed his head under a cushion. The rain dripped continually in his ears with the soft patter of his heart and then gradually left him alone on the couch. The afternoon was hurrying on and leaving him far behind in the musty fold of loneliness. Wait; Wait; he must catch up, for everyone is gone and Mr. Pug's brother is dead.

*Black clouds,
like swift leopards,
stalk across a silent
sky — scratch the cinnabarine moon
and flee.*

JUSTINE LEVIN

LOOKING OUT OF WINDOWS

*Looking out of windows can be a state of mind
perhaps brought about by the nature of man
which is a creature within four walls of unknown
substance, with windows (wide ones looking into
heaven), but always vistas with frames.*

Windows present —

they hold for inspection.

*That which is within their
wooden arm*

they become,

*and for those who have stunted substance
and whose memories are haunted by space
infinity is a mean thing, and windows have it.*

*Glancing outside one can realize the other parts
of a large pattern of its one eye:*

*the universe beaded with the movement of flight of
birds, the tincture of spreading colors over
the horizon, filmed over with cataract of curtains
they frame,*

*and there is no disorder to their binding
of outside to a small square beginning at your room
and leading on to infinity.*

Windows speak,

they call,

*they say that going away from what may be
a pleasing task is more certain a sure delight.*

*Open, plated, barred, or curtained,
some painted in muscular wood, once opened,
nature's great curvature is unbarred from
entering, and in the glare of a day
a window is only a space filled with the outside
looking in.*

K. BRACEWELL



*A gentling gold-auburn tangle
Flaming a farm child's face,
With the widened eyes of a lamb
Finding herself in a foreign place.*

*Yet she walks with the stealth of an Arab,
Draping, caressing her fear in a smile;
A compliment softens the lips
That fevered at the sunset enshrining the stile.*

*A rare perfume precedes her
And lingers once she has passed
To say the just-the-right-thing to
Someone else. A tiny diamond mast*

*Anchors the ship of state
On a bracelet sea. There were hours spent
On those polished petaled nails that
Brush the sabled instrument;*

*Hours once cherished as time
For breathing in a work filled year;
The lull on a harvest night
To make a dream more dear.*

*The girl has transformed for the circles
Of diplomats, generals and kings.
But at night in the stillness I watch:
The hands grope for earth and the heart longs for wings.*

CHRISTINE HICKEY

THE EASTER EGG VILLAGE

*It's simply appalling —
The fate that's befalling
The countryside here in this state.
With FHA housing
The government's lousing
Up all but the state parks, of late.*

*Our landscape is dotted,
All sculptured and plotted
With weird shapes within and without;
On each hill and hummock
(It just turns my stomach)
Like mushrooms in season they sprout.*

*With heliotrope splashes
And fuchsia front sashes
And carports of aquamarine —
No color so bawdy
Or too outright gaudy
To desecrate nature's fair scene.*

*Though prices are rising,
No false advertising
Is needed to push any shed.
On high ground or low ground
A buyer can be found
Sufficiently vacant of head.*

*With modern day selling
(TV's cultured yelling)
'Tis really his blame? I think not!
Like Bret or Matt Dillon
He's "perfectly willin' "
To move in, stake claim, and then squat.*

IDA MARY STRINGER

vignette

Have you ever walked

under hanging moss

beard-grey in the warmth of night

while the moon played tag

through the trees

SARAH LANIER BARBER

Before I die

Hush-now is the silence from time

the minute when hours have stopped

on the plains of the world

and the sounds are only from stars

silent and still

and cool are the muted mild murmuring streams

Hush-now is the silence for love.

SARAH LANIER BARBER

prayer

*Upon the black-faced stage of night
A black-souled child lies down to pray.*

*Let not the moon forget to shine
Let not the world dissolve
Let not the trees cut off their roots
the birds forget to sing
the grass decide to grow no more
the frost forget the spring
Let not the sun grow cold
Let not the stars wane dim.*

*Let not the child forget the peace of being young
Let not the faith of youth get lost while growing old
Let not confusion drown the heart
Let not the eyes look sad
Let not the dreams depart
but let the child be glad.*

*Upon the black-faced stage of night
A black-souled child lies down, and prays.*

SARAH LANIER BARBER

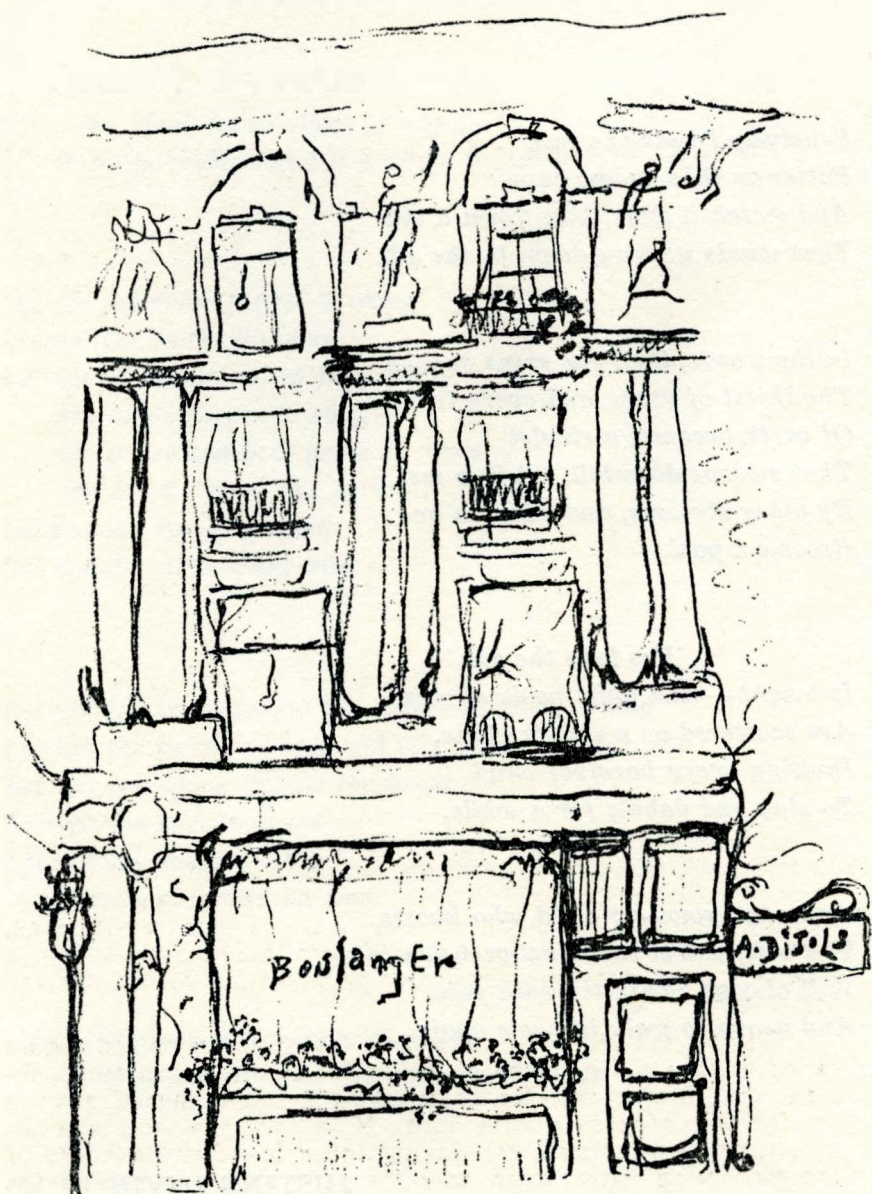
*Pensively I hear the rain
Patter on the window pane
And watch it fleck, then form a rill
That winds its way down to the sill.*

*In the woods, the June rains quench
The thirst of grass, and every trench
Of earth becomes a rivulet
That sweeps downhill, till it is met
By other streams, and they, as one,
Become a pool.*

*Ere long the sun
Is bright — and quiet pools of rain
Are scattered on a country lane,
Inviting every barefoot child
To stay and dabble for a while.*

*And any grown-up child who knows
The soft, warm earth between his toes
Will always reminisce with rain
And yearn to walk in pools again.*

JUSTINE LEVIN



AN EXPERIMENT IN FREE ENTERPRISE

JOHN HARKNESS

Andre Denis Auguste Dijols owned and operated what he considered to be, or so I had been told, the best bakery in all of France. No one on the whole Ile St. Louis could remember when M. Dijols had left his beloved Rue des Deux Ponts to confirm this extraordinary boast, not even the ancient Mme. Untereiner; but nobody really cared, for as soon as any stranger, young or old, tasted his huge strawberry tarts or his crispy raisin bread, the baker could, and did, instinctively add another twenty francs to his weekly income and another patron to his roster. This was proof enough for M. Dijols. As might be expected, this proud Frenchman received copious compliments on his creations; but he would reply modestly to each in turn that the good Lord alone was responsible for his pastries, and, if it were not for this divine gift, he would probably be only a simple caretaker. I might here remark that M. Dijols had never been seen in church or caught saying grace before his well-stocked table; but, as with his boasting, no one seemed to care. He was a good business man and that was enough.

It has been said that this particular part of Paris, loved so well by M. Dijols, has a monotony seldom found in the old city: its once clean and white residences have become crowded and dingy and its gay, aristocratic atmosphere insidiously replaced with the squalor of the poor; yet, for all its unwashed simplicity and passive existence in the shadows of that great marble capital, there is a beauty in its decay and an honesty in its people which is seldom encountered anywhere. Andre Dijols carried on his lucrative trade on the ground floor of one such ancient building, but on the upper two floors he had fashioned a small hotel and had hung directly over his doorway in large, green letters: *Dijols, Proprietaire*. It was this building to which I came, having previously heard of its notorious owner, for my first night in Paris.

Having arrived at an extremely late hour, my tired senses failed to take much notice of either M. Dijols or his establishment that first night, for before long I found myself resting comfortably beneath a huge quilt. M. Dijols, however, was not a man to go unnoticed, for during those few fleeting hours of the mellowing dawn when only the poor shopkeepers and the jovial country women of les Halles are up and about, I happened to sense unconsciously, for I was not quite awake, the most wonderful profusion of odors swirling up the narrow staircase. M. Dijols could apparently expect no opposition from me in regards to his boast, for within the next few moments I had

thrown off the heavy comfort, quickly dressed, dowsed my face with the ice cold water, and stepped curiously down the well-trodden stair to the kitchen.

There, busily molding a massive pile of flour-dusted dough and entirely surrounded by all the imaginable products of his trade, worked the industrious Dijols as if possessed by his creations. The clay ovens had made the air stifling hot; and all the chairs, tables, and, for that matter, even the baker's bed, were completely buried beneath endless rows of those famous pastries; but never once did Dijols pause to rest. The center table, one of those massive oaken pieces of the past century, was surmounted by what appeared at first glance to be several hundred empty tart crusts; but as the energetic baker soon had each brimming over with juicy berries and hot mince, I felt that surely I had over estimated the number. On the sink counter and in the large tins which lined the walls the famous long loaves of Paris lay stacked like cordwood. Nowhere else in the world, even the rest of France, do they make loaves such as those made in that one district; some were a full yard long, but all, regardless of the length, were no more than a few inches thick. On M. Dijols' huge bed, the building was so narrow that the front business section and the baker's combination bedroom and kitchen were the only two rooms on the ground floor, lay twelve full trays of high, frosted cakes. Surely he could not have baked all this in one night. But he had; for, after having scurried briskly about his kitchen seemingly in complete ignorance of my presence for some time, he finally noticed the amazement in my eyes.

"All this in six hours, boy," he said. "Here, have a chair."

Before I could make any reply, he had set in the corner of the table, a full mug of foaming hot milk, and a pile of his tarts of such dimension as to occupy even the most hearty eater for hours. For the first time I now fully noticed the character of my amazing host.

M. Dijols' agility and grace were unbelievable, as were his cleanliness, his polished, rosy complexion, and his neat, white uniform; yet for all this dignity he more nearly resembled a bear than any other man I have ever known. Although probably in his late fifties, his massive body, arms, and neck were well formed and would present a most formidable sight in other circumstances however, even though large and deeply tanned, his hands worked with extreme nimbleness and his face with satisfied delight. Except for a few patches of graying stubble along the sides, he was completely bald. There was a perpetual twinkle in his eye and a smile on his lips. It was apparent that M. Dijols loved his work, and from the way he went at it there seemed to be a minimum of divine intervention. Nevertheless, over the doorway hung a large, wooden cross.

As I was to have a week in Paris, I decided to spend the first day in the bakery watching the people of the Ile who came to patronize this industrious storekeeper. Promptly at

eight, having put the finishing touches on all his works and chased me with a laugh from my ever increasing menu, M. Dijols opened the large front doors and then took his place behind the spotless counter.

By that same noon, a scarce four hours since opening, I thought myself to have conversed with what seemed to be every person on St. Louis including a number of particularly attractive young ladies and the previously cited Mme. Untereiner. Although the definite idol of all the old ladies of the Ile, the baker seemed to be unusually attentive to the former group of ladies as he often conversed and joked in low tones as if each had a report for M. Dijols. As they spoke in rapid French, I soon abandoned any idea of listening in on their conversation.

Mme. Untereiner was one of those rare individuals who think so much of the human race that they have dedicated their entire lives to the easing of its troubles. This unassuming, jovial woman, rather heavy but otherwise quite plain in her faded blue uniform, had received every civilian and a majority of the military awards given by the French government for valor and bravery. She had served as a front line battle nurse for the duration of both the great wars, she worked for the very minimum wage in the service of the Paris poor. She was famous throughout France, yet there she was buying the cheap bread from M. Dijols to supplement her meagre meals, which she usually ate with the baker or in her house next door. Dijols and the nurse were on extremely friendly terms, and it was easy to see from their laughter and conversation that they were up to something.

At one o'clock the stores on the Ile shut their doors for the afternoon meal, so I decided to stroll about the narrow streets and bridges which surrounded the Islands. While passing the building immediately next door to the bakery, where Mme. Untereiner said she lived, I happened to notice the unusual condition of the ground floor windows. While most of the other buildings on the Rue des Deux Ponts had a display or at least an advertisement, there were only thin white curtains on these windows. Through the filmy material I could see, although it was quite dark, a line of six or seven chairs. In what type of residence was Mme. Untereiner living? The matter caused me but temporary wonder, but nevertheless I made a mental note for M. Dijols and then continued on my walk.

That night as I sat eating a large bowl of steaming stew and boiled rice with the nurse and the baker, I happened, in the course of a conversation regarding the various industries and individuals of the street, to mention the residence next door. No sooner had the words left my mouth than the Mme. began to laugh; then Dijols began to laugh; then, having been somewhat embarrassed by the unexpected response, I, too, but in a nervous way, joined their amusement. After they had had their joke, both glanced slyly at each other and then to the wooden cross where upon they both silently crossed themselves.

"Lord, forgive us," they murmured. "Boy, it's simply an investment from which my dear friend here and I obtain funds to help our small incomes and the poor hospital. My bread may be marvelous but it has yet to make me rich."

Their eyes still twinkled, but as they were making it quite apparent that they had some humorous secret between themselves, I thought it best to refrain from pursuing the matter further. Perhaps elderly people, especially when they are as worldly wise as those two, come together for companionship and conversation, so I simply smiled and returned to my stew.

After the dinner we played some eucher, which was the nurse's favorite game; but as I had not slept much the previous night, I soon left the couple deeply engrossed in their battle and climbed the narrow stairs to my room. The night, except for the distant horns and an occasional barking dog, was very still. But as I settled beneath my comfort, I distinctly heard the sound of a woman's laughter through the thin partition which separated Mme. Untereiner's residence from that of M. Dijols. The curious ears of a seventeen year old are extremely acute, even if his mind sometimes is not; but by the time I had finally buried my head deep in the soft pillow, I knew the secret of M. Dijols, Mme. Untereiner, and the attractive girls. The baker and his famous friend knew a good investment; they really did understand life. I went to sleep.

HAIKU

*Sea breaking on cliff;
My father's white hair blowing;
Sea-weed, sea gull's cry.*

*A tall house at last;
Seven crows upon a pine tree
In snow falling fast.*

*Fire spark pops out
On my polished red-wood floor,
There is snow about.*

*Drifting, dries my eyes;
A gull on a stick floating
In the full moon, cries.*

CLINTON W. TROWBRIDGE

ORIGINAL SIN

*He
touching the fountainhead of
trees,
with abrupt, five-fingered hands —
the apples, shaken-down, they fall,
rumbling down upon the land.*

*Adam sees upon the lens
of serpentine eyes, the bitter trend;
Upon the inward turned eye
the birth of chaos in the lie.*

*Eve, of unknown flattery oppressed
weeps
the fear of innocence excessed.*

K. BRACEWELL



*A dark and weary mind.
Turn off the light and go to bed.
That which you seek you cannot find
By turning down the way you fled
When, still a boy, you beat your mind
Against the cold, grey fact of God,
And finding no response of any kind
Presumed you knew, took Aaron's rod
And made of it a tool of pleasure,
A wedge to split the Jesse Tree.
You failed. You were not the measure
Of all things. And now you're free,
Free of care, free of care.
Do not pursue the Godhead to His lair.*

CLINTON W. TROWBRIDGE

FLIGHT

*In a garden full of sun
a shadow passed me overhead
full of the movement of flight;
all black, all textured in one
dimension to the form of a bird.
This flat piece of flight, this board
fluid-shaped of movement, let loose
with a song, and looking up,
I could not find the author
save for a fabric of him etched in space,
 and song
 so inappropriately fashioned
 in full notes out of a flat chest.
The speed of a black handful of wings,
enveloped by a piece of twig jutting formidably
of leaves,
and caught in a twist of breeze,
this reality untouchably lost in speed,
yet left behind the garment of its deed.*

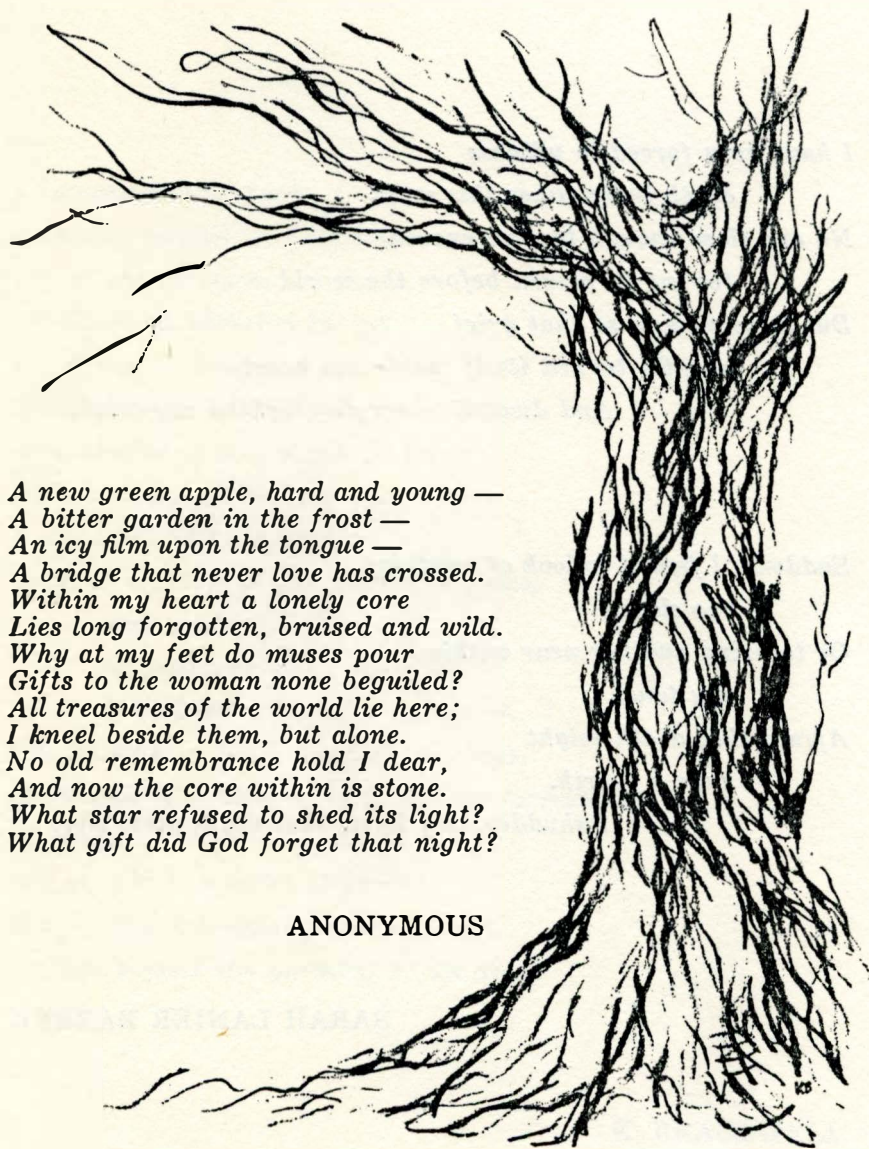
K. BRACEWELL

february 14, 1960

*I have been forced to witness
 death three times this week
No one close enough to give excuse
 for me to mourn before the world
But close enough so that grief
 silently turned itself inside my heart
 And dwelled, worrying, behind my mind.*

*Suddenly I feared to look at anything
 too closely
Or to bring another near within
 my touch
Afraid that death might
 take a fourth.
 I shudder, and know that death must live.*

SARAH LANIER BARBER



*A new green apple, hard and young —
A bitter garden in the frost —
An icy film upon the tongue —
A bridge that never love has crossed.
Within my heart a lonely core
Lies long forgotten, bruised and wild.
Why at my feet do muses pour
Gifts to the woman none beguiled?
All treasures of the world lie here;
I kneel beside them, but alone.
No old remembrance hold I dear,
And now the core within is stone.
What star refused to shed its light?
What gift did God forget that night?*

ANONYMOUS



WINTER

1960