

Excerpts

I

... The first week is now over, and I have soloed. Of all the experiences I had ever encountered, flying for the first time, all alone, surpasses everything. Alone above the long swarming highways that are forever flowing to an endless horizon, up above the clouds that look like ice-floes, I find that I am divorced from the world of human habitation The months are passing quickly now, but I do not fear death in my plane. Death up here is clean. It is a death of flame and ice, of sun and sky, and flame and ice. Below the world lies in decomposition As the last minutes approach I shall head my plane upward into the endless blue sky, heading toward eternity, cutting the clouds with a shrill cold whistle. My plane will flop over on its back and head sea-ward, leaving behind an exaggerated red sun. The sea looks like a sheet of green glass, which will be shattered into thousands of glittering fragments as I head toward reality, but I shall not mind as I shall not be conscious of my downward trip . . . from "*My Last Twelve Months*" by Betty Lewis.

II

... A moist, cool, calm breeze wafts over the emerald water and I sigh, for I am content. I have found "Sea View" my favorite spot of which I have always dreamed. Here in my small cove the water is calm, although the ocean beyond the narrow inlet is turbulent and beats upon the two rocks which stand eight feet high like permanent pickets guarding my solitude from attack . . . Towering trees fringe the shoreline and continue to the top of the ridge that forms a suitable backdrop for an ideally set stage . . . from "*My Favorite Spot*" by Joseph C. Greenlee.

III

... One year to live . . . As I stare out into the damp darkness of a dismal November morning, my eyes, wandering aimlessly over monotonous fields, come to rest upon a tall pine tree lonely adorning a tiny knoll, and silhouetted against a colorless sky. Mighty winds have forced this pine tree's sturdy trunk to yield and lean to one side, and cruel storms have torn from it many a graceful bough. But, still it stands, just as God made it, a pine tree From "*One Year To Live*" by Suzanne Weesner.

IV

... A train also calls up definite sound impressions. It is first heard far away and identified by the distant blare of the whistle, sounding lonely and romantic. As the train comes closer, gradually the rhythmic clicka-a-hanka, clicka-a-hanka of the wheels becomes clearer. The whistle is bolder and more brazen, and the train thunders past with a deafening roar. Suddenly the whistle sounds far away and it fades into the distance, taking with it all the romance. Its lonely and sadly wailing whistle is carried to others. The adventure, romance, and tragedy of the train whistle is ours no longer . . . From "*Three Noisy Things*" by Katherine Armstrong.

V

... The turkey, roasted to a golden brown, gives off an appetite-tempting steam. The cranberry sauce shimmers and throws strange reflections into the eyes of the onlookers, making them regret that such a thing of beauty will soon be eaten . . . From "*A Feast For A King*" by J. Wm. Lynn.