from imbecile and love from hate, imagination can lead one upwards to the stars or cast one down into a mire of self-created sorrows. The imagination must be used in moderation, for as a drug or any medicine, too little produces no effect, and too much may be fatal, while the correct amount will bring desirable results. As in the old saw, "one must not let imagination run away with one." Used carefully and constructively and without the selfish motives of escape, rationalization or self-magnification, imagination may give man an insight of the universal truths. But the use of this faculty, held by some to be more precious than learning, must be careful. When people learn how to correctly use their imaginations to find greater truths instead of escaping truths, to find a greater knowledge and sympathetic understanding of their fellow man instead of searching for a Utopia in which to hide from reality, they will not fear the truth. People will no longer have any use for illusions, and man will not hesitate to help his brother, nor will his brother refuse his hand.

The Rains of April
Janet Newton

It is almost April again. Already the rains have begun, the heavy dark rains that send the waves crashing against the rocks. The narrow beach lies crowded between the rocks and waves; and sometimes dark green shells, reeking of the mysteries of the ocean, are washed ashore. Each time I see a shell or hear the roar of the pounding surf, I begin to remember things I have tried to forget; they come back to me still in April.

It was in April that Angie and I met for the first time—she, already at nine, tall and graceful with a promise of beauty, and I a small, awkward child with little to say. We often played on the rocks while the sea remained calm and the clouds were tired of weeping. When the waves came to life again and the skies forgot their weariness, I hastily departed for home, leaving behind a turbulent, angry sea. Angie, however, loved the stormy days and often stood on the cliffs overlooking the ocean, staring in wonder and excitement as the huge waves thundered against the shore, until there was no beach at all, only sea—everywhere the hungry, grasping sea. To Angie the sight was wild and wonderful, and she laughed at my childish fancies of watery graves.

The April we were seventeen found us once more on the rocks. The sun shone over the white beach, giving it a strange luster as if each tiny grain of sand were a pearl, stolen from caves of the deep. The sunny rocks gave off a warm, lazy heat, and the sea was calm. Yet in spite of my relief at the stillness, I felt a tiny trickle of fear inside. It was odd that there had been no storms that April. I wondered why, and a premonition of impending evil brought back my old fears. Then Angie began to speak, and, intent upon her words, I discarded my gloomy thoughts.
“Oh, Sarah!” she exclaimed, her voice filled with the note of breathlessness it always held when she was speaking of something pleasant. “This is going to be a wonderful April. I can just tell.”

“How can you tell?” I asked idly.

“Why, it hasn’t rained yet, dopey,” she teased.

At the mention of the rains, I frowned. Seeing my worried expression, Angie grinned.

“What’s the matter, Sarah?” she said. “Still afraid of watery graves?”

I flushed. “Of course not. It’s just that I have a funny feeling something is going to happen.”

“You bet something is going to happen! Oh, Sarah, I was going to wait, but I can’t.” “Sarah,” she whispered, “I’m getting married.”

I stared at her in astonishment. I had known she was serious about the boy, Chuck, whom she was dating. He was a college man, and she claimed she was in love with him; but Angie was only seventeen.

“It’s true,” she insisted, and, slipping off the rocks, she waltzed around the beach, her feet kicking up clouds of sand wherever she danced. I longed to join in her frolic, but I was clumsy on my feet; and I dreaded the sound of Angie’s laughter at my feeble attempts to imitate her gracefulness. So I only sat on the rocks and watched her as she whirled to the music of her own clear singing.

How beautiful she is, I thought with a prick of envy. Again, for perhaps the thousandth time, I wished that I were like her.

To Angie the whole world was good. She shut her eyes and mind to the ugly things of life. For her they did not exist. Anything she wanted was hers simply because she wanted it.

“What would you do,” I once had asked her, “if someone whom you believed in betrayed you?”

“It couldn’t happen,” she declared.

“But if it did?” I persisted.

Angie had answered with the patient indulgence that a mother accords her young child’s silly queries.

“I’d throw myself off the cliff into that watery grave you’re always talking about.”

She spoke lightly, but there was a strange look of seriousness in her eyes.

“Hey, plain one, come on out of your trance and let’s go eat.” Startled, I looked up to find Angie watching me curiously. Immediately a cold wave of resentment washed over me.

“Don’t call me that!” I flared.

Angie’s eyebrows rose in surprise, but she only skipped merrily down the beach. After a moment I followed her, trailing my feet in the sand until the pebbles caught between my toes. Once again Angie turned. “Hurry up, slow poke!” she called impatiently. Seeing that I did not lift my head, she shrugged her slim shoulders and went on.
Maybe it was that afternoon that I, feeling keenly my own lack of grace and charm, and seeing hers, began to hate my best friend. Perhaps, the jealousy had always been there, buried beneath the amenities of friendship, but waiting for the time when, like a snake, it could rear its ugly green head between Angie and me. All the times that people had stopped to look at Angie and exclaim, “Isn’t she beautiful!” came back to me. I had stood forlornly by her side, hating the gushing compliments that were always for Angie, never for me.

As the days slowly passed, my self-pity grew. I twisted even Angie’s most innocent remarks into words filled with derision and scorn—until I actually believed that underneath her friendship she had always been laughing at me. Often I did not go down to the beach to meet her at all, but sat alone in my darkened room and brooded, wanting fiercely to repay her for the imagined wrongs she had done me.

One Saturday morning, however, unable to resist the inviting sunshine and the warm water, I flung a towel over my shoulder and headed for the beach. I was stretched out on the flat rocks when suddenly a voice above me exclaimed, “Sarah! I hoped you’d be here today. I want you to meet someone.”

Anger surged through me. Couldn’t she ever let me be!

Opening my eyes, I saw that Angie was not alone. A tall, dark-haired boy stood by her side.

“Hi,” he grinned. “I’m Chuck.”

I knew as I looked at him that he was all wrong for Angie. He was too handsome, too perfect, the kind of person who loves only himself. Someday he would hurt Angie without knowing and, even worse, without caring. I felt a strange satisfaction at my thoughts. When Angie invited me to her party, I agreed to come...

The ceiling was covered with brightly colored balloons, and the whole house had an air of gaiety about it. Angie had asked me to come early. I pushed open the kitchen door, to find her sitting on the window ledge with her hands clasped around her knees.

“Sarah,” she softly said, “Chuck and I are to be married soon. Oh, Sarah, do you know what it is to love someone so much you could die if they ever hurt you?”

Jealousy filled my mind. “How could I?” I wanted to scream at her. “No one ever notices me. It’s always you.”

That was true. It wasn’t that I was so plain, only that Angie was so beautiful. The doorbell interrupted my thoughts.

“Answer that, will you?” Angie asked.

The door opened to reveal Chuck standing there, looking tall and handsome.

“Well,” he said, quirking his eyebrows, “don’t you look pretty!”

I blushed and couldn’t meet his eyes. I was certain he was only teasing me, but his words filled my heart with a warm, happy glow. Later on, dancing in his arms, I wondered why he was paying so
much attention to me. I pretended not to notice Angie’s anxious eyes following us. Chuck would return to Angie sooner or later, but for now he was mine. I smiled at her unhappy gaze. Chuck was watching me with a look that made my heart pound.

“Let’s go out on the terrace,” he suggested. “It’s hot in here.” I nodded, unable to speak. The moon cast its silvery shadows over the beach, investing every object with a strange, Alice-in-Wonderland quality. Chuck’s face seemed very close as he leaned over me.

“I like you, Sarah,” he murmured. “You’re something sweet and lovely.”

His words echoed in my heart as he kissed me.

There was a low, strangled sob behind us. We turned to find Angie standing in the moonlight, her eyes dark and stricken. She stared at us wordlessly for a moment; then she turned sharply and ran down the stone steps to the beach below. A sharp twinge of pain assailed me. Without even explaining to Chuck, I ran after, calling wildly, “Angie, Angie, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean it,” but I could not find her, and soon darkness crept sinisterly over the beach. Exhausted, I sank to my knees in the sand. Ugly, black clouds were gathering. A bolt of lightning struck a near-by rock, outlining its jaggedness against the sky. The waves were coming in now; they reached greedily for the sandy beach. All my old fears of the sea came back to me. The waves rose higher and higher, and, wild with grief and fear, I began to run. I did not stop until I reached my own door. I dared not think of Angie.

“She’ll be all right,” I told myself. “She’ll be all right. She loves the sea.”

The phone rang early the next morning; and I knew, I knew even before I answered it. I don’t remember everything the woman said. The cliffs, Angie dead, and she wanted to speak to my mother.

Chuck and I never told anyone what had happened that night on the terrace. We saw each other at the funeral and did not speak, for we could not meet each other’s eyes. He went back to college the next day, and I have not seen him since. I do not want to.

Everyone has been very kind to me, and even now, after a whole year they tell me: “You mustn’t feel guilty that you couldn’t help her. After all, you didn’t know she was out there.” That’s the part I still can’t get past. That’s where it all stops and begins all over again, because I did know she was there. Deep down in my heart I knew that Angie would be on the cliffs in a storm if she were troubled. Every time I hear the waves pound the rocks, I hear Angie’s voice again, speaking the words of long ago, “I’d throw myself off that cliff into that watery grave you’re always talking about.” I remember the seriousness of her eyes, and I know. Angie could never have slipped off the cliff. She knew those rocks too well. Angie had jumped, and my betrayal had caused her to jump; but it is not this that makes my days and nights a time of torture. No, there is something else which keeps the fear and guilt locked inside me. Often I
ask myself, “If I had gone to her, if I had braved the cliffs that night could I have stopped her?” Then, like a cold dash of water, the thought flashes across my mind, “Would I have stopped her?”

**Derby Day**

*Patricia Burger*

**F**rom where I stood, several yards from the far turn, shielding my eyes against the brilliant afternoon sunshine, I could see the twin spires of the grandstand towering high into the vivid blue Louisville sky. Sitting up there in the shade of the grandstand were the wealthy, the horse owners, the society people and all others who could afford over five dollars for a seat. They were indistinguishable now, part of the faceless thousands who were dashes of bright color on the gaudy picture spread before me. The brick wall across the track that shut out Churchill Downs from the city didn’t stop non-paying spectators from viewing the picture from their rooftops.

The milling crowd around me filled the worn infield to overflowing. Here the sight was more distinguishable than the faceless dabs of color in the grandstand. People, white and brown, in skirts and blouses, sundresses, suits, shorts, sport coats, checked, plaid and striped shirts, straw sunbonnets, caps, hats and sunglasses were walking, sitting, standing, running or sprawling on the ground. Most were talking and laughing, others were shouting about a win, a few were sitting in silent disappointment, and some, like me, were merely waiting for the next race, the seventh race of the day.

Near me, sitting on a large blanket, was a group of young people vivaciously talking among themselves as they gulped beer kept in a large red cooler. Behind them sat an elderly couple, checking their programs while eating hot dogs oozing with mustard. A man sporting a white cap pushed his way forward calling, “Mint juleps . . . get your juleps here,” as he held up a green frosted glass. He nearly ran into an old man slowly wandering past with his eyes on the ground in hopes of finding ticket stubs people had dropped. From my left came the dissonant notes of several bleary-eyed race fans enjoying the effects of too much tippling. Around them raced two children with cotton candy plastered on their open mouths. A drunk fell off his bench, landed on his back with feet in the air, and grinned as he triumphantly held his bottle aloft and safe. The man snoring beside him snorted and settled his racing form securely across his sun-blistered face in disgust.

I took a sip of the warm coke I held in a small paper cup, but it did little to relieve my thirst caused by the hot May sun and the pressure of the crowd. My thirst was a scratchy, parched annoyance starting in the back of my throat, making my tongue a lifeless lump of dried sponge. The departing view of that frosted glass with the green mint leaf caused the sponge to shrivel more as I idly wondered.