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Spring 1964

Flamingo, Spring, 1964, Vol. 48

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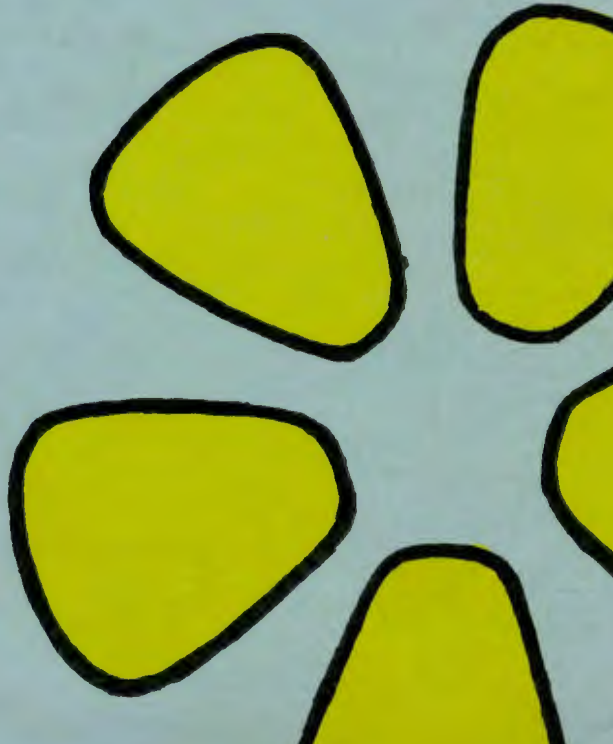


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FLAMINGO



SPRING
1964





Spring, 1964

Volume 48

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

Flamingo

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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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The joy we have shared
And it of itself
And unto itself
Will never die
But float as a cotton puffball
Through eternity
Quite divorced
And forgotten
By the roots that sponsored its growth

Wind whistles
Endless sparrow circles
Searching for Last year's
Now covered nest . . .
In hopes of spring-time food
Too plentiful to be eaten

Long rays of afternoon sun
Lick at the shadows
Of past embraces

HANK HENCKEN

Love is a many splintered thing
Without the Elmer's Glue-All of proximity.

PEOPLE IN THE PARK, ALAS, ALAS

The sleeping woman on my bench had knees which looked like the long-praying knees of nuns, could their legs be seen. But of course, her knees themselves may be irrelevant to her sitting alone on the park bench. Matter of fact, it was my park bench—the one always in the morning sun in spite of the hung trees.

If someone else is sitting on my bench, I never sit there; I find an empty one even if it is in the shade. And if none are empty, I go to the bench near the chess games, because usually bench sitters there are sleeping.

But this woman, with her gnarled knee-skin, was asleep; and besides, the sun was at its warmest. So I sat down and began to tend to the sweater I am knitting for my husband.

No, I did not. I must be honest. I made sure to take out my knitting, and I began to count purls, but actually I walled my eyes sideways to take in this bench sleeper.

Her body showed that she was young, and her face, which fell loosely back onto one propping shoulder, showed a sweetness in the sun. Her dress, hand-sewed, was simple and functional in that it covered a well-defined pregnancy. But my eyes returned to her gnarled knee-skin. Her knees looked much more used than mine.

This sweater I am knitting for my husband is giving me trouble. I have been working on it for two weeks now, but only on those days that I get off from work. Then I come down to the park and sit on my bench and knit and watch the people. Actually, today was not my day off, but I got to work and the person I type for was sick, so they let me go home.

I wonder if I can surprise my husband by seeing him in the park today. You see, he does not have a nine-to-five job the way I do, and he sometimes comes through the park during the day with his friends, he tells me.

No, he does not have a job, but he is working on a novel. He is a writer. I do not mind paying the rent and buying the food, for I know that an ordinary job, such as mine, would crush his genius spirit. And he always seems so happy after he has spent a while with his friends and has been drinking a bit. Sometimes, if he does not come home until the next day, or if he needs more money, he is very pathetic about it and so loving that it makes me feel horrible that I cannot give him more money.

Maybe I'll see him in the park today.

The sun is warm on my face.

The woman sleeping beside me has gray marks under her eyes. I wonder if she is often in pain. I wonder what it is like to be pregnant. My husband and I have been married over a year now, but he still will not let me have a child. I can see his reasons; a baby would mean less money and I would have to stop working for a while and all sorts of things. Yes, of course he is right. Maybe when we are older and his mother dies, there will be money for a child. Still, I wonder what it feels like to carry another life inside you.

When I knit, my eyes invariably seek the food vendors. These fall into two classes, I've found. There are the ice cream men, and there are the hot dog-sauerkraut-soft drink men. I do adore having lunch here, and I never have found anything quite like a hot dog with steaming sauerkraut and the

red onion sauce. I decided I would leave my knitting and go over to the fountain, where there was a food vender, and get my lunch. And it was good to walk after I had been sitting for such a time.

I went around children slinging small hoops at each other and by-passed baby carriages and snuffy old men and a group of haggard, hung-over people silently propping each other up. I finally arrived at the hot dog man and bought my food. Then I threaded my way back to my bench, which was quite to the other end of the park.

I walked slowly, sometimes pausing to eat, and it was a while before I noticed that the sleeping girl on the bench was no longer sleeping. She was leaning back and watching someone, whom I could not see, approach her. As I slowly came closer, I could see that this person was my husband, and the girl was smiling.

I wanted to call to my husband, to surprise him, but my mouth was full of the hot sauerkraut and the good red onion sauce. He could not see me because of our angle from each other. Maybe he has seen my knitting, I thought, and he is going to stay there until I come back.

He walked straight to the girl. He knelt down and did something strange

to my eyes. He was kissing her knees. I swallowed my food and walked more quickly, that I could see. He was saying to her, "You'll never have to work again. You will be my golden girl. I'll care for you forever." And she was bending over him and ruffling his thick hair.

I was just about to say "hello," and surprise him, when he pulled her gently to her feet and they walked quickly down the other path. At first I was disappointed that I had not come to him in time. Then I sat down and began to cry.

How wonderful of him, I realized. He is going to buy that poor girl a good, healthy lunch and maybe give her a bit of money so that she can go somewhere more comfortable to sleep when she gets tired again. And I dried my eyes, slowly, smiling fondly at the thought.

Then I finished eating the hot dog and picked up my knitting. I resolved to give him more money tonight without his having to ask for it, for I knew that he would have even less than usual when he came home tonight.

How romantic my husband is, I thought.

The sun is warm and feels good.

In a little while I will go back to the fountain and get an ice cream cone.

BONNIE MILLER

The slightest breeze
Can fall the strongest trees.
Can any man endure
A look at the pure?

GLORIA G. GILES

THE RED LIST

Ivan awoke slowly as the alarm continued its shrill, piercing ring. With one eye open, he managed to reach out, give the out-dated clock a severe shrove which sent it crashing to the bare pine floor. He then rolled over onto his back and resumed his sleep. Moments later his mother entered his room and, setting a candle down on his bedside table and a pitcher of water on his dresser, she proceeded to gently awaken him once more. Momentarily Ivan stirred and sat up in bed.

"Hurry, Ivan," his mother commanded. "You have to be there an hour earlier today. And it is almost six now. Dress and come downstairs! I'll fix you something to eat before you leave."

His mother turned and left after Ivan nodded his acceptance. Ivan hopped out of bed quickly and, after a short search under the dresser in the poor light, he retrieved his clock. He wound it, checked the time, and set it down on the bed table.

Emptying the pitcher of water into the basin on his dresser, he washed his face and hands. Drying himself quickly, he was soon dressed in his best suit. He had decided on his better suit because it'd make a better impression on the advisory board if they thought that he dressed well and in proper taste to suit the occasion.

Carefully selecting a tie which would go well with his brown suit, a red one, he tied it in front of the mirror, making positive that the ends were of equal length and that the knot was located just right. He combed his rather long black hair back over his ears, relying on the image he received from the long slender mirror which hung over his dresser. He flashed a quick wide grin at the mirror to reassure himself that his broken tooth did not show as much as he had previously feared.

Anything could ruin this day for him, and anything as slight as a broken tooth must be kept as unobvious as possible. His light-blue eyes glistened back at him in the flickering candle-light. Now assured that he was as presentable as he could make himself, he picked up his pens and placed them in his inside jacket pocket. He put out the candle and left the room.

Coming down the stairs quickly, his heart seemed to skip a beat. Fourteen years, he thought, a long time to wait until this day when all that he had learned would either be of great use to him or else would only serve to give him a higher base pay at some factory.

His mother was removing his eggs from the frying pan as he entered the little alcove which served as the dining room. He seated himself at the head of the table in his usual seat. This had been his permanent place since his father had been killed in an accident at the steel plant. His mother placed the sizzling eggs before him and poured his steaming tea into his mug. Quickly bolting his eggs, Ivan gulped down his tea, unaware of its temperature. Rising from the table, he carried his mug and plate out of the kitchen and put them into the sink for his mother to wash later in the morning after she had finished the other farm chores.

After he put on his overcoat, he kissed his mother goodbye and, picking up his brief-case, left the house through the front door, which shut with a loud thud.

The early June morning was cool and brisk, but Ivan found it strangely refreshing after the warmth of the house. His walk was a long one, so he started off at a brisk pace toward the school. Today was the day when the final grades would be posted. After that, well, that was anyone's guess. If he made it, he would be practically

assured of a commission; if not, well, there was always the steel plant where his father had previously worked for so many years.

As he rounded a bend in the road near the neighboring farm, he saw Tolsy, who was waiting for him as usual. Tolsy fell into step with Ivan and greeted Ivan with,

"Good morning, Ivan. Worried about the grades?"

"No, not really," replied Ivan. "Are you?"

"No, I guess not," he answered. "But a commission would certainly be a nice reward for our many years work."

"And play," Ivan added quickly, smiling broadly.

Tolsy was not as tall as Ivan; but he had a full crop of blond hair, green cat-like eyes, and a robust figure. He was strangely handsome, probably as the result of his correct posture. Ivan thought that Tolsy certainly looked the part of a commissioned officer. Tolsy was well dressed, contrary to his usual lackadaisical habitude. He, too, must want his commission very badly, thought Ivan. And he really deserved it more than anyone else at the school; for Tolsy was the most athletic member of the senior class and he certainly always managed to get the highest grades in every subject that he took. Ivan's thought were interrupted by Tolsy's interjection, "A ruble for your thoughts, Ivan?"

"I was thinking about who will be chosen for the awards today," he replied.

"You can't help but get one, Ivan, and you know it. Anyone who has ever been chosen has always been president of his class at least once. And your father was a hero at the steel plant when he saved the entire crew when the atomic press blew up. You can't help but get the nomination, Ivan," continued Tolsy.

"Yes. I guess we'll both receive nominations, Tolsy. You haven't done such a bad job at school either, you know."

The only sound aside from the crunching of the pebbles beneath their feet was an occasional cry of a startled bird as they continued onward toward the school. The sun was just rising beyond the green-blue mountains in the east. Its rays shown brilliantly on the dew-drops which speckled every blade and the leaves on the blueberry bushes along the road. The crickets began to chirp with the first warmish rays and soon the entire countryside came alive.

Farmers began to appear driving their cattle towards the milking sheds, which were located between every communal farm. The wives were waiting patiently for some cream so they could begin their daily chores of cooking for their menfolk. The gentle barking of the cow dogs stirred Ivan from his trance; and he marveled at all he now saw as if for the first time, even though he had walked this same road for many years both to and from school. He often wondered what it was like in the United States where they had great yellow school buses picking up and discharging the students every morning and evening.

His thoughts were again interrupted by the addition of a third student; and, after brief greetings were exchanged, the trio continued onward toward the school, which could be seen perched ominously on the highest hill overlooking the town. The smoke coming from the chimneys of the village houses seemed to cast an evil, sinister spell over the school itself. What horrors were lurking up on that hill for those three and all the rest of the students enrolled in the school?

Unconsciously the boys picked up their pace, their arms swinging in unison. Tolsy began to whistle the Soviet hymn followed by Ivan and the third member of their party. Soon they were joined by many others, and on went the procession toward the administration building.

Ivan noticed that they were all a little breathless and that all faces were a little redder than usual. Their eyes

anxiously turned toward the crowd that had already gathered in front of the main gate of the school. The great gates were not yet open; and the crowds surged against them relentlessly, trying the very hinges on the massive posts. A hush settled over the throng as the janitor came into view; and, as he removed his keys from his pocket, there was not a sound to be heard. He opened the gate, and the group pressed onwards toward the massive bulletin board where the names were to be placed when compiled by the proper authorities. But the usual red list was not to be seen. Instead there was this large notice:

"Computer broken. Grades will be delayed. Tomorrow at 7:00 a.m.

Please be prompt."

Ivan turned slowly about and began his long walk home. Neither he nor Tolsy said anything until they came to the familiar bend in the road, and Tolsy said, "See you tomorrow morning. I've got lots of farm work to do. I am glad we have this extra day, aren't you, Ivan?"

Ivan turned and began the rest of his journey without answering Tolsy's question. Now he had to face another night alone, thinking about the great red list that should go up tomorrow. And he had to answer all his mother's inquiries. It was hard enough last night, but could he take another? He opened the front door and slowly entered the house.

CHRIS JENKINS

Beyond The Sea

Beyond the sea I'll return some day
To velvet hills, laughing brooks, perfumed skies,
To whisp'ring pines and motley flowers gay,
To sapphire lakes where snowy mountains rise.
The summer is turned to winter moon,
And still my heart returns to that far land,
And every night I know I must go soon;
While winter snows, I'll walk on misty sand.
With silver sails and narrow, golden ship
I'll sail in inky night; away I'll flee,
And in the dawn into port I'll slip
Where weary rivers meet the foamy sea.
Return, my heart cries out, return with me.
Go back, set sail for home beyond the sea.

SARA ZIMMERMAN

The milk weed pod bursts
Fuzzy parachutes float high
 Blessed wind of dreams

HANK HENCKEN

Found
Somewhere
Between Sunrise and Sunset
Two
Happy
People
Each is filled with a
Heart's Delight
Of Love

GLORIA G. GILES

COOL

Th formative years
Fumbling, futile
Pressured
A horror show
Be yourself, screamer
Screamed loud enough for people
To stare
It's of this time and of this
Place that the finks will
Take notice
Unreal
Tacky
Shot down by a "Colt 45"
"Check it out," they said
I did . . . only to
Find nothing

Anonymous

A Fairy Tale

IN ONE ACT

A palace throne room:

Queen: Oh John, (pacing about) whatever shall we do? She's acting too strange. And it's getting worse, you know—always dreaming and gazing out of the window across the moat and the lawn, as if she were looking for someone.

King: It is a bit troubling, but she's probably just going through a phase. Young folks are always going through them, my dear. It's been that way since God knows when.

Queen: Young! She's not a teenager, she's 22 years old and almost an old maid. Most of the girls in the kingdom her age have been married and have babies by now. Look at her little sister, Deidre, married with two children. She's already given us these blessed grandchildren. Euphrosine is waiting for a knight in shining armor to come and rescue her to a world of fantasy, to save her from deigning to marry a flesh and blood person and living a normal life!

King: Now, Myrtle, she's a special kind of girl. You must understand. I've always known it, but you've been too busy worrying about whether she'll be normal or not. So maybe she's abnormal. I find her as gay and delightful as a dewy morn and as charming as a throistlecock in full plumage, as fresh as a buttercup, new sprung from its grassy cradle.

Queen: Listen to you! You've picked it up! That ridiculous way of talking. You sound like an idiot, John! Or did she get it from you? Heaven knows. You've both gone mad. Do you know what she asked me yesterday? She asked if I thought the storm would hurt the field of hazy yellow poppies, blown by the silver wind or the proud peacocks that strut about the palace wall.

King: What's so strange about that?

Queen: (slowly, rising in anger) There aren't any poppies in the whole kingdom anymore than there are peacocks. We've got to get her married off before anyone discovers she's mad. I say—if she doesn't find a suitable young man by the end of the summer, then she shall marry Yashu-arity. He's always been wild for her, you know.

King: Yashu is a grand fellow! Now, Myrtle, I want her to make up her own mind, but this does seem fair as she has the whole summer, and besides Yashu is King of Levittown. Together, sooner or later they would rule two kingdoms, his and ours. And I would feel so much better knowing someone as stable as Yashu would be ruling. And since I don't have any sons, that would be ideal.

Queen: How smart of you to think of that, darling. Good. It's all decided. We'll tell her immediately and get it over.

King: All right, you tell her.

Queen: Since you were clever enough to think up all those good reasons, you tell her. You know I'm no good at convincing people, at least not the way you are. I'll go and find her. (Gets up from her throne and walks to the curtained door—starts out, then darts back in, runs up steps and seats herself on her throne.)

Curtains are pulled aside by a pareg and in walks Euphrosine, clad in beautiful, wispy blue, with flowers entangled in her hair and carrying a white dove on her delicate finger. She (Euphrosine) is humming to herself.

Euphr.: Darlings! Hullo! Gwenivere and I have been out in the woods past the garden and everything was glistening from the rain. It was like magic when the sun shown through the trees. They looked almost iridescent. We found a dry spot and had a magnificent lunch of pomegranates, cold duck and truffles, and champagne!

Queen: How lovely. Is Gwenivere a new friend? (said sugary sweetly).

Euphr.: Yes, she certainly is. This is she (holds up the dove). Mother and Father may I present Gwenivere? Garland, the ghilly caught and tamed her for me.

King: How enchanting!

Queen: I've always heard that birds were filthy, dirty little things—with lice and heaven knows what. Now dear, we have something serious to talk to you about.

Euphr.: Mother, what would you say the softest thing in the world was?

Queen: The softest thi — (mad, then placatingly). Well, I suppose silk or perhaps that new french velvet.

King: Oh no. They're not so soft.

Euphr.: I think the softest thing in the world must be a turtle tongue, a tiny, round purple turtle tongue— I touched one once— I opened the turtle's mouth and put one finger, gently mind you, on the very tip of its tongue and it was softer than the midnight mist that hovers about the castle, or the emerald green moss that hides shyly under the woodbine leaves by the brook.

Queen: A turtle tongue! A turtle tongue! Oh, my poor baby! John, you tell her.

King: I should think that a turtle tongue would be very soft.

Queen: Tell her!

King: I can't, Myrtle, I just can't make the words come out.

Queen: All right, I will. Euphrosine?

Euphr.: Yes?

Queen: Come here, dear. (Euphr. mounts the steps to the throne and kneels beside her mother's throne). Your father and I think it's time you got a husband (Euphr. looks blank). It's spring now, and we give you the summer to find a man of your choice, and if you don't, we will arrange your marriage with Yashuarity of Levittown and you will be his queen.

Euphr. looks blank.

Queen: Well?

Euphr.: Well, what?

Queen: Don't you have anything to say?

Euphr.: No, because there is absolutely no chance of my marrying Yashu. (losing control and dropping the passive facade) I'll never marry that bumbling old thing. I'll find someone, I'll find him. Or rather he'll find me. My knight will rescue me. I have faith.

Queen: Euphrosine, you know armor is out of style and knights are extinct. Why do you think someone will find you? You must look around and be nice to the young men instead of being cold and disinterested.

King: Not too nice though, my dear.

Euphr.: Oh, none of the boys I know are right for me. I know *he* will come because the friendly stars say so. (dreamily) They sing to me at night when I leave my windows open for them. They sing that I am of the lucky few who will find the one person in eternity especially right for her. They call it "having shwinglossity." I have "shwinglossity." I am special. Oh, the music of the stars is beautiful and, you know, as of late, it's louder than usual, not faint as it was in the beginning — a sign I think, that the time is almost ripe.

King: Euphrosine, I hope your stars don't deceive you but even if they do, my dear, Yashu is a lovely boy — with that whole kingdom, too.

Euphr.: He's perfectly awful. With all that hair and that bouquet of teeth.
King: Looks aren't everything.
Euphr.: (laughing) Don't worry, Father. Just wait and see — Goodbye, goodbye. (She glides down the stairs of the throne, takes the dove off of her shoulder where she put it when she was talking to her parents, puts the bird on her finger again, kisses it, then puts it on her head and glides out, singing.)
Queen shrugs.

SCENE II

Deidre, Euphrosine's little sister, is sitting on the bench knitting when Euphrosine drifts in with bird still on her head.
Deidre: Well, how's Euphrosine today?
Euphr.: Hello, Deidre. Isn't it lovely in the garden?
Deidre: Yes, I guess. I really hadn't noticed. Say, Euphrosine, I'm glad we're alone because I want to talk to you.
Euphr.: Fine. What about?
Deidre: Well, have you thought lately about getting a husband?
Euphr.: If one more person mentions that —
Deidre: I'm tired of hearing the girls titter about your unmarried status. You'll be sorry one fine day when you wake up and find yourself old and alone. I got my man young—plucked him like a ripe fruit. Of course, he's not Prince Charming —
Euphr.: He certainly isn't.
Deidre: BUT, I'm fond of him, and he provides for me quite well. And he has a good chance of making a top position in the palace guard one day, too. I'll admit we're a bit regimented, but what in life really isn't?
Euphr.: What, in life isn't regimented? Lots of things? Like, like song and most of all — Love!
Deidre: Song? Why don't you know that each note in a song is at a fixed spot on the scale, and when you sing, you must hit every note at the exact right place. It can never be any other place. It's always the same, or the song is ruined.
Euphr.: Love isn't regimented. Love isn't! It's always different. You can't put it in a mould. You can't control it or ration it out! It ebbs and flows as it sees fit. It's as free as the wind that howls and laughs about the towers of the palace on stormy nights. It's infinite and has an infinite number of forms. it . . .
Deidre: Love! Love is completely relative. There's no such thing as the "Grand Passion" they write about. I love my Bo, but I suppose I could go on without him. We get along though. It's convenient. He was the best of the bunch, but I could have got on with any of them as they were all about the same. Bo works hard. (pause) I'm happy to putter about the garden in the morning and knit by the window in the afternoon. what could be better?
Euphr.: To love someone to madness!! To know that you would perish without him! To have an unearthly union of the souls, transcending the urbane, the commonplace, and reaching toward the sky. I'm destined for a love like that, Deidre, and I'll die before marrying just anybody. Mother has already given me an ultimatum that I must find someone by fall or carry Yashuarity. But *he* will come.

Deidre: Impossible, you silly girl! Who will want you with your foolish notions. You'll wait too long, my pretty one, and you'll be sorry indeed. (voice rising) And I'll be safe with my secure husband with his secure job that you scorn so readily. Then we'll see about your Prince Charming. (flounces out).

Euphr.: I'd rather die than be subjected to that kind of mediocrity. Oh heavens, if he'd only arrive. I'm so weary of waiting. (Cries, sitting down on the bench.)

The face of a man rises from the top of the wall. It is tanned with jet ringlets and expressionistic black eyes, wide with gleeful surprise. After a moment, the face is followed by a body which struggles to get over the wall. He jumps down into the garden, and tiptoes up to the Princess who is still crying with her back to the wall. He's dressed in gay rags or any fanciful costume with soft deerskin shoes and a great concert size guitar slung over his back.

Man: Er, excuse me Madame, I . . .

Euphr.: (jumping up and turning around to face him) Oh! (She draws back in fear as she's never seen anyone like him before.)

Man: (Looking at her, surprised and happy) Could it be? I, I . . .

Euphr.: Could it be what? What do you want?

Man: I was looking for someone to tell me where Elderberry Lane is. My people and I are on the way to the grasslands on the snow capped mountains many miles from here, and I must find the way.

Euphr.: Who are you?

Man: Why I'm Serendipity, leader of my people, knight of the Fango-Dango Order, a disciple of adventure, a singer of songs, teller of magical tales, a searcher for the unique and a lover of nature. And who might you be, most ravishing of creatures?

Euphr.: (proudly) I'm Euphrosine, daughter to the King. And this is Gwenivere. (holds up the dove.)

Ser.: Ladies! (He executes a sweeping bow) (Euphr. laughs). May I sit down?

Euphr.: (doubtfully, nervously) Of course. (motions gracefully to a bench.)

Ser.: (fumbling about in pocket, brings out a scrunched up piece of yellow paper, opens it, looks at Euphrosine, then down at the paper, then up at Euphrosine again) Beautiful? Yes, you're beautiful. With blond hair, thick and shining? Yes, (gets up and walks around her, looking at her hair).

Euphr.: Whatever is it?

Ser.: Wearing a golden bracelet with emeralds. Let's see, do you have a golden bracelet with emeralds?

Euphr.: Why, yes (holds out her arm) Yes, I do. (wonderingly) It was my grandmother's when she was a young girl. But how on earth did you know?

Ser.: Wait! (breathlessly) One last thing, 'a small, brown freckle on the underside of left ear lobe.' Do you have a small brown freckle on the underside of your left ear lobe?

Euphr.: (breathless) I don't know.

Ser.: May I look? (almost whispering).

Euphr.: Well, it's quite out of the ordinary, but yes.

Ser.: (walks over to her and standing to one side, gently pulls back a lock of her hair and bends ear lobe to look for freckle. Looks, then replaces hair and stands up straight.)

Euphr.: Is it there?

Ser.: If I could only tell you what I feel at this moment.

Euphr.: Well, is it there?

Ser.: (pause) Yes. Yes! Yes! I've found you! They said that I would. (at this point he does a wild, exuberant dance around the floor, laughing gleefully).

Euphr.: Who said you would? (rising)

Ser.: The friendly stars, of course.

Euphr.: They sang to you, too?

Ser.: They said I had a rare "shwinglossity," and then they told me how to find you. And here you are, as delicate as a snowdrop, as shy as a crocus, and as fragrant and lovely as a lily-of-the-valley first op'd by the warm hand of the sun.

Euphr.: (She utters a long, delicious sigh of adoration typical only of a young girl at a moment like this.) Ahhhhhhhhh!

Singing of the stars is heard faintly, growing louder.

Euphr.: Oh there it is—the music of the stars—At last! (so enraptured, she flusters the dove who flies, disgruntled, from her head.)

Ser.: The song of the spheres! It's like magic! Oh, Euphrosine, I love you! (He rushes over to her with arms outspread, as if he is going to kiss her, but upon arrival, he loses his nerve, stops in his tracks, laughs a little embarrassed laugh and then gathers her up and they waltz dizzily around the floor as they both laugh headily.)

Euphr.: (calls to the wings) Mother, Father! Come quickly. My Knight has arrived.

King, Queen, courtiers, and sister come in.

Queen: What on earth is this?

Euphr.: You mean, 'What in heaven is this?'

King: Who is this young man?

Ser.: (with great seriousness and dignity) I'm Serendipity, your majesty, and I've come to claim your daughter's hand. We were meant for each other.

King: Is this your Knight, Euphrosine?

Euphr.: Yes, isn't he marvelous-looking?

King: A bit odd, I'd say. The way some of these young people dress nowadays!

Ser.: My people and I believe that clothes should be an outgrowth of the individual. They should express one as he really is. For instance, this is me (motions to this clothing).

Queen: I'd never admit it, young man.

Ser.: Why, Madame, I'm quite proud of it. (flashes her a dazzling smile). Now, take you, I'll bet you really don't like wearing all those dark colors and heavy robes. You seem very light-hearted and young, you should be in lighter things, such as chiffon.

Queen: Well, really, I'm a grandmother, you know.

Ser.: No, I never would have guessed it.

Queen: Do you really think that chiffon would suit me? I've always wanted to wear it, but I thought some would think it too frivolous. I am young at heart.

King: I wonder if I could get away with a plumed hat.

Ser.: Of course! That would be perfect. You are very definitely the type for a plumed hat, rather dashing, I'd say.

All the courtiers who are dressed pretty much alike begin looking at their clothes, mumbling among themselves, throwing out brilliant bolts of material and holding them up to themselves, along with strange hats, (etc.)

King: (rushes over and grabs a marvelous purple felt hat with an enormous plume sweeping out behind it and with both hands sets it gently on his head.) Ahhhhhh. (He looks pleased and enchanted — changes his

whole manner — stands up straighter and tosses his head in an assured manner.) Yes, this is much nicer than that hideous heavy crown I've always worn.

Queen: John! You don't mean you're going to discard your crown! Kings have always worn crowns.

King: Myrtle, I will do as I please, my dear. I don't need a crown to prove I'm King. This hat suits me so I shall wear it.

Queen: It's awfully large.

King: It is magnificent. Now let's see about you. Hmmm.

Queen: What about me?

King: I want to see you in chiffon. I want, I command, you to float, to drift, to hover. Now rush off and do something about it.

Queen: Well I — (indignantly)

King: Don't argue. I'm boss, do you hear, you wild, untamed wench.

Queen: Oh John, (giggles) really.

Euphr.: Father, what is your answer?

King: (strutting around the stage) What? Who? Answer? Oh, answer, yes, yes. (whispering) I think he is delightful. You can have him —

Euphr.: Oh, Father!

King: If you promise to bring him back for a visit to shake some of these young people up every once in a while!

Euphr.: It's a deal. (They shake hands.)

King: Quiet everyone, I have an announcement to make. My daughter, Euphrosine, is going to be married to this Serendipity. So I command a royal wedding for tomorrow. (courtiers cheer) Where will you live, young man?

Ser.: (Turns to Euphrosine) We'll live on the meadows on the mountains among the wild flowers and fish in the crystal rivers and eat fresh blackberries and run down hills in the cold morning air and become golden from the sun and we'll never wear shoes, but there'll be rings on our toes and love around us like a mist and at night by the fire we'll sing and dance as late as we please and laugh and thank our friendly stars for this magic thing that has passed between us.

(courtiers cheer) A flock of white doves flies out across the stage; the village bells ring; the music of the stars soars again.

ANN HENCKEN

Contracts
May be broken
By the slightest glance
In the direction of a tempting
Situation.

GLORIA G. GILES

A Tree Falls

Have not the squirrels ears?
The tree that falls
In the woods appalls
The rabbit, whose soul appears
No less dear than a child's,
Though no human be near
To hear the sound sear
The silent woods, the wilds.

RON MORRISSEAU

Endless Life, Fragment

The dry struggle can mean only this
Until the swirling of the dead leaves continues.
The loosely open-hanging mouth repeats itself forever
Even the dull-lidded eyes
Suggest the unending concentration.
And the "come on, baby, we're gonna be all right"
Is its own eternity.

BONNIE MILLER

Monty

By Jeff Clark

The clicking of a hundred pounding typewriter keys filled the newspaper office with a din. Those keys were clacking out one word, a name. Monty. The typewriters clacked "Monty" over and over again, echoing the excited whispers that had buzzed about the building the entire day. Monty. Ray smacked his fist into his hand. Jesus Christ, why Monty, why? And why were Helen's eyes staring at him, her eyes he saw even when he turned away. Why did those eyes show knowledge of Monty in them? True, the eyes were fixed upon a typewriter, and Helen looked intent upon occupying work. But wasn't she really tormenting him? She had not joined in the office chatter about Monty. No, it was worse, worse — because she had said nothing, only looked.

"So, you've finally made it." Ray looked up from his desk to see Jack Buchanan the editor standing before him. "It was what you always wanted, publishing a novel, wasn't it?"

Ray waved briefly at Jack, feigning business with papers. "Yeah, thanks Jack."

"Did you tell Monty you were going to write about him?"

"What do you mean?" There was an edge in Ray's voice.

"I wonder what Monty feels like, being the hero of your novel."

"You've read it already?" Ray asked.

"Who hasn't?"

"I don't see what my brother's got to do with it."

Jack laughed. "Why go on denying it?"

"Because it's so." His voice trembled a little, but he was trying, oh Christ! was he trying to keep good humored.

"Finished your book last night," Carl the typesetter said, passing by. "You worked it pretty subtle. I couldn't tell if you were cutting Monty up or not."

"I don't think he was subtle at all," boomed Rus, the financial manager. "You know Ray," he said, "I'm embarrassed for you."

Embarrassed, what the hell for? What the hell did Russ mean? What did any of them mean? What were they talking about? He wiped the sleeve of his shirt over his perspiring forehead, and he saw — Helen's eyes, Helen's eyes above that goddamned typewriter that never stopped — her eyes were watching him again.

"You made a complete ass out of yourself, to say nothing of demoralizing Monty," Russ continued. "Well, I hope he's proud of you, real proud of you."

"Easy." Jack laid a fat pink hand on Russ's arm.

"I fail to see what Monty has to do with my main character," Ray said between his teeth.

"Your hero talks like him, acts like him, drinks like him and chases after women like him," Russ said.

"My hero also happened to drown himself in a pool of alcohol and degradation," Ray said. "Has Monty done that?" he asked irritably. "Has he?"

"As far as you're concerned, he has."

Ray stood up. Jack took a wary step forward, coming between Ray and

Russ. But Ray merely yanked his jacket from the back of his chair.

"You know what I think," Russ said. "I think you hate Monty's guts."

It was quitting time, thank Christ! "I don't give a damn what you think," Ray said, striding rapidly from the room. In the corridor he saw Diane, one of the pretty typists, and he chased after her, calling out. But Diane didn't hear.

"Diane," he barked, grabbing her arm.

"What?"

"I want to talk to you."

"What about? I'm in a hurry."

What about? Well, for a moment he couldn't think what about. "Come on downstairs and have a cup of coffee with me."

"I've got to go somewhere else," she said.

"Great," he said. "Isn't that always the way? I haven't seen you for a week, and now you don't bother to give me the time of day." He lagged a little behind her as she hurried down the hall. "Well, go on, Diane, go on and go to hell."

She wheeled. "Look, I'm your friend, but the world doesn't belong to you."

"Sure, go on, Diane. Don't worry about me. I'm nothing."

A look of pain flashed over Diane's features, and when she spoke, there was a sob in her voice. "Oh, Ray, I—" But she didn't continue. Instead she hurried down the stairs because the elevator doors hadn't opened yet.

Come on, Goddamn it, elevator, Ray thought. Hurry up and take me out of this vulture's nest. Monty, Monty, Monty! He was sick of it, sick to death! Why didn't the elevator doors open? Was the stupid cable stock or something? Was it?

"Well," he heard behind him, and he turned on his heel, clattering down the stairs. But Helen kept in step with him, her with her goddamned eyes.

"Go away," he said.

She did not reply.

"Scram, I said."

In the lobby she caught hold of his

hand, detaining him. "Were you serious about the book? Were you?"

"I don't want to hear it," he said, "and if you plan to say anything about Monty, forget it."

"Monty's used you all these years," Helen said. "He's rotten."

"He's my brother, and a damned fine guy and —"

"But to put what he is in print," she exclaimed, "that was the most vindictive thing you could have done. How could you?"

"I didn't, I didn't, I didn't!" He clenched and unclenched his fists, gritting his teeth. Jack Buchanan passed them. "Take a break this weekend," he smiled. "Relax."

Ray watched the pompous figure wedge itself out through the glass doors, thinking, Go to hell, you big walrus. How had he worked for Jack for five years without telling him what he really thought of him. How had he?

They reached the sidewalk and she said, "I don't blame you for having to support your playboy brother, but—"

"I'll hit you, so help me, woman, I will!" he threatened.

He looked into her eyes that got larger and larger and rounder all the time as she said, "Go ahead," and he raised his hand. But then abruptly he turned again, quickening his pace and shrugging against the chill of a dying winter afternoon. The sky was light blue, the walk was blue, the buildings were brown. Everything was blue and brown.

"Why did you have to write a book about him? Why couldn't you have just turned him out or left him?"

"Shut your mouth, killjoy," he said. "I know what you think. You're jealous because I've worked in this town as long as you have. I've been a hack writer as long as you, only I finally made it. I finally wrote a book and you can't stand it. It just eats you up. It just tears you inside out, doesn't it?"

"Oh, you're bitter," she said.

"What do you care?"

"I care."

Those eyes of hers were glistening now.

"Sure," he said. He crossed through a red light, leaving her there on the corner. The cop blew his whistle furiously, but Ray didn't give a good hoot. He slammed into his car, starting the motor and careening into traffic. All the while he was seething inside. Those bastards, those vicious, petty, grasping bastards at the newspaper office. They were the ones who upset him, and they did it deliberately, just to razz him, just to let him know he couldn't pull any superior acts with them. Oh, he might have published his first novel, but he was no better than they. Worse, worse in fact, because he had slandered his brother. Oh, yeah? Well, how much did they know, and who needed the *Daily Gazette*, anyhow? What was to prevent him from resigning? Sure! He'd have the last laugh on those jokers! He'd write the letter when he got home. "Dear Mr. Buchannan," he'd say, "it is with sincere regret that I must inform you of —" Regret! Oh, that was funny! Why didn't he just tell Jack Buchannan off? Jack, the fat walrus who looked, dressed, yes, even smelled like a politician! Jack, who had told Ray how much he liked the way he wrote and then made Ray write his dirty little politics for him! "Dear Mr. Buchannan, what business is it to you and your snot-nosed staff if I hate my brother's guts and write a book about him?" He felt like writing that, but suddenly —

Monty! There was Monty in the street ahead of him. Handsome Monty! Where was he going? Did he have another cute broad on his string? Is that what he was up to? Well, bully, bully for him. Ray's foot hit the gas pedal and the car leapt forward toward — But what was he doing? Stop, stop! The brakes, a screeching of tires and a woman's scream. Ray sat there, just sat there frozen while people sprang up from everywhere, milling about the car. A policeman approached, and then Ray felt his shaking hand go to the handle of the

door. His feet touched the cement as he swung himself around in the seat, rising, seeing, then falling back. "Monty! No, Monty, no!"

At the hospital when Ray learned that Monty would never walk again, he turned to Jack Buchannan. "And who do you think's gonna take care of him? Who's always taken care of him?"

Jack, his face ashen, did not answer. "Don't any of you ever say I hate my brother. He's been the best friend I ever had," said Ray. "Why, what would I ever do without him? Huh? What would I? Why, Monty's the greatest!"

— J. C.

I fell in love with a man in mind,

A boy in heart, a child in soul;
God let his mind increase, his heart
Remain, and his soul become.

GLORIA G. GILES

Shakespeare: 1564-1964

Throughout your years you ran a race with time,
Always aware of its consuming greed.
Of life's brief span bespoke you oft in rhyme,
And how can the call of death each man must heed.
You deemed your life to be two score and ten;
But we who live in later years can see
What you, despite your vision, did not ken,
As carelessly you viewed posterity.
Because you gave your characters a reach,
A lasting scene, and universal tongue
With which they sing our song and speak our speech,
Four hundred years have kept you ever young.
Your "insubstantial pageant" shall not fade,
For of eternal stuff your dreams were made.

WILBUR DORSETT

Pulsing cricket chirps
Punctuate my own heart beats
Dewy night flown thoughts

HANK HENCKEN

Elizabeth

Elizabeth Coates was no longer young. Her hair was still jet black. Her skin was soft and smooth. Her clothes were the latest frocks from New York. But Elizabeth Coates was forty-two years old.

It was her birthday, which had been celebrated, if one could call it that, only by her trip to renew her driver's license. Even her husband, Andrew, apparently had not been aware of her birthday. And Elizabeth did not remind him.

Mrs. Coates sat before her dressing table with its many bottles and jars of beauty creams doing her hundred strokes with a silver hair brush. She looked into the mirror, observing how the hair fell into place, how the make-up looked, whether the wrinkles around her eyes were visible. She smiled with satisfaction, noting the brightness of her teeth.

"Lizzie, what time did Butch say he would be here?" The man's voice came from the living room.

"Franklin said he would arrive about nine o'clock. And please refrain from calling me *or* him by those horrible nicknames," Elizabeth replied.

"All right, honey. I'm sorry . . . Elizabeth," her husband said.

Andrew Coates had gray streaking his dark brown hair. His wrinkles revealed age he did not possess yet. No one guessed that Andrew was younger by a year than his wife. Some people even assumed that Elizabeth was Mr. Coates's second wife, especially when their son was home, as he soon would be.

She stood before the full-length mirror, carefully noting the straightness of her stockings, the flatness of her stomach, the uplift at the low neckline of her dress, and the erectness of her posture. She smiled at herself again and left the dressing room with the smile still on her face.

Elizabeth entered the living room, where Andrew was reading the even-

ing newspaper. "How do I look?" she asked.

Barely looking up, he replied, "Fine."

"Andrew," his wife said, "are you sure I look all right? Franklin doesn't get back from college every day, you know."

"Yeah, yeah, fine," he replied. Then, looking up, "Really."

He suddenly asked, "What's the kid's name he's bringing back?"

"George Herbert," she said. "And he's not a 'kid.' They're fraternity brothers, remember?" Not waiting for an answer, Elizabeth continued, "George's father is president of a manufacturing firm in Philadelphia. Very good family, from all I understand. I looked George up in Franklin's yearbook. He's a very handsome young man, if the picture looks anything like him."

"Yeah," Andrew said. "Oh, Liz, uh, *Elizabeth*, I just got a bill from Hanson's Department Store. One-hundred dollars for *one* dress?"

Mrs. Coates went over to the arm of her husband's chair and sat down, putting her hand on the back of his neck. "It was marked down from a hundred-and-fifty. It's just devastating, too. The salesgirl said it wasn't a dress for just anybody, but on me it was perfect. I'm wearing it tomorrow. You *do* want me looking young, now, don't you?"

"No, as a matter of fact, I don't," he replied softly.

"What!" she said. "Andrew, now really, you know you enjoy showing me off. *Somebody* has to look good in this family, anyway."

"You know damn good and well it's *you* who likes to show off yourself. I'd prefer to see you in a matronly outfit—long sleeves, high neck, and all—and with a few gray hairs. What do you do to keep it all black, anyway?"

Elizabeth stared for a moment. Then, "Alma's does it, if you must know. Gray hair is for old people."

"Like me," Andrew replied.

"You know I didn't mean that. But, now that you mention it, yes, like you."

Mrs. Coates said, "I'm sorry, dear, I didn't mean that."

"Yes, you did. You meant it. If you had your way," Andrew said, "I'd look more like Rock Hudson. Or maybe, maybe you'd prefer Butch's cute little fraternity brother, Whatsisname. Maybe he'd look young enough."

"Now shut up! Now just you shut up." Then, more quietly, "You know that George—he does have a name, dear—that George is just a friend of my son's."

"Our son's," Andrew corrected.

Again they were silent.

"Lizzie—and, no, I don't mean 'Elizabeth'—I honestly don't know if I can stand it anymore. I'm sick and tired of your fashion magazines, your face covered with goo at night, the bills for clothes we can't afford—all of it.

"You, my dear, are forty-two years old today. Don't think I don't know it; I just ignore your birthdays because I know you like me to. But, as of today, you are forty-two years old. That should mean gray hairs, half-size dresses, saggy girdles, menopause..."

Elizabeth interrupted, "Let's not be

gross. Just because I don't look like a hag..."

"Just because you don't look like a hag," Andrew cut in, "you resent the fact that *I do*. Maybe not a hag, but, my dear debutante, I'm forty-one and getting fatter, grayer, and more wrinkled. I just think it's time you started looking and acting more like my middle-aged wife."

Elizabeth sat perfectly still for a moment. Then she got up from the arm of the chair, reached into a silver box on the coffee table, and withdrew and lit herself a cigarette. She glanced over toward her husband, and, with a large exhalation of smoke, "Would you prefer me with a gray streak, maybe? Alma's could do it for me."

"That'd be a start," Andrew replied. "Maybe even *all* gray. For now, why don't you change into a motherly-looking dress. Butch and, uh, George will be here in a few minutes. And happy forty-second birthday."

"Thank you, Andrew," she said with a smile, walking back toward her dressing room.

BENJAMIN MORRISON

On the Wings of a Dove

The perfect kiss
That superb moment,
But only one wish—
That moment's life prolonged
Only to be relived once again,
Only to let the rising sun
Take our love
And put it away for some coming time
Above.

LeROY MANSON BACKUS III

The New Year

By Larry Johnson

It was New Year's Eve. There was a perceptible buzz about the party, everyone anticipating its climax. Jane Giddens sat at a table with several other young women, friends she had met in college. She was conscious of the mood of the party and watched the people, some of whom were standing in groups talking, some at the bar drinking, some at tables, and some dancing to the soft music of a small orchestra. Walter was talking at the bar with some of his doctor friends. He had graduated recently from medical school and was serving his residence in a local hospital, anxious to begin his own practice. She was proud of his ambitions and intended to help him and enhance his success. Yes, she was ready to be married. She was twenty-six, her youth was behind her, and it was time to enjoy the peace and contentment she felt certain she could with Walter.

"Have you seen Dick?" a girl beside her asked.

"Dick?" she answered vaguely, trying to conceal her startled surprise.

"Dick Lawrence. Who else? Remember, the guy you went with for two years in college? Margie said he was here and asking about you."

She looked away. "I haven't seen him." She had not seen him in four years, not since they had graduated. "Are you sure he's here?"

"Well, Margie said so, and I doubt anyone could be mistaken about Dick. He's so nice and handsome."

So Dick was here and asking about her. What could he want? Why would he want to see her? She felt uneasy and wanted suddenly to get Walter and leave. She had not thought about Dick for some time, and her concern for Walter was evidence to her that she was over Dick. But why was she so disturbed by the mention of his presence? She straightened in her chair, pushed her hair back, and began to look about at the people at the party. She supposed it was only natural that she should be uneasy.

She *had* loved him, and she would never forget him and the wonderful times they had shared. She smiled to herself, glad that she was rational enough to realize that Dick and their times together were so nice, even though it did not work out. But it was a thing of the past, a memory of her youth, and she would not let it disturb her. She might even enjoy seeing Dick again.

She got up and walked over to the table with the punch and poured a drink.

"May I drink with you?"

"Oh, hello, Doris," she laughed. "Sure, here." She poured another cup of punch.

"I heard Ellen tell you that Dick was here."

"You did?"

"We've been friends a long time, Jane, and we've always been frank with one another."

"Of course. What do you want to say, Doris?"

"Don't you think it'd be best if you didn't see Dick?"

"Best?"

"You know Walter has never liked him."

"Walter doesn't dislike him. He's never really known him."

"Walter may not dislike Dick, but he's certainly never cared for him. And I doubt that he'd care for your seeing him."

Jane paused a second. "He shouldn't mind my seeing Dick. I realize that Walter doesn't care for him particularly, but that's merely because of the circumstances. He blames Dick for—well, for everything, and I guess anyone in his position would. But he doesn't know how it really was."

"Nevertheless he does blame him," Doris continued. "But it's not so much as—well, Walter loves you very much, Jane."

"I hope so," she said, smiling.

"And he needs you. He was telling me the other night how you were the most wonderful girl he'd ever known,

and he didn't know what he'd do if he lost you."

"Well, I need him too. And what do you mean, 'if he lost me'? We're practically married."

"I don't mean anything, Jane, but I think that Walter, though he knows you love him, wonders sometimes if you love him as you should."

"As I should," she said, doubtfully.

She looked at Doris for a moment before Doris turned around. "Margie's calling me. Look, I'm sure you know much more about this than I do, Jane. I hope you don't mind my saying anything."

"I don't, Doris."

"Well, I'll see you again later. We'll usher in the new year, okay?"

"Okay."

Jane turned and sipped her punch, looking into the wall behind the table. She had not known that Walter doubted her love, even in the peculiar way that Doris mentioned. If he lost her—could Doris, what is more, could Walter think that her seeing Dick now would change anything? Perhaps before it could have, but now — now she understood what she could not before. And anyway, she had not seen Dick in four years, and it had been almost as long since she had heard from him. She laughed slightly to herself. If Doris was trying to warn her against anything, it certainly was without reason.

She put down her cup and started to turn around when she heard a voice behind her.

"Jane." It was Dick.

"Hello, Dick." He was, as always, well-dressed and strikingly handsome, with black hair and shining, blue eyes. "How've you been?" she asked.

"Up and down," he said with a smile. "And you?"

"Just fine. I've heard you had some success with your writing."

"Some, not much. But I learned a few things as I struggled." He looked about the room.

"Are you enjoying the party?" she asked.

"Jane, I want to talk to you," he said seriously, "alone."

"Well —"

"We can go out on the patio."

She did not know whether she wanted to or not. She looked at Walter, still talking at the bar. Why shouldn't she, there was nothing to be afraid of.

He took her arm, "Come on."

They walked across the room to the glass doors leading onto the patio. He opened them and walked out behind her. She remembered how gracefully well-mannered he was, always doing just the right thing at just the right time, and how at school the girls so adored him and so envied her. It was not so long ago, but it seemed much further away. She had grown up since then. She wondered if he had.

He led her across the patio to a small, concrete wall where he stopped. Except for the soft sound of the music, she could not hear the party inside. He let go her arm and stood facing her.

"Now," he said "you've been fine." His eyes looked into hers with a penetrating seriousness.

"Yes," she said uneasily.

"I'm glad. I understand you're engaged to Walter."

"We're to be married next month."

"Do you love him?"

He always said what he meant, even to the point of offense, but she could never be offended.

"Yes, Dick, I *do* love him." He said nothing. "He's very kind and good to me," she said, wondering why she was justifying her love for him. "And he'll make a fine doctor someday."

"I'm sure he will."

"Oh, I don't love him as I —" she hesitated and glanced down. "I don't love him in the same way that I loved you." He looked at her without blinking. "I'm older now, Dick, and changed so much since then." She felt herself faltering now, and her heart beat fast and heavily. She wished she was back inside.

"Yes, I suppose you have. I guess your love for Walter offers you," he looked upward, past her, "security and a contented happiness, and perhaps a unique partnership which is important to you."

"It does indeed." How he always knew things. "And that's what is necessary for a successful marriage."

"Well, that's very rational of you,"

he said.

"You always said I was rational."

He laughed. "And you always were, but not so much that you didn't remain feminine. And even when you were," he smiled, "it was not without an underlying irrationality which made it charming."

"That's not true," she said, smiling.

"I'm afraid I see you much the same as before," he said, "still beautiful, especially when you smile, your hair falling gracefully on your shoulders, and your eyes still large and with an attractive uncertainty about them. Your face is hardly changed, a bit older perhaps, but still glowing with youthful life. And you've not added a pound, I don't think, anywhere you wouldn't want to."

She blushed slightly and laughed. "You look the same too."

"Remember, Jane, when we went picnicking when I came to visit you the summer before our senior year. We hadn't seen each other in two months. Remember how beautiful it was that day" — he was looking up and smiling, she smiled too — "how green the grass and the trees were, and how blue the lake was. And the squirrels running about collecting nuts, and you said they ought to collect me."

Laughing, she said, "That was after you had knocked over our basket and drinks trying to imitate the squirrels."

"And remember the bird with the broken wing and how we carried it home with us and fed it until it could fly."

"Oh, yes," she said. "And remember how you sang to me with my head in your lap. You sang so nice."

"*Everything* was nice," he said, "so good and so natural."

She looked into his eyes and felt what had been so great between them. She had never been able to describe it — just a kind of intuitive understanding and naturalness between them. It made their relation seem true and right.

"Remember my reciting poetry to you as we lay there in the shade," he said. "Let me not to the marriage of true minds Admit impediments."

She looked down out of his eyes.

She wondered if she should not be back inside. It was not long before twelve.

"Let's dance, Jane." As he moved her close to him, she laid her head on his shoulder. She felt his hand on her back and his breath on her cheek.

She drew away from him suddenly. "Dick—" He raised her chin and looked into her eyes. "Why did you have to go away, Dick?" A tear rolled down her cheek.

"You know I had to, Jane. I said I'd come back. I would have sooner," he glanced down, "but I couldn't."

"But four years, Dick."

He sighed deeply. "I guess I'm being cruel to you by seeing you now. When I first learned you were engaged, I didn't plan to see you again. But finally, I felt that I had to. I also felt that I should."

Tears rolled down her face. "I have a feeling you haven't cried in a long time," he said.

"I thought—" she sniffed. "I thought I never would again."

"Then I'm glad you are."

"Dick?"

"Yes, Jane?"

"I'm just — I'm just so confused. I thought —"

"I know what you thought, Jane."

"But I think the world of Walter, Dick. I do."

"I know you do."

"You know, I think I'm glad I'm crying too. I guess I'm mourning the old year and anxious for the new one to begin."

She turned around. Walter had come through the door and now stopped about five feet before them.

"Hello, Walter," said Dick.

"Hello, Dick." Walter took off a bright-colored, pointed, paper cap and held it nervously before him in both hands. "It's almost twelve o'clock, Jane," he said.

"Yes, I know."

They were silent. Walter looked down at his cap. "Well, I'll wait for you inside." He started to turn around.

"No, Walter, don't go," she said quickly.

Jane lowered her head momentarily, feeling Dick's eyes on her, then looked up at Dick.

"I'll be going," said Dick. He stuck out his hand to Walter. "Good luck, Walter."

"Thanks, Dick."

He walked toward the door. "Dick," she called. "Goodbye."

"Goodbye, Jane." He smiled slightly, turned around slowly and left.

"I feel that I should apologize to you, Walter," she said as he walked over to her. "I've been so wrong."

"Wrong?"

"Yes, wrong. Oh, not about you,

Walter." she paused. "Not about you. About me."

He took hold of her hands. "You're crying," he said.

"Yes." She looked into his eyes and squeezed his hands. "But I'm happy," she said, smiling.

"Then so am I. Let's go back inside, Jane. It's almost time."

"Whatever you say, darling. Here, put on your hat."

They walked inside. She hugged his arm. It was twelve o'clock.

— I. J.

Temple Hall

The morning sun shone directly on the facade of the displaced Colonial mansion. The old place, however, did depict some of the character of its northern Indiana locale. The hand-cut reddish brown stone afforded the vines that covered it secure anchorage. Porticoed on three sides, with gables above, and with white columns supporting the wooden lintel all around, the house presented the odd mixture of the last century and the dawning of another, which it was. The facade faced the east, and the bright autumn sun, reflected by the white columns, presented a brilliant contrast of the white painted wood on the rough, red stone of the building itself. To the horizon in all directions the fields were ripe for the harvest. The field hands had begun their day's toil. The wag-

ons, drawn by teams of mules, could be seen plodding slowly along, the workers following behind.

The massive old house squatted firmly on the crest of a grass-carpeted knoll. Descending obliquely from the mansion's vine-covered facade was an elm-lined path. Jacob Van Temple, the youthful master of the farm, and his widowed mother briskly descended the grassy slope. Jacob addressed his mother.

"Mother, I don't mean to be—uhh—disrespectful, but aren't you makin' too much of Jeremiah being sick?"

"I don't think so, Jacob. He's been with us a long time."

"There wouldn't be somethin' besides, would there?"

"What on earth do you mean, Jacob? You've been talkin' like that ever since you were in town two weeks ago."

"Nothin'. I'm just talkin', I guess. How bad do you think he is?"

"Pretty bad, I'd say. Pretty bad. I don't think he's goin' to make it."

Jacob and his mother were nearing the horse barn. The barn had recently been repainted that bright blood-red so common to the mid-western farm-country. But Jeremiah Boggs always had a flare for the neatness about things. The cross braces of the barn door, the window sills, and the underside of the overhang were painted a bright, glaring white. Out front of the barn was the horse trough and water pump. The trough and the pump, too, were painted the bloody-red, but, in contrast, the edges of the trough and the spout of the pump were white.

"That barn just always reminds me of him," Madame Van Temple said. "Like that bright-red shirt he always wears. That barn's got his mark on it. That pump, too."

"I suppose it would," Jacob said. "After all, he's lived in it for twenty-five years, about."

"Twenty-four almost to the day."

Mother and son neared the door, hesitated, then knocked. The door opened slowly. Lester Boggs, Jeremiah's son, stood quietly just inside the darkened lean-to where he and his father lived. He was wearing one of his father's red shirts. The shirt was open, the tails hanging out. The morning sun knifing into the darkened room

caused him to squint against its harsh intrusion. Lester was unshaven. His sky-blue eyes were underscored by reddened, puffy flesh. His sandy hair curled down on his tanned forehead.

"How's your father, Lester?" Madame Van Temple said.

"Dead!" Lester said, his voice low, husky. "'Bout an hour ago."

Lester backed into the room. The door being left open, Jacob and his mother followed Lester to Jeremiah's bedside.

"He never woke-up," Lester said. "He just stopped breathing. I don't know how I knew just when it was. I guess because I just felt something. I don't know."

"Shall I go to town for the preacher?" Jacob inquired.

"I guess so," Lester said. "Suppose we should—should bury . . ."

"I think so," Madame Van Temple said, her voice wavering slightly. "Today."

Jacob walked quietly out of the room, closing the door behind him. As the door closed, Madame Van Temple, a subdued sob escaping from her throat, knelt down at the edge of the bed. "Jeremiah," she whispered. "Oh! Jemy! Jemy!"

"Ma'm," Lester said. "Is there anythin' you'd like to talk about?"

"No, Lester. Not now. Not yet. I'm goin' back up to the house. I don't—wish to stay here."

"I should think you would want to."

"Why do you say that?"

Lester did not answer. From his standing position behind the old woman he moved to the chair at bedside. His long muscular body, hardened from the long years in the fields, revealed his anxiety, his inner turmoil, in the short, quick movements it made. His brawny frame gave the appearance of being relaxed, the way that he was slouched in the chair, but the tenseness was revealed by his gritted teeth, his clenched jaw muscles, and his twitching, nervous hands.

"Ma'm," Lester said, "when are we goin' to talk about it?"

"Please, Lester. Josiah's dead only three weeks. I haven't caught my breath from that yet. So much happenin' so suddenly. First my husband, and now —"

"And now what, Ma'm."

"Alright, so you know. I was afraid you'd find out. But nothing's changed, Lester. Nothing! Do you understand?"

"We'll talk about it later."

"Lester, does Jacob know? Have you told him?"

"He doesn't know anything for sure. We've sort of had wonderin's about it though. Heard people talk, ya know how they do. We've never believed it though. But Jacob most believes it sometimes. Someone'll say somethin' and he'll come down here rantin' and ravin' at me like I was an animal or somethin'. Then Pa here'd catch him at it and run him off."

"Yes, I know. Now hush, Lester. I don't want to talk about it."

Madame Van Temple rose from her position at the side of the bed. She turned towards the door as though to leave. Then, looking at the body on the bed, she bent over it, pulling the blanket over the head.

"No!" Lester said, jumping from his chair. "Don't do that." He folded the blanket back on his father's chest. Straightening up he found himself standing very close to Madame Van Temple. His massive shoulders towered above the fragile old woman. Looking down into her face, he saw a new welling-up of tears flood her blood-shot, brown eyes. Suddenly, crying, "Oh, Lester," she threw herself against him, her arms around his thin waist and her head on his half-bared chest. The strangeness of having this aloof, aristocratic woman so near made Lester uncomfortable, in spite of his new knowledge. After a moment he placed his rough, caloused hands on her narrow, sparrow-like shoulders, and gently sat her down on the foot of the bed. She took his hands from her shoulders. Holding them in her own, palms upward, she laid her face in them, sobbing deeply, with the heart-rending gasps and hysterical mutterings that only a woman, stricken to the quick with grief, can utter. After some time, Lester became impatient, as men do, not from lack of compassion or understanding, but from embarrassment. Men cry, yes, but the deep sobbing is more within. It is that silent, chest-convulsing, vice-like inner torment that man must bear. And Lester bore

that torment now. This stranger, his mother, was crying into his opened hands. This woman, mistress of the farm on which he labored all his life, was now humbled before him. This woman who had always given the orders, to both him and his father, was now like a sparrow with both wings broken. Two lives departed, first her husband and now the father of her two sons, in less than a month. Lester tenderly raised his hands, lifting his mother's chin, that he might look on her face.

"Ma'm, do you think you could talk to me now? Please? I want so much to know what it's all about."

"There's so much to tell, Lester. So much. Not now; I'm so tired."

"Just this, then, for now. Are Jacob and I twins?"

"Yes, but fraternal twins. Do you know what that means?"

"Yes."

"I'm going to go up to the house and rest now. Come and get me when Jacob and the preacher get here."

"Ma'm, will you tell me everything? I must know! I must know about my father and—and you and Master Van Temple. Did he know? Did the master know I was your son?"

"No, Lester. He never knew."

"I don't understand. How come he didn't know? Wasn't he here?"

"No, he wasn't. He was in Chicago trying to save some grain from a crooked elevator owner."

"But what about my moth—I mean, what about my father's wife? I thought she died when I was born."

"So did everyone else. No, she and her baby died less than a week after you were—you and Jacob were born. It was in the winter and the farm was deserted. Oh, Lester! Must I go on? Must I?"

"Don't stop now. Not now. Who was with you? Who else knew?"

"Just your father. He was with me. He was so kind, so good."

Madame Van Temple looked at the figure on the bed. She could not restrain herself. Lowering her head to Lester's hands she sobbed again. Lester knelt down before her, guiding her head to his shoulder.

"If no one knows, then how come I hear talk sometimes?"

"Preacher Vere did the buryin' then, just like he still does. Just like he's goin' to do today."

"Then he knows everythin'?"

"Yes. He knows. But I don't think he's ever told anyone outright. He gets to preachin' to someone sometimes and he slips. Not really sayin' anything, but enough to give people ideas."

"Why did Jacob stay with you and me come down here to live in the barn? If we were twins, shouldn't I have—shouldn't I be equal to him?"

"Lester, from the day you were born I knew I wouldn't be able to hide a thing if I admitted you were my son. You were the spittin' image of your father from head to toe. So, he took you the day before Josiah was due home. He pretended to all that you were his wife's son. No one could tell any difference."

"Poor Jacob. What's he goin' to do when he finds out I'm his brother? He'd like to kill me everytime he hears someone talkin'. Just to prove that it ain't so, I guess."

"Lester, no! He must never know. No! No!"

"No? Why not? I've been workin' these fields all my life. My pa killed himself with the work. The master killed himself, too. All Jacob's ever done is go to school. I never went to school. I never had a chance for any of that stuff. Don't I get a chance now to enjoy all the work I've done. I've earned it. Look at these hands—cuts, bloody every day when I finish work. My skin dried and hard, and his so soft and white."

"I know, Lester. I know. But that's the way it's meant to be. Jacob's like me, soft and white. We're supposed to be that way. It's meant to be that way. You're your father. You're hard, like him. You're strong, to do the work. That's the way it's meant. That's the way it's got to stav. I said before that nothing's changed. I mean it, Lester. \nothing!"

"What if I tell him anyway?"

"God! Lester, don't! I don't know what he'd do. He'd probably kill you, or me. Or even himself, he'd feel such guilt. He'd hate me for what I've done. No, Lester. It can't be. You have a good life. You have everything you

need right here."

"But then Jacob'll never know his father. He'll never know who he really is. He himself, I mean. He's always tellin' me 'bout how he's really finding himself at that college he's goin' to. He'll never know even who his own father is. That's almost a joke, isn't it?"

"Lester. For heaven's sake. With your father's body right here."

"I don't mean it that way. Alright, we won't tell Jacob. Not for now, anyway."

"Lester, Lester, Lester. Don't, whatever you do, don't ever tell him. I just don't know — is that the preacher and Jacob already? It's hardly noon."

"A little after, I think. Yes, it's them," Lester said, having gone to the window. "They'll be here any minute."

Preacher Vere and Jacob, who held the reins, pulled the buggy up at the water pump and trough. Jacob hopped down and secured the reins to the pump handle. Preacher Vere descended from the opposite side, walked quickly to the lean-to, and entered, without knocking at the partly opened door.

"Hello, Lester, Madame," he said. "Jacob tells me it's to be right away. It'd be best, with this heat and all. Where's it to be?"

"Up near Josiah's, I guess," Madame Van Temple said.

On hearing this, Jacob, who had been standing outside the door, rushed into the room.

"What do you mean?" he said. "That's for family."

"But —," Preacher Vere began.

"It's all right, Jacob," Madame Van Temple said. "Now, Lester, hadn't you and Jacob better get your shovels?"

"Shovels?" Jacob said. "What do I want with a shovel? I'll have no part of this business."

Again Preacher Vere tried to interject, but again was interrupted by Madame Van Temple.

"Jacob," she said, "you ran from your father's burial, you found an excuse to get away this morning, and now you want to get out of this one. Don't you think it's time you faced this kind of thing?"

"All right. I'll go with you to bury him, but I'm not digging any grave. No, Ma'm!"

"Jacob," Preacher Vere said, "go with Lester. He'll dig it. You just keep him company. Okay? I want to speak with your mother."

Lester departed from the room. He walked into the barn, Jacob following behind, and took a shovel from the tool room. The pair walked slowly up the path to Temple Hall. The noon sun shone with full intensity in the cloudless sky. Drops of sweat glistened like molten brass on Lester's ruddy-brown forehead, rolling down off the end of his nose. In contrast, Jacob's face had a flushed, limp, wilted stickiness about it. He didn't sweat in droplets, as most people do. It just seemed to ooze out of his flesh like condensation on a glass of ice water on a hot day. They ascended the elm-lined lane. They passed the house, its porches in shade. Lester swung the long-handled shovel down from his shoulder and used it as a walking stick. Approaching Josiah's grave marker, a wooden plank with a rounded top, Lester hesitated for a moment. He looked around him, then, having made his decision, he took a few more paces, and drove the blade of the shovel into the ground.

"I reckon just about here," he said. "What do you think, Jacob? This a pretty nice spot? It's level. Open to the sky. Shade trees all around."

"I think down the hill farther. Down there," Jacob said, pointing to a gully at the bottom of the hill on which Temple Hall stood. The gully was overgrown with weeds and brush. Lester looked to where Jacob pointed, then back at Jacob.

"Why do you say that, Jacob? You got some special reason for saying a thing like that?" Lester's sweat-glimmering forehead furrowed; his eyebrows raised. His full, sensuous lips curled down in the corners. "Them's pretty thoughts you're implyin', Jacob."

"Just where he belongs, that's all. He don't belong up here with my family."

"Jacob, I — I don't know why you want to act this way. Are you really so much better than we are? Is that what it is? You feel we just don't matter. You think because we work for our daily bread, stead of gettin' it

gived to us, you think we just ain't no good? Is that it?"

"Not exactly. But you're pretty close though."

Lester began the digging of the grave by marking off the sod by thrusting the shovel into the ground, pushing it forward, waving the handle from front to back to front, which separated the thick sod from the reddish-black soil underneath. Then, with the sod cleared, he began to dig, throwing huge shovel-fulls onto the mound of sod.

"Jacob Van Temple," Lester said, in mid-swing, "someday you're gonna regret those words. Mark me? Some day you'll wish you had never said that."

"Go to Hell, Lester Boggs," Jacob uttered vehemently. "Do you hear me? Go to Hell."

Lester looked up from where he was standing, as the hole was now about two feet deep, but said nothing. He just stared at Jacob for a moment, with pity.

"Go on, Lester. Say something. Ha! Ha! You're afraid to. You know I'll send you away so fast you won't know what happened. I just might do that anyway. Yes, that sounds like a pretty good idea. I just might do that."

Lester ignored Jacob. He continued digging. He dug feverishly, throwing the dirt out of the hole with a kind of internal vengeance. Jacob walked away, a few feet up the hill to where his "father" was laid. He stood hunched over Josiah's grave, his hands in his pockets.

"Death," he said. "What are you?" He remained standing there some time. Then Lester called out to him.

"I'm finished. I'm going back."

Jacob did not answer. He just remained standing by Josiah's grave, looking down at it. Lester drove the shovel-blade into the mound of dirt. With a glance at Jacob's back, he paused. Then, shrugging his mountaneous shoulders, he started the walk back to the barn. He paused from his walk back for a moment in front of the Hall. The afternoon sun had descended behind the gables and the peaked roof. Lester stood there, solidly, like the massive old, stone house.

"That wood-work shouldn't be white," he said. "Nothin's white, real-

ly. It should be a brown, or tan, or somethin'. White don't exist in this world. Not really."

He continued down the knoll towards the barn. The afternoon sun cast long shadows of the elms across the path. The shaded grass was ominously dark. The shadows fled across Lester's face as he walked past the trees, corresponding to the waves of torment that flowed through his mind. Arriving at the barn, he stopped at the white trimmed pump. He grasped the handle, but hesitated.

"White, again," he said. "On the barn, too. Just a little, though. Maybe—Maybe there is a little white somewhere. Maybe just a little."

Lester cupped his hand under the white spout of the pump, raised and lowered the handle, and drank the fresh, crystal-clear water. Wiping his mouth with the sleeve of his right-red shirt, he stood erect, and entered the lean-to.

"I'm ready," he said, as he entered. He crossed to his father's bedside. After a brief pause, he wrapped the blanket around the body, then, with little effort, he picked the body up in his arms. He carried his father's corpse to the preacher's buggy, placing it tenderly on the bed back of the seat. Preacher Vere and Madame Van Temple followed him out of the door. The preacher took the reins from the pump handle, and led his horse around to the path. Lester walked behind the buggy. Madame Van Temple walked haltingly at his side. As the procession passed the house, Lester kept his eyes on the body in front of him. The preacher pulled up at the grave. Lester went to his father's body, lifting it off the buggy. He carried it to the graveside. Jacob, standing at Josiah's grave, remained motionless, just watching. Lester jumped down into the grave, his father's corpse in his arms. Straddling the corpse, he laid the shrouded figure on the dirt bottom of the hole. Then he climbed out of the grave. Preacher Vere walked to Lester's side, Madame Van Temple following. The preacher began talking, praying, softly. Then his voice rose.

"...but he gave the world three sons, dear God, and two remain, yet.

Two sons to carry on his good works."

Madame Van Temple gasped. Jacob screamed out.

"What! What did you say?" Jacob ran to the preacher. He looked at his mother. "What did he say? It's true! It's true! You've lied to me. All of you. You've lied to me all my life. I won't have it! No! No!" He stared at his mother. His face became scarlet beneath his ashen pallor. His agonized soul, his wretchedness, contorted his face into a hideous mask. No one spoke. The preacher turned from him to the grave.

"...from dust to dust; from ashes to ashes..." he continued.

Jacob broke from the graveside, from the people who stood there. He ran for the house. Lester, afraid of what Jacob might do, ran after him.

"Jacob! Wait!" Lester yelled, as he pursued the fleeing figure. Jacob ran into the house by the kitchen door. Lester entered right behind. Jacob grabbed a long knife from the breadboard. He spun around and faced Lester, the knife pointed at him.

"Come near me and I'll kill you first," Jacob said.

"Jacob! Jacob! What difference does this make? You're just the same. Nothing's changed. Nothing. Do you hear me? Put that knife down."

"Nothing's changed? The whole world's changed. I'm evil. You're evil. My mother — my mother's —" He turned the knife and plunged it deep into his chest, between his ribs. With both hands on the handle of the knife, pushing it to the hilt, he crumpled over on the floor.

"Oh, God!" Lester said. "Oh, God, why?"

Lester walked through the house to the front door. He left Jacob on the floor, the blood gushing out in spurts at first, then steadily oozing. Lester opened the door and stepped out on the porch. Madame Van Temple and the preacher were walking briskly up the hill from graveside. The setting sun was behind the house. The shadow of the structure was extended grotesquely down the slope, bordered by the elms along the path. Off in the fields the ripened grain shone golden from the last rays of the day's light.

RON MORRISSEAU

