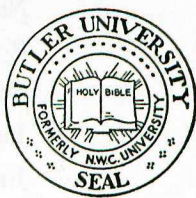


Butler University



MS S S



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The Snow

Lucia Walton

CHARITY began to lift her body, stopping at every inch to listen for a change in Faith's breathing. It seemed to her as though an hour passed before she was sitting up, and then there remained the task of swinging her legs over the side of the big tester bed and getting out of it without waking her sister. Now! Her feet were on the floor—the bed squeaked when her weight left it. She bit her lip. Faith grunted, dug her head into the pillow, and then the regular rise and fall of the tufted comforter resumed.

Stealthily Charity reached to the wall peg for her clothes, hoping she wasn't taking Faith's by mistake. For a minute annoyance welled up in her; if Faith hadn't been so eager to go to bed early with her she wouldn't have had to get undressed all the way. Now there was nothing to do but take her clothes and dress downstairs; Faith would surely wake if she tried to do it here. Maybe she ought to wake her and say goodbye—Pa'd surely never let her come back. She'd never see her sister again. Charity turned, then stopped—Faith would cry and wake the whole house if she knew. Charity swallowed, and crept out of the room.

How had she ever thought she'd get past Ma and Pa's door and down the stairs? Her bare feet on the cold floor sounded like hobnail boots. Every time a board creaked, her heart gave a funny flutter and stopped momentarily, then thudded against her flannel nightdress until the next creak. It pounded in her ears so loudly she feared that everyone would hear, and she pressed a rough slim hand on her chest to still it.

Finally she was in the hall. Teeth clicking, she hurriedly drew flannel knickers and petticoats and heavy woolen stockings beneath her gown, then tore it off and pulled on her best brown wool dress with trembling fingers. Funny to be wearing flannel underclothes for a wedding—but if she froze to death there'd be no wedding. What would Faith say, finding her sister had been married in flannel petticoats? Charity remembered how the two of them had sewed for days on Hope's dimity ones last year and giggled as they threaded them with white ribbon. Lucky Hope—and here Charity was, sneaking off in the middle of the night in flannels! If Pa wasn't so all-fired stubborn! He'd see, Pa would. He'd see how responsible and dependable Jed Sparks was. Jed—she'd been so full of getting out quietly that she'd hardly thought about him. A sudden warmth made her fingers go faster buttoning up the brown basque. She spread and smoothed its white collar and took her shiny auburn hair out of its bedtime braids, hoping she could get it fastened up decently without a mirror. Maybe the Justice's wife would give her a room to fix up a little when they got to Bentleyville. There—she was ready! But she couldn't leave her nightdress right here in

the front hall, Ma would have a fit. She wadded it up under her arm.

The vows Hope had taken ran through her head. This time it would be "I, Charity, take thee, Jedediah"—she hoped she wouldn't stumble over his full name. She'd better not, if she was going to be Mrs. Jedediah Sparks for the rest of her life! As she tiptoed to the back door, took her thick cape and shawl from the hook and bundled into them, she suddenly thought about Ma and Hope. She was going to be married. They were married. What was it like? You went to keep a man's house, and you had babies. You didn't get sent out of rooms when people talked, and you went to other women's houses when they had babies instead of being bundled to Aunt Chatty's when Ma had one. That was what it was to be married. But what was the other thing, the thing Ma had talked to Hope about the night before she was married? Charity remembered them coming out of Ma and Pa's room, Ma with her lips tight and Hope scared and big-eyed. Probably just a lecture about keeping house. Hope never did like doing chores. There couldn't be anything to be scared about—not with Jed, anyway. Jed was so big and kind and easy-going. . . .

The cold hit Charity hard as she pulled the door to behind her and stepped out into the chicken yard. Great shakes rattled her. What would Pa say if he knew she'd come out in such cold of her own free will? Nobody hated winter more than she did—nobody except Jed. Pa'd have a conniption when she wasn't there in the morning. Charity shuddered with more than cold, glad she wouldn't be there to face it. She hoped Faith wouldn't catch it for not waking up and stopping her.

Plodding through the snow, Charity appreciated it for once; the moon was hidden, but the white covering on the ground made it easier to see where she was going. The barn loomed huge and fearsome ahead. She'd get a lantern there. Laws, it was cold! She could hardly get breath against it. Pulling her shawl closer around her head, she mopped away the cold trickle down her cheeks with a corner of it. As she neared the barn she began to talk, very softly, hoping to keep the animals quiet without waking anyone in the house. The dogs came out to escort her the rest of the way, their tongues warm on her numbed fingers.

At the door of the barn, Charity turned toward the tall, narrow house built of brick made right on the land. Straight as Pa's back it stood blackly against the black sky, with its two chimneys pointing upward. Hope always said they looked like "Simon says 'thumbs up'!" in the game, but now to Charity they were her parents, upright and solid and forever pointing to heaven. So strict and narrow—for a moment Charity had felt an impulse to run back, but now her shoulders straightened. Pa said she couldn't marry Jed. He said Jed wasn't steady. Well, what if he had missed his own brother's barn raising? It was only because he forgot about it. Anybody could forget. And Ma wanted Charity to marry the preacher—that skinny

old thing! Must be at least forty, and he wore a beard and droned on for hours in a hideous nasal tenor—Charity whirled around. Must be the night. It was only Daisy, not the preacher's voice. What was she thinking of, to waste all this time? Jed would be out there freezing to death. Why hadn't she told him to meet her in the barn where it was warmer? Oh, yes, the animals wouldn't know him.

In the corner she groped for a lantern and flints. Her hands were shaking so that she struck and struck before getting a spark, and the cows began to stir. There! Holding the lantern high so as not to brush against any straw, Charity made her way to the back door of the barn. How strange it was to see the animals at night—Prince poked his nose out of his stall, and Charity hastily grabbed a handful of hay to keep him from neighing after her. As she fed it to him she kissed his big nose, wondering if he'd miss their early-morning rambles.

If only the door wouldn't squeak too much—praise be she was thin, and didn't have to roll it back very far. Gently she pushed it shut after her, poking the dogs' cold noses back. They whined, but they didn't bark. It had been so easy! Charity's heart began to beat more steadily. Every moment she'd been expecting Pa to come stomping out like bearded doom in a nightshirt, and heaven only knew what would have happened. Now all she had to do was walk about a hundred yards to the dead oak log, and there Jed would be.

Beyond the flickering lantern light the trees cast weird shadows, and Charity remembered all the old tales of bears and wolves. Silly! Jed was there, waiting. She'd better hurry, before he died of the cold! Feeling suddenly gay, she giggled between shivers. Didn't it prove how much they loved each other, that two people who hated winter as much as she and Jed would set out on a night like this to be married? Charity wasn't minding the cold now, though it pinched into her bones and set her shaking like a newborn calf. There was the beech tree—she began to run a little, holding her skirts tight with one hand to prevent their catching. Then she stopped short. In a minute she'd be there, and it wasn't seemly to be running. Jed must see the light by now; why wasn't he coming to meet her? Charity stood motionless to listen, but not a twig snapped. He must be playing games. Trying to put on a dignified expression, she stepped solemnly forward, her brown eyes dancing like the lantern flame. The great hollow log came into the light—and that was all. "Jed? Jed, come out, I'm here! Jed, it's too cold to play hide games!" and then simply "Jed!"

Oh, well, maybe she was early. He'd come in a minute. Charity brushed snow off the log and sat down, setting the lantern in front of her and stretching her hands out to it. The nightdress was still under her arm; she tossed it inside the log, remembering she'd left half her hairpins on the hall table. Ma would be furious! Not Faith—they never seemed to have enough to go around. Charity wondered if Faith would marry the preacher. She liked him pretty

well—poor Faith. But it wouldn't be so bad for her, she wouldn't be the butt of his preaching all the time. One reason Ma'd wanted Charity to marry him was to settle her head, but Faith's head was already as settled—and dull, to Charity's mind—as anyone could ask. Faith would be a good preacher's wife. Not she—how could she ever marry anyone but Jed? Jed with his ready bass laughter and easy ways—why didn't he come? It was starting to snow again, and the lantern burned lower and lower. There hadn't been much oil in it to start with. He'd be there in a moment, laughing—did she hear his horses on the road now? Charity sat up straight, suddenly in a panic. What would she say to him? What did you say to a man you were about to run off and marry with? What would he say? Oh, well, they always had found plenty to talk about. There was always the weather.

Charity gave a little cry. The lantern had gone out. It was so dark and cold—she could see nothing but the snowflakes that fell thicker and thicker in front of her nose. Shortly she reached inside the log for her nightdress and wrapped it over her shawl. She could snatch it off and hide it when she heard Jed coming. Her feet and hands felt numb. Jed wouldn't be able to tell her from the log, they were both covered with snow . . . she couldn't stay like this much longer. But she couldn't go back—what would Jed do when he came, if she wasn't there? The log was plenty big enough, she and her sisters all used to get in it together when they were little. What if something else was already inside it—a bear, or a snake? No, it surely would have waked up when she came.

Gingerly feeling ahead, Charity crawled inside the oak log. The inside was scaly and fungous; she choked down a sob, pulled the shawl over her face, and stuck her hands inside it. She felt a little bit warmer, but what if she didn't hear Jed when he came? Holding her body rigid, Charity listened with straining ears, but the only sound was that of the blood thudding against her temple. After a while she relaxed. If he didn't see her right away, Jed surely would call her name. The log was none too big; she felt terribly cramped. It must be getting quite late. The Justice would be angry if they woke him up in the middle of the night . . . well, there wouldn't be anything else to do. They couldn't stay out all night without getting married. Pa'd shoot both of them.

Closing her eyes, Charity prayed with all her might that Jed would hurry up. Then she opened them with a start, realizing she'd been about to drift off. That wouldn't do, she wouldn't hear him call her. She was beginning to feel cold again, clear through. Eloping wasn't as much fun as she'd thought—but there, that wasn't fair, it would be as soon as Jed came. She couldn't fall asleep—why hadn't they waited till spring? Funny, they hadn't even thought about it, much as they hated the cold . . . so sleepy . . . what if Jed thought she wouldn't come, on a night like this? Maybe he was home in bed, asleep, this minute. No, he wouldn't be asleep . . . not when she

The Player made his move; and the Opponent, shifting his cigar, made a quick reply.

The Kibitzer shrugged. "You see, the game plays *itself* now. He can't go wrong."

"I suppose I might as well resign!"

"Might as well."

"Yah, well, if you don't mind, I'll play on. I happen to like the game still."

"Suit yourself. I don't care."

The Opponent watched them, amused. The Player moved again.

"Oh, not *that* move, you idiot. This time you *had* to move the bishop."

The Player grunted, but said nothing.

The Kibitzer shook his head back and forth. "It was the only move, and you missed it. *Why* do I watch such playing?" And he leaned closer for a better look.

A Scrap of Lavender

Judy Bergen

YOU PROBABLY read the story; it was in all the papers. When a man as prominent as Wheeler Dunlop gets killed, it's bound to attract attention. Of course people get hit by cars often enough, and if anyone suspected its having been more than an accident, certainly nothing was said. If I had said anything, who would have believed me?

Wheeler Dunlop was an artist. So am I, but he was a good one, a genius. We met in college and managed to keep contact through the years, years that carried him to heights of fame while they brought me a clientele which kept me eating but nothing more. For several summers we had been going up into the New England region to paint and get away from civilization a little. We always picked a small rural community where Wheeler wasn't known. Somehow we never worried about anyone recognizing me.

Wheeler's last summer was spent in Vermont, in one of the rocky mountainous spots that can be changed, via the paint-brush, from grim reality to picturesqueness. It was here that he was killed. Till now I have never told my story, partly because I didn't want to get involved and partly because I don't think anyone would have believed me. There was a third reason, but I myself wasn't sure just exactly what it was.

We had been working hard that day, tramping all over the hillsides, picking first one spot then another for our sketches, and our luck had been bad. Wheeler was a little out of sorts, a prerogative of genius, I suppose, so I suggested driving in to the county seat, a town about fifteen miles away, for dinner. He instantly agreed, and as soon as we had gotten cleaned up, we were off.

It was a misty evening with a touch of fog in the air, and

Wheeler was driving. Suddenly I saw a figure emerge from the indistinctness ahead.

"Look out," I cried.

The car swerved and just missed hitting a young girl walking along the road. Wheeler stopped the car, obviously shaken by the encounter. We waited till she was beside the car and I asked, "Did we frighten you? The fog is getting bad, and I'm afraid we were driving too fast."

I was struck by the girl's loveliness. She had clear blue eyes and deep auburn hair that came below her shoulders. But it was her skin that was most noticeable; it was clear to the point of translucence. One had the feeling that if it were held to the light one could almost see through it, like fine china. She was dressed in a sheer dress of a lavender color; it looked like the sort of dress a young girl would wear to a party.

She spoke softly. "No, you didn't frighten me. I was on my way into town; I never miss the dance. I live just around the turn." She pointed back the way we had come.

"But," Wheeler said, "you have over a mile to walk yet. That's much too far; if you'll let us, we would be glad to make up for your close call by taking you into town."

She smiled. "If you'd like."

I moved over and she got into the car with us. She didn't seem inclined to conversation, so the three of us rode along in silence. Then I noticed that she was shivering.

"It's getting a little chilly. Would you like to slip my topcoat around your shoulders?"

She smiled in acquiescence and adjusted the coat about her. In a few minutes she turned toward Wheeler.

"I'll get out here, if you don't mind," she said.

We were on the outskirts of town, near an old building which seemed out of place with the modern houses around it. But supposing that she was going to one of the houses, neither of us asked any questions. I opened the door for her and she thanked us, and got out.

We were both silent for the rest of the ride. Then I realized that I hadn't gotten my coat back from the girl. I said this to Wheeler and he answered that we could stop at the house where the girl lived tomorrow and retrieve it.

The next day we drove back to the old house that the girl had pointed out as her home. As we pulled into the driveway a woman came to the door. She matched the house, old and run-down and grey-looking, as though time had dealt unfairly with both. She wiped her hands on her apron and walked over to the car just as we got out.

"You want berries?" she asked, squinting her eyes against the early sun.

Wheeler spoke. "No, we're looking for a young girl who rode into town with us last night. She forgot to return my friend's topcoat, so we stopped by to get it."

The woman stepped back a little and frowned.

"No girl here. Just my man and me, and he ain't here half the time." She started to leave and I stepped forward and caught her arm. She acted as if she were anxious to get back into the house.

"You say there's no girl here? But there has to be; she said she lives here." I must have looked belligerent, because the woman shook her head decisively, a little frightened.

"No there ain't. We had a girl once, but she was killed, fifteen years ago. Killed down the road apiece, walking into town." Her eyes looked bitter.

Wheeler and I stared at her, too stunned to say anything. The old woman glanced at us, then turned around and hurried into the house. We got back into the car. Wheeler started the motor and we backed into the road. Just as we started down the road something caught my eye. By the front steps of the old house was my topcoat, neatly folded.

That evening, after dinner, we discussed what had happened.

"She's lying," Wheeler said. "That's the only explanation. Maybe she resented our picking the girl up. The thing is, we both saw her, and we both saw the coat, there near the house. So there has to be a rational explanation."

I shook my head in bewilderment. "I don't know. But I'm not going to worry about it. I got my coat back, so I'm satisfied."

I meant what I said, and the next day I got out my paints and easel, all set for a day of sketching. But Wheeler was moody and said he wasn't interested in work at the present. Chalking up the remark to his well-known temperament, I set off in the car alone.

When I came back that night, he was quite elated. When I inquired as to the reason, he said that he was on the tracks of the girl. He had found out that there really had been a girl killed on her way into town and that it really had happened fifteen years before. Furthermore, he said, the old building where the girl had gotten out had been a dance-hall at that time.

For some reason his concern with the whole thing annoyed me. I shrugged, made some remark about coincidence, and went to bed. I thought the novelty of a possible phantom would wear off if Wheeler had no encouragement. Perhaps this would have been the case, but unfortunately he got encouragement. He saw her again.

She was walking along the highway when he saw her, about a week later. He told me afterwards that she smiled, but would not speak to him or stop walking. Then she disappeared into the trees by the side of the road. After that, he gave up all pretense of painting. He spent his days talking to people in town about the girl and his nights driving that lonely stretch of road, hoping to see her again.

His preoccupation was beginning to affect me. We were barely civil to each other in those last days; I was exasperated with his obsession and he was angry at my indifference. Most of the towns-

people, being staid New Englanders, thought him a little balmy, and I was beginning to wonder myself. My work, such as it was, was beginning to suffer, too. I couldn't find a spot for a landscape I hoped to do in pastels, even though I had made countless attempts. It was to be a "bread-and-butter" painting for a lady who wanted it over her fireplace.

Then came that Thursday. I had spent almost the entire day hunting a suitable location to set up my easel, but without luck. As evening approached, I drove along the road where Wheeler and I had first encountered our little friend. About a quarter of a mile from the old house I happened to spot a clearing that looked as if it might have possibilities, so I parked the car and got out. Picking up my equipment I started toward it. It was a pretty little spot, a grassy knoll flanked on one side by a clump of young white birch. To the right of the knoll was a maple which was just beginning to don autumn's colors.

Here, I thought to myself, is my scene. I hoped to work fast enough on the rough outline so that I could catch the colors as the sun was setting. I swiftly outlined the hill and the trees. As I worked I noticed a particularly intriguing shadow just back of the smaller tree, obviously a composite of the tree's shadow and the color of the sunset.

After I got the rough outline drawn, my fingers worked automatically, blending in the colors and shadows. My mind wandered to its usual subject, Wheeler and his strange actions. Why had he become so obsessed by this idea; was he really beginning to lose his mind?

I was brought back to earth by the realization that the sun had set and my light was fast waning. When I focused my attention on the picture I was doing, I was utterly amazed to find that I had unconsciously distorted the purple shadow behind the maple tree. Where the shadow had been I had sketched a girl—a girl in a lavender dress!

I stared at the picture with a feeling of abhorrence as if I had created a monster. Obviously I, too, was becoming obsessed with this delusion. Deciding it was time to halt my work, I started packing up my gear. Suddenly I heard a cry.

It was Wheeler. He was calling to someone, pleading with whoever it was to stop. I ran toward the sound of his voice. Just as I neared the road I saw him running; he was headed for the road, oblivious of an oncoming car.

When I got to him, it was too late to help him. I knelt beside him and lifted his head into my lap. He opened his eyes and grimaced.

"Did you see her? She was there, but she wouldn't wait for me."

That was all he said. And, as I said earlier, no one knew but me about this phantom he was chasing. The police assumed he was blinded by the car's headlights. And of course they saw nothing

unusual in the fact that the driver of the car was the old man who lived in the house around the turn—the girl's father. He had been returning home and failed to see the figure dart in front of him.

Before the police got there, I noticed that Wheeler had something clutched in his hand. I opened his fingers gently: between them was a scrap of lavender material.

The Sag

Keith Shields

THE SMALL man with the dark goatee and the bald lines cutting into his hair above either temple sat alone at the round-topped table with only a lighted candle to see by.

On a piece of unlined and crumpled paper he wrote:

"Wherein lies the joy of life?

That I should hurt so?

That sunsets say more to color-blind alleycats than they do to the great bearded me?

That the guitar and the horn should win while the human voice does nothing, man, nothing?

That the flaming red billows of hair in the golden sunlight should mean less than the hard red knot of ashes sucked at the opposite end in the darkness of a damp-walled lair?

That the smell of pot should grapple with my guts while I miss the grey-river dawn scent coming in my waterfront window as cool as an angel?

But what are angels to the saintly Us? They are superfluous. They are a dime a greasy dozen.

Yet, wherein lies the joy of life?

O Headless Heaven! Lead me far and wider in my wanderings! Extinguish my sorrows in the stench of side-streets, the garbage of gurgling gutters."

The little man got up to leave the cafe, and he hung the sheet of paper with writing on it on a hook labeled "POETRY." His vacation would be over tomorrow. He would shave off the beard and say good morning everymorning to everyone he met everyday for the next fifty weeks.

Bank telling wasn't such a terrible occupation. He could always look forward to the next vacation and its two-week bender.

"Ya Gotta Match?"

Sue Winger

THE OLD man, muttering unintelligibly beneath his breath climbed shakily into the bus, the knuckles of his puffy hand white as he tightly clutched the bar on the door. His whole body quivered, as though he were palsied, and it was with extreme difficulty that he extricated a crumpled ticket from his pocket to give to the driver. A battered hat, nondescript in color, partially covered his face; an ill-fitting, threadbare jacket, which appeared to have been plaid at one time, and a pair of baggy trousers clung abjectly to his stooped figure. He carried no baggage.

Tremulously, he swayed down the aisle, inadvertently stumbling against seats along the way, scuffling his poorly-clad feet along the floor—an almost grotesque figure. About midway the length of the bus, he lurched sideways and settled himself in a seat next to the window, giving at the same time a wheezing sigh. As though from habit, he folded his hands in his lap—soft, swollen hands, mushroom-like, useless.

Several other people entered the bus and, choosing seats at random, hardly noticed the huddled figure by the window. The old man peered about with eyes that were only faintly curious. At last the driver started the engine with a roar; the wheels began to roll, and the roar became a low throbbing.

The passengers settled back. The old man, however, groped inside his frayed jacket with a trembling hand and pulled out a solitary cigarette. Laying it on the seat beside him, he searched his jacket again, this time more frantically, and then the pockets of his trousers, but he found nothing. Weak from the effort, he slumped back in a little heap and looked about. His fingers twitched spasmodically. He merely sat for a moment, and then he leaned toward the stylishly dressed couple diagonally across the aisle.

"Hey . . . hey. Ya' got a match?" The face bore a striking resemblance to the hands—soft and puffy, like a mushroom. The little eyes were deeply embedded in circles of flesh, and the nose, like the brim of his hat, seemed shapeless. There was a peculiar childlikeness about the face, an innocence springing not from inexperience or purity, but from emptiness, from a blankness of mind.

The woman, who was seated next to the aisle, shrank back noticeably. Frowning at such an indelicate intrusion, the man placed a protective arm about his wife and said gruffly, "We have no match. We have nothing to give you."

Whatever gleam or lustre there had been in the eyes of the old man seemed suddenly clouded. There was only a dullness, and perhaps a memory in his brain of the others who hadn't had anything to give, as he repeated, "Ya' got a match? Ya' . . . got . . ."

Aficionados

Jessie H. Cochran

I didn't want to go.

"The Plaza de Toros in Mexico City seats forty-seven thousand," my husband read from his ever-present guide book. "Legal admission prices vary from a few pennies to five hundred dollars."

"How much did you pay for ours?"

"To tell you the truth I'm not quite sure, but it wasn't five hundred dollars because we don't have that much. Here, let me see."

He took out his great fat wad of peso notes and began to count up.

"Never mind," I said quickly. He was likely to do his figuring aloud and I do not, or will not, as he prefers to put it, understand rates of exchange. "Forty-seven thousand blood-thirsty savages. They ought to have an S.P.C.A. down here. The poor bulls! They don't stand a chance."

I have a great love for all animals, including bulls, and have to think of something else when I eat a steak. I didn't want to see a bullfight. Senseless slaughter. And, too, I had once started "Death in the Afternoon" and had become so annoyed at Hemingway's high-handed attitude toward the tender-hearted that I couldn't finish it. I had hated his way of becoming one with the Spanish peons, when I imagined they were sniggering at him behind his back. Wait till you're asked to join the club, I had thought.

"I'll tell you what," Dick said, laying aside the book. "We'll go, but the minute you get sick we'll leave. I promise. Okay?"

So at 3:30 we were hailing a cab in front of the hotel. As usual, the driver turned to me on the assumption I was a Mexican (and with the usual little leer that suggested I was Dick's Mexican "amiga") but Dick cried out "A la Plaza de toros" in the peculiar Chinese sing-song he reserves for any foreign language, and we were off.

The first thing I noticed was that I shouldn't have worn high heels. We walked miles through the tremendous crowds of shoving, brawling Mexicans and staggered down the almost vertical precipice of seats to our own, which were down near the railing. Down so close and on the shady side of the bullring looked like too much money to me, but I let it pass.

"Good Lord, look at that!" Dick exclaimed, pointing. In the center of the bullring was a giant replica of a Pepsi-Cola bottle. "No wonder they resent us."

"Colorful old world pageantry," I said. I didn't like it already. Next to me were a group of Mexican men, dressed in festive white suits, passing around a pigskin full of tequila. The game seemed to be to see who could hold it farthest away from his mouth and aim the squirt accurately. The suits were becoming less and less white,

and I sensed trouble because Mexicans are notoriously bad at holding their whiskey. The Indian blood, I suppose.

High up on the other side of the arena the band started playing. It sounded like a New Orleans jazz band being led by a circus conductor but it was somehow thrilling. A group of men came and pulled away the Pepsi-Cola bottle, with much jeering from the crowd. The band switched its themes in mid-tune, the big gates directly opposite us swung open, and the parade of bullfighters entered. It was impressive, I had to admit. Matadors are surely the most beautiful of men, and the most arrogant. They swept grandly around the ring, keeping a stately pace, followed by their banderilleros and mounted picadors. Bringing up the rear were the chulos driving three mule teams.

"Cuadrillas," said the Mexican to my right, chattily. "Is named cuadrillas."

He hadn't missed that Dick and I were speaking in English to one another. Wanting to present the best possible front for the United States I smiled and said, "Is pretty. Bueno. Lindo." We beamed and nodded at each other. All but one of the cuadrillas left the ring and the band fell silent. It was about to begin, and I tensed myself.

With a mighty roar the bull was released into the ring, and he looked like black death. A strange wave of wild, fierce emotion swept through me, almost impossible to describe. This wasn't the picturesque, humped Brahmas of my childhood; this was evil, black evil. He galloped thunderously around the ring, his roar sounding as if he were in a cave; it had a weird, echoing quality about it. I hadn't counted on the bull being cruel. I thought, "The bull is cruel, vicious; he *should* be killed." He wasn't goaded, he was looking for trouble.

I have always had a deep distrust of any sort of mob violence. It is incomprehensible to me. I dislike reading about war; my loathing for it contains an element of personal horror, not so much at the slaughter but at the massive, violent emotion that makes the slaughter possible. I have difficulty cheering home teams. I do not care which side wins. I stay out of clubs not only because I am abjectly bad at working for an organization but because I intensely dislike it. My loyalty is always to the individual, and I know I carry it to idiotic extremes but I can't help it.

So there is no way to explain how I felt, except atavism. The crouching jungle of racial memory reached up and clawed me down and I hated the bull and loved the matador. He was brave, he was young, and he was immensely beautiful. His suit of lights was no longer childish but was suddenly the only thing he could have worn; it was a daring way to dress when face to face with death. I remembered primitive drawings of bulls on the walls of caves, drawn more delicately and with greater care than any other animal pictured. Why. The symbol of fertility, perhaps, but why should fertility be

at once terrifying and awe-inspiring? Is the great, black, snorting, pawing bull of the bullring a symbol of our own terrible need, our own drive, and just this once, perhaps, we may kill it, may lay the demon of our instinct? I would not, like Hemingway, call the bull brave. The matador was brave; the bull was pure. Whatever he was, he was purely that.

As the banderillas were placed, with much danger, the crowd rose to its feet shouting "Ole!" I rose with them, screaming with the rest. Far above us a bugle sounded, proudly clear.

"Ahora," said my Mexican friend, "el matador."

The matador swung his cape at the bull, and the picadors moved into the ring, their horses wearing quilted mattresses. At once the bull swung into the horses, using his horns. I screamed softly and the Mexican, looking concerned, passed me the skin of tequila. I drank gratefully, and all along the row of seats brown faces nodded and smiled at me. I was being as bad as Hemingway.

"Is okay," said the Mexican. "Horse okay."

And so he was. I noticed then he was wearing blinders, and couldn't even see the bull. Another trumpet call sounded, signalling the kill, the Hour of Truth. The matador walked sedately, ramrod straight, to a box at the right of us and removed his hat, bowing. Then he tossed it lightly to a girl in the box and turned to face the bull who awaited him, head downthrust, across the ring. The matador strode to the center, stamped in the sand, and grunted "Ah! Ah! Toro!" Over the short little sword used for the kill he swung his cape. The arena was absolutely quiet. The matador's words came quite clear through the chilly afternoon air, though he spoke softly and to the bull alone. The bull charged. Not so fast, not with the rapacious avidity he had displayed earlier, but with a deadliness that could not be mistaken. It was man or bull, it was good or evil. Someone was going to be killed. There is no use writing about it, because it can never be explained. It is not a bull who is to be killed, it is an abstract: I say it is pure evil. It is not a man who will, perhaps, kill him, or be killed trying, it is bravery. It is not a crowd of Mexicans, mostly drunk, watching; it is humanity. The phrase nearest it is Hour of Truth, and this does not explain.

Twice the bull passed under the cape. The matador moved his hips ever so gently to one side; his feet in the little effeminate ballet shoes did not move. A great surging shout came from the crowd. A third time the bull backed off, head lowered. He no longer bellowed. His lumbering hoofbeats thudded loudly in the sand. He was coming straight for the matador, who did not move. As the horns grazed his side the sword, free now of the cape, flashed momentarily in the sun and then was plunged into the hump of the bull. He staggered, his front legs gave way and he dropped, ever so slowly; dead. There was very little blood.

As the chulos and the mules came to cart away the carcass, the band struck up again, the matador strutted around the ring and we

shook hands with our Mexican friends, triumphant. There were five more bulls to be killed and we settled back in our seats, true aficionados.

Cows Don't Pull Wagons

Toni Aberson

MILKING cows is honest work, I said; after all, cows have to be milked. And so I milked cows and laughed at my sticky hands and rubbed my toes through the pasture grass. But then I heard I had a mission in life. I heard I owed a debt to the world. I was supposed to look up to the stars and hitch my wagon and, they said, cows don't pull wagons.

So I put on my shoes and went to a teaparty and ate little cookies because these were "nice" and learned about neuralgia and gentility and was called "My dear!" But all the time I thought about the kitchen maid peeling lemons and I saw long-haired, pink-ribboned Tabby sneak out to rub fur with Mrs. Petty's tom.

So I pulled my hair into a chignon and went to a coffee break and drank coffee to "keep me going." They called me T.A. and we talked about plane flights and ticker tapes, and long scarlet fingernails always clicked on desks or typewriter keys and I left there too after stopping to talk with the janitor about the best time to plant asters.

Finally, I went to a vodka blast where nobody knew anyone's name and they called me doll and baby and leaned heavily on my shoulder and close to my face while they talked about futility.

And now I want to know—since cows don't pull wagons, who will milk cows?

BY A SLEEPING CHILD

Ah, sweet he lies; his tiny bed
Walls him from the world of lead:
Where his hateful brothers sneer,
And no sister sheds a tear.

I sorrow for the soul that breaks
When innocence is lost.—He wakes!
Into his merry eyes I stare,
And see the lizards lounging there.

—ROBERT MERRIX

Solitude

Bob Worth

HENRY DAVID THOREAU once wrote, "If the day and night are such that you greet them with joy, and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more immortal,—that is your success." Perhaps it was in search of this type of success that Thoreau retired to his now famous retreat "Walden." Today, some look upon him as somewhat of an eccentric. This he may have been, but also he was an exemplification of a trait residual in every human soul. Every man, no matter how successful he may be, must have his "Walden." Deep inside, all of us possess some of the feeling expressed above by Thoreau. God did not create man as an entity by himself, but as an integral part of a vast, interrelated universe. Thus, all of us must occasionally step out of our lethargic daily routine and consider the events of life in an order and purpose in existence.

This desire has manifested itself in my own personality as a sort of unquenchable thirst. I seemed to feel that the events which took place around me were shallow and meaningless. Consequently, I began to search for a solution, and then it was that I came upon a spot that has come to be a sanctuary in which I may take refuge in disappointment of confusion. Like many of the best things in life, it seems quite ordinary to eyes not initiated into its secrets and beauty. Its charm springs from two qualities, each becoming increasingly rare these days—seclusion and serenity. Were these its *only* attraction, it would still be an invaluable possession in a world fraught with dissension and anxiety, but surpassing these attributes is the fact that at least one can observe nature, not as man has altered and distorted her, but as God originally created her.

Perhaps the most magnificent and rewarding time for a visit is in the evening. As the sun sets, it flushes the clouds with a hue that foils description, and, with the coming of evening, a certain eternalness pervades the hour. Indeed, it is as if the tide of time has dropped us for a moment on the beach of immortality before sweeping us once more into the turbulent sea of life. One experiences thoughts akin to those of Emerson when he wrote, ". . . that for all the poetry that is in the world your first sensation on entering a wood or standing on the shore of a lake has not been chanted yet."

The old road winds timidly through the copse like a warm, brown intruder in a swaying, fluttering labyrinth of cool green. Emerging from the trees, it boldly circumvents a field of tall corn and passes finally by an abandoned gravel pit. The pit is nearly dry and the water is honeycombed with many tiny islands and peninsulas. At the tip of perhaps the largest of the peninsulas is a sun-hardened mound of earth, ideally suited as a stool. As one walks here, he hears the numerous tiny splashes made by frogs fleeing from

a heavy-footed intruder. The farther he walks, the more he is overwhelmed by a feeling of tranquility, isolation, and utter satisfaction. All around can be seen evidences of nature in her most quaint yet breathtaking guise. The killdeer's tip and bob in the shallow water, the swallows wheel overhead, and all around are heard the warm, pulsating sounds of summer. Peace and contentment almost tangible in its completeness settles upon the beholder of this vast, magnificent pageant.

In every form of human expression—art, music, sculpture, literature—there is something missing. Inspiring as they may be, they are subject to mortal limitations. Only in the cathedral of the outdoors can one experience the grandeur of God and the pure ecstasy of human existence.

Fenstermacher's Music School

Ruth Myer

IN LOOKING back I can recall no specific event, no definite time, no clear-cut emotional experience toward which I might gesture and say that it was the turning point. My dislike for Fenstermacher's Music School must have come over me so gradually, so subtly, that memory failed even to record the date when this dislike changed to utter loathing.

The Fenstermacher's I remember from my student days was an underground establishment. Although I understand the school has since moved to more fashionable quarters, in those days its clientele was obliged to reach it by descending the back stairs of a dusty music shop. As one moved downward on this creaking apparatus, the foul air and roar of the city's streets would give way to the fouler air and more strident roar of Fenstermacher's. Here confusion sat enthroned. More often than not, the small lobby had been invaded by a class of baton twirlers whose shiny sticks—frequently out of control—rebounded off wall, ceiling, and student. If the lobby happened to be unused, one could sit on the folding chairs and gaze at the yellowed magazine prints of singers liberally besprinkled on Fenstermacher's walls to hide their peeling yellow paint and chipped plaster. About the room would recline the standard array of Fenstermacher students and their mothers—usually mute and always expressionless. Around these individuals the sounds and smells of the school boiled and surged continuously. From 10:00 A. M. to 10:00 P. M. the voices of drums, pianos, violins, accordions, organs, trumpets, trombones, and electric guitars blared, ground, grated, and whined incessantly forth from each studio. Lest the suffering client yet remain patient under these tortures to eye and ear, Fenstermacher's instructors liberally spiked the atmosphere with a high concentration of reeking pipe and cigarette fumes.

I do not know why I did not rebel sooner. One evening I turned

my back on Fenstermacher's forever. Perhaps the unshaded light bulbs, hung starkly from their ceiling cords, had glared at me once too often. Perhaps the water cooler was empty one time too many. It may be that the filthy linoleum was uncommonly unbearable. Whatever my reasons were, I found that my decision to leave brought great relief. I ascended that night into a smoke-blackened city whose streets were swept with rain; but my heart was filled with sunshine.

"English As She's Not Taught"

Bill Duff

IN APPROACHING the problem of deriving clear meaning in English, Barzun states that the principle of mental discipline should be made clear to every beginner, child or adult. However, he adds, the schools make writing an irrational chore approached in the mood of rebellion by requiring length and concentrating on correctness.

How right he is! I could not agree more.

In the primary grades the student realizes, with a rude shock, that he not only has to learn to read reading, but also to read writing and write reading. The extent of this disciplined education stops, however, with the firm differentiation between making neat circles on lined white paper and informing the world that "Herman is a rat" on the rest-room wall.

Other attempts of self-expression are sterilized by bringing to his attention mistakes of grammar, punctuation and spelling in a confiscated love letter written in secret code.

This conflict between teacher and student develops into a struggle to get all of the requirements of an assignment fulfilled without the student's invoking the Fifth Amendment. The student tries to avoid this because invoking the Fifth Amendment requires the use of only nineteen words, and he knows that it is best, when you do not know much, to say a lot.

What view could the student develop other than that compositions are like a bolt of cloth: to be reeled off in the required length? The fact that the cloth contains no pattern or originality is to be expected. This eliminates the need of any effort on the part of the teacher to judge the material with any but the accepted academic scale.

The ability to rapidly throw up a wall of words to hide ignorance stands the student in good stead in later life.

In college he observes that the objective test is apparently graded by the difference in weight between a new blue book and one to which lead has been applied. If you do not comprehend what the professor wants, give him enough wordage, and he can find his own answer.

Outside in the jungle, the graduate advocates the proposition that a prolific use of words is supposed to indicate a degree of intelligence—thus perpetuating a vicious circle.

The Beach

Marilyn Quillen

CLOSE your eyes and picture a lonely beach. Relax and allow your mind to wander, touching here and there for an instant, but not settling on a definite image. Think, to yourself, of utter peace, and your mind will begin, of its own accord, to assimilate more concrete ideas of this lonely, lovely place. In my own reverie this is more of a state of mind than an actual picture, yet, at the same time, it is a definite place.

Stretching before me for miles is nothing but sand, air, and sea. The land curves gently out to my left, out into the ocean. Somewhere there is a point, obscured by the ocean spray, which is the land's furthestmost penetration into the sea. I am walking slowly toward that point, with no sense of urgency, for I know that ultimately I will reach it. My approach disturbs the denizens of the air, causing them to wheel and dip with raucous cries, only to settle farther on down the beach. Unmeaningly I drive the gulls before me until the border of their particular part of beach is reached, and they double back over my head, far beyond my reach. The air is fresh with a tang of salt that is good, and the wind is the essence of this thing, this feeling of peace.

The beach almost assumes the identity of a person, so varied are her moods. In the early morning she basks in the sunlight as one lies abed upon first awakening, deliciously contemplating the forthcoming day. Then the beach is suffused in a sort of golden light, and pillars of clouds are mirrored in the still water. Her mood then is passive, awaiting the middle of the day when everything takes on an intensity. The water becomes restless as the tides come in; the air loses its golden tint and heat waves dance endlessly off into the distance. As noon passes into evening, everything seems refreshed. The breeze from the water comes alive once more, speeding the message of approaching twilight. On many such days the beach is a friendly place—indeed, a friend.

Everyone has a place in which his thoughts must be pondered, and the beach is such a place for me. Mundane things are brushed away as easily as grains of sand. There I am at peace.

"Teen-age"—The Term

J. C. Urlain

I WAS twelve and impressed—or rather, astonished. Turkey: my mind pictured it. Boys, my age, walking the streets with winsome harems and corpulent children—their own! An incredible spectacle.

My Sunday school teacher: my mind goes back to him. We met in winter, on a Sunday. My hand was hot and wet and limp; we shook hands. He said, "You are a man now. Shake like a man." But I was only twelve. "In Turkey they are married and have responsibilities by twelve. You are a man; and I will treat you like a man."

He did.

He was a dynamic man. He was a Carnegie man. As soon as someone would walk through a door, he would grab his arm and tell him how nice his tie looked—even if it was a drab olive and had noodle soup spilt over it. He had been a salesman: he sold Bibles. He would knock at someone's house and show the family where the Bible predicted the automobile. The people bought. He was a dynamic man.

His dynamics brainwashed me: to me Turkey had the right idea. I even considered giving up Little League. Too Juvenile. At twelve they were married in Turkey. I was astonished.

Now I am mature: I am eighteen years of age. I am not as susceptible to dynamics as I was at twelve; and my attitude has changed: let the fools get married at twelve and have responsibilities. I shall probably remain a bachelor; and people will whisper when I pass them on the street, "My, he is over thirty. I wonder why he never married. Does he drink?"

As you have probably guessed, I have never reached manhood, which fact speaks rather deprecatingly of the efforts of Sunday school teachers and Turkish precocity. I am what is termed a "teen-ager."

I have always abhorred the term "teen-ager." It reeks of middle-class dullness. It is a term that skips over the rough surfaces of individuality and glides complacently over the smooth facets of conformity. To think that everyone within a certain age group can be defined by one single term is abominable—at least to me. It is a term that ordinary people use when talking about ordinary "young people." "My daughter is a typical 'teen-ager'," a proud, dull housewife tells her neighbor. "Stop, you thievin' teen-ager," an irate grocery man yells after a figure retreating into an alley.

Just what do people mean when they use the term "teen-ager?" What connotation do the majority of people attach to the word? Before I give my conception of the present-day meaning of the term, I must first state that by "people" I mean those of the human race who have sufficiently accumulated enough adult responsibility to want to disparage the juvenility of younger thinking. This category does not include all adults, just as "teen-ager," as used today, does not include all of those in their teens.

Recently, I met a man, a grocer—or, more properly, a fruit salesman. He has an accent, which is nothing unusual for fruit salesmen. But I have trouble understanding a person with an accent

and am fortunate if I decipher one half of his speech. Put a cigar in his mouth and my ciphering score drops to one fourth.

My friend the grocer smoked cigars—big black ones; he was almost incomprehensible to me. So I let him do the talking while I smiled knowingly. After a while he stopped, took his cigar out of his mouth, and said: "You don't believe me, do ya? God, I wish I could take ya around and show ya some stuff. You don't know people. Son—God, I wish I could take ya around."

"God, I wish I could take you around." I was young. I was inexperienced. Mr. Cate, the fruit salesman, told me as much. Inexperienced. To be a "teen-ager," this is the first qualification—to be inexperienced. But one may say, I think that the teen-ager of today is too experienced. He has too much freedom and time to become experienced in. But what this person actually is saying is this: the modern teen-ager is one who, in his inexperience, is susceptible to temptation. This is the second qualification to be a "teen-ager"—to be susceptible to temptation.

While a youngster is in his pre-teens, he is often thought to be too young to fall prey to grave temptation. But as he enters his teens, Satan beckons. The odd fellow with the pitch fork becomes public enemy number one. And he has help: the automobile, the liquor, the pretty girl with the pony-tail. Life becomes a complexity of temptation for the teen-ager, and if he reaches twenty without mishap, he is one out of many.

Therefore, I think that when people speak of the "teen-ager," they mean a person between the ages of thirteen and nineteen who is so inexperienced that he is amenable to temptation—a person who is much more inexperienced and amenable than anyone in any other age group. This is what the "people" mean. "People" who speak of the "reckless teen-ager," "the impolite teen-ager," "the 'thankless' teen-ager." People who speak not of the bright teen-ager, but of the bright youth; not the promising teen-ager, but the promising youth; not the gentlemanly teen-ager, but the gentlemanly youth. The term "youth" seems to represent good qualities; the term "teen-ager," bad qualities.

I do not say that the above always holds true. I do say, however, that the above connotations are predominant ones for the terms. This should not be so. Since the term "teen-ager" is applied to a certain age group, and since it has the connotations of inexperience and temptation, all persons in this age group are thought to be inexperienced and temptable. The term has reached that stage of hypocrisy in which it can damn a group and still remain uncensored.

When people can judge a person's works and acts, not by the age at which their deviser accomplishes them but by their innate quality, they will have come a long way. I am waiting for the day when people cease to gasp at Grandma Moses.

Let's Purge the Augean Stables!

Karen Wagner

THE over-emphasis on and the misuse of intercollegiate athletics have plagued higher education for many years. In spite of the protests of faculty members and administrators, in spite of "sanity codes" and other attempted reforms, this plague still remains. It seems no longer possible or reasonable to conduct college sports on an amateur basis. Many people feel that an amateur is no longer qualified to participate in college athletics. Oftentimes the colleges themselves are more interested in a winning football team than in setting and keeping high academic standards in the field of education. Colleges have taken drastic measures in order to recruit the best athletes. Colleges offer the athlete what he needs in room, board, tuition and fees, books, supplies, and some miscellaneous items. Oftentimes the boys are offered a weekly or monthly allowance or the use of a car. Athletes are given private tutors, special help on their lessons, help to get a summer job, and money if a certain game is won.

Harold W. Stoke, in his essay, "College Athletics," suggests that universities hire professional athletes to represent them in intercollegiate competition. In this way the athletic activities of the college would no longer interfere with the students' academic career. However, many universities, as well as students, protest the hiring of professionals. They feel that this would be unfair to the students who are on the teams as well as to the students who like to watch their classmates play ball. Students, as well as faculty members, do not want the athletics of the school to be separated from the school. When a game is won, students and faculty members like to say that the best player is attending the college with which they are associated.

It has also been suggested that all athletic scholarships be taken out of the hands of alumni groups. Alumni, anxious to win athletic events at any price, are more prone to offer Cadillacs to the player than to see that he gets an education. Every athlete should be required to progress toward a degree. If the boy is interested only in playing football and not in getting an education, he should not be in college. The penalties imposed on boys who offer themselves to the highest bidder should be made more strict. A rule should be passed that suspends the offending athlete, as well as the college guilty of unscrupulous recruiting. A student is going to think twice before attempting to break the rule.

Institutions of higher education must become and remain, first and foremost, places of teaching, study, and research. Athletics are important, but in a lesser degree than the fundamental activities of a center of learning. Accrediting agencies must take a greater interest in athletic policies of colleges. The Association of American Colleges, the American Association of University Professors, and other inter-

ested organizations should bring moral pressure to bear upon the situation in order to remedy the glaring evil in higher education.

A FORTRESS DIVINE

The heart pulses and thrills
At its sight:
Nowhere in the world
Can anything be so fair,
For it *is* the world;
It is fairer than the sun,
Yet it *is* the sun;
It is fairer than the sky,
Yet it *is* the sky . . .
And the rose and the tree
And the rolling lawn.

In it I see a dove,
Slow and at the same time swift,
Innocent yet somehow knowing,
Priceless . . .
So precious that one dare not clutch,
Dare not hold too fast
For fear of smothering it,
Choking it out . . .
When present sadness and joy suffuse
The soul,
The feet run and skip and hop
. . . . or they freeze to the earth
Unable to move.

Next to its blaze,
Sunsets lack in color.
Some die for it,
But I would rather live for it
And in living
Exalt it.

Blessed be the man
Who knows
Yet would not speak of it
To those who know not,
For they would think him insane . . .
He who is the sane one,
They who are the dead.

How can I tell you,
 I, who am so young?
 How would I know . . .
 Is not my mind as clear glass to yours?
Nevertheless I claim to have seen and known . . .
To see and know
The most beautiful thing in this world.

If it be false
It is a thousand times cursed.
 If it be genuine
It is a thousand times blessed.
Have you never known
Love?

—LEDONNA BOUKES

I Couldn't Call

Sandra Cheney

IT'S A beautiful Saturday night. Snowflakes pepper the windows and melt almost instantly. The earth looks white and fluffy like a chocolate cake with white frosting. Outside the trees glisten mysteriously. Sleek cars slide by on glassy streets! The world is as silent as the fieldhouse an hour after the game.

Last Thursday was a night just like tonight. After our victory over Podunk Center, the fellas and I called the evening quits by celebrating over cherry cokes and pretzels. We had finally beaten Podunk. It was a close one. The coach used me throughout the game 'cause two of the regular players were ill. Everyone said that I played a terrific game. I tried to play my very best because I knew she would be watching.

She was there! I hoped she would be impressed by me. I sighted her immediately in the midst of the crowd. She always looks like a doll. I can tell she brushes her hair a lot. It always looks so shiny and fluffy as it lies softly on her shoulders. She's about the best dressed girl in the whole school, too. Maybe she noticed that I played a lot in this game.

The fellas thought I was out of it 'cause I didn't want to hash over the game, so they left. I was too excited to hit the hay so I decided to go skating. She might be there; that's why I wanted to go. I had put on my new red wool ivy leagues that Mom bought the other day. They'll feel good, I thought, 'cause it's almost a mile to the old shanty, and the winter wind can nip like a playful pup. I couldn't find my red ear muffs, so I had borrowed Dad's Sunday-best wool neck-scarf. I knew I would be home before he was; I pulled it tighter around my neck.

Hustling down the sidewalk, I felt the ashes crunch beneath my feet. It's a good thing the ashes were there or I'd have slipped for sure. Mom always cautioned me to take it easy. "You'll go pell-mell," she said. "Someday you'll get hurt rushing across the streets without looking. When you have your mind on something, you don't see or hear."

Mom was right; I had only one thing on my mind and that was to hurry-hurry. I wanted to see her if she was at the shanty. That's where I first saw her! She's a real dream. I had known other girls before, but they were never like her. I know you think I'm kind of dumb 'cause I'd known her for almost a month, but I had never even spoken to her. I guess I was afraid I wouldn't say the right thing.

I was worn out when I finally reached the shanty. The place isn't so neat looking, but it is friendly and just tops for skating. I guess that's all that matters anyway. I looked all around but couldn't find her anywhere, so I just skated around and around. Then I saw some of the fellas. Everybody was having fun.

Then—she came in! She glistened all over; her hair, eyelashes, and eyebrows were covered with tiny flakes of snow. Even her nose, a little red, looked cute. It matched her bright red car coat and earmuffs. Her skates, flung over her shoulder, swung back and forth with every move. She paused at the door as if looking for someone, and then I saw her wave at a girl friend. I was glad it wasn't a boy. I watched her change from her dripping shoes into her ice skates. I wanted to help her, but I knew it wasn't the opportune time. Then I saw her glide onto the ice with the gracefulness of an angel. I felt jittery inside. I had already had one break tonight; I had played a winning game. This was my lucky night, and I had to make it two in a row. I skated right up to her although my heart was pounding like a hundred congo drums beaten by wild natives. I slipped my arm around her waist. She felt so warm and close. She just said "Hi" in her soft, kind voice. I asked if I might skate the rest of the evening with her. We talked and talked. I don't remember what we said. She felt so close now; before she had been so far away. In my heart I could almost call her mine, but she hardly knew me. She would never know how long I had noticed her. She just skated 'round and 'round and laughed and talked. Pretty soon we were laughing all the time and at nothing at all.

* * * * *

She thought it had stopped snowing—I really wanted to have her alone awhile—so I said, "Let's find out." We went outside and I pushed her gently onto a snowbank. She sat there on the snowbank along the pond. I threw a handful of snow at her. It landed on her head in a soft white mist. She laughed and I leaned over to brush it off. Her big, brown eyes looked into mine; I felt warm all over!

Then I said, "We'd better start home." I hurried back into the

shanty to get her shoes and put them on her tiny feet. I remember that, as I came out of the shanty, her face was all aglow and her eyes still sparkled in the moonlight.

We started to her house, her hand so warm in mine. She laughed and talked as we trod through the icy snow. The night was so still. When we reached her house and were standing at her door, her eyes looked into mine and mine into hers. I said, "I'll call you," and then we said good-by. I don't know what else happened that winter night—I just woke up a few hours ago.

As I lie in this hospital and look out upon another beautiful winter eve, such as it was only two nights ago, I realize that I shall never have the chance to call and tell her how I feel about her. Mom and Dad and Doc are afraid to tell me that I have only a few hours to live, but—I know.

Reaction of the Distaff Side to Mr. Wylie's Essay

("Science Has Spoiled My Supper")

Frances Baird

MR. WYLIE, I admire your scientific interest, education and background. You are an integral part of that world of science and knowledge that has made possible those controversial modern foods and their eye-appeal packing. But let's not rationalize, Mr. Wylie: it was not science that spoiled your supper. Science was only the tool in the hands of the real culprit, woman.

As one gourmet to another, your reflections on the foods from the era of our (we are contemporaries) "Momism" reactivated taste buds that had long lain dormant. The mention of jam, particularly, called to my mind the incomparable goodness of real apple butter. Did you, Mr. Wylie, ever have real apple butter? The kind that is short on beautiful, smooth texture and exciting color, but oh, so filled with a wealth of the flavor of freshly picked apples and unrefined spices? The kind that makes it a sacrilege to call the canned stuff on the super-market shelves by the same name? You did? But did you ever have to rise at dawn, gather apples—bushel baskets full of them—sort them, wash them, peel them, quarter them and, added insult, wash them again? Did you ever have to carry arm loads of wood to keep the fire at the correct temperature for constant simmering? (Of course, Mr. Wylie, I don't doubt that you realize that food cooked on a good, old-fashioned wood stove has an immeasurably superior flavor to that cooked with gas or electricity.) And do you remember those delicious little noises made by those millions of tiny bubbles breaking the surface as that wonderful concoction, in those enormous kettles, slowly and aromatically became apple butter, perfect apple butter, the kind you haven't tasted since?

Let me remind you, Mr. Wylie, while you drool, that this was an all-day job, with time taken out only for the small, incidental task of preparing the regular three meals expected, as usual, by the man of the house. The fact that the man of the house was most often a "Life with Father" kind of man merely, I suppose, offered an extra touch of excitement and a greater challenge to the woman in the kitchen.

That woman, Mr. Wylie, is your culprit. The same one whose culinary skills you so ardently extol eventually came to realize that the game wasn't worth the candle. She rebelled. In rebellion she found her strength lay in alliance with science which, as you so ably pointed out, is applied honesty in search of truth. Now the truth is that we can eat with our eyes. Witness, as an example, the still great number of over-weight men and the fast diminishing number of over-weight women. The former still relish food, modern or not, and the latter no longer find it necessary to taste while cooking to assure the indomitable male a palatable meal.

In short, Mr. Wylie, woman has asserted her right to live a little too, and her first step toward that goal had to be out of the kitchen. I'm afraid your call to insurrection is a bit late, thank Heaven.

Another Life

Judie Penny

IF I WERE a Hindu and still believed in reincarnation, I would not be too concerned about terminating this life and beginning anew in a different form. I am not convinced that the life of a *homo sapiens* is the best. In reality we are weak creatures, ill prepared for existence—we are susceptible to disease (the strongest are no longer the ones that survive), have no natural protection from the elements, such as fur or feathers, cannot sleep through cold or adverse months. Our highly developed mind with the ability to reason abstractly supposedly has made up for our frailness, but is this true? Is not a mind often a burden? How many people have committed suicide or have gone insane because they could not bear the weight of their thoughts? Also the origin of much sickness is in the mind. Because we are gregarious and thinking animals, we have set up certain behavior patterns to be followed to the letter (Emily Post incorporated); that these "rules of order" may be unnatural seems to be of no concern. One soon realizes that man is the least free of the warm-blooded creatures here on Earth. If I had my life to live over, I would be born something wild and free, without care or concern.

Because I'm partial, I might choose to be a crow in my next life, although the form of a snake, racoon, mouse, cat, or deer would do as well. With luck, I would be born in a tall oak, safe from other birds of prey, small boys, and hunters. From the time I pecked my

way through the shell of my egg until I was cocky enough to fly away on my own, I would be fed and cared for by my parents (in fact they would push the food down my gullet). When I tired of such dependence, I would fend for myself with no attachment to my parent crows (they had raised me because it was the natural thing to do and no more). Upon reaching maturity, I would choose for a mate the strongest and most handsome bird that strutted before me, and that would be it. There would be no parrying as to age, wealth, race, religion, or blood type. It would then be my turn to raise a family or six families as the length of my life permitted. There would be no question of keeping my mate interested in myself (the "husband" need only be for one season); it would make no difference at all as long as more crows got born. When I grew old and ready to die, I would cease flying with the flock and go off somewhere to wait my approaching death—alone. I would have served my purpose in life and there would be younger crows to take my place. Life and death would have assumed their just proportion as natural things to be accepted. In this existence there would have been no questions as to God, morals, or obligations. My actions would have been guided solely by instinct and education (experience in the field).

Yes, if I had my life to live over, I would want a release from worries and unnatural restrictions. Being a "happy fool" has its advantages, for in such a state there is little restlessness or dissatisfaction; contentment in ignorance could be a blessing. Another gift I want in my next life is to be born with the ability (and to have the freedom) to see the great beauty of nature. A child has this gift and accepts with wonder the softness of a rabbit, bright colors of flowers, snow, a rainbow, fireflies. . . . After these first glimpses of nature, our eyes are closed for us and our actions influenced and hampered. It is condemned as strange if one listens to the sounds of the night, tries to hold the earth close, sees beauty and senses closeness in a cloudy day. It is believed that God made us in his own image, but generations of men have distorted that masterpiece and have brought shame to our persons. In contrast, a wild animal has been influenced only by his environment, and that has made him strong; his body still retains its clean lines, his actions retain purpose. If I had my life to live over, it would be in protest to this "civilized" existence we all so worship.

Skid Row

Dean McEldowney

IT is nearly time for the fog to pay its nocturnal visit. At about seven o'clock each evening the fog rolls in from the river, bringing with it that indescribable stench caused by the mere presence of the waterfront. A bleak-appearing four-storied tenement, with light shining from its cobweb-curtained windows, stands as a sentinel, an impotent sentinel, against the fog.

The neighborhood youngsters are still running roughshod about the vicinity, taking full advantage of the few remaining minutes to play before the fog calls an end to their recreation. One group of ragamuffins is playing hop-sotch on the cracked and buckled sidewalk. Further down the street is a gang of boys loudly protesting a decision in their stickball game. Elsewhere a number of the rebelliously inclined, hidden behind a white-washed fence pockmarked with political and religious propaganda, are stealthily smoking cigarettes. Some young entrepreneurs have gravitated over to the main dock where they attempt to panhandle coins from the evening-clothed ladies and gentlemen who have braved the district in the hope of enjoying an evening of dancing on one of the swank river boats.

The onrushing fog has nearly obscured the neighborhood. It is time for the small, long-legged waif in the faded, checked dress to make her way up the long flight of stairs to the dingy three-room suite where she, her parents, and her four brothers and sisters live. Each stair moans with weariness as her light step, not yet beaten down by the disappointments of life, touches it. She is so accustomed to the ancient building that she no longer stops to read the etchings on the walls. Initials, dates, and obscenities in several languages grace the walls as the sole remnants of generations of dwellers.

Back outside, the day-being has its place taken by the night-being. Across the street, two doors south, a woman's face, heavily made-up, peers through a nearly opaque window. She opens the door. As she emerges from the wooden shack and the harsh light from the jagged street lamp plays upon her deeply-lined face, it is easily discernible that the make-up is intended to hide several years of her obviously full life. An aura of weariness and resignation permeates her entire being. A man rounds the corner; her tired limp vanishes and she gyrates towards the oncoming prospect. They meet, talk, and . . . the omnipresent fog creeps further up the block, now enveloping an unfortunate human castaway who is softly serenading himself in the gutter. More shabby buildings, some pale yellow lights, a line laden with forgotten laundry. And the fog creeps on, travelling over the city as a blanket covers a sleeping person.

