



The **SOWER**

Spring---1951

# THE SOWER



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Sower of inland plains  
fling the whistling seed  
against lusty spring winds;  
thrusting it  
into the humid earth womb.

Sower of winged words;  
rising before dawn,  
swinging your arm over the world,  
release your thought  
into the lash and roar of winds,  
send your seed singing  
into the westering night.

—Norman C. Bansen

## FOREWORD

Written language is primarily a means of communication—a means of expressing ideas, and conveying them to others. So, in struggling to express ourselves in these pages, we have tried to express our own ideas, thoughts, feelings, hopes and dreams—in a word, ourselves.

We believe that in such measure as we have experienced truly, and expressed our experiences well, in such measure as we have succeeded in finding the universal and eternal which is common to all mankind and made it part of ourselves, in just such measure we have written truly.

We are young, and we speak with the boldness and impassioned belief in freedom which is an essential part of the young. But we also believe that as long as men are free to speak their minds out, are free to express their hopes and beliefs and convey them to other men, so long is the world safe for ourselves and for the generations which shall descend from us. Therefore, we dedicate these writings, and ourselves, to freedom, and to all free men everywhere.

The Editor

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## The Aftermath

FRED W. REINKE

Private First Class Samuel Camplore, of Middleton, Illinois, flipped the butt of his cigarette into the dirty gutter and smiled ironically as he saw three skinny urchins dive for it. The larger one in the blue army field cap scooped it up quickly, took a short puff, and put it out with his fingers while the other two looked on wistfully.

"And why not?" thought Sam. "These Krauts can get five Marks for that little butt." But he loathed them. Looking at their skinny limbs and smudgy faces he thoroughly loathed them. He remembered his own healthy childhood and his good home. "What a difference," he thought.

As he turned his face toward the big hotel across the street, his thoughts brightened a bit. It was his first assignment overseas, and he had heard that the American G. I. "never had it so good" here in the American Occupation. Picking up his B-4 bag he started across the noisy street, walking at the signal past the German policeman, who was dressed neatly in comparison to the other civilians in a military-looking white tunic and white gloves. When he reached the curb on the other side, another little beggar approached him. "Bitte, bitte, candy soldier?" Sam ignored him and with a shrug of distaste entered the hotel.

At the desk he signed for a room, and the civilian clerk behind the desk picked up Sam's bag and said in good but broken English, "Please, Sir, would you be so kind as to follow me to your quarters?" After tipping the clerk a few cigarettes, he entered the room and glanced over the fine furnishings, among which was a wide, luxurious bed.

"Pretty good," he murmured to himself, "especially for a lousy transient P.F.C." As it was nearing five o'clock, he decided to find the dining room.

Fifteen minutes later Sam was sitting alone on the terrace of the Schumann Hotel, for allied personnel only, eating a fine steak with all of the trimmings. A waiter in a white coat served him in regal style and Sam was again impressed at the service.

Suddenly he saw something that interrupted his pleasant pastime. Laying down his fork beside the plate, he looked over the edge of the terrace to the building, or remnant of a building, across the street. Four shrapnel-scarred walls stood outlined against the horizon. Four walls, but nothing between them, stared with empty sky-filled

windows at Sam. His sensitive nostrils caught for the first time the odor of decaying rubble-buried flesh. And he knew then why he was the only one on the terrace on that fine spring day, for eating wasn't exactly pleasant when the wind was wrong.

At once he was sick of the whole mess. For the first time he wished he could leave this stinking country with its dirty, undernourished, unwashed people, its terrible want and poverty, the animal-like display of humanity, and the awful sense of superiority he felt toward these poor unfortunate wretches groveling in the aftermath.

"Why, why," he thought, "does this have to be?"

And again the empty walls spoke, "War!"

## *In The Light*

CAROL M. PETERSEN

The sky smiled through the window,  
The dirty window.  
The dirt  
Marred not the blueness,  
The sparkling blueness.  
The blue  
Smiled brighter, purer.  
I saw the dirt  
Was black.

## *Public Relations*

ELMER PETERSEN

Dew was still glistening on the diving-boards as Jake scowled his way to the locker-room. Mornings were particularly offensive to him and it even took him a while to realize that the sun wasn't against him. Jake was one of the life-guards; Protector of the Incapable, The Law, and very wrongly, he felt, a member of Operation Poolbottom. He was tall enough to justify a nod of the head as he passed through the doorway. And, allowing for differences in opinion, he came quite close to Adonis qualifications. His blond hair, bleached from the sun, was quite a contrast to his sunripened forehead. He often tried making like a bear, during the early morning hours but his usually mild manner triumphed before long.

As he was bemoaning his plight, the vision of cold water, a

diving mask and a broom were interrupted by the shrill whistling of a fellow sufferer entering the locker room. As hard as he tried, Jake couldn't figure out what made a seemingly sore fellow whistle, of all times, in the morning!

"Hi ya, bright eyes! I expected you to have the pool all cleaned up by now," grinned Steve, getting the desired result.

"What's your particular maladjustment?" muttered Jake, which he intended to serve as a welcome.

Steve always managed to bring out the bear in Jake, and so delayed the transformation. It wasn't long, however, before the teasing cheered him up somewhat and together they dragged their feet to the pool's edge. They went through their usual routine of abusing the pool architect, before entering into the hateful water.

The pool was circular and about seventy-five yards in diameter. The shallow water framed the perimeter of the pool, deepening gradually to the fence, which blocked off the section for diving. Projecting from the deep water was a concrete island boasting twenty diving boards and a "plateau" where the lifeguards watched the swimmers. What fiend that designer must have been, thought Jake, to force the lifeguards into the water in order for them to reach their stations. Sometimes they wasted half of their noon-hour trying to devise some method of getting to shore without getting wet.

Now they approached the island, swimming with one hand held high out of the water bearing their necessary articles, such as sun glasses, wristwatches, olive oil, and towels. Once dry, they proceeded as usual to flip a coin to see who would clean the bottom of the pool, there being only one set of diving equipment. Jake flipped, lost, and immediately stretched out on a diving board, trying his best to get away from reality.

"Come on, lover boy! Hop into those weights and see if you can't get some of that spinach off the bottom," chided Steve to his sun-loving fellow guard. "You'll never get a tan that'll cover up that scrawny frame of yours anyway."

"Just to make you happy, hollow-chest. Here, strap my watch around your thigh, will you? Above your knee cap, so it won't slip down and break," retorted Jake as he began donning the diving helmet and weights.

"If you find any money, we go fifty-fifty, okay?" asked Steve provokingly.

"That'll be the day," came the muffled reply through the diving-mask.

Jake soon disappeared while the escaping air made the water boil above him. He really didn't mind going down but, like Steve, he would rather be up in the nice hot sun. It seemed like another world down there, dark and cold. When he started sweeping, the algae clouded up so that he couldn't see more than five feet ahead, and the air that came through the mask smelled of rubber hose and hot oil from the motor.

Jake finished shortly before the pool was to open. The boys took their stations and settled into the routine of soaking in the sunshine and seeing who would be the first to spot an occasional beauty who might stroll on to the premises.

The pool was crowded that morning and things proceeded uneventfully until Jake yelled, "Look!"

"Look what?" asked Steve, as he turned wearily around.

"That terrific girl! She keeps looking at me!"

"Looking at you? She's looking at me. She's an old friend of mine. She asked if she could come down and see me," answered Steve, looking for a war.

"What do you mean? You've never seen her before."

"Never seen her? I'll prove it by going out and talking with her."

"Oh, no you don't. The pool's too crowded. We've both got to stay out here and guard," said Jake, all of a sudden becoming conscientious. Then he added, "Why don't you motion to her if you know her?"

"Because she might come out and you'd feel utterly dejected."

"Dejected? If she came out here she'd never even look at you, and—say, I'll bet you don't even know her. If she comes out, stay on your own side. I don't want you frightening her away!"

While the guards were busy ribbing each other, the girl had come out to the island and was just mounting the ladder when Steve saw her.

"Let's see some action," encouraged Steve. "Take a look who's below you."

Putting on his best manners Jake leaned over and began crudely. "Hello, there! Have you ever been here before?"

"No, I haven't. This is a rather nice pool," she answered sweetly.

At that, Jake turned around to Steve. "Listen to me go, buddy. She's spellbound."

"As soon as she wakes up send her over here."

Turning back to the girl Jake asked, "Do you live in town?"

"Yes, we just moved here last month, from Oconto," she answered.

"I suppose you'll be going to Park High this fall? I work with the coach so I suppose I'll see you," said Jake, really feeling quite sure of himself.

"No, I don't believe that's the name of the school."

"Probably Hoclick High then."

"That doesn't seem right either. It seems like Mitchell, or something quite similar," she said, trying to be helpful.

"Mitchell?" sputtered Jake, unable to believe his ears. "Why that's only a junior high school."

"Is ninth grade very hard?"

"Ya. Ya. Pretty hard," muttered Jake, not caring if she heard it or not.

Steve had been listening attentively, but silently. At this new turn of events he broke into uncontrollable laughter. The girl wandered off, perplexed.

"You'd better stay with it," coaxed Steve. "Maybe you can talk her mother into giving you a job as a sitter."

"What's so funny?" asked Jake. "I was just trying to make her feel at home. Good policy for the pool. You know—public relations."

## ***The First Kiss***

HAL COLE

The clashing  
Of cymbals  
The beating  
Of drums  
The blare  
Of trumpets  
The knowledge  
Of the world  
The mystery  
Of ecstasy  
Are captured all  
In the first kiss!

## Suspense

SYLVIA SIERSBECK

"Tipton's Noodle Soup and Tipton's Tea now bring you the famous radio program, *Suspense*."

Donna Pierce sat sleepily in the soft, comfortable rocking chair in the combination music room and den of their home on Weeping Willow Street. As Donna heard the radio announcer try to convince his audience that they should use Tipton's products, she even more sleepily pushed her school books away from her and tossed the dictionary on the desk where it nearly hit the antique lamp that dimly lighted the room.

The door of *Suspense* creaked open on the first act as she gazed at the radio. Should she turn it off? Oh no, it was too much bother to get up. Just leave it for now. But listen! The green-eyed seven-foot monster approached the graveyard. The cold, death-like stones greeted him as the wind howled and whistled through the fir trees. "Awfully creepy," shivered Donna. "I guess I just need some rest."

Donna leaned back and rested her head on the soft, downy back of the rocking chair. Just as her eyelids began to close, she noticed the cream-colored drapes figured with green dragon-like shapes. A draft must have hit them, for they were moving slightly. In the misty glow of the antique lamps, these figures, twisting and writhing, came out as haunting ghosts. They played and danced on the brightly varnished desk top illumined by the dim light.

Donna drew back and folded her feet up underneath her as a shiver went through her body. She shook her head, trying to get rid of that vision. But what was that on the Persian carpet? Her eyes centered on a dark spot—a pool of wet, cold blood. She gave a quick, short scream. Then a door slammed shut and a draft of cool air hit her in the face. Her eyes were wide open, staring into space. What would she see next? The room was still. Even the radio program gave no sound except for a few grunts and pants as the horrible monster clawed at the coffin he had dug out of six feet of earth. Then she heard footsteps. They sounded distant, like a sound muffled in the thick carpets.

Now Donna could not scream, for the scream stuck in her throat. She felt too paralyzed to equip herself for defense. The radio, that's it, the radio. She must turn it off before someone discovered that she was in this room. But her body was glued to the chair.

Then the cloak room at the front of the house was illumined by

the lights of a lone car which passed by, and Donna saw him! A stoop-shouldered figure, cloaked in a black garb stood with its back to her. It wasn't doing anything but just standing there. What could she do!

She screamed and her scream pierced the stillness of the dusky room. A door opened quickly somewhere in the house. Donna clenched tighter her already nail-pierced fists. Her arms and legs, cold as they were, shook violently. Someone called her name and she covered her face with her hands to try to banish the horrible thoughts that ran through her mind. Then she recognized the warm voice of her mother. It took Donna a minute to realize that her parents were finally home and she was safe again.

"Mom," she called with a voice still with fright, "I'm in here, in the den."

She heard the door of *Suspense* creak shut and the announcer's voice say, "Don't forget to tune in again next week for the *Case of the Warm Corpse*."

## **Fight!**

CAROL M. PETERSEN

War, war, disillusionment and war!  
Guns, bombs, and Death.  
Cold, hateful Death,  
Hot-breathed throes of Death  
Breathing fire down our backs!

Fight for Peace?  
Peace needs not be fought for.  
Peace is with you,  
Sitting at your feet, smiling,  
Waiting for you to smile and embrace her.  
Peace in a child's laughter.  
Peace in God's house of prayer.  
Peace as the mother peels potatoes in the kitchen and  
coos to her toddler.  
Peace in the spring.  
Peace in the rain.  
Peace in the snow.  
Peace . . . .

Fight!  
Fight and slaughter!  
Fight and be slaughtered!

# The Waltz of the Flowers

CARL H. NIELSEN

As I listen to *The Waltz of the Flowers*, I see a poor little girl and a beautiful flower garden. The quartette of reed instruments, which opens the song, displays the poor little girl as she views the beautiful garden for the first time. She is stunned by the garden with its beautiful flowers.

"Oh, I have never seen anything like it," she says as the harp plays the excited notes. The harp rises in pitch and the tiny girl becomes more excited. A smile appears on her tiny face and her widened eyes are filled with amazement as the harp comes to a subdued part of the cadenza.

She approaches the garden and begins to wander through it. The gentle plucking of the harp becomes delicate golden buttercups. The solid French horns strike up the first theme.

"Oh," cries the little girl as she sees the giant blue delphiniums mounted on sturdy, stately stems, "aren't they beautiful!" She gazes steadily at the blue flowers until her eyes catch sight of the yellow rows of daffodils that skip about the garden in zig-zag fashion. The clarinet rises and lowers, twists and turns in this descriptive manner. The violin picks up a swaying melody of pure white tone. The little girl fixes her eyes upon great white lilies swaying in the soft breeze.

"Oh my," says the little girl as she smells the fragrance of the flowers, "how wonderful!" She ponders before going on.

Suddenly, in sharp contrast, the oboe with its rich, somber red tones breaks through the whiteness of the violins. Looking down, the tiny girl sees deep rich-colored red geraniums blooming amidst the tall lilies. The colors switch from deep red to the pastel lavender of the cellos in a high pitch to the rich purple of the bass viol.

"Oh, look at those little flowers," she exclaims as she notices the tiny African violets at her feet. Her eyes travel to the deep colored irises and she stops to see the variety of colors that seems to be constantly moving. The notes of the flute dot the music with tiny pure-white tones. She hasn't noticed the small white lilies-of-the-valley which dot the garden. What a pretty sight!

The little girl moves sadly from the garden and turns once to view it as she leaves. Suddenly the gold, blue, yellow, white, red, and purple colors of the orchestra rise to their fullest splendor. The poor little girl looks at the beautiful garden for the last time.

# Lee

ELVA JENSEN

Lee raced back to Nordyke's house with Butch. Butch won, of course. He was a couple of years older than Lee and always won when they raced, but Lee didn't mind. He was happy as long as he was with Butch, doing what Butch did. Butch had said that his father was going to be home tonight. Lee had never seen Mr. Nordyke. But he just knew he'd be as wonderful as the rest of the Nordykes. Lee adored Mrs. Nordyke. It was she who had asked him over tonight for supper and the housekeeper at his house had said he might go. Lee seldom saw his mother—he had never known his father who had been killed in the early days of the war. He had been too little even to remember him. Sometimes at night Lee cried because he was so lonely, but during the day he was usually with Butch at the Nordykes. He just couldn't wait 'til he met Mr. Nordyke.

"Hey, Butch—let's play ball, shall we?" Lee's voice always sounded breathless when he made a suggestion because he didn't want to seem bossy or anything to Butch.

"Sure, Lee—we'd better go in and tell Mom you're here first, though!"

So in they went—and there was Mr. Nordyke stretched out on the couch. Lee couldn't understand how Mr. Nordyke could stand to be away from his wonderful family for such long periods of time while he worked in other towns building houses. Mrs. Nordyke, who was trying to talk to her husband and at the same time set the table, hardly glanced at Lee when he came in, except to smile to let him know that she knew he was there.

Lee didn't mind. Mrs. Nordyke was always busy. And as long as she knew he was there—well, he'd get to eat supper with Butch's family and get to meet Butch's father.

Butch said, "Dad, this is Lee—he's here for supper."

Shyly Lee stretched out his hand and stammered, "How do you do."

Mr. Nordyke looked at him. "Hello, Lee. Now keep the noise to a minimum, will you, fellows?"

So Lee and Butch went outside to play catch with Butch's new mitt. Lee thought about how he liked to eat supper with Butch's family, while he caught Butch's carefully thrown balls. Lee had never played ball much till he met Butch. The house-

keeper always said he'd probably break a window—but Mrs. Nordyke said she didn't think he would if he was careful. So Lee was happy.

He missed one of the balls and it rolled toward the house. As he ran after the ball it rolled under a bush directly underneath the kitchen window. As he crawled under the bush he could hear Mrs. Nordyke's happy laugh floating out the window. And then suddenly the laugh faded into silence. Lee wasn't worried though until he heard Mr. Nordyke's voice raised in anger.

"Why must you always have all the kids in the neighborhood in to eat. I don't make enough money to feed anybody but my own family—and now, since I lost those two jobs in Fairville. . . ."

Lee didn't hear Mrs. Nordyke's answer—he felt rather sick to his stomach and hoped he didn't look too bad as he walked back and tossed the ball to Butch.

"Butch—", he began helplessly.

"Here, Lee, look out—this is a fast one." Butch was oblivious to the pleading in Lee's voice.

Lee caught it. He didn't know how. The tears were blurring his vision and suddenly, he had to get home. He turned and ran.

Behind him he could hear Butch say anxiously, "Lee!" And then wonderingly, "Now what got into the little guy?"

## Tragedy

BEATA HAUGE

A kitten,  
Frolicsome and playful,  
Soft and cuddly.

A kitten,  
Bloody and mangled,  
Stiff and cold.

A shoe box  
Tremblingly placed in a hole  
And covered with dirt.

A child,  
Kneeling on the ground,  
Tears running down her dirty cheek.

## The Picture

CAROL M. PETERSEN

"Dear Joe:

*Life alone in the city isn't at all like I had expected, but now after two weeks of it, I believe I can say I am going to like it. In the mornings it is so strange to see everyone dashing here and there, running up the street waving at the trolley they just missed, or standing glumly on a corner waiting for their rides to come. This morning I was late to work because I missed my bus. In fact, I might say that today was quite eventful. . . ."*

Jenny's fingers stopped hopping about on the keyboard of the typewriter. An empty stillness throbbed in her ears. The room in which she sat was plainly furnished, simple, the one room she called home while she lived and worked in the city.

"What is it about a picture?" mused Jenny as she gazed at the one before her on the desk. "If it's someone you know, you don't look at the picture at all. You look right through it into the person's eyes, into his soul. The outline of his cheek and jaw, the tilt of his head, the shadows and light places are all part of a living human being. Is that strange, or is it wonderful?"

A cloud drifted through her blue eyes as though there were a blue sky in there somewhere. She stared fixedly at the picture till she saw—could it be? Slowly and steadily, the flat surface behind the printed shoulders sank back. The chin was thrust forward a bit. Dark patches on the sides became slight hollows beneath prominent cheekbones. She saw the eyes sparkle just a bit and the corner of the mouth turn up just a little more than it had been.

Jenny closed her eyes. She looked strange sitting at her wooden very slowly that she could hardly be sure when it had begun, the head turned. Slowly ever so slowly, till it directly faced her.

"Hi, Joe," she whispered not moving. "I just thought I'd sit down and have a chat with you 'cause I'm so miserable, Joe, so miserable and lonesome." She sat still, moving only her lips, afraid even to blink lest the picture become a flat reality again.

"Fact is, I almost wish I could die I am so lonesome. And I had a terrible time at the office today, Joe. The boss bawled me out five times because I did so many dumb things. I almost cried, but didn't." The lips curled and the nose wrinkled into a funny smile, but the eyes looked serious and puzzled.

Jenny saw. "Is it wrong Joe, that I feel this way, this lonesome empty way?" I know so many times you've said it isn't good for us to think about ourselves a lot, Joe. . . you taught me that, and I promised I'd never forget. I tried not to, but it's hard not to think about myself when I think of you. I can't think of either of us without the other. But then, you said that wasn't exactly wrong either because you said that together we can think about others. Guess I'm just thinking of myself, huh, Joe? Just myself and how I want to be with you."

Jenny closed her eyes. She looked strange sitting at her wooden table-desk with her hands on the keyboard of her typewriter, her body leaning forward at almost a sixty degree angle. When at length she opened her eyes, she did not look at the picture. She knew she would not have to. Instead, she raised her eyes only as far as the paper in the typewriter and reread the last sentence.

"In fact, I might say today was quite eventful." She began pecking at the round keys. "But variety is the spice of life (to be trite), and I certainly had enough variety. The boss got mad at me five times. Poor man, I think he must have high blood pressure. He gets so excited."

## Socialism—An Oration<sup>☆</sup>

FRANKLIN JESPERSEN

We in America are a very fortunate people; we have lived in freedom so long that it is as essential to us as the air we breathe. We have enjoyed free enterprise and growing progressive industry for so many years that today we are ripe fruit for the socialistic worms that crawl beneath us. We are fooled by people who, while they shout loud and long for capitalism, are really trying to sneak government control measures into our economic system. The terrible crime is that they are successful in recruiting thousands of important people to assist them in this plan.

Just as communism seeks to beat our democratic world to shambles in the open, or not in the open, just so does the organization known as socialism aim at this goal. But unlike the brute force of communism, socialism may be compared to a slow, deadly poison. It is introduced to the people in small doses and is so thoroughly mixed with other elements that no one knows the difference. For a shining example of this we may glance briefly at Great Britain.

\* This oration was awarded first prize in the Dana College Oratorical Contest,

As far back as 1883 an organization called the Fabian Society was planning socialistic control for the British government. George Bernard Shaw, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and Ramsey MacDonald were numbered in its ranks. These people worked their way into the minds and hearts of the working classes, declaring only portions of their vast program, year after year, bit by bit defeating that urge for independence and self reliance of which the British people had once been so proud. Growing with the years, the society numbered over five thousand members in 1905, and when five years had passed Ramsey MacDonald was Prime Minister of Britain. Though MacDonald did not stay in power long, the socialists were able to press through welfare state measures that were to make the British people look to the government for answers to all their problems.

Great Britain abandoned her political affairs at home and took time out to fight two terrible world wars. When she again turned to affairs at home, she discovered her entire empire was on the verge of collapse. Pains of poverty and destruction were new to the British people; confused and frightened, they sought a solution in socialism. So it was that in 1945 the Fabian Society, now known to the people as the Labor Party, was swept into power by an overwhelming majority. Today the British people are finding that what they were promised and what they are being given certainly are not the same thing. Let us take a brief glance at what has happened in recent years to England's economic program.

In 1948 the socialists took control of the coal mines. In that same year the coal mines produced seven million tons of coal less and lost about ninety-five million dollars. The government took over the housing industry and as a result thirty-four thousand fewer houses were built than in the preceding year when that sector of the economy was under private ownership. The government so mismanaged their medicine plan that in 1948 the British cemeteries boasted more new headstones than in any previous year. In this same year the government passed so many new regulations that some thirty thousand people were arrested for violating laws they did not even know existed!

Looking at socialism from the point of view of the individual, it is a stagnating and degenerating evil. Lincoln said, "All men are created equal." But even when Old Abe uttered these words, he knew that all men are not created equal in the physical or mental senses of the word; that every man does not have the same amount of personality and character. We must interpret from his words, and justly so, that every man, whether he be black, white or yellow, should have the same opportunity to do with his talents

all that he can; that he be allowed to progress as far as his genius will carry him. Socialism in its truest form offers opportunity for a few, prosperity for none, and a shaky uncertain system of government security for all those who are willing to be pampered by the government from birth to death.

Unlike our British neighbors, we in the United States are not unstable economically; in fact, we are enjoying the most prosperous era of our colorful history. Still, we cannot, we dare not under-estimate the destructive forces that dwell among us, for the real danger of socialism lies, not in its immediate power, but in the development of a careless attitude toward its actual strength. To be sure, our way of life is far from perfect; it has many flaws, but it is vital that we are not fooled into believing that we can lose our troubles in a socialistic dictatorship. For though we may solve a few difficulties, for every problem we had under a democratic government we would find a hundred cropping up in its place under a socialistic government. John T. Flynn has said in his book, *The Road Ahead*: "No few men, no matter how smart and far-sighted, can ever hope to conceive and solve all the problems of a nation's entire economic system." It simply cannot be done! To do a good job the authority must be broad, the responsibility must be distributed, the opportunity offered to every man. Responsibility, character, and self-reliance can only be nourished by the prospect of just reward for honest effort. Progressive Americans, and a nation full of free men, unhampered by an overly-demanding government, make for a powerful force for peace in our troubled world.

## **Night after Night**

SHIRLEY PETERSEN

Night after night and day after day,  
Listen to how we pass hours away.  
Our moans and our groans may be heard through the door,  
The three of us rolling in pain on the floor.

I say, Martha Barry, just look at the sight!  
I still don't believe I can bicycle right.  
How many more rockers do we have to do?  
How long will it be before we are through?

The floor begins shaking, the building to quake;  
I think that it's all for appearances' sake!  
For what else in the world would make such a din,  
What else but three girls who hope to get thin?

## Storm

ELVA JENSEN

The wind blows outside;  
It tears the beautiful young day into shreds and a  
Tattered old crone takes her place,  
Weeping hysterically as the wind  
Whistles back and forth through  
The trees, and storm clouds  
Break above the tops of the buildings.  
The roads show slimy and wet,  
Huge rivulets of mud and rain  
Marring the smooth pattern of the hills and fields.  
Tears are streaking down the window  
As the old crone  
Weeps for the lost beauty  
Of her morning charms.  
Again the wind puffs,  
Blurring the tears on the window,  
And the old, old day  
Turns submissively and steals away  
Hand in hand with the wind.  
And the dusk comes,  
Flinging the faded afternoon dress  
Of the once beautiful day, with its gold, and violet and red,  
Way to the west, to the far edge of the sky.  
It clings for a moment and then slips over,  
Brushed aside by the dark cloak of night.

## Humiliation

NAOMI BACH

I pushed open the big door and let myself out of the old stuffy school, chewing on the big wad of bubble gum I had just popped into my mouth. What a lovely fall day! I wished I didn't have to go take my piano lesson. The rest of the kids were going downtown for cokes.

I walked slowly down the shady avenue, kicking the leaves on the sidewalk with the toes of my saddles. Oh, look—wasn't that a beautiful leaf? Kind of red and shading almost into a rose. I picked it up and placed it carefully in *Bach, A Book For Beginners*. Maybe the bright color would cheer him up a bit.

The air smelt of football and bonfires and marshmallow roasts. I stopped and took two big deep breaths, then blew a great bubble and sucked it back into my mouth. I felt like skipping, but there were too many kids around, and after all I was in the seventh grade now and in the big school. Skipping would get me there too fast anyway.

I reached the curb and crossed the street, passing the huge old house on the corner. A lonely old man lived there all by himself. I liked to make up stories about the things that could happen in a big house like that. I bet it had a beautiful attic with lots of wonderful old trunks to rummage through.

The next house was where Miss Olga Kindly, my funny old piano teacher, lived. It was an orange house surrounded by huge trees that almost ate it up. In the summer it stood out boldly among the green foliage and the soft tan houses around it but now that it was fall, it blended in kind of nice with all the other fall colors. It sure seemed funny how a house could be so bright from the outside and so boring inside.

I walked up the creaking stairs and pushed the snubby little bell button. Miss Kindly opened the door and handed me her little broom (you see, she was a very particular person and I had to brush the dust off my shoes.)

We walked through the dark musty living room toward the French doors that opened into the music room. The whole house smelt of lysol and cleaning powders. Yet no matter how well it was scrubbed, the smell of age and use couldn't be rubbed out.

The music room was very small with two pianos and a big music cabinet. That left room enough for only one person to move around at a time. The two big upright pianos stood staring at each other as if they were both trying to outdo the other in their old grandeur. The wood in each had been polished so much you could almost see the grooves made by the fingers which must have rubbed over them a million times.

There weren't any windows, so the big overhanging yellow light pushed an eerie gloom into the corners and made even the sheet music look old and yellow with age. It made me think of the light that hung in the reception room at Burgess's Mortuary.

Just then I remembered my gum. Miss Kindly couldn't tolerate gum. I stopped chewing and tried to stick it in the corner of my mouth, but it was an awfully big piece and I could feel

it pushing my cheek out as if I had mumps.

"Old Olga" had forgotten her red pencil, so she skitted out of the room on the two boney toothpicks she used for legs.

Now I could get rid of my gum if I hurried—there, quick, under the piano bench.

Miss Kindly came stiffly back into the room with the business-like look on her face, and I sat down to pound out my lesson.

Oh, dear, I'd forgotten one of my books. (Of course I'd done it intentionally because I hadn't had time to practice my lesson in that one.)

And again Olga came to the rescue. She was sure she had one in the piano bench. I slid off and she bent her long spine carefully and lifted up the wooden top.

No—No. There in the right hand corner sat my jolly piece of pink bubble gum.

My whole being seemed to shrink into the size of a pencil, or maybe it was just that I would have liked it to. All I could see was that big piece of gum.

Miss Kindly announced in her spikey voice, "I wonder who did this? No one around here even chews gum."

She reached for the gum, and the wet gob seemed to cling like a slimey leech to the highly polished sheen of the bench. She picked a kleenex from her pocket and carefully wrapped it around the gum, trying not to touch it with her fingers. Then she walked sternly over to the wastebasket and dropped it in.

I was still standing in the same position in the middle of the room. My hands were clenched and my face was burning. Inside I was all mixed up. My eyes were focused on the piano, but I didn't see anything. All I could feel was a horrible pain; a headache tried to start someplace. My feet were glued to the floor. I just couldn't move, I just couldn't. But somehow I found myself back on the piano bench, trying hard to forget that awful humiliation, humiliation that shouldn't ever happen to anyone twelve years old.

Well, I had one consolation; I bet I was the first one to ever stick gum anyplace in that house. And someday, boy, just wait, I'd come back and stick oodles of gum under every chair in that house. Boy, just wait!

## And Man Looked Up

FRANKLIN JESPERSEN

Tender hands were moist with wringing,  
Blue eyes were bleached with bitter tears.  
And Christ looked down and smiled.

Inky black clouds loomed in the turbulent sky,  
Silver shafts of lightning split the night.  
And Christ fell limp and died.

Crimson red stained the morning light,  
Sorrow filled man's throbbing soul.  
And man looked up and prayed.

## Leavetaking

FRED W. REINKE

Paul looked out of his bedroom window for the last time and saw, as he had seen many times before, the hedge encircling the big yard and the three apple trees with leaves turning brown in the early autumn. He wondered how many times he had climbed to their tops and looked over the roofs of the neighboring houses and into the distance towards the majestic silver structure that was Centerview's water tower.

The middle one had the best apples, he remembered, and it saddened him to think that never again would he sit in its motherly boughs and munch on a meaty-white apple, the most perfect way he knew to spend a Saturday afternoon. And then he remembered how on many occasions he had so managed to conceal himself in the leafy foliage that even his mother could not see him when she went to find him at mealtime.

His gaze shifted to the simple bird bath surrounded by the three big trees, and to a sparrow fluttering and splashing in the shallow bath. Paul remembered the many times he had perched himself in the farthest tree and attempted in vain to shoot one of those happy creatures with his slingshot.

To the right he saw the graveled driveway to his father's garage, and on the other side his mother's vegetable garden, where he had often helped his mother plant the tiny carrot, lettuce, and radish seeds in the moist black soil. And he remembered the good taste of raw carrots eaten unwashed from the earth.

His eyes were moist as he turned from the window and took in

the details of his room. In the corner were his desk and chair, and overhead hanging motionless were two model airplanes, apparently defying gravity but kept aloft by two invisible threads. Crossing the room, he sat down on his wide bed, feeling the softness of its innerspring mattress and unconsciously fingering the design on the bedspread.

"It's going to be tough to leave", he thought. "I really never knew what home meant till now."

Suddenly his thoughts were interrupted by the voice of his mother. "Paul, it's three-thirty and your train leaves in an hour."

Going over to the dresser, he picked up the open letter and read its contents as he had read it a dozen times before. ". . . You are hereby ordered to report for induction. . . ."

Paul folded the letter carefully, put it into his pocket, and then went out, closing the door behind him.

## *Ulterior Motives*

ELMER PETERSEN

"What a day, eh, Moe? Nice, just buzzing around on a day like this. It's really getting spring," I said as we drove down the highway toward Sturtevant.

"Ya, Dick, but I sure am getting tired of just riding around with you. I'd like to have a beautiful brunette with big blue eyes and wild about me—and with copious gobs of money so she would take me out tonight," replied Moe wistfully.

"Keep dreamin'—eh—you didn't just see something back there on the road, did you?"

His reply was a screech of the tires, a twist of the wheel, and off we went back the way we had come. The object of our sudden change of course was two ladies in distress. A flat tire. We didn't get a good look at them but Ma always said, "Be helpful, not for the rewards you might get, but for the good you can do." That's a good thought anyway. We pulled up sort of cagey-like. The back end of our Ford sashayed around a little and then rocked to a halt.

We walked around to the side of their car and to our horror we saw two perplexed old maids, faced with the trials of their first major accident. Moe would have left; so would I, I guess, but feeling an urgent sense of duty he asked, "Uh, are you waiting for someone to come, or could we help you?"

"Oh, would you boys really help us? Norma and I were just sitting here wondering what we could do," replied the older lady. I believe her name was Carrie. Then, looking benevolently to Norma, she said, "These things make Norma so nervous. How do you feel now, darling? Wasn't it good of these boys to stop?"

Norma gave us that "please-don't-ask-me-to-talk-these-things-upset-me-so" look and rested back against the little pillow she had propped up and closed her eyes.

"I believe Norma's so upset because she noticed it first. She smelled the rubber burning," said Carrie, unselfishly giving the credit to Norma.

At that Moe and I, as of one mind, walked over and stared at the tire. They must have driven on it for blocks. It was nothing but shreds and little pieces of rubber were left in a trail down the highway.

Moe whispered to me out of the corner of his mouth, "Get that. She knew there must be something wrong because she smelled rubber burning."

"Boys! Here are the keys. I do believe there are tools in the trunk," said Carrie.

Yes, they were. Still wrapped. We uncovered a jack, a wrench, a screw-driver and a good spare. As Moe was trying to pry off the hub-caps I had a chance to get a good look at the old gals. Carrie was a rather neat lady, although she could cut down on the potatoes, and had a Ladies'-Aid-president look on her face. Norma stayed in the car and opened her eyes only when the car raised or lowered on the jack. The hub-cap was stuck and Moe was having a hard time getting it off. In the process the hub-cap was getting a few nicks on it.

Carrie stood patiently for a while, watching us scratch her hub-cap. But finally she could take it no longer. "Must you do that? Why don't you just change tires?"

We then told her that we had to take off the hub-cap in order to get the wheel off and put on the spare.

As we finished the job and were putting the tools away Norma stepped out of the car and so together they told us what fine boys we were and that they couldn't have gotten along without us. That last part we were sure of.

Just as we were getting ready to leave Carrie placed something tenderly in my hand. I opened my hand and there was a five-dollar bill. Amazed, I said, "We can't take that. Here, take it! That's an awful lot."

"No, boys, you deserve it. Don't they Norma?" said Carrie.

"You'd better keep it. Thanks anyway but. . . ."

I didn't get the sentence out of my mouth before Moe cut in with, "Well, if you insist, thanks a lot."

As we drove off, the ladies watched us disappear—their benefactors. It wasn't long before Moe turned to me and mentioned casually, "Like I said, I'd like to have a beautiful brunette, with big blue eyes and wild about me. . . can you imagine that, five bucks?"

## **Guns and Guts**

HAL COLE

What is this game  
Of guns and guts?  
What does this lead to—  
This game  
Of guns and guts?  
The boy from Tennessee  
Is dead!  
The Texan lies  
In a red pool  
Of blood.  
The kid from California  
Hunts to find  
His legs.  
The Nebraskan  
Dreams of home  
As he waits  
For death!  
Oh, God!  
Oh, merciful God,  
Where are we going  
With this game  
Of guns and guts?

## **Monologue**

ELAINE MADISON

But, Miss Barnes, I didn't hit her, honest I didn't. She's lying. She always tries to get me into trouble . . . . Yes'm. But you said you'd let me explain after school so now can I explain, please? . . . . Well, it was when we were out for recess, see? We were playing

ball and those girls were watchin'! Everytime a ball came over by them they tried to grab it. I was playin' first base. They usually have me play first base 'cuz I can catch good. Sometimes Georgie plays first, but he misses the ball half the time. He ain't much good as a clean-up man either. You know what a clean-up man is, don't cha? . . . . Yeh, I thought maybe ya would. Oh, let's see. Well, anyway we were out in the field. I was playin' first base. I see these girls comin' up toward first base. Coulln't figure out what they wanted. People that watch usually stay in back of home plate. But here they come. That Betty was at the head of the line. Boy, is she stuck on herself . . . .

Yes'm, I'm comin' to that. Spike hit a grounder over to third base. Nick was playin' third. He can't throw a ball—don't know where he should play. You always got to throw a ball straight if you're good at all . . . . Yeh, I'll try and stick to the story. Well, Nick, he throws the ball to me. It went sailin' off to the side—not very fast. Nick can't throw fast. The ball landed right by those girls and Betty, she picked it up and started to run toward the school. I took after her—course I caught her right away and took that ball away from her. But I didn't hit her, honest. Might have given her a shove. Didn't mean to though . . . . Oh, Miss Barnes, do I have to? I sure hate to tell her I'm sorry.

## Love

TOM NELSON

When the silv'ry moon began to shine,  
I kissed her cheeks and called her mine.  
She turned her head,  
To me she said,  
"Now to please me,  
Get on thy knee,  
To pay for those  
You must propose."  
And then said I, "I must refuse."  
Without a word she blew a fuse.  
I looked up then from on my back,  
For goodness' sakes, that was some crack.  
I wished I had been on my knee,  
For then she wouldn't have flattened me.

## Count Your Blessings

LOIS HANSEN

I paused hesitantly before the green-painted door of Room 230 on Second West, Lutheran Hospital, my hand on the door knob. Impatiently I tugged at my stiffly starched gray uniform, which clung to me, making the uncomfortable sultry summer day even more uncomfortable.

"If I leave these two baths until last, probably Leona will be through with hers and be able to help me here," I thought.

"Now, Joan, is that fair? And besides, you promised yourself to give Mrs. Ullen and Mrs. Brown their baths first thing this morning."

"So I did," I thought wearily "But oh! how I hate to give them baths. Oh! how I loathe it. Who wouldn't?"

I started to go in, but I did not have the will power. It had been terribly hot passing the linen and passing and collecting the trays this morning. And it felt so good to lean up against the cool, cool wall. And as I stood there, a picture of my first visit in that room flashed through my mind.

On my first day as a nurses' aide Mrs. Steinhoff had led me into this room, called the convalescence ward. At first glance my eyes had registered horror. In one corner of this gloomy room stood an old iron hospital bed. On the edge of this neatly made bed sat an old woman, whose eyes, when they turned to look at me, merely stared glassily. Her white straggly hair had hung half way down her back, which was bent with age. She talked to herself in Swedish and now and then laughed crazily.

My heart had crawled slowly up into my throat, and tears stung my eyes. Turning to look at the patient in a similar bed in the opposite corner, I had felt nauseated. In that bed lay the most pitiable human I have ever had the misfortune to meet. Her hair had been braided neatly, framing her ugly face, in which two glassy, meaningless eyes lay sunken. Her long bony chin wagged as she mumbled and sometimes screamed, "Take my puppies out, take my puppies out. Daisy's home, Daisy's home." Her body was deformed from lying so long. Her legs could not be straightened and her spine was curved. I had walked out of the room, unable to say a word to Mrs. Steinhoff.

But my duty lay before me. I grabbed the door knob with a determined air, and hearing the squeaking of an old rocking

chair coming from inside the room, I felt chills of horror creep up and down my spine and relaxed my grip. Little flashes of memories of other incidents spurted through my mind as I stood there, afraid because I knew that eventually I would have to go in. I remembered sometimes entering and finding the old Swede rocking away in her rocking chair and mumbling crazily to herself.

And then there was the other woman. I remembered how she screamed every time I changed her dressings. I remembered how clammy and icy her hands felt when she clawed at my arms. I remembered how I had come to hate the horribleness of it all a little more each time.

I glanced at my watch and became panicky when I saw that it was getting late. I had to go in, but I just couldn't, not yet anyway.

"Why," I asked myself, "does God let them live?" Then I thought, "Perhaps it is to make people like me count their blessings." Shuddering, I pushed open the door.

## *My Julie*

CAROL M. PETERSEN

I remember that afternoon a week ago when Julie came home from high school. Her brown eyes danced with excited sparkles as she bounded through the door, happy from the inside out. Whenever Julie is happy, she is happy all over.

"Hi, Ducky," I called from the kitchen door. She looked at me and for an unsure moment, shoved the glow inside her. "Oh, oh," I thought, "Julie's got an inspiration." With a smile from me, the light came on again, though she tried to suppress her excitement by acting maturely nonchalant. That was her sixteen-year-old method. I, being thirty-nine, could see through her like plate glass.

"Hi, Mom. What-cha doin'?" She knew very well what I was doing, or would have, had her mind been functioning properly. I was holding a potato peeler in one hand and a potato in the other.

"Scrubbing the floor," I answered, turning back to the kitchen and the pan of potatoes.

"Will Daddy be home pretty soon?" Her father always comes home at 4:30. It was 3:55 now.

"Oh, he'll be home about 7:00, I suppose." Would she respond to this absurdity? Herman was always prompt.

She was unimpressed. "A beauty expert came and talked to our home-ec class today."

"Oh, that's nice." What could she be leading up to, I wondered. I always prepare myself for the worst so that nothing will be a shock. That has always been my policy where Julie is concerned. If I don't prepare myself in this manner, I will some day be a complete nervous wreck, shocked beyond the bounds of self-control.

I turned and tossed her the question with my eyes. She caught it and proceeded boldly, like an infantryman advancing on an unconscious enemy.

"She told us about colors and a wardrobe and how to wear our hair, and—Mother, can I cut my hair?"

Thump, That was it. Can I cut my hair. I looked at Julie's black locks brushing her slender shoulders. Aside from my motherly prejudice, I feel I can honestly say that Julie has beautiful hair. Where she got it, I don't know, because her father and I are both blessed with straight brown hair, but Julie's is black and just wavy enough.

She stood before me, five feet three inches of radiant hope. Now, to a casual observer, the cutting of hair isn't a tragedy or even an occasion for much concern, but to a mother who has the image of her only child graven on her heart, well, it's hard to change that image. And Julie, why to Julie—.

"Oh, Mother, please may I? It makes a person look so sophisticated, and I am sixteen now. I think I should stop looking like a little girl."

Stop looking like a little girl? Oh, she is just a little girl, isn't she? The shaft of that thought passed through my heart, right out the back of me, leaving a little vacant spot. Sixteen, that's not so old. Why a sixteen-year-old is just a child. When I was sixteen, I was—. I looked at Julie again. She was ready to leap if given the word, and ready to burst into a violent state of emotion if her wish was not granted. When I was sixteen, I finished my thoughts, I guess I thought I was pretty grown up, but my "mature" feelings were easily touched and tragedy was utter tragedy. But cut her hair, my Julie with flowing black hair. Without speaking, I turned back to my potatoes and jabbed the eye from one.

"Do you propose to cut it yourself?"

"Of course! Miss Burke showed us how to cut our own hair and what flatters who and that stuff."

By now my feelings toward that Miss Burke were definitely not of the buddy-buddy type and I was sorry I had urged the conversation to this point. I mentally saw myself jamming a firm, clean potato down her stylish throat. However, Julie was getting impatient and about to orate when something inside me said right out loud, "All right, go ahead, but take it easy. Maybe I can help." What was that I said? Did I say that? Me, help her in such an abominable act! When I looked up, she was already in the sun room, digging in the sewing kit for the old scissors.

"Gee, thanks Mom. Wait'll Daddy sees me. Will he be surprised!"

"You can be sure of that," I emphasized. Soon I could hear the scissors snip-snipping, and I tried to bury my thoughts in potatoes. Julie with no hair!

That was last week. Tonight Julie's got a date with the most popular boy in her class. Not that popularity matters, but Julie looks cute, like an ad out of *Seventeen*. Fact is, she looks pretty awful cute, my Julie.

## Poem

MARY WEAVER

The creek winds its lonely way  
Down a rocky hillside.  
As it descends, it spreads,  
Exposing its beauty  
Like an oriental fan.

## Billy

RUSSELL P. JENSEN

Billy sat on the front steps listening. The book lay beside him. It was yet early. Billy could smell the awakening of the day, the dew not yet subdued by the sun, the leaf buds opening their eyes to greet the new day. His ears were tuned for the loud whistle that would tell him that Bunker would soon be appearing around the corner. Soon in the distance, Billy's delicately tuned ears heard the loud, shrill whistle of Bunker.

Suddenly Bunker came around the corner. His bicycle was all but scraping on the sidewalk. Jumping off and running breathlessly up to the stairs, he threw himself on the steps beside Billy.

"Hi, been waiting long?" asked Bunker.

"No, I like to get up early and listen to the morning as it wakes up," replied Billy.

"Want to go for a ride after breakfast?"

"No, my Mom said I couldn't after the last time."

"Gee Bill, I'm sorry, honest," said Bunker. His eyes had a hurt expression, but Billy didn't look at him.

Billy reached for the book at his side. His hands moved over the pages fondly. It was his favorite book. He loved it dearly.

"Maybe we can go fishing on Saturday, huh Bill?"

"I don't know, Bunker. I'll have to ask my Mother."

"Oh, well. O.K. But I thought maybe. . . ."

Bunker walked slowly to his bicycle, picked it up, and rode slowly away.

Billy's mother came out on the porch and called him to come to breakfast. Billy slowly rose, took his white cane, and mounted the stairs, his beloved book in his hand.

## *The Street*

ELVA JENSEN

The street stretches out in front of you in the early morning light as you step from the street-car, coming home from the long, tedious night-shift. You start walking slowly toward the tall building at the end of the cobbled pavement thinking about the street. It's not a long street—only two blocks long. But it's a horrible street—soot-stained buildings staring grimly with their rain streaked windows down at the grimy, filthy cobblestones. As you walk along you pull the scarf from your plain brown hair. grimacing as you notice how dirty and stained your hands are. Once you were one of those typical American girls—fresh-looking, well-scrubbed complexion, shining hair, nice hands—now what are you? And you hurry along, dodging the stream of water spraying from the hose carelessly guided by the wizened old man in his tattle-tale grey apron opening up his dirty little corner grocery store. The slimy, musty-smelling water sloshes sluggishly down the mossy gutters after you as you hurry on down the street toward the tall building. But after all, this street is home to you—all the home you have in this big, unfriendly city. And you think a little wistfully of the clean wholesome streets in the town where you were born—sure, it's too bad you had to get that night-shift. But

you should be glad you've got a job. There was no work to be had in that small friendly community you miss so much.

But your thoughts revolt from gratitude for anything that forces you to live on this sordid street and you hurry along, averting your eyes from the sprawled drunk on the steps of one of the buildings. Perhaps you ought to stop. He could be sick—but then, what could you do? Who would thank you for your efforts? Better let it go and not get mixed up in anything. You never can tell whom you're getting mixed up with.

So you hurry on down the street and turn into the tall building toward which you have been walking. Up one flight, two flights—sometime you ought to count the steps. Could you count that far, you wonder whimsically—three flights, four flights. There's your door.

You hesitate before you open it—perhaps today it will be different—you hold your breath and turn the knob—the door swings open on the cracked plaster and the oil-covered orange crates, the ragged curtains and rusty sink, the lumpy, unmade bed and the wobbly-legged table. Dear God!—it's just the same—.

And then just for the instant after you've fallen into the bed with the sagging spring and before you have fallen asleep, the sun shines in the window giving everything a fresh look—a touch of gold. Did you read that somewhere? You are reminded to send up a silent prayer of thanks for at least having the sun—.

The eternal fog blots the sun from sight—and another day starts on the street below you. Then you fall asleep.

## Stella

NAOMI BACH

I sat stiffly in the iron chair in one corner of the music room. Its walls were lined with racks that held ugly black-cased instruments and brown-colored music folios. Several of the iron chairs, which someone had forgotten to put away, were scattered about the room. The silver stands, looking like a group of spikey bushes, stood in one corner.

In the center of the room sat Stella with Mr. Strom, the music instructor, standing over her as she practiced. The shrill notes of the music pierced the afternoon stillness.

I looked away and my eyes found the windows. I didn't

have to look at Stella to remember what she looked like. She was a little girl with dark hair and a beautiful fair complexion. And so talented. Why had she been blessed with so many gifts?

I slowly got out of my chair and walked quietly over to the window, not really seeing the greenness and life of the hot spring day. My thoughts wandered slowly back. Back to Stella and me.

All through school I had tried to compete against her. I had worked hard to get grades that were just as good as hers. How wonderful I had felt that day in the sixth grade when I had gotten a one hundred on an arithmetic test and she only a ninety-eight.

How well I remembered the day tryouts for the Junior High play had been announced! As soon as we both had read *Elmer and the Lovebug* we knew what part we wanted: Millicent, the sweet naive girl who was Elmer's first love. I studied and practiced hard. But I was too tall and too mature for the part. I got the part of Elmer's mother instead.

But in the eighth grade Stella had moved away for a year while her father was in the army. It was a happy year for me. I didn't have to worry about Stella getting straight A's on her report card, while I got one B in English or maybe geometry. When Don Kirshner from Dickenson arrived in school, I got the first date with him, not Stella.

When she came back that next fall, Stella had changed. She no longer openly competed with me, but had learned to do it in a sly manner. So now on the surface we often appeared to be good friends. And her friends were the same as mine. But deep inside me I couldn't squelch that old dislike for her.

Once in a while the fight would flare up in the open. I suddenly remembered the horrible argument we had had about a year ago. With several of our friends, Gloria, Janice and Jean, I had planned on going to a movie in the evening. Little by little we were beginning to exclude Stella from our activities, as we became more and more tired of her pushing and managing, her little tilt of the head and eyes that looked at us with a "better than thou" look, her bragging about her wonderful father and darling little sister. So that evening when she called, I had said that we planned to stay at home. Later on when we had just gotten comfortably settled at the Princess, our one movie theater, I suddenly felt a tap on my shoulder and discovered sitting directly behind me, dear Stella. I could only stare at her as she screamed at me.

"I thought you were staying home tonight?"

"Well, when you called, I had planned on it," I stammered.

"You dirty little brat! Who do you think you are?" she screamed in her father's modified army lingo.

My first reaction was to slap her face, but somehow I managed a cutting, "Please, Stella, after all."

It took a long time before Stella would speak to me, even though we sat side by side in band.

And then the day Mr. Strom, the music instructor, came and asked me if I would like to start taking flute lessons! My parents bought me a flute and I thought now I finally had one role I could play where I wouldn't have to compete against Stella.

I had had my flute just one week when Stella came running up to me, "Suejette, Suejette, I'm getting a flute too. Just think, we can take lessons together."

That sensitive hollow inside me seemed almost to explode. Well, at least I was going to try hard again to excel her.

We had taken lessons together for a year now, both of us practicing hard, trying to outdo the other. Then the day had arrived when Mr. Strom told us the school was going to buy a piccolo.

Oh, how wonderful! Maybe this once, I'd get ahead of her. Maybe I'd get to play that piccolo.

It had taken two months for the piccolo to arrive. Almost every day we would run up to Mr. Strom and ask if it had come yet, hoping that even if it weren't here he would at least tell us which one was going to play it.

Now I tried to make myself believe that it really didn't make any difference. But as I stood listening to her practice "The Stars and Stripes Forever" I felt I had known all along it would be Stella who would get to play. If I had only been competing against someone else, that knot in my chest wouldn't be quite so big. But Stella with her brown eyes that could look so innocent was someone I would always play second fiddle to.

Suddenly the playing stopped. I turned from the window and looked hard at Mr. Strom, hoping the tears beginning to form in my eyes didn't show.

"Suejette," he said, "would you like to try playing it—for fun?"

I looked from him to Stella. A gay smirk on her face, her

eyes seemed to say over and over, "I've won again, I've won again!"

I turned and ran out of the room, out of the building into the burning sunshine and hot air, the knot in my chest moving slowly up into my throat, my ears beating with the noise of the shrill piccolo.

## *From Stream to Sea*

HAL COLE

Starting  
In the mountains high,  
Flowing  
Down to meet  
The great rivers  
Which flow  
To meet  
The great seas  
Which beat  
And fight  
Against the weathered rock—  
In storm  
In peace  
In hurricane  
In calm  
Ever unconquered  
Ever vengeful  
These billows  
Owe all  
To the mountain  
Start.

## *Seashore*

PEGGY WITTLINGER

In the sand are playing little ones three,  
Building their castles of hopes and dreams,  
Not giving a glance to the great white ships  
That are slowly coming in from the sea.

# Home

DAVID S. NULAND

Yes, home is a wonderful place, for you are loved there. You spend the first eighteen or nineteen years of your life there. Every night finds you at home only to leave in the morning again. Then something happens; you find yourself putting out from home. You figure college will be a good place to go to get some learning (some go to get loving but it takes work to get either), or otherwise you set out to see the world or just set out to settle down. At any rate you are glad to leave.

You feel free although you may be a little homesick. You start wondering how things are going at home now that you've left. Then the first letter comes and reads something like this, "Dear Son, We love you and miss you much and it seems lonesome around the house without you. It's even worse than when the dog died." You sit back and think of the day you left and wonder why you did it. Mom had tears in her eyes. Pa was shouting last minute instructions. Sis looked sad because she would have no more help with the dishes. Brother was the only one that looked glad for now he could have the car all to himself.

Yes, they are nice folks! Yes, absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Ah! At last vacation is here, and home you go. The bus just seems to creep along. The driver stops to say hello to his favorite girl (he has one at every stop). But the kind old lady occupying the seat next to yours takes your mind off the slowness of the bus. She asks about, or rather I should say she tells you about the draft board and the new bills. Then she compliments you by saying you are too good-looking to go into war. And that reminds her of her son, and so goes the time of day. By the way, she also had rheumatism and suggested panther oil to relieve the pain.

The bus stops and you pay your compliments to the kind old lady and are on your way across lots taking all the old short cuts home. You enter and shout, "Surprise!" It sounds as if a storm hit the house since every one is glad to see you. Then the excitement finally dies down and Mother remembers that company is coming, and lo and behold, you find yourself out on the front porch with a broom in your hand. (Now a broom isn't much good but to sweep with, so sweep you do). And from that minute till you leave, you are put to work. But work is part of living and it takes a lot of living to make a house a home. Yes, Home! the place where you are loved the most and treated the worst.

Then vacation ends and you go back out in the world to take its knocks and blows, to get up only to get knocked down again, but still having to keep going in order to succeed. After a little of this you would be mighty glad if you could be back home, for there is love and love covers a multitude of mistreatments.  
*Carol Petersen*

## *Futility*

ELVA JENSEN

When the sudden silence descends and enfolds me  
After the song has ended, I think  
Of how magnificent it would be  
If the song had never ended.  
And then I realize that  
The song  
To be a song  
Must end.  
And yet,  
How magnificent it would be  
If the song had never ended.

## *Struggle*

BEATA HAUGE

The huge sack of groceries was heavy—almost too heavy for me as I fought my way up the narrow path toward the little building I had called home for the last four months. The January wind whipped down over the hill, finding its way up the sleeves of my coat and making the coldness penetrate my body. Bits of cinders from the path that began where the cracked sidewalk ended were blown into my face. Perhaps it was a little piece of cinder that made a tear form in the corner of my eye as I looked at the school-house standing all alone on the top of the hill with no trees, even, to comfort it—that is, no trees except the one lifeless, twisted, lop-sided form that had at one time put forth a desperate struggle for life, but had lost to the harshness of the North Dakota winters.

I hated that schoolhouse. It was because of it that we were living in this desolate town. If only my father hadn't died—if only my mother didn't have to teach—.

I crossed the railroad track. Its daily freight train was the only connection between this forsaken town and the rest of the

world. I glanced down the track and thought of Evelyn, who lived about a mile to the West.

Evelyn was the only decent girl in the school. The other seventh grade girls were town girls. They were snobs. If they felt like lowering themselves enough to be friendly to a lonely newcomer—all right. If not, they didn't! Evelyn was different, though. Back in Logan there had been many girls like Evelyn, I wistfully remembered.

My sack kept slipping. I boosted it up with one knee. My fingers and legs were becoming numb. I turned my back to the wind and tried to walk backwards for a while. The distance from the little one-street town with its row of dirty frame buildings, each one with a chimney generating heavy black smoke, had become greater. I had been making progress, even if it didn't seem like it. I turned around again and tried to hold my hand to my nose, but my burden wouldn't allow it. The groceries were becoming heavier and heavier, and I was becoming colder and colder.

The colder I became the more I hated everything about the town and its people. I hated the little white church that seemed to stare unconsolingly at me from the other side of the street, or maybe I should say road, for it was hardly a street with its deep ruts and its ditches that had been over-grown with weeds when we came in the fall, but now were filled with tumble-weeds and tough, brittle ragweed stalks, with a patch of dirty snow here and there among them. Yes, I hated the coolness, the unfriendliness, of that church, with its services every other Sunday—if the minister could manage to come even then. It was nothing like the comforting, inviting church we had left back in Logan.

I was getting nearer to home, but in spite of the fact that I was almost frozen, I didn't want to go home. I hated that house as much as I hated anything else around the place. I hated the horrid yellowish partition that separated our kitchen from the only other room that we had. I hated the kerosene cookstove that always needed more kerosene from the tank by the side of the house. I hated the coal bucket with its brown, soft, peat-like coal that gave off so much gaseous smoke when it burned. I could smell the infernal smoke now as a strong, howling gust of wind blew a wisp of it down to the ground. Well, at least it was making the house warm, I thought—warm except for the drafts that came in all along the walls, despite the hideous black tarred insulation we had nailed around the entire outside lower edge of the house.

No! I didn't want to go home, but I started to run anyway.

I couldn't even feel my feet under me; they were that numb. I became almost hysterical, not only from the intense cold, but also from the hatred and fury that was walled up inside of me and wanted to get out and destroy my surroundings.

As I pushed open the door I wanted to run to my mother and tell her how I hated the place. I wanted to tell her that I'd go back to Logan and stay with my grandparents. I wanted to tell her that I couldn't take it any longer. I threw myself down on the davenport beside my groceries and pulled up my feet to try to warm them. Warm, salty tears were running down my cheeks and my sobs were shaking the whole davenport. I could feel my mother rubbing my toes and hands trying to make them warm. I started to blurt out all I felt, but I was sobbing so hard that I couldn't. I heard mother trying to comfort me as she warmed me, but I didn't listen to what she was saying.

Finally my sobs subsided to an occasional little heave of my shoulders. I looked up at Mother and saw the love in her face. Suddenly I realized it was for my little sister and me that she had taken this job. She wasn't enjoying this life, either! As she wiped a few more tears from my eyes, all that I could say was, "It's—so cold!"

## ***You Do Not Have To Ask***

ELVA JENSEN

You do not have to ask  
"Do you love me?"  
Is it not enough  
That I laugh for you,  
Cry for you, dance for you,  
Controlled by your frowns or smiles  
As a puppet by the strings of its master?

## ***Can't Remember***

ELVA JENSEN

A thought flies through my mind;  
I struggle to grasp it.  
It hesitates an instant  
As if we were playing tag,  
Then, grinning, it eludes me  
And I have lost it.

# Prejudice

HAL COLE

Dirty nigger!  
Damned trash!  
Lynch the cur!

*Hatred!*  
*Prejudice!*  
*Persecution!*

Look at that black wench!  
Beat her!  
Rape her!

*Contempt!*  
*Seduction!*  
*Demoralization!*

Look at them black boys!  
Get rid of the bastards!  
Burn 'em out!

*Scorn!*  
*Depravity!*  
*Dishonor!*

Let's throw 'em out!  
Send 'em back to Africa!  
Stick 'em in Hell!

*Hatred!*  
*Prejudice!*  
*SIN!*

# Question

CAROLYN GRILL

Thou dark and lofty pine,  
What do the breezes whisper  
As they gently sway thy boughs  
And stir the fern beneath you?

## Loneliness

ELVA JENSEN

I stretch out my hands to the children;  
They fall back  
Startled, in the midst of their play,  
Into miniature statues of  
Hard-faced stone—  
And, then, ignoring me, they turn  
Again into flesh and blood  
And go on with their make-believe.  
I try to speak to the adults,  
Talk gaily of clothes, the war, high prices.  
A cool look from a lady I don't know  
Has frozen me as the children froze  
In the garden. They all turn and walk away.  
I laugh with the old, old people—  
Inane, useless laughter.  
Laughing as they do,  
Because I cannot control myself.  
Harder and harder I laugh  
Until the raucous shrieks of merriment  
Tear me apart  
And tears stream down my face.  
I stumble away from humankind, out  
Into the healing balm of night.  
And the breezes dry my tears and whisper  
Of friends, and love, and laughter.

## Modern Newsboy

ELVA JENSEN

I was just finishing waiting on a couple of customers when he first came in. I didn't notice him right away because the top of his head didn't even come to the top of the counter. But after I had moved down the counter, away from my customers, he hoisted himself up somehow onto one of the tall stools and I saw for the first time that piquant little face I still can't forget.

At first glance, he seemed to be all eyes, because his great blue eyes shone out of a thin white face that unexpectedly showed a dimple when he smiled—although it was hard to tell that his face was white. It was unusually grimy with dust and dirt from the streets.

A pitiful little figure he was in his ragged oversize clothes and his little baseball cap that had once been bright red satin, but was now a dirty, dull, faded pink—and I wondered what it was he could want. Then I saw his newspapers. So this little boy was a newsboy, I thought to myself. Well, I wouldn't mind if he wanted to sell his papers in the restaurant. And so when he asked me if he might in a husky little whisper of a voice, I told him he could.

As he walked around the restaurant I noticed how thin he was, and I wondered when was the last time he had eaten. I expected him to leave as soon as he had sold his papers, but he came back and struggled up on the stool, and smiled at me.

He hesitated a moment, and then pulled from his pocket one of those old-fashioned cloth purses with the clasps so hard to open and close. He tugged at the clasp and finally opened it. Then he dumped the pitiful contents out on the counter. Counting slowly and with such intense concentration that his tongue just had to come out and lick the dirt on his cheek, he sorted out five pennies and asked, with that smile which showed the dimples so startling in that thin face, what he could buy for five pennies.

He was so obviously undernourished, and yet so fiercely independent, that my heart turned over, and I told him he could get a little sundae just like the one in that picture for his five pennies. He frowned suspiciously at me, and then glanced at his pennies, but nevertheless, he said he would take it.

When I set it in front of him he again frowned slightly, but flashed that unexpectedly merry smile and pushed the five pennies toward me.

He never came in again. I talked to the man in the barber-shop across the street from me and he told me how the little boy and an older brother who was crippled supported themselves solely by selling newspapers. They were fiercely independent and would not take outright charity from anyone. They supposedly had a mother who was never seen and no one knew anything about her. As the barber talked, I could see how closely the people in the shops along the street kept their eyes on these two boys and their struggle to maintain that hostile independence of their's.

Sometimes when I had nothing to do I would stand at the window and watch him selling his papers, or fighting other more prosperous-looking newsboys for the better corners. He always lost, but he always came back again the next time, fighting just as hard.

But I wondered then, and I wonder still, why it was that my little newsboy never came in again.

## **Helen**

HAI. COLE

As a star  
In the night  
Is Helen!  
For Helen  
Is love itself,  
Helen is beauty,  
Helen is life.  
She loves  
All.  
Helen's lips speak  
Of nothing less than God,  
For Helen  
Is one of His.  
Helen is unlike  
Any other woman.  
Helen is  
All of womanhood combined  
And Helen  
Is mine!

## **On Going To Heaven**

CARI H. NIELSEN

If I go to Heaven  
I am bound to see  
People whose presence there  
Will be a jolt to me.  
But I'll keep very still  
And not even stare.  
Doubtless there'll be people  
Shocked to see me there.