



'60
SOWER

FOREWORD . . .

A new year . . . threshold of a new decade . . . hopes for a bright future — these thoughts are with us at this time. Dana is ever-growing, ever-changing, is new and renewed. But always its spirit lives on with those who come and go.

Likewise, the SOWER has grown and changed. The anthology was first printed in 1942, and contained only creative writing. As years passed by it grew to include art work, and more recently, musical compositions. This year the SOWER contains creative writing, musical compositions, art, a translation of poetry from the German, and also a two-act allegory.

Yet the past has not been forgotten. Three beautiful old gas lamps, sent as a token of friendship from Copenhagen, now provide a soft, warm glow for the student along the way. This spirit has been reproduced on the cover of the 1960 SOWER.

With a remembrance of the past and a look to the future, we present to you the 1960 SOWER. It is yours to read and enjoy. May it serve as a reminder of a year at Dana of which you were a part.

To Professor Joseph Langland, University of Massachusetts, and Professor Norman C. Bansen, to the staff, the contributors, and all who have a part in creating the 1960 SOWER, I am sincerely grateful. You have made this publication a reality.

Arlyce Fuchs, Editor

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Awards . . .

Joseph Langland Award in prose

"A Sound of Laughter," Richard V. Carr

Joseph Langland Award in poetry

"Affair?" Stanley Cupp

Hal Evans Cole Award in music

"Handfuls," Duane Petersen

Hal Evans Cole Award in art

Cover, Jim Olsen

THE SAND AND THE SUN

R. V. Carr

He stood on the chapel steps looking into the glare of the afternoon sun; his mind wandered in the red, flat desert that shifted before him. He hated the wind storms, when the sand drove so hard that the adobe on the mission walls was bleached to a blinding whiteness—almost as if the evil desert had purified the church. When the sand raged and screamed, it steadily carved deep grooves in the buildings of the mission Del Solaz and the burning grains even etched small designs of renewed hate in the soul of Father Antonio. He hated the desert, and sometimes he found hate for the rancheros, and more often, he hated the raiding commanderos from the North. But his hate for the desert left little room in his crowded soul.

Many years had passed since Father Antonio had brought Christ to these people, but Christ had changed; He was no longer the Blessed Virgin's Child of the green valleys of Spain. He had become the dry doctrine that Father Antonio was to preach to the rancheros and peasants of this forsaken wilderness. He often fancied that he could teach more of Christ to the snakes and lizards than to the superstitious Mexicans with their desert spirits.

"Padre! padre!" The cry wafted and dried in the desert sun.

"Come quickly, mamacita!"

The tall dark frame of Father Antonio turned vainly from the sun in the direction of the small voice.

"Quietly, Pepito, I will come."

The words never betrayed a hint of that which dwelt in the soul. Father Antonio's brown, wrinkled hand swallowed the small soft fingers of Pepito and together they headed toward the archway leading to the main street of the silent Mexican village.

Father Antonio walked slowly, not with the meditating slowness of the humble monk, but he walked almost haltingly, swaying heavily on his right foot. He walked with the bones that were no longer young, those that had once carried him through the fertile olive groves of Granada. They were getting old and brittle—dried by the omnipresent desert sun.

"Hurry, padre. Mama is very sick!"

"Yes, yes, Pepito, I am hurrying."

They had walked past the first of the small adobe houses which lined the dusty street in two crooked rows. The houses had the same dry, white-washed appearance as the walls of the mission. Only these houses were roofed with dark thatch, for few men in El Pueblo De Solaz could afford the fine red tiles that covered the buildings of the mission.

As they passed between the rows of houses, Father Antonio saw the same scenes he had viewed for thirty-five years. Nothing had changed in Solaz; it was preserved like a tomb—a tomb in the desert.

Pepito led Father Antonio through a low doorway into a dark, stifling room. He recognized the odors of the hot air; they no longer strangled him with their burning scents. He could smell the peppers which were drying in strings near the single window. He smelled the spices of uncleaned cooking bowls and the brilliant dyes of the coarse wool blankets, all of which were added to the eternally rising dust of the floor.

"I have brought Father Antonio."

He glanced at the bulging mound on the low cot against the wall. A small square of fused light, from the lone window, fell on the wrinkled face of the aging woman.

"Ay senora? Qué pasa?"

"Padre!" The parched lips moved.

"Padre, the desert spirits are in me; they have come to take my heart."

"No, senora, they will not take it. Quietly now, you must rest."

As Father Antonio knelt down beside the cot, he looked deeply into the feverish eyes of the old woman, eyes that he had seen often before, the eyes of sickness—a disease of the desert. And maybe it really did come from the desert spirits. He wiped the sweat from her forehead. He thought of what the outcome of her illness would be; maybe a day or only an hour, but she would die soon.

"Father, will mamacita die? Will she die?"

"Only if it is God's will, Pepito."

Father Antonio turned and clasped his rosary between his hands. He bowed his head. The prayers droned through the darkness. They mingled with the dust of the floor; they rose and fell, dryly drifting through the hot room.

Pepito was quietly sobbing and praying, but his prayers fell damp in the dust of the floor; they splashed into tiny patterns of red mud.

A short time later, a deep sigh penetrated the thick atmosphere of the dark room and Father Antonio could be heard pronouncing the Benediction—the word-spirits, unreal, rolled slowly between Father Antonio and Pepito.

“Padre?” a weak voice asked, “padre?”

“Yes, Pepito.”

“No! No! Mama?”

“Come, Pepito.”

Father Antonio stepped out into the hot desert sun. A slight wind was whirling small funnels of sand around the buildings. As he walked toward the mission his head was bowed, but not with reverence. He looked down at the dry, red earth. He felt the tugging hand of the sobbing Pepito, and he thought how much he hated the sand and the sun.

NIGHT ENCHANTMENT

Sally McMahon

Giving light upon the world are the moon and the stars.

Illuminated by the moon are the well-rounded rocks embedded deeply into the abounding hills.

The bird of prey hovers into space casting its rambling shadow on the heads of the hills.

Shallowed crevices are protected from the moon's ray and small almost obscure insects are busily consuming the day's tributes.

Ambling over rock and pebble, searching endlessly for food, the coyote settles its shrunken body into the mouth of a hill.

And peering down at him is the philosopher amongst the hills, the owl.

Seeing and knowing all, he gazes below with indifference at a valley blind with darkness...a microcosm...in the stillness of night.

"OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN"

T. J. Hess

"...the blast leveled homes in an area of fifty miles; radiation killed all living creatures up to one hundred miles. New York a desert!" Johnny threw down the paper and walked off sunny Market Street into a small bar. The bar hummed with conversation and a great number at the rail kept the bartender busy filling glasses. The drunks piled up in the back of the establishment. I guess the news left little time for preparing against the inevitable attack on this great city, thought Johnny, as he reached for his glass of scotch. A flash came over the radio..."Any persons attempting to leave the city will be shot at the police barricades!" Johnny laughed inside himself at the astonishment on the customers' faces when they heard this. Where could they go? There's no sense getting out of town now, might just as well sit tight and wait for the end. He slung the drink of scotch down across his tongue and it led a bitter trail toward his stomach. Getting up from the bar stool, he crossed the barroom and strode back into the sunshine. Walking briskly, he observed people scurrying back and forth carrying their life possessions strapped to their backs. They were preparing to evacuate the city.

Windows along the walks were smashed; thieves reached in and a handful of wedding rings disappeared. It's disgusting, Johnny said to himself; God's creatures act just like pack rats leaving a sinking ship. The biblical story of Noah and the ark crossed his mind. Where can they go but to certain death?

Johnny walked on. Here and there he could hear people screaming and crying. "...and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"...the phrase raced through his mind. He looked across the street and saw the bloody remains of a suicide leap from the forty-story building. One of many before the end, he said to himself. He took a left turn into an abandoned restaurant. The mirror behind the counter was smashed, otherwise everything was in place. He sat down at the counter and lit a cigarette. A sign over the counter read: "No credit allowed!" Isn't that the way it is right now, he mused, nothing but cash on the line! We are going

to get what's coming to us. After our long cold war they're paying us off in total destruction! Picking up a salt shaker he threw it across the room; it shattered against the far wall. Out he went into the daylight. Another two blocks and he stood in front of a huge cathedral with the doors ajar. He walked in. His footsteps echoed up the long aisle. Johnny walked to the front, shed his coat onto a nearby bench, straightened his clerical robe, stepped up to the altar, knelt down... "Our Father who art in heaven...!"

LENT

Willa Houtwed

Ash Wednesday.

Cold and drear, the darkened snow
Covers the land. The leafless trees
Seem mourning in their nakedness.
The sun hides its face in shame.
All is white and black,
A contrast of the pure
Against the vacant soul
Of man. What promise here?

Silent and sure the seasons change.
The ground again is bare, and where
The snow lay, now are tufts of green.
The sun still hides its face
Behind the clouds, and soft spring rain
Falls to the earth.

Resurrection.

The dawn arrives, and with it comes
The song of birds. No more of snow or rain,
But only sunlight streams from skies of blue.
A tree, once barren at the summit of a lonely hill
Is now adorned with green,
The hill is now a labyrinth of flowers.
Thus do the seasons change, and thus the soul of man
Is cleansed, until another Lent
Brings need, then promise, then relief.

APRES - MIDI

Isaac Jenkins

Rhythmically Bright

The first system of musical notation consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. It begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note F#4, a half note G#4, and a quarter note A4. The middle staff is in bass clef and contains a continuous eighth-note accompaniment pattern: G#3, F#3, E3, D3, C3, B2, A2, G#2. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a continuous eighth-note accompaniment pattern: G#2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G#1. Dynamics include a piano (p) marking in the middle staff and a forte (f) marking in the bottom staff.

The second system of musical notation consists of three staves. The top staff continues the melody from the first system, featuring a half note F#4, a half note G#4, and a quarter note A4. The middle staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment pattern. The bottom staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment pattern. Dynamics include a forte (f) marking in the top staff and a piano (p) marking in the bottom staff.

The third system of musical notation consists of three staves. The top staff continues the melody, featuring a half note F#4, a half note G#4, and a quarter note A4. The middle staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment pattern. The bottom staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment pattern. Dynamics include a forte (f) marking in the top staff and a piano (p) marking in the bottom staff.

Slowly

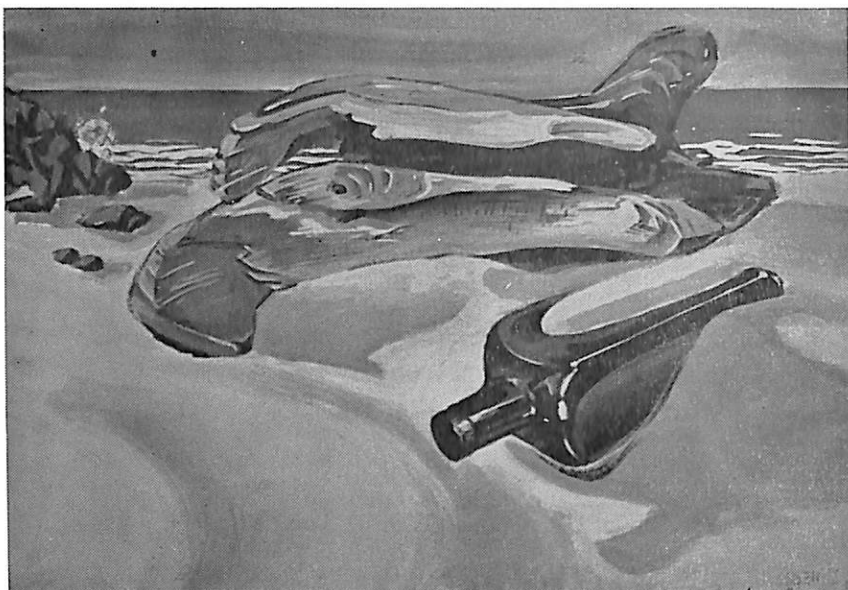
First system of a musical score. The top staff is a treble clef with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes, marked 'Slowly'. A crescendo hairpin is placed over the first four measures. The bottom staff consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with block chords. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano).

Second system of the musical score. The top staff continues the melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff continues the block chords. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). A crescendo hairpin is placed over the last four measures of the system.

a tempo

Third system of the musical score. The top staff features a more active melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, marked 'a tempo'. The bottom staff continues the block chords. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). Crescendo and decrescendo hairpins are used in the top staff.

Fourth system of the musical score. The top staff shows a melody with some rests and a final chord. The bottom staff continues the block chords. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *f* (forte), and *ff* (fortissimo). The system concludes with a final chord in both staves.



Hacetta

Jim Olsen

MAN ALONE

Jim Olsen

Although my ketch was at anchor, it rolled and pitched with the waves. A vicious wind forced its way between the high rocky cliffs that flanked the narrow mouth to the cove. I could barely hear the shrill of the wind whistling through the rigging above the torrents of rain pounding on the cabin roof. It was not an unusual storm for February though. I had experienced worse storms many times.

It was depressing to be alone; to think back over the past few empty years. Each one had seen me degenerate one step further. I made my way across the cabin to a bottle of rum. The sky was bright as day for an instant, then came a deafening clap that rolled off into a whisper. Bottle in hand, I stepped out on the deck. I was

completely drenched by the rain in a few seconds, but the wind was warm and the water soothed my hot face. Once again I was lost in memory. The bottle was almost empty before I realized, but I had had enough. I tossed it into the water. It floated upright at first, but the wind and waves took their toll. It began bobbing from side to side, taking in water, diluting the once pure rum. More and more water splashed in as it slowly sank until only the neck remained above the surface. I turned away. I could not watch it any longer. I knew what would happen to the bottle...and to my soul.

DER GOTTSUCHER

Gustav Schöler

Ich habe Gott gesucht und fand ihn nicht.
Ich schrie empor und bettelte ins Licht.
Da, wie ich weinend bin zurückgegangen,
Fasst's leise meine Schulter: „Ich bin hier,
Ich habe dich gesucht und bin bei dir.“ —
Und Gott ist mit mir heimgegangen.

THE SEEKER

Translated by
Willa Houtwed

I sought the Lord, and yet I found him not.
I raised my voice, and in that hope I fought.
Then, as I weeping fell, at dusk of day
He raised me, softly saying, "I am here,
I have sought, and found, and I am near."
And God is with me on my homeward way.

THE LOST DEADLINE

Holger Madsen

:“Well, that’s all for today,” sighed Joe as he stuck the reports into the big brown envelope. Pushing his chair back from his desk, he swung a tired foot over his knee and wearily began to unlace his hiking boot. With about as much gusto as a man who has hiked twenty miles can muster, he repeated the same procedure with the other foot. Uttering a long groan he extended his stockinged feet in a gesture of complete fatigue. Too tired to move he just sat and stared out of the dirty window. He was too exhausted to think. Joe was jolted back to realization by the shrill jingle of the phone. Staring at it with contempt, he let it ring, hoping that whoever it was would soon give up. No dice—the phone kept ringing. Snapping to alertness he grabbed the receiver, “Yea,” he growled.

“Long distance,” said the sweet voice at the other end of the wire. “We have a call for a Mr. Joe Johnsen. Los Angeles is calling.”

“Put them on,” said Joe.

“It’s a Mr. Les Regan from Los Angeles who wishes to speak with a Mr. Joe Johnsen,” insisted the operator.

“Well, who the devil do you think I am, Santa Claus? Put Regan on.”

“Yes, Sir,” gasped the operator.

With the receiver to his ear, Joe reached for a pencil and paper while the operator struggled to get a clear line. After the usual interlude that always went with a long distance call in a small town, Joe finally heard a familiar “Hello, Joe.”

“Hello, Les, what’s up?”

“Got a pencil and paper, Joe?”

“Just like asking a duck if it can swim,” thought Joe. But that was Regan for you, always direct—never any time for salutations. “Yea, shoot,” he muttered.

“150 blue, 250 pink, 600 red, 700 green, 240 brown, 60 purple, 2 twenties and 1 thirty. These are all bales. Did you get them all? And make sure that they are all number one stuff.”

“Since when did I ever send you anything but number one?” snarled Joe.

"O.K. O.K.," said Regan apologetically. "Don't be so touchy."

"Where do you want them and when?" yawned Joe.

"No later than October 6, spotted in Frisco."

"Are you crazy? That's less than two weeks away and it's still too bloody hot to cut. I haven't even got any cutters started, let alone have 10,000 ready to ship," protested Joe, coming fully awake.

"That's your problem, Johnsen. Just see that they get here. I'll call you tomorrow." With that, Regan hung up.

"Why you stupid slob of a malleable iron double-back action, self-adjusting cor."

"If you are through with your call, sir, please hang up," interrupted the operator.

"Aw shut up," he moaned throwing the receiver into its cradle. Without taking his eyes from the order sheet before him, Joe reached into a drawer and pulled out a bottle. As he peeled the wrapper from the bottle, he stretched out his foot reaching for the nearest boot.

"Here's to the night shift," he muttered as he poured some of the dark black rum down his throat. "11 p.m. Better get at it."

Entering the New Moon Cafe, Joe peered through the smoky haze of the noisy room. This third-rate joint was always filled with "Smokeys" after the late night show was out; Charlie ought to be here too. Pushing his big, well-proportioned body through the welter of bronzed faces, Joe spied Charlie and some of his gang in a back booth.

"Hi, Joe," greeted Charlie. "Sit down."

Charlie was a good guy. He was popular with his tribe. He had a high school education and that put him in the role of spokesman. He was smart, too, and a real go-getter.

"Got a tough job for you, Charlie. How many men have you got? Good men, I mean, cutters that don't need an inspector."

"About ten," replied Charlie after a minute's hesitation. "Going to start cutting already? Plenty hot yet, isn't it?"

"Too darn hot, but this is a special order. How soon can you get your gang together?" asked Joe. He was beginning to feel better now that the rum was starting to work.

"Just a minute, I'll see," said Charlie. Going down the length of the cafe he called to this fellow and to that. As the men crowded around the booth, Joe wrote on a napkin. 150-2's, 250-4's, 600-6's, 700-8's, 240-10's, 60-12's, 2-20's, 1-30. Turning the napkin to Charlie, he asked, "How soon can you have these ready to go, baled and loaded?"

"How much money?" queried Charlie.

"Two bits a bale."

"It'll take us about two weeks," replied Charlie.

"At thirty cents a bale, how long will it take?"

After a conference with his gang, Charlie answered, "One week, if there's beer money."

"There'll be beer money if you make it in a week."

"O.K., it's a deal," said Charlie as his gang nodded smiling approval.

"Keep them in the shade and bale them at night. We don't want them to shed," cautioned Joe as he left the jabbering group.

Next evening when the phone rang Regan asked, "How are you coming?"

"They'll be loaded in a week and on their way. What's the big rush all about?"

"The boat leaves for Hawaii October 2, and we have to sharp-freeze them first," snapped Regan. "What's the price?"

"Thirty cents plus beer money," replied Joe.

"That's too much. Why, we can't afford to pay that," Regan sputtered.

"That's your problem, Regan," chortled Joe as he hung up.

A few days later Charlie phoned and asked Joe to have the cars spotted as they would be ready to start loading any day.

Joe made his way along the walk and entered the little waiting room that smelled of old cigars and snuff. "Darn it," he thought, "I should have gotten to work on this angle long ago." He greeted the little shriveled-up man in the visored cap as he hobbled out of his chair and made his way to the counter.

"Hi, Jess, how soon can I get a couple of fifty-foot boxcars with solid frames?"

"Lemme see," replied the other, thumbing through a little book. "Two weeks is the earliest I can promise you, Joe. But if you'll take the open frames you can have them tomorrow."

"This is a U.S. shipment and you know that the Yanks won't accept open frames and there isn't time to reload at the border," Joe explained. "Can't you make a switch for me? This is urgent."

Jess peered over his dirty glasses at Joe's hand. Seeing the ten-dollar bill in it, he said, "I'll give you one."

Joe tossed him the bill. "I need two, though."

Again the little old man looked over his glasses at Joe's hand where another ten-spot lay. He shook his head. Joe dug into his pocket and exchanged the ten for a twenty. Jess's face broke into a sly grin. "They'll be on the siding tomorrow," he mumbled, scooping up the bills.

Charlie and his gang met their deadline and everything went according to schedule. Regan had even phoned and assured Joe of a bonus.

Two weeks before Christmas, Regan phoned again. "Bad news Joe—the Hawaiians are disappointed."

"Why, what's the matter? What happened? Weren't they good enough?"

Regan laughed, "The boat sank two days out of Hawaii, so now Davy Jones is stuck with ten thousand Christmas trees."



Rubber Plant

Jim Olsen

GOD CAN'T DRIVE

Stanley Cupp

I awoke with a start to see Grandpa standing beside the bed. The sun was glaring through the shade as it always did on the morn of a hot day. He chuckled softly when I squinted at the clock. It was 7:30.

"Come on, 'Zilch.' Can't be a sleepy-head and catch those old bullheads. Grandma has pancakes on the stove already."

I sat up in bed, trying to decide what to say. Grandpa patted me on the rump as he turned to go. Yawning and stretching, my mind not yet fully awake, I once again tumbled into thoughts of decision. I had fallen asleep the night before, restless and disturbed over my problem.

Every summer a part of school vacation included a stay at Grandpa and Grandma's house. Today was Sunday and the folks would be here to take me home. It had been a short week, probably because we had had so much fun together. But now I must decide. Grandpa wanted me to go fishing with him, and if I did the folks would be here before we got back. If I didn't go with him, he'd be hurt, and if I did, the folks would be hurt. I wished that Mom and Dad were here now so that they could tell me what to do.

I crawled out of bed slowly, remembering the week's events. Visions of picking strawberries and eating more than I put in the pan, sitting quietly along the river bank with the old yellow cane pole resting across my arm, and riding along a country road in Grandpa's old Model T Ford—these things passed through my mind in the time it took for me to reach the window. I raised the shade and looked out.

The robins were taking their turns at bathing in Grandma's bird bath near the front of the house. I could see the shed where Grandpa parked his car, partially hidden in the alley across the street. Old Nels was working in his garden among the flowers. He could sure tell some fish stories.

As I began to dress I heard a call from the kitchen telling me to hurry up. "You better get here pretty quick or I'll have your cakes all ate up."

Then he chuckled aloud when I hollered that I was coming.

Grandpa was always in a good humor. He often laughed until he got red in the face and started to cough from smoking too many cigars. He was a good buddy, too, and it was very seldom that he passed anybody on the street without talking for a minute. I liked to visit with him in the summer, and everybody liked the way Grandpa came to visit when somebody was sick or had died.

I finished tying my shoe and went into the kitchen. Grandma smiled her good morning and put some pancakes on my plate. Then as I started to sit down, she said "Ah! Ah! Ah!" and I went over and washed my hands and face.

After a bit Grandpa looked up at me for a minute, noticing that I hadn't as yet said anything.

"What's the matter, 'Stick-in-the-mud'? Don't you feel good?"

"Yeah, I feel O.K.," but it didn't sound like it. I ate only three pancakes before saying that I was full.

"What?" said Grandma in disbelief. "You can't be full already or you are sick."

"Grandpa, I don't think I better go fishin' today."

"So that's what's the matter. You can stay here if you like, and wait for the kids to come." He looked up and winked at Grandma.

"Well, I wanta go fishin' with you, Grandpa, but maybe I better wait for Mom and Dad instead."

"Ok-e-doke. Maybe we can find something to do after dinner. Would you like that better?"

I nodded my approval and he left, hollering back through the door to say that he'd see me out at Aunt Edna's for dinner. "With a whole string of nice bullheads, too," he added with a chuckle.

* * *

It was afternoon now, about one o'clock. My family had come and we were all out at Aunt Edna's farm. Just about everybody was there for the celebration, since today was Sunday, July 2. Aunt Lucile was up clear from Des Moines and Uncle Floyd had driven over a hundred miles to come up from Waterloo. Everyone was laughing and joking about his coming such a long ways and then finding that Grandpa was gone fishing, but the whole household agreed that they wouldn't want him to be any other way. It was just like him.

We boys were all out playing softball in the yard, hardly conscious of the fact that dinner was late because Grandpa hadn't yet arrived. Besides, we were all having a good time, what with the fireworks to be shot off as soon as it got dark enough later in the day. None of us even noticed the strange car pull into the lane and

stop outside the house. A few minutes later my younger sister ran into the yard, screaming the message which the man in the car had brought with him.

"Grandpa's dead! Grandpa died and made his car get stuck in the ditch!"

The words stopped all motion. We stood dumbfounded, unbelieving, yet struck by the weight of what she had said.

"Don't ever say that again, you stupid little brat," I growled at her.

"Go ask Mom if you don't believe me, then," she said with the smirk of a proud youngster.

I raced into the house, hitting her and knocking her down as I passed. One look told the awful truth. There would be no celebration today, nor the 4th either. Mom hugged me against her stomach, the tears streaming down her cheeks. She led me into the bedroom where we could be alone.

"Grandpa got stuck in the mud while he was fishing, Sonny, and he had to work too hard to get out. When he was coming to see us, God decided to take him to Heaven where he could rest, so He made Grandpa's heart stop and drove the car off into the ditch."

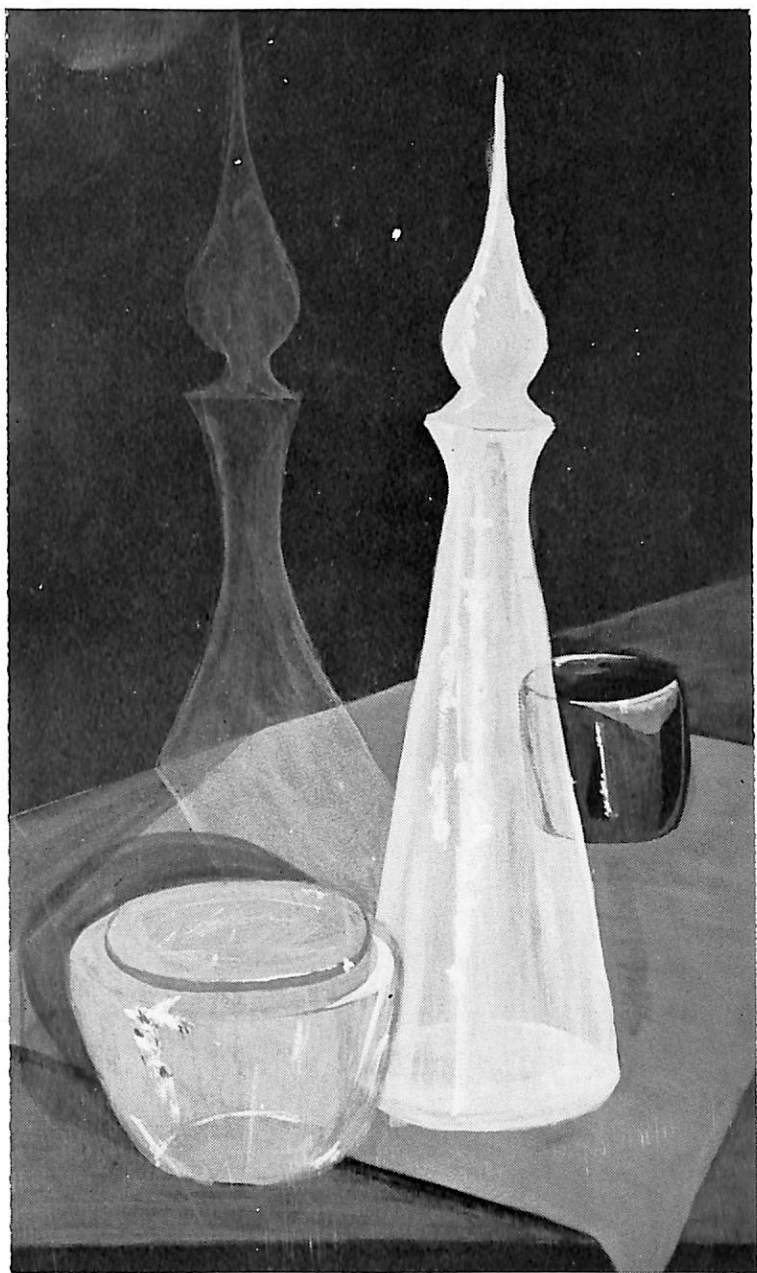
I began to cry even harder. Her words echoed in my mind. I didn't care what she said. God sure must not be a very good driver if He couldn't get Grandpa home safe.

FAITH'S DUTY

Timothy Larsen

When in that moment all seems lost—
The past all lived in vain,
And soul within its storm is tossed
On waves that bear no gain—

Then faith by duty has one choice:
It pleads to search inside
To find and hear that still small voice
That calms and turns the tide.



Study in Ceramics and Glass

Jim Schaeffer

A SOUND OF LAUGHTER

An Allegory In Two Acts

by

Richard V. Carr

CHARACTERS

Dr. Vance Landersen: A Physics Professor

Adam

Martin Luther

Charles Darwin

Omega

A Messenger

Peter: Innkeeper

A SOUND OF LAUGHTER

Act I

Scene I

First Setting—A narrow winding pathway barely moonlit in the misty night; a very cool, almost cold breeze moves the trees that overhang the pathway. The path itself is so crowded by the trees that it seems to pass through a tunnel.

Briskly walking down the pathway is a rather short, heavy-set man; thrown over his shoulders is a long dark cape; he is absorbed in his own audible conversation. His name is Dr. Vance Landersen.

Dr. Landersen: I can't ever remember it being this cool in July nor can I recall a night as black as this; not even a star. Hmph! That devilish moon is purposely leaping behind every cloud that passes.

Hello. Looks like a torch, yes.

Hello there!

Adam: (on the pathway) I greet you in God's name.

Dr. Landersen: (Mumbling to himself) Strange looking chap. Must be an entertainer for the Inn.

(The strange man is clad in what appears to be a cave man's costume of animal skins.)

Dr. Landersen: Glad to see your light; black as hell out here. Going to the Inn? The name's Landersen, Vance Landersen.

Adam: (Astonished at the rapidity of Landersen's conversation)
I—I am Adam.

Dr. Landersen: (Grabs his hand and pumps it vigorously) Are you headed for the Balbrook Inn?

Adam: Balbrook Inn?

Dr. Landersen: Yes. Yes! Come now, this path leads nowhere else.

Adam: You must be mistaken; this is the path to Nod.

Dr. Landersen: Nod? Where? Damned if I've heard of that town.

Adam: I know nothing of a town, but Nod lies at this path's end.

Dr. Landersen: I'm sorry, old chap, but Balbrook Inn lies on this path. After all, I've traveled this path for seventeen long years; I live at the Inn.

Adam: I, too, have traveled this crooked path many times.

Dr. Landersen: (Interrupting) I say, it's damned cold standing here. Let's walk on.

(They turn and begin to walk down the path. Landersen speaks again.) If this is your path, and I'm sure it's mine, and if we walk together, we should both arrive at our destinations. (He laughs) I say, that is a hell of a paradox. Don't you have another name besides Adam?

Adam: No. Only Adam.

Dr. Landersen: Say, what's the costume for? Rather cool for this evening, isn't it? That lamp—strange, I hadn't noticed it before. An oil lamp?

Adam: I carved it myself; it burns sheep's oil.

Dr. Landersen: It's strange this breeze hasn't blown—(He suddenly stops speaking; he turns about and takes a long look back down the pathway; he mumbles) Hmm, very curious.

Adam: (Noticing Dr. Landersen's glance back down the path) Curious?

Dr. Landersen: (Turning to Adam) Oh, yes. About the lamp, I mean; the wind hasn't blown it out. (He again looks back down the path.)

Adam: You are right. I thought I knew it well, but it is not the same now.

Dr. Landersen: (Interrupting) Did we pass on to another back there?

(The light in Adam's lamp suddenly goes out.)

Adam: The lamp has gone out!

Dr. Landersen: (Absently draws a lighter out of his pocket) Try this.

Adam: What is it?

Dr. Landersen: (Again looks down the path) What? Oh! (He tries several times to light the lighter, but it fails to light.) Damn machine.

Adam: The wind—

Dr. Landersen: (Thrusts the lighter back in his pocket) The what?

Adam: The wind has stopped.

Dr. Landersen: (Recovering himself) Well, that's more like it; I knew this cold spell couldn't last in the middle of July.

Adam: (Casting his eyes towards the sky, whispers) God has once again sent us the moon and stars.

Dr. Landersen: (Looking up, slightly astonished) Yes —

Adam: God is with —

Dr. Landersen: (Breaks in) Well, there's no need for that lamp now. Let's hurry on; I'm hungry, and you must have some rehearsing to do.

(The lights dim to dark and both men walk briskly off stage.)

Scene II

Same pathway with a cutaway inn at right—it is in darkness—lights come up to dim on two figures.

Dr. Landersen: Ah, just around the bend.

Adam: What is?

Dr. Landersen: The Inn! It's just around the bend; (A sound of loud voices comes from the Inn) don't you hear the laughter?

Adam: (Slowly) Yes, I hear, but if the path ends—(They round the bend in the path and the light from the windows suddenly bursts upon their faces. Adam whispers astonished) I am lost.—What demon's trick have you led me into?

Dr. Landersen: (Stopping to stare at Adam) What was that you said? (He laughs) A trick? Surely you've seen an Inn before.

Adam: (Still whispering) This is the Inn? It is the Serpent's dwelling.

Dr. Landersen: Are you completely mad? Stay and catch your death, I'm going in.

(Landersen turns to enter. Suddenly Adam drops the extinguished lamp and leaps for Landersen's arm; he is still awe-struck, and does not speak. Landersen ignores Adam, confronts the door, turns the knob and marches straight in. He stops in mid-stride and gasps. The door is still open and Adam is still clinging to Landersen's arm.)

(The lights come up on the left of the Inn while the right side is still in a semi-darkness.)

Luther: Ah! (A loud voice booms from a figure before the fireplace) More guests!

Dr. Landersen: (Still slightly astonished but becoming furious)
What?—What in the world's going on here?

Luther: We're not sure this is in the world (Returns the figure from the fireplace).

Dr. Landersen: Would you mind telling me what's going on here?

Luther: An excellent question which deserves an answer — which I cannot supply.

Dr. Landersen: (Squarely facing figure at fireplace) Who are you and why are you dressed like that?
(The figure steps towards Landersen; he is dressed in the garb of a 16th century priest.)

Luther: (Seriously) My name is Luther, Martin Luther.

Dr. Landersen: (Again astonished) Are you daft? You're who?

Luther: (Laughs) You've not heard of the renegade Luther. — You cannot be a Catholic.

Dr. Landersen: (Weakly) No, of course not, I'm a Lutheran.

Luther: (Astonished) A what?

Dr. Landersen: (He suddenly realizes the door is still open; he slams it; then rather nervously he speaks.) Well, I'll leave you to your party and retire. (He turns left and walks to the left wall; he even reaches out for a non-existing door knob.)

Luther: (He follows Landersen's actions; he notes the gesture for the door knob and laughs) Now, who's daft? Were you going to walk straight through the wall?

Dr. Landersen: (He stares blankly at the wall. Adam has remained very close to Dr. Landersen and now Landersen, annoyed, shouts at him.) Will you stop following me!
(Then Landersen slowly walks to the large oaken table that reaches to the other end of the room. He withdraws a chair and slumps into it, staring at the ale mug before him. Adam recovering, moves swiftly into a chair beside Landersen. Dr. Landersen gazes around the room as if it were completely strange to him. His eyes come to rest on two other figures seated at the table. One is seated opposite Adam. He is rather short and plump with a long, white beard; he is dressed in a jacket and vest from about 1850. The other figure is seated at the far end of the table and is obscured slightly by the darkness at that end of the room. He is dressed in a red cloak and hood, and he is facing the wall; it is impossible to see his face. It cannot be seen if the figure is man or woman. Dr. Landersen turns to Luther questioningly. Luther speaks, pointing to the figure opposite Adam.)

Luther: He calls himself Darwin, Charles Darwin, and the other, the other does not speak.

Dr. Landersen: (Still astonished, whispers) Charles Darwin? —
 And you, you are truly Martin Luther?

Luther: I have told you so, and I speak only truth; and who are you and what is your servant called?

Dr. Landersen: (Regaining some of his composure) I'm Dr. Vance Landersen and this is Adam—he is not my servant.

Luther: Adam? Only one name?

Adam: (Timidly) Yes, only Adam.

Luther: (Amused) Easier to remember, I envy you.

Darwin: (Speaking to Landersen and Adam) Would you mind telling us how you two came to this place.

Dr. Landersen: (Slowly, as if trying to remember) I was returning to this Inn — ah, Balbrook Inn — from the University as I do each evening; I took the shortcut over the moor.

Darwin: Enough!—I suppose (pointing to Adam) that's his story also?

Dr. Landersen: No. He —

Adam: (Interrupting) I was going to visit my son —

Darwin: (Breaks in) And you were taking the wooded pathway?

Adam: Yes. I always —

Darwin: (Again breaks in) The same!—Exactly the same story.

Luther: He means that we all seemed to be on a wooded pathway when suddenly we came upon this tavern.

Darwin: Inn! If you please, Herr Luther.

Dr. Landersen: (Surprised) Inn —. Yes, where is the Innkeeper?

Luther: Innkeeper?

Dr. Landersen: Yes, Peter, the Innkeeper.

Luther: There are none but those you see in this room.

Dr. Landersen: (Rising, calls) Peter —? Peter —? (He then notices the absence of a counter and that there is only one room and one door, the one which he and Adam entered.)

Adam: (Leaping out of his chair) This is evil! I must leave this place. (He looks at Landersen with pleading eyes, then turns to the door).

Darwin: It's of no avail to leave. There is only one pathway, and it ends just around the bend—. Go ahead, look for yourself!

Adam: (Looks at the figure at the far end of the table) Trapped! The Serpent has trapped us!

Dr. Landersen: (Seats himself again and grasps the mug) Ale?

Darwin: Yes, five mugs of ale and five chairs. Whoever owns this place was only expecting five guests.

Luther: (Glaring at the red-hooded figure) Yes, there are many strange things about this Inn. (Then defiantly) He neither speaks nor turns about!

Dr. Landersen: Won't speak?

Luther: (Dryly amused) He reminds me of a certain Bishop I once knew.—

Darwin: (At these words the figure slowly turns about and faces the other four people who are astonished to see the cloaked figure move. Darwin is the first to recover) Who are you?

Omega: You shall call me Omega.

Luther: (Seating himself next to Darwin) You are a Greek then?

Omega: No, not a Greek.

Dr. Landersen: Then, who?

Adam: (Whispering) The Tempter.

Omega: For now a name, but soon you shall know all. (He again slowly turns to the wall.)

Dr. Landersen: Impossible, it's a joke.

Luther: If it is, it's the most clever joke of all ages (He laughs).

Darwin: (Seriously) It's no joke. Our very presence is proof of that. But one fact is positive, we must have been specially chosen to be here.

Luther: Chosen? What do you mean, chosen?

Darwin: I'm not sure why or who did the choosing, but we are here and we have transcended time.

(At this moment there is a soft knock at the door.)

Luther: Enter.

(The knock comes again)

Luther: Enter!

(Dr. Landersen rises and walks to the door. He opens it and a strange soft light floods the doorway. Omega rises as do Darwin and Adam; Luther is last and he rises slowly.)

Adam: (Whispering) The Serpent has come.

(The light disappears and a youthful-looking man steps in. He is clothed in a white gown and hood.)

Dr. Landersen: (Slowly and dryly) Will you sit here? (He offers the young man his chair.)

Young Man: No, I will stand, for what I have to say will only take a moment. You are to decide a question that will determine your future in this world. The one whom you call Omega will answer any questions after I have gone. Man has been judged by the Father and found wanting. You have put more to doctrine and noble ideals than to love of His sacrifice. But once again He shows you His love and mercy; He will let you choose—if—you, all five are true to love. Then you will decide between Paradise and Damnation.

(The young man turns and opens the door. The soft light again floods the doorway for a moment, then recedes, and the figure

is gone. The door remains opens. There is a silent clash of minds and souls. No one moves at first; then, Landersen slowly closes the door.)

Omega: How you came here is not important, but who sent you is; you were directed here by the Father, or God, or Jehovah. He is one.

(Darwin smiles)

(Martin Luther is expressionless)

(Dr. Landersen and Adam stare unbelievably at Omega)

Omega: I must begin by explaining my own presence here. Omega is a well-chosen name for I am truly the end — the last man on Earth. I am come from the future which you created.

Darwin: You've come from where?

Omega: (Stronger) You will not ask any unnecessary questions, for you must return before you are missed.

Luther: Adam? — Yes, you are the Adam of Genesis.

(Adam returns a questioning glance.)

Omega: He is that Adam.

Dr. Landersen: (Recovering) Who was the young man in white?

Omega: A messenger.

Darwin: From God?

Omega: Yes, and you four are to represent Man.

Luther: Can this be that Almighty God would give us the power to judge.

Omega: Not judge, for we have already been judged; all of us for all time, not only by God but also by men—that judgement I am the result of. I am the last living man on earth.

Dr. Landersen: What do you mean, the last man?

Omega: The last man alive after the great atomic war.

Darwin: But how?

Omega: The details are not necessary. You would not understand. You four have a great task which you may or may not perform; it is your choice. But if you decide to do it, it must be done together, every heart must be true and it shall be done.

Luther: How can we accomplish this task?

Omega: You must change history!

Darwin: Impossible!

Omega: No, not impossible. You can do it if all hearts be true to the task. Adam, you must start by showing Cain that love is more important than pride and if you do this Abel will not die.

Adam: (Seriously) But he is already dead.

Omega: You shall be returned to a time before that which you must change.

Luther: Thereby preventing war and the division of peoples.

Omega: You, Martin, Luther, have an equal task. You must so reform the church as to prevent any split, *for Christ's Church is love and not doctrine and it shall always be one.*

Luther: But how?

Omega: That is truly the greatest task. You must find the way yourselves, keeping love as your tool for change.

Darwin: And what is my task?

Omega: What you discovered is true, but in some way you must publish your findings so as to glorify God, for God created all life. Your task may soften Dr. Landersen's. But your job, Dr. Landersen, will nevertheless be difficult. When you return you must show your Atomic Structure theory so as to reflect God and nature instead of high reason.

Dr. Landersen: What of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the present plans for space travel?

Omega: Yes—Hiroshima and Nagasaki—they are true examples of the result of high reason. They were the diabolical opposite of love.

Dr. Landersen: But what of Einstein?

Omega: He is your problem, Doctor. As for space travel, Mars was the limit of that endeavor.

Dr. Landersen: (Pondering) Mars?

Darwin: If we succeed in changing these things, what will happen to you?

Omega: Only the Father knows that.

Luther: I must think — *this is contrary to all reason* (He rises and walks to the fireplace).

Adam: What we are doing is truly God's will?

Omega: You have seen his messenger this night.

Darwin: What if one fails?

Omega: Then you have chosen, as you always have, damnation.

Luther: What bothers me is that we are judged, but Christ has not come.

Omega: Christ is love and has returned many times, but you again denied Him. If you succeed, there will be a new heart in Heaven and on Earth. What do you decide?

Adam: (Anxiously) I say, Yes!

Luther: (Strongly) I, too, say, Yes!

Darwin: (Blankly) I — I agree.

Dr. Landersen: Yes.

Omega: You have not yet considered the Tempter, but I tell you if you keep love first, he cannot influence you.

- Curtain -

Act II

Scene I

Second Setting—The Inn is altered so that a counter is right, and there are rooms and a corridor at left. It is early Sunday morning, and the sun streams in through an open window, casting a square of light on the floor in front of the fireplace. Only the Innkeeper stirs behind the counter. Dr. Landersen comes in from a near room.

Dr. Landersen: Good morning, Peter.

Peter: Good morning, Sir—there was a message for you from Dr. Einstein.

(Landersen turns and goes to the phone on the left wall, lifts the receiver)

Hello, operator, I'd like to place a call to Cambridge to Dr. Albert Einstein. — Yes, I'll wait. (After a brief pause) Oh, yes. Hello, Albert. Yes, yes, fine, and you? — You were trying to reach me? Yes. The reactor, wonderful. Oh, by the way I'd like to talk to you about the possibility of using the reactor for a power plant. — Yes. — Well, I'll explain the details when I see you Tuesday. Yes. Thank you. Goodbye.

(Landersen walks to the counter)

Well, Peter, it's going to be a new world!

Peter: I like the old one fine, Sir.

Dr. Landersen: (Turning and walking towards his room)

Well, I must be off to Saint Mary's.

Peter: (Absently) Saint Mary's, Sir — but I thought you were a Lutheran.

(Inn darkens, spot on Landersen)

Dr. Landersen: Lutheran? Then we failed — But love was so easy ...

(The scene freezes and from all corners of the stage comes the sound of laughter.)

- Curtain -

GOD IS NOT MOCKED

Stan Larsen

In white robe and purple stole arrayed,
The man before the altar stands,
"Our Lord, in the night He was betrayed,"
He takes the bread into his hands.

"He brake it after that He had prayed,"
The people dream, they know the phrase,
"My body for you on the altar laid."
Adjusting their hair in its natural ways.

They see the cross with sightless gaze
"Man need no longer die in sin."
Forgetful of those three long days.
"A new covenant doth this cup begin."

They all proceed who have been shriven,
Approach the altar with regal pace,
"The body and blood which for you was given,"
Austerely file back to their former place.

The service ended, now filled with grace,
Each one his countenance unlocks
And greets his neighbor with smiling face.
At the door of their hearts the Savior still knocks.

They rejoice together; they are forgiven.
Theirs is surely the Kingdom of Heaven.

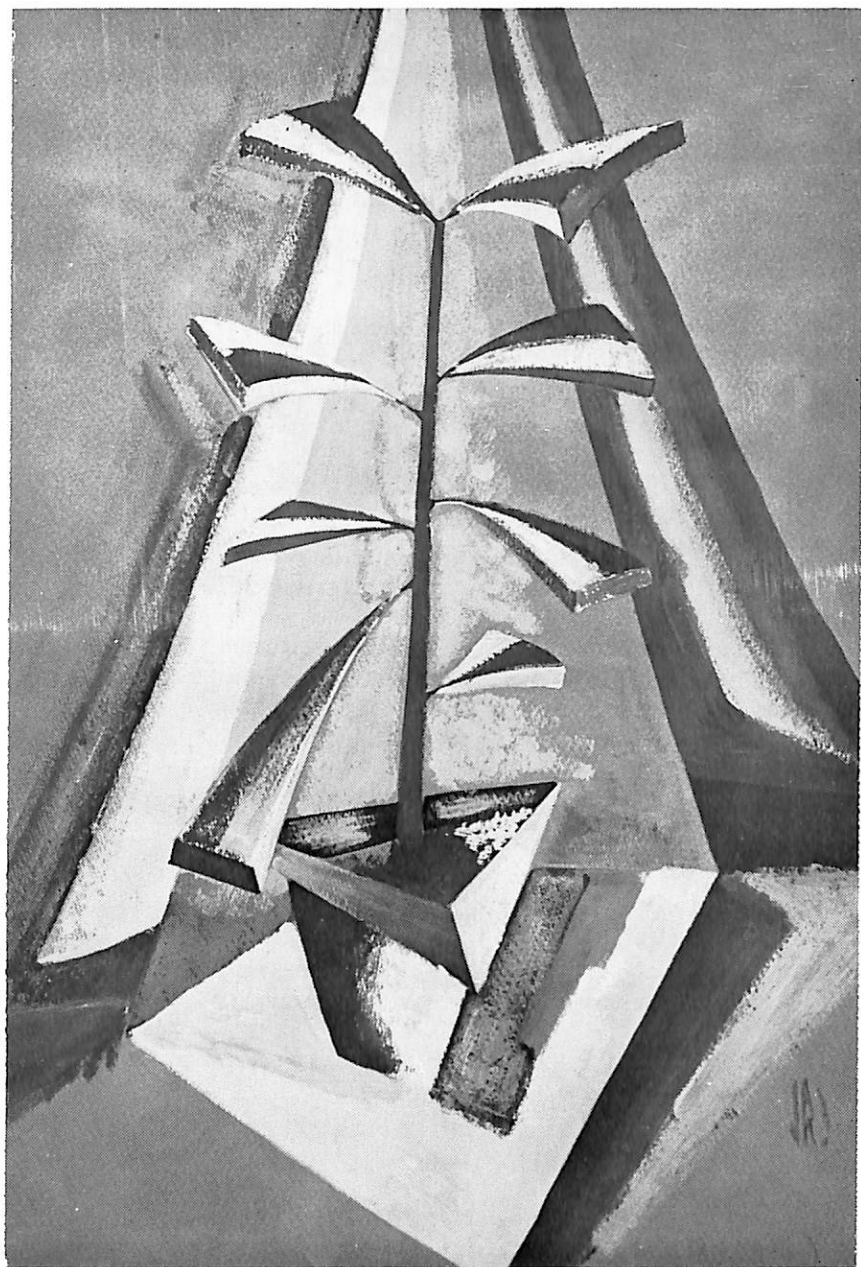
Great bombs are shattering the lives of men,
And mothers weep. There is blood and death.
And each side raises its voice again
To God who gives them life and breath.

And in his prayers each preacher saith,
"Protect us, O God, on this foreign shore.
We struggle for truth, as thou commandeth;
Lord, give us the victory, we ask no more."

Two soldiers kneeling, the chaplain bends o'er,
Receiving the sacrifice He made.
Not knowing the cause they are fighting for,
"Our Lord in the night He was betrayed;"

They don't hear the words for they are afraid.
"My body broken, my blod shed for you."
For an end of the fighting they had often prayed,
They had killed enemies they never knew.

The war goes on, a mortar sings.
"His peace be with you." Their souls take wings.



Rubber Plant

Jim Schaeffer

JIM

Carol Jo Peterson

Jim and Karla had been raised on a small Montana ranch, the only children of a middle-aged couple. The telegram came that morning, and now Karla was the only one left. Her mother's hysterical cry, the silent yet wretched face of her father, suddenly made her wish she had never existed. Why did she have to live when he couldn't. She ran downstairs out of earshot from her parents and was about to dash out the door when she noticed the partly folded paper on the floor. She stared at the telegram again—"Missing in action." She placed it safely in the corner cupboard of the kitchen without really knowing why. Stunned, yet unable to cry, she walked across the yard to the barn. She was glad that Croppy was the only horse there, he was the only riding horse on the place that Jim hadn't trained. She saddled him, using the saddle Jim had given her when he had outgrown it a few years back. Jim was everywhere—how could she get away from him. She turned Croppy from the corral and galloped him hard.

The sun no longer seemed bright and shiny as it had been when he rode beside her. She didn't know and didn't care where she was or where she was going. After an hour of hard, steady riding, Karla realized that if she kept up the fast pace, she would "wind-break" her horse in no time. She didn't want time to think, but necessity made her remember. Jim often said that unless she took care of her horse, she wouldn't have one. Karla remembered other things, too. Like the time when she was eight years old and he taught her to tell time when everyone else had given up hope that she would ever learn.

They had many fights when they were kids, but she couldn't even remember those now. He was always so good to me, she thought. They were five and eight years old again and, she remembered, that was the year when her grandfather died. The folks had gone to be with Grampa, and Jim was left to take care of her. They were together when they found her dead lamb in the chicken coop, bloated from the sour milk it found there. Karla had cried, and Jim cried with her. She remembered when his pup had distemper, how hard their dad worked to save it, and when it died, Jim said he never wanted another dog in his life. She was ten

when Spot had to be shot, and Jim was the only one who understood. "I lost a dog once too," was all he had to say. When her Shetland died, he let her spend a last hour with the horse before he dragged the body away. Once again, he had understood.

She found herself in the present and automatically turned toward the creek. They had a lot of good times there. But before she and Croppy reached the gurgling stream, she stopped. There were the bases, the trodden grass of the stops and starts they had made when Jim taught Karla how to barrel-race for the contest arena. She dismounted and walked over to the sagebrush clump they had replanted here because they needed a third make-believe barrel. *It was still growing. It was alive!* Leading her mount a bit past the bush, she lay down on her stomach as Jim had done and remembered how, on his last furlough, he had shown her how to shoot her 4-10 army-style. They had laughed when they switched guns and the kick from Jim's almost knocked her over.

She mounted again, and somehow it didn't matter so much any more that he had taught her everything she knew. She was almost glad—these were things he had done for her, and she would keep them forever, no matter what else happened. She rode over the hills where they had played hide-and-seek on horseback when they were kids. Then she loped on toward the creek. The stone crossing where she slipped when they were wading, she laughed now as she remembered it. By the time he had helped her get out, they were both soaking wet. She was nine, and he was twelve when they tried to ford the creek which had swollen over its banks from the winter's thaw and spring rains. Her Shetland had bogged down and Jim pulled her out of the raging creek by help of the rope their dad always had him carry. They rode double—back to the barn, told what had happened, and in due time their father came back with the Shetland close behind.

Pleasant, happy memories continued to run through her mind as she recrossed the now lazy five-foot wide creek, and made her way toward home. She noticed that Croppy was thoroughly rested. Jim would be proud of her for bringing home an unlathered mount after a four-hour ride like this one.

For the first time that day, she completely relaxed. Croppy steadily walked toward home; his reins slightly lengthened as Karla's grip on them became more loose. Suddenly a gopher raced in front of him, and the cow pony no longer remained in his plow-horse stride. He reared, Karla lost a rein, his front hoof caught it, and he was off, the rein left useless on the ground. Karla regained her seat and held tight to the run-away horse by use of her knees. She wasn't afraid, she knew he would head for the barn

and his unfinished oats. She even liked the wind as it rushed past. Jim and she had often galloped along side by side like this. The wind had always cleansed their guilts and fears, and later problems were easier to face.

Croppy tore through the big corral and stopped short just in front of the barn door. Karla was surprised when she saw her dad drive the jeep through the log gate that led to the corral. He had been looking for her, and worry mixed with genuine concern showed in his eyes when he said, "I don't know where one of my children is, and now, you"...he then noticed the single rein, and knowing the danger, he couldn't continue the unfinished reprimand.

The phrase went through her mind, "I don't know where one of my children is..." "Dad, you're wrong," Karla started to say ...but then she stopped. She had found Jim and it couldn't be explained. "Dad will find him eventually," she thought to herself as she dismounted from the saddle which she had inherited from Jim.

OBSERVER

Lowell Jacobson

The candlelight was glowing
As youthful voices sang.
Among these little children,
There was a boy so small.
His meager clothes were ragged,
His thoughts were merely shreds
Of nothing but despair.
Korea was his country.
Battlescars showed everywhere,
And reflected from his eyes.
He stumbled on in loneliness,
A child without a home.

Shall I forever marvel
At strange things God permits,
And shall I ever know
Why I was not that boy?



ABSTRACTION

Sally McMahon

Hurling, swirling, sweeping,

jolt, flash, sudden,

hard, cold, swift,

calm, soft, mellow,

running, crying,

laughing, Anger!

Imprompto No. 2

Richard Brink

BORN OF A WOMAN

Duane Petersen

"Our first child, John, and he's completely normal, isn't that wonderful, John, isn't that wonderful?"

"Yes, dear, wonderful," commented John, lost in deep concentration, "wonderful. Had she noticed it too," thought John, "or was I just imagining that strange look—but the doctor said he was normal, he must be. I must just be nervous, first child and all."

The head floor nurse interrupted John's train of thought, "I'm sorry, sir, feeding time you know." Slightly embarrassed, John bent down over his wife's hospital bed and kissed her lightly on her left cheek, forgetting momentarily that it always made her cry when he kissed that cheek. You see, Mary didn't have any cheek bone on the left side of her face, giving her a rather grotesque appearance from that side, not that mutations of this type were infrequent after The War, but she was a woman to whom beauty was important, and somehow she couldn't overcome the defect nearly as well as she had her baldness. Of course, this was a simple task for a wigmaker, and few people seemed to realize her sparsity of hair. John, however, was quite lucky in that he had few deformities, six fingers on each hand and a stump of a third arm projecting rather uselessly from underneath his right armpit.

"The important thing," thought John, "is that my child is normal." The words stuck in his throat and that strange feeling that overcame him the first time he saw his child again gripped him. What was it about his child? Was it his hands? No. His legs? No, they seemed normal. His eyes, yes, his eyes. That was it, they were not normal, they were divided into hundreds of tiny facets, like the eyes—the eyes—he could not say it. Suddenly he felt nauseated; he was going to be very ill. He ran for the lavatory, stubbing his vestigial arm on the lavatory door in his haste.

"She would be coming home today," he thought, "how would he, how could he tell her?" And then she was standing before him holding it and smiling. "She doesn't know," he thought, "she doesn't understand."

"Well, don't just stand there," she said smiling, "don't you want to hold your son?"

John felt the nausea creep into his intestines, but he grimly stuck out his hands, eyes half-closed. She placed it tenderly in his arms. He held it fully a minute, hardly daring to look at it. Suddenly it hissed at him, not a baby's hiss, but the hiss of an insect. The baby suddenly turned in its covers and bit John on the stump of his right arm. He was so startled that his arms involuntarily jerked apart, spilling baby, covers and all on the floor. It lay there mewling until Mary picked it up. It had cut itself, but no blood came, only yellow. John raced for the bathroom, but only reached the stairs.

As weeks went by, John completely avoided the upstairs room where the baby was. He knew it was growing, for he could hear it sliding about the floor. Months passed and now a new problem presented itself. The neighbors had seen it peering out the upstairs window, and he was plagued with telephone calls about an animal in his upstairs. He had to tell Mary. Somehow mother's love had blinded her to reality. "Mary, Mary." She came down the stairs quietly. She had been playing with Junior, there were bruises on her arms. "Mary, somehow you must believe me. Our son is not normal, Mary. He's a mutant, an insect. He must be destroyed before the neighbors find out, before he destroys us."

Mary sat there as if she hadn't heard a thing. "Darling, don't you think Charles is a good name?"

John's stomach crawled, he must do it. Now he knew it was the only way. He quietly took the fire tongs from their place and walked quickly upstairs. There was the crunch of a swift blow and then a scream that carried the agony of death in its throat.

Mary, startled from her thoughts, raced upstairs and rushed into Junior's room. Junior sat in the middle of the room fully six feet tall, staring back at her with all 12,000 facets. "Junior, you bad boy, where's Daddy?" Junior ran for a corner dropping from his mandibles the bloodied stump of an arm. He dripped yellow from his side. He had been struck.

ROOM 315

Holger Madsen

Come and listen my friends while I tell you a tale,
Of a room that is harbor to a Wednesday night gale.
When the bell rings at seven and it's still in the hall,

Eight eager faces are poised for the brawl.
The teacher begins with a long explanation,
Which is destined to help in a written creation.
If you need help with description, read Willa Cather.
If witchcraft's your problem, consult Cotton Mather.
There are several more minutes of helpful advice;
He then wipes off his chin and his forehead so nice.
Then he stretches his arms showing cuff-links so bright,
And points to Dick Carr who sits off to his right.
Bright young Carr clears his throat and he leafs through his book.
He locates his material and with a studious look,
Addresses the class with a long introduction
That's supposed to explain his latest production.
So with pencils in hand seven critics now wait
For a misplaced word or a stumbling gait.
And as Dick introduces all the merits of Hell,
Charles Darwin and Luther soon hear their death knell.
There's a blinding flash, a terrific explosion
As the world is wiped out by a speedy erosion.
But it all works out well and Luther won't tarry,
He hastens to worship at the shrine of Saint Mary.
With no thought of discretion the critics all start
To converge on poor Dick and tear his story apart.
He defends his own script like a brave little bantam
With a theory as weird as was that of his phantom.
Dispelling the clamor, Herr Professor breaks through
With a barrage of suggestions of what Dick should do
To improve on his plot to make it authentic.
This portion needs work and this sounds eccentric.
The be-cuff-linked arm once more makes a sweep,
And with Willa Houtwed we are out in the deep
Of the forest and mountains where the air is so thin,
That the gals in the summer sleep in their bear skin.
And the gist of her tale appeared at first glance:
You climb mountains, my friend, when you're given the chance.
But the class with great gusto demolished this thought,
Leaving poor Willa dear with a heart so distraught.
Sonorous Stan Larsen was next on the floor,
With a tale of a bum who had opened the door
Of his car while he toured throughout South Dakota.
This bum, by the way, had had more than his quota
Of liquor and luck, which always was hard.
But he'd swear to his Maker at the drop of a card.
As old Stanley droned on, so did his blue car.

Very soon they arrived in a city so far
Removed from the town of the bum's rotten luck.
Here Stan was relieved by his guest of a buck.
The critics now ranted and snorted and spewed,
But welcomed the coffee the teacher had brewed.
With whistles all whetted and appetites slack,
They all listened to Hess and prepared their attack.
He related a tale of wee Willie, a lad,
Who with fear and with trembling was searching his pad.
By the tear of a frog he nearly was drowned,
But he managed to make it to much higher ground.
Then by skipping along from flower to flower,
He arrived safely at home in the water bug's bower.
With a groan of despair the whole class now lit in,
'Til poor Terry was wallowing up to his chin
In reasons for this and causes for that,
Why this portion was good and this one was flat.
With a gasp of defeat, Hess looked up at the Prof,
Who raised up his arm which sent Marvin off,
With a story of drinking and horses in flight,
And a record that always played "Mac the 'Knight'."
Now Sam had trouble with his gambling kid brother
Whose hobby it was to make Old Sam smother.
So after he'd issued a sponge-rubber check,
Sam took a cab home and he severed his neck
With a powerful hand and a good sharp knife;
Survivors included four kids and his wife.
The root of this tale is, Don't ever keep
A sharp knife right handy for it may cut too deep.
And Marvin was ready to pull the same trick,
As the critics shot questions at him fast and thick.
"Hurry up now, class, for it's getting so late,"
Roared out the professor as Carol opened the gate
Of chute number five from which came a steed,
Whose wild bucking and twisting belied his great speed.
A little girl watched with her hand on her chin,
Until she observed that her next of kin
Was the lad who had wrangled this snorting old horse,
And was dusting himself at the end of the course.
Now the writer remaining I have no intention
With this list of celebrities even to mention.
But this tale is written so that you might glean
What transpires on Wednesdays in room three-fifteen.

THE POOR IN SPIRIT

Stan Larsen

Nathan was tired when morning finally came. The night had passed slowly for he had slept little. Even when Marion wasn't moaning or asking for cool water, his mind was too uneasy to let him sleep. He didn't know about these things, and he was afraid.

After making her as comfortable as he could, he left the house and caught his old thin mule. The sun could not yet be seen as he left the yard and rode east toward Leesburg. The mule was slow and his backbone made a fellow want to sit light, but Nathan knew it would still be faster than walking the twelve miles to get a doctor.

The sun rose and beat down on the lean pair as they moved slowly along the dusty road. The inside of the man's pants were soon soaked with sweat, both his and the mule's. But they had both grown to accept sweat as natural as sleeping.

Nathan was occupied with his thoughts and fears, and Old Ben with keeping himself in motion. The man wondered if it ever rained in Missouri during August. Sometimes he wished that things hadn't happened to place him here. He often thought of the years he had spent in Kentucky when he was a boy and he and the other children would play together after the day's hoeing or cotton-picking was done. Then after supper the grownups would gather round outside the little cabins and sing while he and the others listened and longed to be big so they could sing too. Marion's family lived right in the next cabin and he had always hoped that he could marry her someday. Now here after fifteen years they were married and in Missouri, and she was going to have a baby.

"Come on, Old Ben, we got to get movin'. Chilluns don't wait for no doctor. We got to get back before he decides to come."

The mule quickened for a few steps but soon settled back into his only real gait as the man returned to his meditation. The years between the time that Marion left and the time he had come to Missouri to find her had been very hard. His parents had left, Marion had been taken away, and there was no more playing and singing, just work and sweat. After the war everything was confused. He left as quickly as he could to go find Marion. They had been married two years and Nathan was sorry that her life was almost as hard now as it had been before. He had worked hard and so had she, but it seemed they could hardly get enough to eat.

They had grown used to being hated, but it was hard to get used to being hungry.

Old Ben was not yet walking on his shadow when they passed the first houses at the edge of Leesburg. The streets were dusty and dirty children played aimlessly in the shade of the few trees.

Nathan rode until he saw a sign suspended from a post—Dr. Myers, M.D. He slid off the mule and knocked on the door before him. He was surprised by a man no older than himself.

"I'm looking for Doctah Myahs, suh."

"You're looking at Dr. Myers."

Swallowing hard, Nathan clasped his hands imploringly, "Please, mistah, uh, Doctah Myahs, my Marion, she's got a baby comin' on. You got to help her. She was moanin' and wailing all night. Please, Doctah Myahs, will you come?"

Dr. Myers looked for a moment at the wiry black man and his jaded mule. Then he firmly closed the door.

Nathan stood for a moment stunned, then slowly turned and walked back to his mule. He stroked the animal's nose meditatively. "Well, Old Ben, I reckon I'd be better off if I was still a slave back in Kentucky. Marion wouldn't be hurting so now either." Ben nudged him affectionately. Nathan untied him and crawled on his back. When he reined the mule around, he was heading east again. "It's twenty-one miles to Stewart but I can't go back to her without a doctor. If I ride all night we can get back home by tomorrow night. Well, Old Ben, you just keep walking and I'll keep settin'."

The afternoon passed, evening turned to dark night and the mule kept plodding along the dusty road. Nathan dozed and woke by spells, automatically staying atop the mule. The east greyed, and the sun rose finding the mule still walking and Nathan riding as if hypnotized. The morning was well along when he rode into the little town of Stewart. He found the home of Dr. Johnson, and mumbled his mission and where he lived. He and Ben leaned against each other while the old man quickly harnessed his horse and hitched him to the buggy. He threw a little hay in behind the seat and helped Nathan up over the tail-gate. With Old Ben trotting reluctantly behind, they headed west down the dusty road.

During the afternoon, clouds began to boil up in the northwest. Lightning flickered and thunder rumbled faintly. Nathan did not awake until they were several miles outside of Leesburg. It was pitch dark except for the occasional lightning. He crawled up on the seat and the two men sat in silence behind the bobbing rump of the doctor's horse.

Nathan wordlessly pointed out his short lane and leaped down as the buggy stopped. The lightning was now frequent and the thunder almost continual. He ran toward the house and pushed open the door. There was no longer any moaning and wailing, nor was there any baby crying. By the brief flashes of illumination, he could see a silent figure in the bed.

The thunder galloped across the face of God, and the rain descended.

THE WALK

Judy Magnussen

The walk seems never ending.
We take such unsure steps,
We slip and slide and fall,
But still we keep on treading.

The wind is harsh and blowing;
It stings and burns the skin;
The goal seems far away.
Why must we keep on going?

The walk is often tiring.
We'd like to take a rest,
But stopping leads to staying.
We must not think of lingering.

AFFAIR?

Stanley Cupp

A separate glance in static space
Electrifies still air,
Until the shock when eyes embrace
And clutch emotion's flare.
No guise offsets a smiling face
Nor shields a glowing stare,
So rapt is each that minds erase
The speculation there.

HANDFULS

Duane Petersen

Carl Sandburg
Chicago Poems)

1. FOG

mp

The fog comes on little cat feet. It sits

mp (Slowly)

looking over harbor and city on silent haunches and then moves on.

2. WHITE SHOULDERS

Your white shoulders I remember and your drug of laughter. Low laughter

f (With life)

Low laughter Shaken slow From your white shoulders.

mf

3. LOSSES

(With melancholy)

mf I have love and a child A ban-

jo and shad- ows. (*mp* Loss- es of God,

All will go And one day We will hold

On- ly the shad- ows.) *ppp*

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of staves. The first system shows the vocal melody starting with a half rest, followed by the lyrics 'I have love and a child A ban-'. The piano accompaniment begins with a half rest, then enters with a melody. The second system continues the vocal melody with 'jo and shad- ows. (Loss- es of God,'. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and a moving bass line. The third system has the vocal melody say 'All will go And one day We will hold'. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support. The fourth system concludes with 'On- ly the shad- ows.)' and ends with a double bar line. Dynamics include *mf*, *mp*, and *ppp*. The tempo is marked with a half note.

ESCAPE

Willa Houtwed

Matt could see little of the path he was following except for a few light spots where the moonlight was penetrating the thick branches of the trees. Around him he could see only shadows in progressing depths. The ground was soft and moist from the spring rains, and his shoes sank with every step he took. The branches of bushes rubbed against his trousers, and he could feel where one of them had torn the heavy denim and clawed his skin. But Matt found himself scarcely conscious of these discomforts. Only one thought consumed his entire being—freedom.

How long had it been since he had felt the blackness of the night close in around him? How long since he had felt the presence of nature, which now seemed to have almost an air of holiness about it? For Matt, the past six years had seemed an eternity—spent, as it were, in hell. Each succeeding day had held nothing for him but desolation. The nights, he recalled, had been even worse. He would go for hours without sleeping, his mind consumed with thoughts of escape and freedom. Even death at times would have been welcomed by him, but this last favor, too, was denied. Matt's thoughts trailed on through the past as he groped his way in the darkness.

Suddenly he heard what he thought to be the snapping of a twig behind him. He felt his body sicken in cold sweat, the pulsation of his heart resounding in his throat. He stopped short. Scarcely daring to turn around, he glanced cautiously over his shoulder. He could see nothing but the still forms of trees, yet his fear was far from quenched. In quick movements he concealed himself in the shadows. Two minutes...five minutes...no more noise to be heard but the pounding of his heart and the usual sounds of the night. With a half-grin of combined fear and relief he felt himself moving almost unconsciously back to the path. Only now was he beginning to realize how exhausted he had become—physically, because of the flight of the past hours, and mentally, because of the fear and apprehension which he was experiencing. Yet one goal still loomed in his mind, and he felt as though the realization of that goal would be his salvation. He must

reach the highway. If he could do that he knew he would be saved. Maybe Mexico, maybe...

Matt was too tired to realize that Mexico was little more than one chance in a million. He had no idea what he would do if he did reach the highway, for doubtless there would be more danger there than that which he knew now. Yet despite his exhaustion and fear he felt a sort of pleasure in freedom, something he had not experienced for six long years. It was this spark in him that kept him going and helped him meet each successive moment, although his movements now seemed to be governed by instinct more than anything else.

Looking ahead, Matt saw the flicker of lights and quickly concluded that he was approaching the highway. A feeling of accomplishment swelled in him and he felt momentarily revived. Now he was coming closer and the trees were less dense, making it increasingly difficult for him to hide himself. As he approached, he noted that there was little traffic on the road. Strange for this time of night... Stepping out of the last row of trees which had obscured his view, he swore under his breath as he realized that he was not approaching a highway, but a country lane instead. Stunned by the realization that the highway must be at least another mile in the distance, Matt felt himself collapse on the damp ground.

When he awoke the moon had gone under the clouds. It was almost impossible to discern anything in the thick blackness that surrounded him. Even the trees were nothing but near-indistinguishable shadows. Not a star was visible in the sky. Matt could not have asked for a more concealing night, but for some reason he found its blackness odious to him.

Raising himself to his knees, Matt felt the consequences of his rest on the damp ground. Every muscle in his body was stiff and sore, and he felt pain in every movement. Despite the fact that he was still tired, he knew that he could afford to delay no longer. He approached the road on hands and knees. Making a final check in either direction he could see no lights. He raised himself and bounded for the other side.

* * *

Marge put her head on Larry's shoulder and reflected on the evening as they drove along the highway. She couldn't recall a party that had been more fun. Dancing, jokes, and a couple of drinks—not enough to hurt anybody, naturally—just for fun. Why should an evening like this have to end so soon?

"Larry," she said suddenly, "let's take a drive down the creek road. I don't feel like going home yet."

Larry found he had been enjoying the past silence, so he only nodded and turned off the highway to a dirt road. They drove on for a while, then Marge again broke the silence. "Turn out the lights. Maybe we'll find somebody parked along the side of the road." Then a giggle. "We don't want to bother them, do we?"

Against his better judgment, Larry did as Marge said. He decided that there could be no danger anyway, as long as the road was clear. He knew it from one end to the other—why should it matter? The car began to pick up speed as it coasted down hill, so Larry took his foot off the accelerator. Suddenly he heard a dull thud and felt the car jerk violently. He struggled to keep it on the road as it rocked from side to side. Bringing the car to a standstill, he muttered under his breath, "Must be some fool farmer's dog."

LOVER'S LAMENT

Stanley Cupp

Soaring serenely on moonlit tides,
Her wings yielding never a shadow,
Love casts but an image of delight,
While drowning one to save the other.
Born for appeasement, it rises in pairs,
And fails to satisfy the heart,
Forsaking only the weaker
Of two unbonded infatuations.
Jealous souls scream above
Still weighted silence,
Scarcely heard over chattering whispers
That belie love's flighty destination.
False pleasures endure till their
Pleasure reeks with an air
Of boredom, securely hidden in
Conformity, awaiting the parting tide.

CONTRIBUTORS . . .

Judy Magnussen, author of "The Walk," is the only freshman contributor to this year's SOWER. She is from Audubon, Iowa.

The only sophomore contributor is Holger Madsen, New Westminster, B.C., Canada. Both of his compositions were written for creative writing class, and his poetry entry, "Room 315," is the runner-up for the Langland poetry award.

Juniors have a good representation this year. Two excellent poems were contributed by Sally McMahon, a transfer student from Omaha, Nebraska. Stanley Cupp, Eagle Grove, Iowa, wrote a story about a past experience. He is also the author of "Affair?" which is the Langland poetry award winner. T. J. Hess, a veteran from Racine, Wisconsin, contributed a short story expressing something of the ravages of war.

One of the associate editors, Richard Carr, contributed something different to this year's SOWER — "A Sound of Laughter," for which he received the Langland prose award. Jim Schaeffer, one of the artists, is home working in Detroit, Michigan, this semester. The art editor, Jim Olsen, Chicago, Illinois, is the Cole award winner for his "Gas Lamp," this year's cover design.

Seniors have the most contributors. Richard Brink, Pender, Nebraska, is the only senior artist. Art is his major, and most of his works are abstract.

Music compositions were done by music majors Isaac Jenkins, Omaha, Nebraska, and Duane Petersen, Little Sioux, Iowa. Petersen is the Cole award winner for music and performed his composition as a part of his senior recital. Jenkins was last year's recipient of the award.

Stan Larsen, a pre-seminary student from Underwood, Iowa, wrote both prose and poetry. His entry, "The Poor In Spirit," is the runner-up for the Langland prose award this year. A poetry translation from the German was done by Willa Houtwed, Ruskin, Nebraska. She is an English major, and contributed both poetry and prose. Carol Jo Peterson wrote a story with a western air. She is from Wolf Point, Montana, and is a social service major.

Timothy Larsen, Franksville, Wisconsin, is a psychology and biology major. He is the author of the poem, "Faith's Duty." "Observer" was written from service experience by veteran Lowell Jacobson. He is a mathematics major from Boxholm, Iowa.

