LINES FROM THE NIGHT

JOSEPHINE ROSENFIELD

The vanity
of the trees leaning over the rivers
adjusting and readjusting their coiffures.

The solemnity
of the brook gliding by
laughing as the rocks tickle it.

The processional
of the moon
bringing in its trail the princesses
of the sky—the stars.

The strains
of music ascending to the heavens
carrying the heart and souls of the listeners.

The soft richness of twilight in autumn,
The welcoming call of a morning in spring,
The heavy scent of an evening in summer,
The crisp breath of an afternoon in winter,

They can destroy the trees' vanity by bombing them.
They can stop the brooks' laughter by damming it.
They can spoil the moon's processional.
They can diminish the glory of the stars
By cluttering the sky with wings of devils.
They can silence the strains of music with gunfire.
They can disrupt an autumn twilight with tanks.
They can hush spring's call with bugles.
They can destroy summer's scent with gas.
They can wilt a winter afternoon with curses.

But they cannot
close our eyes to beauty,
deafen our ears to music,
silence our lips from prayer,
squeeze our hearts dry of courage.

Beauty in this shattered world?
Music in this bitter world?
Prayer in this hateful world?
Courage in this fear-crazed world?
Yes, the
beauty of freedom,
music of liberty,
Sketch of an Old Man

by J. Frank Currier

John Herron Art Museum
THE RED TAM

BY LEON KRALL

John Herron Art Museum
prayer of peace,
courage of faith.

They may
Dim the electric charades on Times Square
Black out the Golden Gate,

But never can they
Dim the torch of freedom
Black-out the ideals of liberty.

IT COULD BE
Geraldine Staley

WELL, SIR, You're here again. I ain’t agoin’ to tell you anymore; instead, I figured you’d like to see some of the things she did later, written in her own hand. This is a journal that she started in college about a year after the war began. I’ve taken some pages out that I thought you might be interested in. The first I gave you, was made the night after Johnny, the boy she later married, went back to the Navy after a furlough.

August, 1943—
The Chaotic Era has been going on now in America for a year and a half. Yesterday, Johnny left again. Today life goes as usual. Sometimes, I think I can never go on trying to be normal and lead a normal life; but somehow, like all the rest I am able to live a seemingly peaceful existence. We have our jobs and our Home Defense to counteract the horror of actual warfare. Important things happen to us just as if the war were not taking place, such as the incident of my second professional radio appearance. It happened last week, here in the studio. I was sitting at my desk, filing cards, sharpening pencils, and smiling at the general nuisances like they were my friends, when I overheard the Program Director remark that they needed a girl for an afternoon broadcast. They were having difficulty in locating one on such short notice. Then I found myself speaking to the director just as if I were somebody around here instead of chief flunky. I told that I had had experience behind the “mike,” and I would gladly help out — help out! I was literally dying for a job! The Director surveyed me uncertainly, then — she was desperate — she said they’d test me for the part. She grabbed my hand, jerked me into a studio, thrust a script under my nose, and said, “Go ahead.” The directions said to whisper the lines into the “mike,” so I started to whisper in a voice that made curtains wave like a sail in a storm. The loudspeaker said, “Hold it. Miss Philips, the instructions are whisper the words softly, not bellow! Now, let’s try it again.” I nodded dumbly, then—proceeded to squeak a beautiful squeak into the microphone. Again the loud-speaker interrupted, saying that I seemed a little nervous, and that we’d better rest a few minutes. I sat down on a chair, thinking about when this would be over, and I could escape. When we took up our little game again, I came through like a trouper—hammy. The loudspeaker seemed satisfied, though, for it said, “O.K.