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Winter 1964

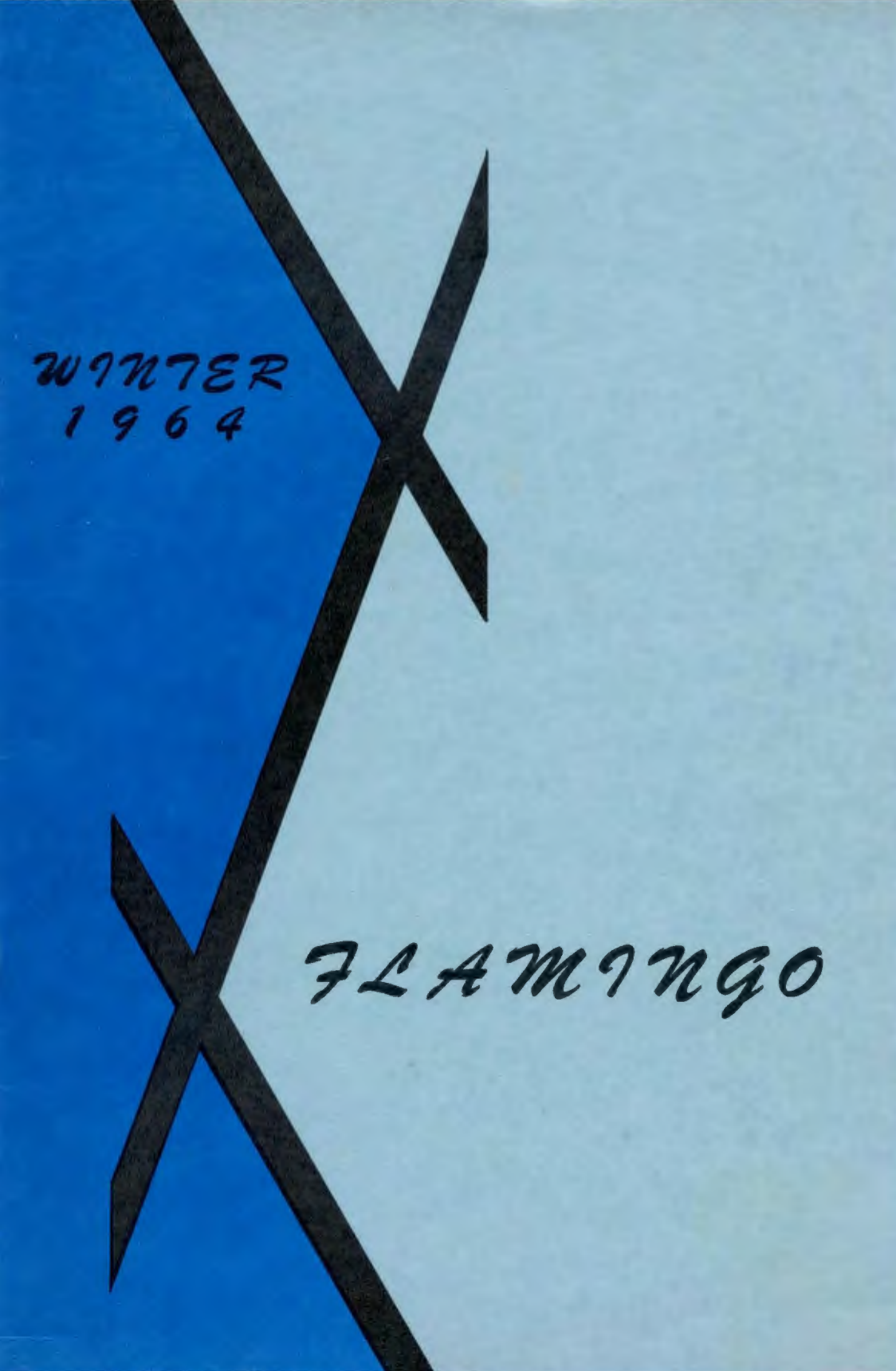
Flamingo, Winter, 1964, Vol. 48

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WINTER
1964

FLAMINGO



Winter, 1964

Volume 48

The *Flamingo* is the Rollins College literary magazine and is published three times during the academic year.

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PREFACE

This is the FLAMINGO, and it attempts to capture the literary pulse of Rollins College . . .

The works on these pages are not by masters, but they do represent the enthusiastic efforts of promising students, gifted alumni, and skilled faculty members. Their capabilities differ, but they are together in their belief that the FLAMINGO is coming of age . . .

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MOON BEAMS

Now come the moon beams,
Piercing the night
With a glorious glow,
Kissing the sea
And the sands
And me,
As along the shore
I go.

CANDY NORTHWAY



Just as in times past, there comes,
In the run of things, a day when each
Must say the truth and to himself be
Master; On this inevitable day, the
Youth of your childhood must be pawned.

Hold forever onto the memories of the
Old times but remember that in your future lies
Everything.

FRANK WEDDELL

ABU SIMBEL

Oh, to relate myself
To this extinguished civilization!
How I long to transcend
This discrepancy in time,
To commune with these presences
Emanating from the very palisade.
Would that I could perceive
Their muted echoes.
Scarce ankle-high to a colossus,
I am enveloped with reverence.
In this context of river and sky,
The temples best exhibit their majesty.
At this renaissance of day,
Their potential is realized.
Flooding me are reflections
On the continuity of time.
These ancients antecede
The villagers of actuality.
Here, we moderns are the anachronisms.
The landscape and beneficent river
Alike defy the millenia.
Horizon to horizon all remains timeless.
Or so it used to be.

PAMELA DOWNS

Dusty Roads, but Beyond

Steeped in yellow-leaved palm trees
serendipity awaits me here.
Yes, brick-red tiles cobble the roof,
the typewriter keys lock the mind.
people lean out of cars and delicately sicken.

BONNIE MILLER

A MAN AND A BOWL OF MUSHROOM RICE

The sun rose heavy and grey; shrouded by a veneer of morning fog. A few wisps of smoke drifted skyward, playing with the few sea gulls sailing in the breeze.

The old man pushed apart the string of bamboo which curtained the entrance to his humble shack. He blinked into the absurd little rays of sun that had slipped past the filter of vapor and now cast yellowish stains on the house.

How difficult the times were; so much sacrifice for the war, especially the young ones. But then there was always comfort in the words of the emperor that it had to be for the glory of Japan. Nevertheless, it would be nice if the old peace and sanity returned.

On the table in the house lay a knife, some dishes, a bottle and a candle. On a side table stood a bowl of cold rice with fish and some mushrooms brought by a relative from the country. The old man sat down and began picking at the unappetizing food.

‘How nice our cousin Tamura is to bring us these vegetables,’ thought the old man, “and how wonderful life is that there exist such things as mushrooms. If you are hungry you need only pick the right ones and you can eat; if you have an enemy, pick one which is poisonous and you can put him to death; if you are a small frog you can protect yourself from the rain by sitting under one, yet if you are a fly you must be careful not to let your wings get caught on the sticky surface.

“How perfect nature is that everything she creates has good and evil both at one time, yet what for one is bad is good for the other.”

And so thinking the old man sat finishing the dry rice and licking his salty fingers.

And so an airplane appeared in the sky to bomb the city, yet the old man just sat there on the old wood box because there was nowhere to go for shelter.

And in a shop in Europe, a man tore off yesterday’s leaf on a calendar and opened the shutters; August 6, 1945.

And meanwhile the old man in Hiroshima, still sat licking his fingers and thinking of mushrooms and watching the lone plane come closer and closer. . .

STEFFEN SCHMIDT

Inconsiderate Edith

A FARCE IN ONE ACT

(A neat, cozy living room. In a heavy padded armchair Mr. Richard Cole, a grey-haired, middle-aged man, sits reading the evening newspaper. His wife, Edith, sits in another armchair, knitting. The time is early evening. Winter.)

EDITH

The hospital bill arrived this morning with the mail.

RICHARD

I'm glad our insurance company will cover it.

EDITH

We'll have to pay a few things . . . like the telephone bill and some little things that the hospital will dream up.

RICHARD

How have you been feeling today, Edith, no more pains or anything?

EDITH

Fine until today. I don't know what's the matter this time.

RICHARD

What do you mean?

EDITH

Well, sharp pains like before. I hope it's nothing to worry about.

RICHARD

I hope not. Oh, I forgot to mention it. Jack is going to come over for a drink soon. I should have mentioned it sooner, but it slipped my mind until I saw this article in the paper . . . "Truck jack-knives on highway . . ."

EDITH

How horrible!

RICHARD

Do you think that you could fill the ice bucket?

EDITH

Of course, let me just finish this row.

(She knits for a few more seconds. She gets up from her chair, but suddenly falls to the floor on her hands and knees.)

RICHARD

Good Lord, Edith, what are you doing there on the floor?

EDITH

Richard! Help me!

(RICHARD looks up from his newspaper and leans forward in his chair.)

RICHARD

What's wrong, Edith? Did you drop one of your needles?

EDITH

Richard! Help me! My heart!

RICHARD

Your what? Get up, Edith, and get the ice out. Jack will be here any second.
(EDITH rolls on the floor, moaning in pain.)

EDITH

Richard, please! My heart is failing. Can't you see?

RICHARD

You don't have to make such a commotion about it. What will the neighbors say?

(EDITH rolls some more, crying aloud.)

EDITH

Help me, Richard.

(She collapses on the floor, dead. He puts down the newspaper, gets up from his chair, and walks over to where his wife lies.)

RICHARD

Edith, get up! What's the matter with you?

(He stoops down and shakes her arm.)

Edith! Edith! Are you alright?

(He leans down and puts his ear to her chest.)

Good Lord!

(He looks at her eyes.)

She's dead. Of all times to die.

(He stands up and walks around the room.)

Well, she can't stay here.

(He walks over to her, picks her up, and carries her through the door L. The doorbell rings.)

Is that you, Jack? I'll be right there.

(He returns from the adjacent room, goes to the door R, and opens it. JACK, about the same age as RICHARD, enters.)

JACK

Hello, Dick.

RICHARD

Glad to see you, Jack. Give me your hat and coat.

(RICHARD takes the hat and coat and hangs them on a peg near the door.)

RICHARD

Have a seat while I get some ice and glasses.

(RICHARD leaves through the same door through which he had carried EDITH. JACK sits down in one of the armchairs and begins to read the newspaper. RICHARD returns with the ice and glasses. He goes to the small bar, front L, and begins mixing two drinks.)

RICHARD

How'd your day go?

JACK

About the same as usual . . . just another day.

RICHARD

Just another day? Sounds like my day.

(He hands JACK a drink.)

JACK

Thank you. Don't you retire sometime this month?

RICHARD

Yes. Just a few more weeks. Won't know what to do with myself.

JACK

I can understand. What's Edith doing with herself?

RICHARD

Oh, not much. She's in the next room.

JACK

Is she coming out or isn't she feeling well?

RICHARD

Damnedest thing happened just before you came, Jack. Edith collapsed on the floor, rolled around moaning, and died.

JACK

My God! She died! Just like that? How sad.

RICHARD

Yes. I didn't know what she was doing there. Thought she was looking for one of her knitting needles. She sure picked a fine time to die. She hadn't even begun to get dinner ready yet.

JACK

That is too bad. You could come over to my house for dinner, if you'd like to.

RICHARD

Thank you. I'd hate having to fix my own dinner and then have to clean up afterwards.

JACK

What do you think you ought to do about Edith?

RICHARD

Gosh, I hadn't really thought about that.

JACK

We shouldn't leave her here, being dead the way she is. Aren't you supposed to call someone when things like this happen?

RICHARD

I suppose so, but whom would you call? The police?

JACK

No. They wouldn't want to be disturbed. How about the hospital?

RICHARD

Of course. I'll call them up.

(He picks up the telephone directory that is on the small table beside his chair and looks for the number of the hospital.)

Here it is. Mulberry 5-8862.

(He begins to dial)

Hello? Ah... could you send someone over to 14 Glenwick Lane to pick up my wife? (He pauses) An ambulance? Why, yes, that would be very nice. (He pauses) Oh, nothing really, she's dead though. I think it was her heart. (He pauses) That's right. 14 Glenwick. I won't be here so I'll leave the key under the front-door mat. (He pauses) Yes. Thank you very much.

(He hangs up the phone)

That certainly was simple. They are always so nice at that hospital. They're going to send over an ambulance.

JACK

They were so nice when my wife died.

RICHARD

That was a shame about Eloise. So pretty and to be run down by a truck.

JACK

I know, I remember it so well. She was standing a few feet from me and the next thing I knew she was fifty yards down the street. I didn't know where she'd gone. She always wandered off... looking in store windows. You remember.

RICHARD

Of course.

JACK

The truck driver was awfully upset. I don't blame him though. Probably the first person he'd ever hit before.

RICHARD

It's remarkable the damage one of those huge trucks can do. I noticed in the newspaper this evening that a truck jack-knifed after a blow-out and ran into a road-side cafe. Moved the building some twenty-five feet.

JACK

Amazing.

RICHARD

Lucky no one was killed inside of the cafe. Only the driver was killed... The owner was outside emptying the garbage when the truck hit his building. He heard the crash and the next thing he saw was his cafe moving across his parking lot.

JACK (looking at his watch)

We ought to be going soon, don't you think?

RICHARD

Why, yes. Are you through with your drink?

JACK

Yes.

RICHARD

Fine. Give it to me and we can be on our way.

(RICHARD stands up, takes the empty glass from Jack and places the two glasses on the bar. He turns to JACK.)

I was just thinking, Jack. Do you think I ought to leave Edith in the next room? The men from the hospital might not find her if she were in there.

JACK

You're right. Maybe we should bring her in here and put her down in one of the chairs.

RICHARD

Wonderful idea. Could you give me a hand with her?

JACK

Of course.

RICHARD

Is your back all right, Jack? I wouldn't want you to strain it. I can do it myself.

JACK

Oh, no. Let me help you.

(They leave through door L and return shortly with Edith's body.)

RICHARD

Here we go. Right down in this chair.

(They place her in the armchair next to the telephone table.)

JACK

Dick, you'd hardly know that she was dead. She looks as though she's asleep.

RICHARD

She does, now that you mentioned it. Do you think that the men from the hospital would think that?

JACK

Maybe so. Why don't you leave a note for them explaining that she's not really asleep. It would be a shame if they walked in and thinking that she was asleep walked right out again.

RICHARD

They'd think some prankster had called them up.

JACK

It would be horrible if you walked in after dinner and saw that she was still here.

RICHARD

That would be awful. I'll get some paper.

(He goes to the telephone table and tears off a sheet of paper from a small pad.)

How should I start this note?

JACK

I don't know . . . maybe . . . "My wife is dead. She is sitting in the arm . . ." Oh, you can't say that.

RICHARD

How about . . . "Mrs. Richard Cole died of a heart attack this evening around six o'clock. She is sitting in the armchair. Would you please take care of her. I can be reached at . . ." What's your number, Jack?

JACK

Belmont 5-8088.

RICHARD

"at Belmont 5-8088." How does that sound?

JACK

Much better than what I suggested.

RICHARD

Where the Hell am I going to put this note so they'll see it. Maybe I ought to pin it on her. No, that wouldn't do.

JACK

How about in front of the door? So when they open the door they'd see it.

RICHARD

That's a good place. They'd be sure to see it there.

(He puts the note down on the floor in front of the door and places and ash tray on it.)

Well, we might as well be on our way.

JACK

You know, Dick, you sure are taking this well, Edith dying so suddenly.

(They walk over to front door.)

RICHARD

Why, thank you, Jack. I'm certainly glad that you happened to come by.

(RICHARD opens the door.)

One second, I've got to put the key under the mat.

(He stoops down, but looks up suddenly.)

Why look! The ambulance has already arrived.

JACK

My, they didn't waste a second.

(A man dressed in a white uniform comes to the door.)

FIRST MAN

Good evening, sir.

RICHARD

Good evening. How are you?

FIRST MAN

Very well, thank you.

RICHARD

I suppose you're here to pick up my wife, Mrs. Cole? Won't you come in?

(FIRST MAN walks inside)

FIRST MAN

Thank you. How is her condition?

RICHARD

I think she's dead, but you can take a look for yourself. I might have been mistaken.

FIRST MAN

Where is she?

RICHARD

Oh, I put her in that armchair. You see . . . we were just leaving as you arrived, and I thought that you might not have found her in the next room. So we brought her in here.

FIRST MAN

Why, that's very considerate of you, sir.

RICHARD

Oh, nothing at all. I even left this note explaining that she was not really asleep as she appears, but I guess I can tear it up.

(FIRST MAN walks over to Edith. He examines her closely.)

FIRST MAN

You were quite right, sir. She is dead.

(He goes to the front door)

Hey Ralph! Can you bring in the stretcher!

RALPH (from off stage)

Be right in.

RICHARD

Is there a receipt or anything that you would like me to sign?

FIRST MAN

Oh, no. We'll have to take her to the hospital and run a few tests on her . . . just routine checks. We'll notify you later.

(RALPH enters with the stretcher, rolling over the floor)

RICHARD

I understand. And by the way, I won't be here this evening. If you should need me for anything, I can be reached at Belmont 5-8088. It is Mr. Griswold's residence. (Pointing at JACK)

FIRST MAN

I understand very well. This must be quite hard for you.

RICHARD

Yes. And not only that, she didn't have time to fix dinner.

FIRST MAN

How unfortunate.

(He and RALPH place EDITH on the stretcher. They start to leave)

RICHARD

Thank you so much for everything.

FIRST MAN

Oh, don't mention it . . . just part of our job. Good night.

(They exit. RICHARD closes the door behind them.)

JACK (Putting on his overcoat)

Certainly were nice young men.

RICHARD

Yes, weren't they. Ready to go?

JACK

All set. (He opens the door. They both walk out.)

RICHARD

Where's your car? (He closes the door behind them.)

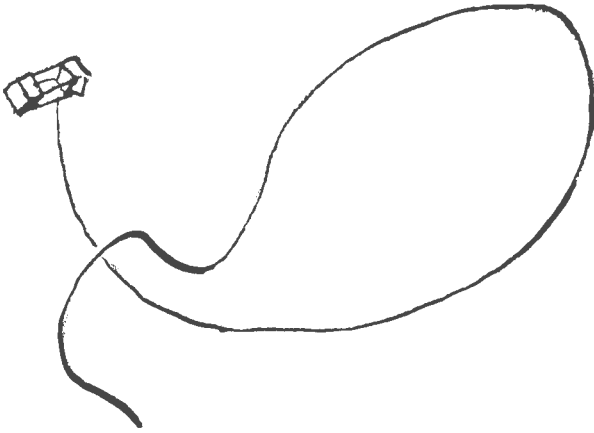
CURTAIN

ELLIOTT RANDOLPH

The Downfall

Why go through the preliminary ridicule again
 Why reaffirm what has been previously understood
 Why the sudden, stinking, peaceful ritual,
 Shot through with baroque meaning
 on each fat-cheeked cherub.
 Let us document our ineptness
 on well-wrought scrolls
 And seek the end in the superfluous.
 The beast bends over his sadly mottled form
 and does five-finger exercises
 with prehensile grace.
 Whose finger is it that traces our names inexorably
 so close to our noses
 that we follow
 with cross-eyed fascination.
 It is squat and calloused and flails about,
 picking out here and there
 the reasons that we have fallen to our pale knees.

BONNIE MILLER

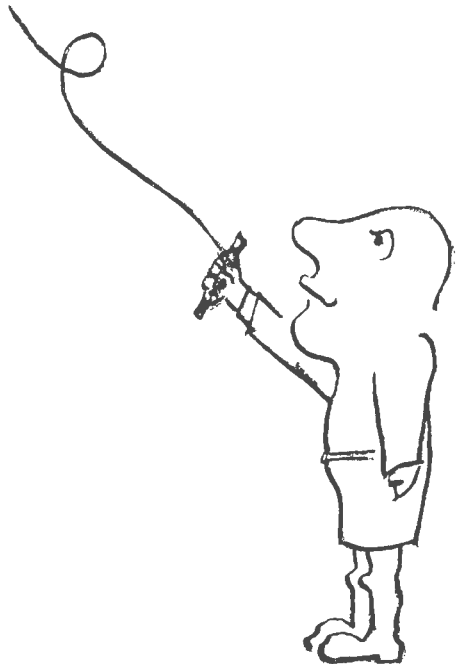


My Kite

Today I stood upon a hill
And sailed my kite on high;
It ran a race with the West Wind
As he went sailing by.

I let it float and toss about,
And e'er I pulled it down,
I wondered if it caught a smile
From folk in yonder town.

JANE C. SWANSON



Florida . . .

A link sausage floating in the ocean,
an endless sandbar,
an inflamed appendage
infested with coin-laundries, Burger Kings,
car-lots, and cinderblocks
A sun stained coast strewn with bloated jellyfish,
decaying sea turtles, paraded upon
by the glamorous middle-aged,
by bold anglers
A network of frustrated roads flanked by miles of
sterile swamp, by starved cattle, by signs that
tell you that The Big Tree, Gatorland, and Bibleland
are all FREE
A playground for the aged, a long shuffleboard
cluttered with hearing-aids, wheelchairs, canes,
and hypermyopic lenses
the sunshine state

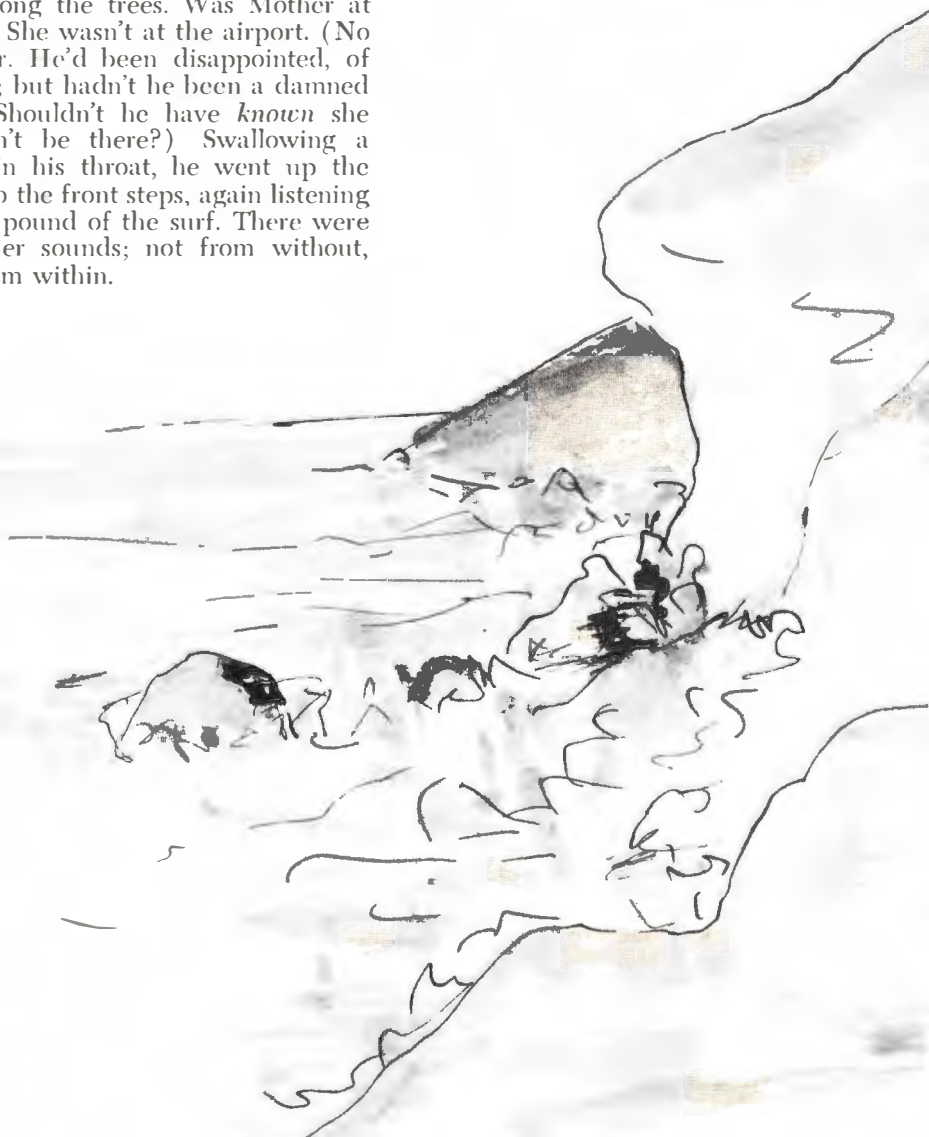
ELLIOT RANDOLPH

HIGH TIDE

by JEFF CLARK

David Lee saw the gulf stretching away to a great blue afternoon sky. Despite the chill in the air, he wanted foam from the crashing breakers to spray his face; he wanted the sand of the beach he loved beneath his feet; and yet — it *was* cold.

Now he heard the roar of the departing taxi; and the pang at the bottom of his belly struck again like the repetitious boom of the waves in the distance. He closed his eyes, not wanting to face the house that loomed among the trees. Was Mother at home? She wasn't at the airport. (No Mother. He'd been disappointed, of course; but hadn't he been a damned fool? Shouldn't he have *known* she wouldn't be there?) Swallowing a lump in his throat, he went up the walk to the front steps, again listening to the pound of the surf. There were no other sounds; not from without, nor from within.





He rid himself of his suitcase in the hall, staring up at the ballustrade along the lobby above. His ears strained for sounds. (Oh, how often he'd heard those peals of ecstasy rippling from Mother's bedroom. Time after time he'd slipped from the house, returning to the beach even if he'd just come from there. But the beach, anywhere in fact, was preferable to that house and the knowledge he could, would and inevitably must attain, though he shrank from it every time.)

But the hall was so silent he could hear his own respiration, and softly he stole to the entrance of the living room. (He felt like a thief, not like a young man returned from college.) There was no one in the room. He stopped, seeing the portable bar. So the bottles were neatly arranged in their rows; the glasses were polished, were they? He crossed by the sofa, selecting a bottle, holding it at arm's length as though it were some dread thing! (Wasn't it indeed?) He eyed the contents suspiciously. (Yet the amount of liquor was not making the impression so much as the memory of Mother's voice: "Fix me a drink, duck. And Em—fix Em up, too . . . Turn on the radio, Em. Find me a cha cha. I want to cha cha." And he had mixed their drinks innumerable times, until that one day when Em asked to borrow five dollars from him and he realized that Em was no longer a guest in the house but something more permanent.)

"Mr. David!"

He spun around. At the same time the muscles contracted in his chest. (So this was it. The confrontation had at last arrived!) But when he saw, he could but laugh, and it was shattering because the tension in that God-awful room was broken, and his relief overwhelmed him.

"Oh, Mr. David, it so good to see you." Grace, the Negro maid advanced, taking his hands in hers. "This house been mighty lonesome without you."

She continued to fuss about him, hardly allowing him to get in a word as she inquired about his health, his activities, his trip; then, looking as though something were amiss, she stepped back from him, suddenly asking: "Where your bags?"

"In the hall."

Grace looked puzzled, putting her hand to her chin, then looking back over her shoulder. His muscles again tightened. She was probably expecting Mother and Em, and any moment they would —

"Your Ma and Mr. Em . . ."

Yes, Mother and Em. Em and Mother. (Any way you said it, those names were inseparable.)

"Where are they?"

What did she mean? How did he know where they were, or even *want* to know where they were? (But of course he *was* certain of their whereabouts.) And now he could detect the traces of suspicion in Grace's words; yes, and he had to look at her. He had to answer her questions.

"I haven't seen them."

"Didn't they meet you?"

"I took a taxi," he said.

"Your plane get in early?" she asked.

He shook his head. "On time."

"What happened?"

"I don't know."

"They left two hours ago."

"Were they all right?"

"I think so."

(Did she indeed? Well, who was asking the questions? And what questions! But it happened every time, almost like a familiar game they played—not much fun, really, for they both knew the answers, knowing they each knew, yet never openly admitting anything.)

"They said they were going to meet you," Grace cried.

"Do you think they stopped?"

"Where would they stop?"

"Don't you know?" (He could have shouted at her and avoided doing so only by gritting his teeth.)

"Oh, Mr. David, they wouldn't stop there!" She looked almost heart-broken. (Here, there; she talked so vaguely. But had she *ever* been able to speak plainly? Or he—for that matter? No, he'd never been able to bring himself to complete candor. But was it so terrible? Yes, everything was wretched; and he was weary, terribly tired.)

He went back into the hall, doggedly climbing the stairs, hearing Grace trundle behind. Going to his room, he stepped directly to the window, plac-

ing his hands upon the ledge, leaning forward to listen to the gulf. (How often he had let the comforting woosh of the waves lull him to sleep!) It was high tide now; the sky was turning to pale blue, and soon it would be dark. Still watching the wind swept waters far below, he said to Grace: "Tell me about Mother."

"Mr. David, I swear they just don't feed you enough at that college. You thin."

"You heard me."

"What can I tell you!"

"Has she changed?"

"Oh, a little, maybe - - -"

"In what ways?"

"Folks change lotsa ways. You don't notice 'em all."

"What ways?"

"Don't make me tell you!"

"I sec."

"Mr. David — !"

"Okay." He turned from the window, moving about the room, touching his favorite things — the toy airplane hanging from the ceiling, the record player beside the bed. Finally he stood before the tiny model of the Southern plantation occupying half of the desk.

Grace, lingering in the doorway, spoke mournfully: "I remember how you worked so hard on that plantation. All by yourself up here, not goen to bed till three o'clock in the morning."

But Grace was wrong. "Charles and I made that model together." (Hell, what was the use? Everywhere he turned, memories. He thought fondly of Charles. But Charles was away at school in the North, doing God knew what. There was no one here—not his mother, not his friend—no one.) Suddenly he wanted to leave the room; he wanted to leave and never come back.

"I got what you like for supper," Grace called as he returned to the hall. "Baked ham, scalopped potatoes and lotsa hot rolls."

"I'm not hungry." There was only an empty feeling in him, queer — somehow yearning.

The jangle of the doorbell shot through him, making his heart thud. They must have arrived; but why did they ring? Had they forgotten the key *again*? (If Mother was drunk, if she

was . . .) He knew Grace was at the front door while he himself was edging toward the window to the terrace, and then — Grace called. He wanted to pretend not to hear.

"Mr. Charles is here!"

He stopped, dumbfounded. Was he hearing right? It couldn't be. But when he went to the door, sure enough there stood his friend from boyhood, complete with a new pair of hornrimmed glasses, white turtle neck sweater and tweed sport coat. Leaning on his arm there appeared a shapely brunette he'd never seen before in his life.

Brushing his hand over the top of his head, Charles roared, "How do you like my hair? I let it grow long!"

Immediately a thousand incidents came to mind. The boat they'd sailed, the races they'd won, the time they caught the tarpon—but his mind was racing. He had to slow down, stop, back up. Let them in. (Charles! Charles would take his mind off Mother.)

"Got a little chick I want you to meet," said Charles, ushering the girl into the living room. "Name's April."

The girl smiled, revealing a set of miraculously white teeth. Charles flung himself onto the sofa, and April nestled close, still clinging to his arm.

"What're you doing home?" David asked.

"I got sick of that ratrace of a university," Charles said. "Just walked into the dean's office, stuck my hand in his face and said, 'So long, Grandpal!'"

"Your parents —" David began.

"Well, why should they kick? I'm saying *them* a hell of a lotta bread."

"Find a job?"

"Aw," shrugged Charles, "I work for the old man when I feel like it, and when I'm out of bed before noon." He grinned at April. "The little woman here takes up a lot of my time. Eh?"

"Ummmm," said April.

"Why, you know what we did last night, Davie?" Charles continued. "We drove to New Smyrna Beach. Right?" He nudged April.

April grinned. "Ummmm."

"But that's over two hundred miles away," David said.

"So, we wanted a little excitement." Charles winked. "Guess what happened at midnight? Cops caught us driv-

ing through a red light. Isn't that so, baby?"

April let out a long, drowsy sigh and slithered further down into the sofa, putting her head on Charles shoulder.

"Ummm."

"Spent the night in the New Smyrna bull pen."

"Bull pen?" David asked.

"It's not a cell," Charles explained. "Just a little room off the entrance to the jail. Call it a bull pen." He chuckled. "Cheeze, was I teed off, and I almost said, 'Look here, officer. Don't you think you're too old to wear a whistle?' As it was, when the old troll gave me the razzle-dazzle about how late it was, and didn't I know all good people were in bed, I almost said, 'Well, what're *you* doing up?'"

April stirred, suppressing a yawn. "Say. You got a little girl's room around here?"

"In the hall to the left," David said.

She rose, sauntering away.

"Great little gal, huh?" David thought he heard Charles say, but he wasn't paying any attention. Excitement had risen within him, and now that April had left the room, he wanted to really talk to Charles, find out what he'd done, what he'd seen, what books he'd read. Yes, all those things and more! (Charles was there, and maybe with a friend around the vacation would be bearable.) "Charles, do you remember—?"

"Say old man, would you mind awfully, I mean—"

It was Charles speaking, standing close to him now, making a confidential tone. Why? For whose benefit, since there was no one else in the room?) Charles gestured, waving toward the bar. "Could you give me a little shot?"

Momentarily he was puzzled, and, then, in the perfect quiet of the room he was conscious once more of the churning gulf outside. He saw in his mind's eye the sailboat, and he recalled something else, something that aroused a peculiar unrest in his stomach. In the millions of times Charles had been in the house, he'd never once asked for a drink.

"Sure," he said, moving slowly to the bar. Charles followed, saying, "I met her, of all places, at the hospital.

He-he-he!" He laughed. "Said she was a chemist. Worked in the lab for a while till she got distracted. He-he-he!"

David paused, smelling breath as Charles leaned close, still the confidential man. "Some lab technician distracted her right out of her job. He-he-he."

David set the glass down with a hard tap before Charles, an unpleasant certainty telling him that he really didn't need that drink; and as he looked into the face, didn't he see blood-shot eyes? (The glasses didn't quite hide them. No, not quite. Mother's glasses never hid her hideous eyes, either.) He moved away, not wanting to be caught staring, and quickly he said, "We ought to get ahold of Bill and Joe, take the boat out like old times."

"Of course," Charles said, "April tried to tell me how great she was and I know, I know every guy in Saraport was after her, but I told her a thing or three."

David turned. Charles sat at the bar, the glass clasped between his hands. (Was this talk about sailing?)

"I told her she didn't amount to a sack of beans. Then we went to my house." Charles smiled a sort of secretive smile that David did not understand.

"Charles," he said, "How're your folks? I want to see them soon."

Charles grunted. "Wouldn't know. When they're out, I'm in, and vice versa." He drank the rest of the gin, then commenting: "I could never talk to April about D. H. Lawrence or Thomas Mann, you know. She's not really the intellectual type." He pivoted around on his stool. "But she's a type..."

April entered, crossing to Charles, toying with his hand. He stroked her head. "Well, I guess we better go to Bill's party," he said. "Don't have a date, do you?"

"No."

At the front door April looked up at Charles. "My horoscope told me I'd meet a blond handsome German."

"Well, I'm blond and I'm German." He winked again. "*Voulez-vous coucher avec moi?*"

"Huh?" April said.

"Never mind," Charles said. "The

Latin translation for it is *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi*."

Now David *was* staring at Charles. (The sense of humor remained, but where was the Charles he knew? The Charles who used to sit on the deck of the boat talking of Milton and of far away places? Charles — the one who wanted so intensely to make his dream of traveling and teaching into a reality—Charles who was as serious about his love of adventurous life as David was about the life he knew on the beach, the only thing he had to love?—where was the dedicated Charles, the Charles who'd once been the only friend he had?)

Hardly before he knew it, they were gone, and he was alone, alone before the great mirror at the foot of the stairs, seeing not the image of the tanned youth he'd once been but instead the figure of someone older. True, the brushcut was the same, but the eyes were large, dark, and the mouth was unhappy; and no matter how he tried, he could not smile. Suddenly he felt terribly small in that big empty house; and the only thing calling to him were the waves, the rushing waves . . .

The water was cold, rising in angry silver-crested swells. Then in a split second the waves rushed forward, turning to geysers of foam as they battered against the rocks that stood like obstacles in the way. He sat motionless, numb with the increasing chill that heralded the approaching of the evening. The sky was tinged with ink-like patches, patches that were rapidly enlarging.

Spray wet his cheeks, oozing away, stinging all the while. Again and again, the dark swells swept the jetty where he sat, tumbling along in a never ending deluge. The wind became stronger, whipping about his head, pricking his ears, blasting right through his jacket, cutting into the core of him. The rocks dug into his legs; his calves were sore and he knew he was drenched to the skin.

How long had he been sitting there? Hours? Maybe. He hadn't noticed the passage of time, for that seed of unrest had grown into an awful ache all over, and he just wanted to let the gulf sweep it out of him.

Now he looked at the long beach, grey white in the dusk, curving away

to the great pines skirting the highway. There were no cars to be seen, and for the first time he felt utterly desolate. He could find no solace from the beach his father, long dead, had taught him to love.

He shivered as another torrent of water bombarded him. Painfully, he got to his feet, seeing deep blue flecked with white sand particles. The intensity of the wind became sharper all the time, swooping down over the rocks to the beach, hurling sand at him in a storm. He stumbled onward. Sand bit into his face, scorching his eyes, and he had to put up his hand as though warding off an adversary. A burst of wind rammed into his side, half spinning him around. He turned back, leaning into the flurries of sand whirling all around him. The wind reached a frenzied peak, screaming, whining at him. He could hardly see where he was going. Now a slope of ground was beneath his feet. He was climbing a hill. Or was it the ridge? His legs threatened to give way; he felt himself falling forward; and then, seeming only by some sheer fluke, his hands struck something rough. He was supported by the trunk of a tree. It was the ridge, and the highway was near. He went farther into the grove, his feet slipping over the pine needles strewn everywhere; and then he stopped, turning, seeing the sandy tornado through the trees, suddenly wanting to hurl himself back to the beach, knowing the elements would keep him from thinking, from putting his fists against the tree. But his knuckles *were* digging into the bark, the fingers clenched, the muscles straining. Charles. If Charles were there, he'd hit him and be damned. Why did Charles bother to come over? Just to show off that girl? Was that all he cared about, his women and his liquor? Oh, granted, he'd always been a big talker, and a story-teller, but this time it was bull! (Wasn't it bull about him being the lady killer of Saraport? What was Charles doing? Was he turning himself into an alcoholic? Would he be like Mother? Mother, a prize alcoholic who didn't come to the airport but sat in some bar with that gigolo Emlyn? Didn't he know it? Hadn't it happened before?)

He broke away from the pines, run-

ning down the bank to the highway. Then he was struck by a chill. He huddled up in his jacket, something inside seeming to choke him. It was lonely, so damned lonely on that highway. His shoes sloshed with the remnants of salt water in them. (What a shabby figure anyone would think to see him now!) Yes, he knew he was bedraggled and—hopeless. It was so hopeless, the walk alone to the house. A few yards away was the path leading to the back lawn, and with a few more steps he would be able to make out again the swelling breakers.

From behind there came the hum

of a motor, growing more distinct and then lights illuminated the pavement. He saw that a bus full of army guys was coming his way, and as they passed he heard them singing. The bus rattled by; the voices died away. The gulf rumbled on in the wind. He imagined those boys were having a good time.

He reached the drive and stood watching the tiny red taillights of the bus as it disappeared around the bend. Then he started for the house. Grace had turned on the light beside the front door. He walked forward, keeping his eyes upon the light.

LOST SOUNDS

A lonesome breeze is sighing in the palms
For the days of Spanish songs and padres' feet,
The sigh of an old culture begging alms
From a traffic world and age of motor fleet.

ANNA M. LINDEN

THE TWILIGHT ROAD

My heart is chilled by winter's bitter wind,
And weary numb does grow my ancient frame.
No friend to walk with me today I find,
For he does fear dim future's doubtful name.
Besides dry leaves which fly against my face,
Alone except for aged memories,
Along this twilight road, a path I trace,
Which men before me walked for centuries.
The coldness chills my breath and blurs my sight
And keeps me blind to fertile fields and trees;
I see no more spring's dim early light,
For eerie night becomes eternities.

The ancient path is wide and worn so deep
By men whose souls eternity shall keep.

SARA ZIMMERMAN

May the blue skies that visited me this spring,
Be with you and to you bring,
Some measure of the warmth and radiance
With which you're gifted.

I oft-times think of the many lonely
and discouraged spirits you've lifted,
And can only say to you of the great race,
may there come joy.
And this I give to you alone.

FRANK WEDDELL

QUIK KLEEN
LAUNDRAMAT
OPEN 24 HRS

...gleamed in bright neon orange,
turning the one car in the parking lot,
a pale blue Ford, a murky brown. The
aid was misty with the fog of late,
chilly evenings in the South.



The Happiest New Year

Across the street, the cacophony of an over-zealous band seemed to power the only light there, another orange beacon, with ROD'S LOUNGE spelled out. This sign turned the row of cars before it various shades of the same brown.

There was little sound in the laundromat. Two dryers whirled to assure the couple present that the two dimes deposited were causing the huge drums to rotate satisfactorily. The two figures sat in the corner, talking.

The girl clutched a paper cup filled with coffee in one hand and the hand of the boy in the other. Both were smiling and talked with the animation that association and affection bring. She had huge green eyes with long lashes which spoke even when she was silent. He was talking now and brushing his long brown hair off his forehead with his free hand.

"You know, this is our first New Year's together. It hardly seems possible that last year I was over at Rod's, trying to drink that noise quieter and smile myself happier. Neither worked, of course.

"This New Year's is both quieter and happier. It's — I don't know — beautiful or something. What time is it, anyway, darling?"

She smiled back at him with her whole face, and then, mock-seriously, "Nearly three minutes later than when you last asked. Don't worry, you'll hear it when it's midnight. And we can both say, 'Happy New Year,' and kiss and drink this God-awful coffee and make-believe it's champagne."

He said, "I'd rather believe it's coffee. I don't intend to be driven home by my date *this* year. What time is it, really?"

"Five more minutes," she beamed back, laughing at his impatience. "What difference does it make, anyway?"

"I don't know, I always look for the New Year as a possibility for happiness. 'Happierness,'" he added.

She said, "Was this year all that bad? I rather enjoyed it. After all, we met each other and started these weekly trips to good ole Quik Kleen."

"No," he said, "it hasn't been that bad. Good, perhaps. Meeting you was especially good. And doing laundry

every week."

They both were still for a moment, just looking intensely at each other. She suddenly burst out laughing.

"My God, if this isn't the most ridiculous scene. Everyone else is out celebrating madly, and here we sit watching those damn clothes spin around."

He laughed too. Then, "Would you like to go to Rod's? Ellis and Jennie said we should join them there tonight."

"Tonight I want to be with *you*. Not Ellis, or Jennie, or anybody else. So just pretend you enjoy it and have a sip of this coffee."

She held the cup up to his lips, and, following a quick gulp, he said, "It is pretty bad, isn't it. I've got some Maxwell House in the apartment. You can fix some while I put up my laundry."

She said, slowly, "All right, if you want to find out why I flunked Home Ec. Remember, you suggested it."

She held out her watch for them both to see. There was about a minute left. They studied the second hand in silence.

Suddenly fire crackers erupted; the stifled sounds from Rod's Lounge grew louder, and they smiled.

She glanced at her watch and murmured, "Fifteen seconds slow," as they kissed, gently. The two dryers simultaneously stopped.

"Happy New Year, beautiful," he said softly.

"*Happier* New Year to you, and flattery will get you everywhere."

The two went over to the dryers hand in hand, letting go finally to get their respective loads out.

"Maybe next year your junk and my junk can dry together," he said.

"If that's a proposal, I accept," she said flatly, smiling a huge grin.

"It *may* be a proposal. It all depends on how that coffee tastes when we get back. C'mon."

The two walked out into the night.

"You know," he said, "I think this year *will* be happier."

"Me too."

They dumped the clothes in the back seat of the car and got in. The brown car changed back into pale blue as they drove down the street.

BENJAMIN MORRISON

The Moon, Baby

Cold where it should be warm
now that you have confused your role
and tried to reach beyond what you have
and to write your own cues
because you want your play to be different
and therefore better.

it is not
there is no audience
or it's not interested
and you are dry
and fraught with horror at your life
and cannot reason why
but nevertheless you have.

For that, I have terror
at your idle curiosity
concerning that which,
though you know it not,
you are yourself now reaching for at last.
And I refuse to accept that,
Dream-child.

BONNIE MILLER

And what do you know of life

You who are sheltered and
untouched

You who have never been
silently and completely
alone

You who have never felt a
cold, stinging rain on your face

You who have never seen
night creep in like a
blanket, engulfing life and
reality.

You who have never felt
pain or the agony of
disappointment, failure, and
sorrow.

You who have never seen
war or witnessed a
blight that takes away
the green from the earth

You who have never seen
the smiles disappear
from the faces of humanity

You who have never had
life taken from your
very arms

Be happy now my child

You who have a lifetime to grieve

ELLIE SONKING

To a Color-blind Husband

You're skeptical of the color of our house — pastel green —
You squint and seem to find it the poorest shade you've seen.
How can I describe it to prevent your grand rush
To the garage, the ladder, and your old paint brush?
It's the green of apple leaves in a pale spring sun;
It's the emerald of the Gulf — foam-washed and wave-spun;
I know for you it's dirty grey, but for me, it's a culinary dream,
For it's the color of lime-icing and pistachio ice-cream!

ANNA M. LINDEN

To a Quiet, Wise Lady

A lady dwells atop the granite shelf.
With long and patient constancy serene
She keeps her thoughts full secret to herself,
Refusing to disclose the sights she's seen.
She's smelled the rancid air of smoke and gas.
She's seen the generations come and go.
She's watched the stumbling of each English class.
She's heard their quibbling prattle grow.
She's listened, and she's learned a thousand things.
She's learned from wise young mind and from the dunce.
She's heard a list of scorns and sundry stings,
And never have her eyes betrayed her once!

But, friends, I'm sure her constant scrutiny
Proclaims, "O Lord, what fools these mortals be!"

ANTON BLACK

One Too Many

The old, Negro bartender had served Mr. William R. Bondell five whiskey sours before the customer said a word. Finally, after everyone else had gone, he spoke slowly between deep breaths. "The Bears are really doing a great job this year, aren't they? They really tore up the Giants last week. I hear they're favored to win on Sunday, too. If they beat Green Bay, they'll be on top. The only team that's beaten them so far has been the Colts. If they'd beaten the Colts, they'd've had first in the bag." His voice faded to a whisper.

The bartender emptied the last dirty ash tray into a wastebasket. Almost inaudibly Bondell continued. "Is it still snowing out? I damn near froze on the way over here, and I only walked a block." He threw back his head and drained the rest of his drink. "One more, Johnny." The bartender laid down the sponge that he was using to clean the tables and went back behind the bar. "Seen any of the old gang around here lately, Johnny? I haven't seen any of them except Byron in years. They've all moved out of town. As far as I know, we two are the only ones left. Doesn't he still have that same old hardware store?"

"No, sir. He sold that last spring and bought the restaurant on the corner of Bay and Fifty. He calls it the Log Cabin Inn. I eat breakfast there every once in a while." He put the drink on the bar. "Sir, are you feeling well?"

"Yes, Johnny," he replied with a pathetic attempt at a smile. The bartender washed and dried another glass. "Never get married, Johnny!" The bartender froze, holding a soapy glass in his hand. He stared disbelievingly at his customer. "Listen close, Johnny. Man to man, Johnny, I'm telling you, never get married." After he spoke, he looked stunned. He clutched his cold glass and emptied it. His eyes closed painfully. Deliriously he mumbled, "Damn those Colts! . . . I could really go for a good Polish sausage. Yes, I'd like that," and he lapsed into a distant stupor.

Seven clean glasses later Johnny looked at the clock, dried his hands, and walked to the door. With a gay flip of the wrist the OPEN sign turned around and read CLOSED.

Bondell moaned, his head down on the bar. He raised his head a little, just enough to put a loose fist under his forehead before he bellowed at the bar, "Damn women! You try to help them, try to love them, do everything you can for them and you end up in jail for them." He paused. "Johnny!"

The bartender ran to his station. "Yes, sir?"

"Another whiskey sour," he said after a long, deep breath.

"Are you sure, sir? It's awfully late, and the club's been closed for over an hour. Would you like me to drive you home?"

"No. When I want a drink, I want a drink. No one, and I mean no one, tells me I can't have one! And no one tells me I'm drunk either. As long as I'm a member of this club, I'll drink all I want, and you'll serve it to me. Is that understood?"

"Yes, sir. But your membership here ran out almost a year ago. I haven't served you a drink since last New Year's. I heard you gave it up for your wife and children. I heard that you swore you'd never touch another drop. I was happy to hear that, too, sir. It makes me feel good to see a man who doesn't have to have a drink in his hand all the time. And you proved you could do it. I was really happy for you. And for Mrs. Bondell and the children, too. A drinking husband . . ."

"Shut up! As far as I'm concerned, I'm still a member here, and that holds for you, too. And if you don't let me get dead drunk, I'll kill her. Her and her goddam husband. She never told *me* she was married. Never wore a ring or anything. She *made me* love her, Johnny. *Made me*. Do you hear me, Johnny? I couldn't turn her away. At first, yes. But not forever. Then one day she asked for a couple bucks. Just for a loan. She promised to pay it back. So I charged it to the company. But she never paid. She always asked for more. And I gave it to her. I *gave* it to her, Johnny! And that wasn't all I gave her. Diamonds, furs, all God's creation. And then one day her husband comes in and tells me

they're moving because *he's* got a new job. And then he had the unmitigated gall to *thank* me before he tells me I better not look for her. 'For my own sake,' he said." He stopped, choking.

His eyes involuntarily became puddles, remaining open to see only a blurred pallet where the huge mirror hung with its hundreds of colored bottles on its glass shelves.

"Johnny, I've got to do something. Today Mr. Brewer told me that the banks were close to ten thousand short in our account. They're going to check tomorrow. Of all days! *Tomorrow*, Johnny. What do you think will happen when they find out? I mean to Mary and the kids. How will I tell her? Johnny, how will I tell her?"

His head fell solidly against the bar. The bartender didn't try to throw him out. Instead he unfolded a cardtable chair that he kept behind the bar and sat down, put his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands.

Bondell alternately coughed and snored. Suddenly he choked. His body heaved. He yanked his arms to his chest, throwing his drink to the floor. The bartender jumped from his seat and hurried to clean up the glass and liquor with two dish towels and a dust pan.

Just then a soft but sharp sound came from the black glass front door. The old Negro ran to see who it was, but all he could see through the black glass was that it was a woman. He yelled, "Just a minute, please," and ran to his drawer behind the bar where he kept his keys. Facing the mirror, he instantly buttoned his collar and reclipped his black bow tie before running to the door.

He opened the door just a little, and then as soon as he saw her, he opened it all the way. "He's not feeling well, Mrs. Bondell. He just spilled his drink. I'll have him cleaned up in a minute."

Tears were already in her exhausted eyes. She tried to smile thanks to the bartender as she ran to the bar. Her arms wrapped around her husband and her head pressed against the back of his shoulder. "Darling! Darling! The children and I were so worried. Why didn't you come home? Did I do something wrong? Oh, Bill!

What happened? Please tell me." She kissed the back of his neck and tried to regain some of her composure. "Johnny, could you please help me try to get him to the car? It's right outside. I'll take him home."

His wife gently lifted his head from the bar. Large tears were running down his face. "Can you walk, Bill?" she asked soothingly. "Please try. The children will be coming down to open their presents in an hour or two. You know how eager they were last Christmas. Remember? They were tearing everything open even before the sun came up."

She went on as she led him to the door. "Do you think those two rascals know who Santa is yet? Even if they do, you can be sure they're not going to tell us. They're probably afraid that if they tell us, we won't get them any more presents. Aren't children funny? And wonderful? I'll bet we were the same way. I remember I used to look for my presents weeks before. My mother used to hide them in the basement."

Johnny opened the door for them. Mrs. Bondell still held her husband tightly, even though he was doing most of his own walking. As soon as they were through the door, the bartender rushed to the curb, brushed most of the snow from the door handle, and opened the door. Mrs. Bondell and he helped Mr. Bondell into the passenger's seat of the snow-covered, red Corvair. He slid down until his head rested on the back of the seat, his eyes closed.

The bartender closed the door. Mrs. Bondell went around to the other side. "Johnny, thank you. You'd better go in before you freeze. And merry Christmas to you!" She got in, kissed her husband softly, and drove away slowly.

The bartender turned to go in, took a deep breath of the cold air, and lowered his head. The street was empty. The snow was coming down in bigger flakes. Already the Corvair's tracks were being erased by the snow and the night. The bartender looked up pleadingly to the source of the snow. His lips moved, but no sound came out. He lowered his head again and went back into the bar.

JAMES J. BUTLER III

I Have Seen a City Burning

A flare of light and then a flame
And then a sky filled with a fire
That calls down God to watch.
I have seen a city burning,
A people standing in charred streets,
Numbed by the knowledge that this fire is final
And what it takes
Cannot be returned.
I have seen a city burning, then the world,
As trapped and crackling lightening
Holds all humanity in a whirlwind of passion,
Hope, religion, love of home and
Man and peace, then suddenly is gone.
I have heard a baby crying as all he ever knew
Lies in ashes before him.
I have seen his mother groping for him
With an absence that proved
She didn't really know he was there,
So great is the throne of fire.

MARY SUE STONEROCK

Summer Squall

Smell the rain!
like tarnished metal
carried across the
too-green tree line
from monstrous
blue-hard billows
on cold piles of air,
surging.

Closer coming,
like a march army
the sheet of water
drops,
curtain-like,
over my circle world.

And the clattering pellets
splatter on my lips.

JO ANN CUMMINGS

A Day OF Heat

The searing sun
 absorbed the moisture of my skin.
The wind and sand
 crept into every helpless pore.
The sticky lips and tongue
 and tortured throat
 and blinded eyes
drained all my bodies meager strength.
The shadow of a cloud
crept over shrubs and rocks
The shield of vapor
blocked the sun's hot beams.
My sticky lips and tongue
 and tortured throat
 and blinded eyes
dared not enjoy the fleeing shade.
A drop of something cool and sweet
 splashed on my hot, parched chest.
A second one, a third, a fourth . . . !
 and suddenly, a flood, a curtain fell . . .
Water,
 sweet, unpretentious, pure.

STEFFEN SCHMIDT

