



GRIFFIN

1960

THE GRIFFIN

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THE GRIFFIN

"This creature was sacred to the sun
and kept guard over hidden treasures."

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STUDIO REPORT

Helen Rice, a senior from Kansas City, designed the cover for this year's GRIFFIN. She spent last year in Europe studying at Geneva. Helen has contributed to THE GRIFFIN in the past, and she was recognized her freshman year in a poetry contest. Her major is art.

HELEN RICE

WE talked in great splashes
Lately, of creativity
Between white walls.
 “To extend oneself . . .”
Among the artifacts
There present — ashes,
Broken teapots, an old glove —
 (Ah, we bled at the stem)
Committed Persons said,
“Knowest thou not
That thou art
 In the presence of greatness?”
Morality also drums dully.
The persistent poor
Wind their siren
 Down Paradox Hill.

ON CHRIST'S OPTIMISM

HELEN RICE

THE generous mind of a forgotten giver
Persists with all its gentleness, quiver
Of holiness that cannot be stilled
By the intellect's riot. The crowd's filled
With discontent, the squares of cities
Are nothing but rubble. He who pities
Sees gardens there, through world-care.

OF LIFE WITH MABELINE

Norma, a senior physical education major from Ellisville, Missouri, is editor of this year's GRIFFIN. For an English honors project, she is studying the informal essay.

NORMA NIXON

OF ALL THE HORSES ON CAMPUS, I liked Mabeline best. It must have been her disposition which attracted me; it certainly wasn't her appearance. Her long back was conveniently swayed so the saddle had a place to wedge itself. Her eyes often looked perplexed (especially after a class period with me), but they were friendly and "wide-set," which the horse book stated was good. Her mouth always carried a strange half-smile, and her ears had a tendency to flip back and forward as she walked. Although Mabeline was no mountain goat, she was sure-footed (hooves the size of water buckets should be sure-footed).

For such a gentle beast, Mabeline did have vast proportions. The beginning riding student would gulp and gasp for breath as he opened the stall door and came nose-to-nuzzle with what at first glance appeared to be a hairy elephant. She was rather pudgy; in fact, she was fat. It took me a long time to learn to get my legs around her bulging belly; it took me even longer to learn to keep them there.

Mabeline had a funny walk—it was more like a waddle. With each step her huge girth swayed from side to side, and I went with the girth. Her trot was slow. I believe she begrudged me every step she took at a trot. If I gave the slightest inclination with the reins that she should slow down, she would skid to such a violent standstill that I would nearly fly over her drooping head. More than once I got a mouth full of mane—but I didn't really mind, since it was Mabeline.

Mabeline and I shared many and exciting moments together. She took most of these occasions in her stride, but my moods changed daily from complete confidence to utter fright. Our instructor repeatedly assured me that I was not assigned to Mabeline every day because she was the tamest, slowest, tiredest equine within 500 miles, but rather because I should learn to understand her better. I persisted in my efforts.

Mabeline thought she was a "life of the party" type horse. When I mounted her she would wait until I was half-way up and then begin to play jokes. Occasionally she would take a step forward, and my heart would pound and thump as I clung to the back of the saddle, one foot in the stirrup and the other dangling awkwardly beneath me. Other times she would nip me through the well-worn seat of my jodphurs as I rose to the saddle—I think she realized if I let loose the various things I clutched to assist me in mounting (saddle, girth, mane, reins, and whatever else was handy), I would fall to the black, sandy ground and have to start from the beginning once more.

The day finally came when I decided I must bribe this beast—actually, it was the second day of class. That day I walked up to her, thrust a white, sparkly sugar cube into her gaping, laughing mouth, and mounted her before she could recover her senses. She soon came to wait for her daily tibdit, and she was ready for me with even more tricks. The sugar caused her to foam at the mouth—the first day this happened I thought she was rabid. But I soon

accustomed myself to this nasty habit of hers, although I never could accept her next bit of wit. As her mouth chomped and foamed, she would turn her big head and wipe her dribbling lips on the sleeve of my clean shirt. I should have hit her, but I was afraid to get on her bad side; and then again, perhaps I was simply afraid.

One day after an unusually exhausting hour with my fourfooted comrade, I drugged back to the stable and accidentally led her past her stall door. The aisle is quite narrow there, and I decided I should back her down it. I tugged at the bridle and shouted "Back" in her floppy ears as I had learned to do. She stood, looked at me, and quivered her shoulder. I tugged again and shouted again. Still she remained firm. Finally I put my hand on the front of her neck and chest and pushed. I must have hit her ticklish spot; her head spun to the side, nipped my hand, and she returned to her strong, silent pose. I was rattled. Afraid she would bite my entire hand off next time, I decided to approach this problem more conservatively. I took her head and made a U-turn with her in the restricted aisle. I considered looking back to see how she was making out, but when I found her head and tail both facing the same direction, I decided it was wiser to proceed and pray. She struggled on, and I heard her bucket-feet banging on the splintered wood floor behind me. She came through in true Mabeline style and made the turn like a segmented caterpillar.

Our real trouble began the day I was browsing in the library. I came across a book entitled *Your Horse and You, or Riding for Beginners*, or something equally apropos. My heart pounded at this opportunity to make good; I quickly withdrew the book from the shelf and blew the dust from the top. I became absorbed in my reading, and by the end of the afternoon I felt I was nothing short of being an expert on horsemanship. The next day I arrived at riding class breathless. I approached my teacher and expressed my desire to ride bareback. She paled. I then went on to explain that every horsewoman should experience the ripple of her horse's muscles beneath her legs. She sat down, regained her composure, and afraid to annihilate this last glimmer of confidence, she submitted.

I think Mabeline suspected something was amiss when she saw me so happy and gay; she was certain things were not normal as I began to disrobe her. I led her outside, and one of the stablehands offered to boost me up on her back. I remembered I had seen trainers grab hold of jockeys' ankles to help them mount race horses; in spite of my 5'9" stature, I offered my ankle—with one big boost I went up. I gathered the reins, and we began to walk slowly. I didn't feel any muscles. In fact, all I felt was something that seemed like a board with little bumps on it right down the middle of her back. She did seem to sway from side to side more; I assumed her muscles were getting loosened up so I could feel them ripple a little later. I had to use care not to hold the reins too tightly; when I did this she would dance to the side—and if there was anything I didn't want to do while trying to feel rippling muscles, it was worry about falling off a naked dancing horse. It happened I held them too loosely; another horse trotted past us as we rounded a curve, and Mabeline took the cue. She began to trot, and I began to bounce on that bumpy board—but still no muscles. My weight was jounced from the center of her back, and I began to slide. Slowly (and gracefully, the girls later told me) I slipped down her side. My leg came over the hulk of her back, flipped me up, and worn jodphurs, saliva-drenched shirt, and frazzled patience crashed to the solid

surface below. When I opened my eyes, there were Mabeline's friendly eyes—and that nasty laughing mouth—gazing into mine. Unfortunately, I was not seriously injured, and I had to get up out of the gritty dirt and remount the plodding beast (we had a rule at the stables—which we undoubtedly agreed to under the supposition we'd never be unseated—that if we fell off we promised to get back on and ride.) Our instructor hurriedly sent for a saddle. I never rode bareback again.

Mabeline retired soon after her tour of duty with me that fateful spring. My friends tell me that her replacement is not half as exciting as she was. I think about those days sometimes—especially, when I get a kink in my sacroiliac. I didn't really mind it all though; my only regret is that I never did feel any muscles. I don't read many horse books any more.

MYSELF OPPOSED

Nicole Johnson, a sophomore English major from Sioux City, Iowa, is a member of this year's GRIFFIN staff. Nicki is interested in writing, and she had her poetry published in the GRIFFIN last year. President of Alpha Lambda Delta this year, Nicki is also a member of the Poetry Society.

NICOLE S. JOHNSON

FALSE thief! What now is left to steal from me?
You seized the orchard hung fruit-heavy, sold
It for a whisper, plowed the fields wheat-gold
Deep under. Barren lies my land. No tree
Bends blossom to the wind, drops berries free
And fleshy splatting on packed earth. Loud scold
The hungry jays perched bold on wind-rubbed old
Barn rafters bare that shiver rooflessly.

Ask what remains? The house with door lock-closed,
Its windows shutting rattling emptiness,
A cup, ringed coffee brown, a chipped, cracked plate
Of Spode, a single couch, an orange crate.
And I, bewildered, find I am the less
Who pilfered from myself, myself opposed.

PAINTED CHINA

Sarah Kuhn is a freshman English major from Oklahoma City. This short story, "Painted China" won first place in the Freshman Writing Contest this year. Sarah is a member of Poetry Society.

SARAH KUHN

IT HAD SNOWED THREE DAYS AGO—enough to really cover the ground. And even after the sky had cleared it had stayed crispy cold, so that now the day was all bright and white and breathless—just asking for a party. One where people would wear red velvet or blue wool or white jersey or green taffeta. And, thought Sandra, I'm *going* to a party . . . a rush party. It would be a nice party. In fact, she could tell it would be an exciting party. All the girls from State who were in—oh, she never could keep those Greek letters straight. But anyway, everyone had said it was a good sorority to consider, and she should be flattered they were rushing her. Everyone had said rush parties were so much fun, that everyone was sooo nice, they never let you be alone or feel left out, and those girls really knew how to talk! They really kept a nice party going.

Now Sandra could hardly wait for Jan to come by so they could be on their way. She was glad Jan had been invited for the same time she had been; they loved to do things together, and Jan liked parties and people as much as she did. They would have a good time at the party, making friends with the girls and asking them about college—things like what sororities are like and how they're run, what to major in, what kinds of things there are to do. Oh, why didn't Jan hurry? They didn't want to be too late. What would the girls think if they didn't show up pretty soon? But Jan was probably just having trouble in the snow. She caught a piece of mistletoe in mid-air and hung it up a little more securely and a little farther up on its string so no one else would knock it down as they walked under it. She looked at her invitation again to make sure it was three o'clock they were supposed to go. That was clever the way they had put on it how to get to Kingsbury Lane. Most people didn't know how to find places in Bellemont very well. But it was a wonderful place to have a large party; the houses were big enough for a lot of people to be at a party comfortably. That was an interesting thing about sororities, too. The members were really devoted to them; the alums always had the rush parties in their homes. Well, here was Jan now. They wouldn't be awfully late.

As she stepped gingerly across the icy walk, she noticed Jan's excited smile. She looked as eager as the lead husky on a dog-sled . . . and a bit nervous, too. Like maybe this was her first important run. Well, it was, wasn't it? As they drove, chattering all the way, Sandra wished Jan would be a little more careful. The tires didn't get much hold on these icy streets. It seemed like Jan wasn't thinking or driving as well as she usually did; she must be

pretty nervous. But was there really much reason to be? It hadn't even occurred to Sandra before she got in the car. She had just been eager to meet the girls and flattered she was being rushed. Heavens! There would be plenty more parties after this, and everyone said they were very nice parties, and you were never left alone; that the members always kept a conversation going and you never felt left out.

Jan asked her if she should have had her mother shorten her dress a little. "I mean, it is the style to wear skirts just below the knee, you know. Most of the girls will probably have their just the right length."

"Well, I don't know about you," Sandra said, "but I couldn't wear a skirt that short if my life depended on it. My knees are too big. I don't see any sense in wearing something just because it's in vogue if it looks funny on you. Besides, people aren't going to notice your dress length. They want to meet us. Golly! Just think, Jan—we're actually being rushed, and next year we'll be pledging. Maybe this very sorority!"

While Jan maneuvered the car into a parallel space, Sandra watched the girls coming to and leaving the party. She noticed idly that most of them, as Jan had predicted, did have rather short dresses. For some of them the style was quite flattering, but several looked almost ridiculous in it, their too thin or too thick legs being enhanced none by the odd length. But that was unimportant. Didn't the ones who were leaving look like they had all had a good time? They were smiling and calling to each other and waving back to the doorway. And the ones who were coming walked calmly and assuredly with looks of gay expectancy—certainly not the least bit worried about what they should do. They, too, were probably pleased at the prospect of making some new acquaintances and learning about college.

At the door they were greeted by a girl very bright in a red jersey dress. She swept them in with, "Hello! I'm soo glad you could come. My name is Esther Trew. You're . . .?" "Sandra Jessup and Jan Ellis." "I'm so glad to know you, Sandra and Jan. Wouldn't you like to just lay your coats back there in the bedroom? Isn't this a beautiful day! I'm so glad the sky cleared up after the snow. Looks like we'll have a white Christmas for once, doesn't it? Come right through here. We'll get some name-cards for you. Oh, here's Sookie. Sook, I'd like for you to know Sandie and Jan. Would you get them some name-cards—can't have anyone forgetting their names, now can we?—and have them sign the guest book, and then get them some eggnog and take them in the den? I'd better go back to the door. That eggnog certainly is good . . . so nice to have met you girls. I'll see you later."

As Esther hurried toward the door to grab some more new-comers, Sandra mentally caught her breath and felt an absurd desire to sit down for a minute. Now, what was *this* girl's name again? Suzie? . . . Took—Sookie! Hmm—that was kind of cute. She wondered what it meant. She noticed that Sookie wore little Christmas trees on her ears that fluttered and sparkled when she moved her head or laughed.

Sookie pinned their name-tags on them and led them off through the crowd to the dining room. There was a huge golden puff of foam floating in a sterling bowl of yellow eggnog. Sookie didn't take any—she'd already had three cups this afternoon. "It's soo good!" They took theirs and dutifully selected little iced cakes and a few nuts and some green and pink and yellow mints—mmm, the eggnog really was good. They followed Sookie into the club room, gently forcing their way to an already full couch. As they pro-

gressed slowly across the room. Sandra noticed the way the Christmas cards were fastened in the pine bough on the curving banister of the stairway. They kind of nestled their way up the stairs and looked down at the little tree decorated entirely with more cards. How pretty! She must try that next year. Or maybe there was still time this year.

She said, "Look at the darling way they've done the stairway. Mrs. Goodwin seems to be quite an ingenious person."

"Oh," said Sookie, "she's a dear. My, they must have an awful lot of friends!" And she sat down nonchalantly on the edge of a coffee table where a couple of other girls were already perched.

"Sandie and Jane," (Jan cringed) "I want you to know Beth Merrill, Ann Roberts, and Suellen James." The introductions went on around and included the rushees who were with these members. Sandra wondered why people always wanted to make a nick-name out of her name. She liked it the way it was, but new people always tried to call her Sandie. Beth was saying something to her about what a darling dress she had on. "Oh, thank you. I made it last summer."

"You did! Why, I never would have believed it! I always wished I could sew. Would you like a cigarette? I saw the cutest dress at Stevens the other day. Yellow velvet and beige chiffon. Darling! And only \$39.59! I kind of told Mother I liked it. I think I'm going to get it for Christmas."

"Did you see the one Maryanne had on at the Phi Delt formal the other night?" Ann asked. "I practically had to blind-fold my date!"

"I know it. Bill nearly went ape. We didn't stay at the dance very long—I saw to that!"

Everyone laughed gaily, and the sound reminded Sandra of imitation china. Suellen said very sweetly, but still with gaiety, "You all will just love college next year. You can tell we do—all we talk about." Then, "Is there anything you all would like to know about college? We're such authorities—but we'd really be happy to tell you anything we can." She smiled brightly and lit a cigarette with a red-enameled lighter.

Jan asked if you had to study much harder in college than high school. The members sniggered. "I don't know what I'll do if it's very much harder!" Sookie leaned over her carefully-carelessly crossed legs and snuffed out a cigarette with a tinkling laugh that made her Christmas trees dance. "We never study at State. We just make the best cheat-sheets in the country!" More china laughter. Well, you had to say one thing for these girls: they kept everyone happy. That's what the kids had said. Sandra asked what they were majoring in. Ann replied, "We tell people Home Ec., but what we mean is Men."

Ann was the type that wouldn't have to work very hard at that major. She was little and curly and soft-looking, yet with a mild "sophistication" that made you feel as if she must smoke an unforgivable amount of cigarettes. Already, while she talked, she had smoked three. Between the cute comments, Sandra discovered that only Beth had a major so far—commercial art—the other girls hadn't yet had to declare any.

Pretty soon, someone started singing a sorority song, and for several minutes the closely packed room resounded with all the sorority *and* fraternity songs they could remember and considered appropriate. When it was over and everyone was laughing and chattering again, Suellen blew a smoke-ring. "Well, it certainly has been nice talking to you girls." Sandra looked at her

watch and saw they'd been there for forty-five minutes. "I think I'd better go in and help Mrs. Goodwin," Suellen continued, "I'm soo happy you could come, Sally and Janie. I hope I'll see you again." She smiled ever-so-sweetly and excused herself. Jan and Sandra nodded to her and turned back to the group.

"I think we'd better go," Sandra said "Mother's expecting me soon. She'll think Jan ran into a snow-drift or something." They laughed. Jan said, looking gratefully at her, "Yes, I really think we'd better. We don't want to wear out our welcome." They stood up and so did Sookie. "I'll see you to the door," Sookie offered "I'm *sorry* you have to hurry off. Here, let's put your name-tags back in the box. Can't take anything with you, you know." They walked toward the bedroom. "Now, which coats were yours? The—oh, you've got them. Fine! I'm glad you all could come this afternoon. I hope you didn't have much trouble in the snow. It's so icky! I can't wait till it melts!" That figures, thought Sandra. Jan looked rather oddly at Sookie. Esther came busily up again. "Oh, are you leaving already? Well, I'm so very glad you came. Be careful on the ice, now. Have a Merry Christmas. What a pretty coat, Sandie. You left your name-tags, didn't you? Oh, I'm so sorry you have to leave. It's been so nice having you."

"Well, thank you very much. We *really* enjoyed it. You all were soo nice to have us."

They walked down the carefully salted side-walk to the street. Yes, they *were* nice, and they did really know how to keep a conversation going, and she was never left alone nor did she ever feel a let-down in the spirit—boy, not for a minute!— It *had* been a very . . . nice party. Well, then why did she feel this way? Why did her limbs move as if she were a china doll—one of the sweet, curly-haired, bright-and-wide-eyed china dolls with those perpetual smiles painted on their china faces. She turned and waved back to Esther in the door-way. "Merry Christmas!" she called, and she creaked stiffly to the car, squinting her eyes against the bright, white glare of the sun and the snow and the air.

TO FAUNUS

Mary E. Cox, an art major was graduated last year. A frequent contributor to the GRIFFIN, she is now doing graduate work in art at the University of Iowa. Mary won honorable mention in the ATLANTIC MONTHLY creative writing contest in her senior year.

MARY E. COX

THE caterpillar
Crawled along my arm, bushy reddened gold
Like your eyebrows are in sunlight, he was afire
On the continent of my floating arm.

A bird
Flew over
 dipping
 down
 to
 see us sprawling in the sun.

The ants
 scurry
Here — there,
 Larva in mouth,
Digging tunnels, running,
Quick!
A soft powder moundfull, ignoring us.
Too busy!
And your hand moved slowly, lazily through my hair
Across my lips
 And back to trace my ear.

THE UNIVERSAL ENIGMA: HUMAN SUFFERING

Janice is a junior from St. Charles, Missouri. She is majoring in English and plans to do graduate work. When she was a senior in high school her essay, "On Peace", was published in the national magazine YOUNG AMERICA SPEAKS.

JANICE SEITZ

SINCE THE GIFT of understanding the difference between right and wrong was given to man, he has suffered. This suffering has not been limited to any nation or race but is common to all men and their possessions. For man, suffering entails a unique problem. Not only does he suffer physically as do lower animals, but he suffers spiritually and mentally as well. For proof, select almost any record left by man and you will find mention of some type of human suffering. The Indian *Bhagavad-Gita*, the Hebrew *Book of Job* and the Russian short story "The Death of Ivan Ilyitch" by Tolstoy present an interesting insight into the causes and effects of human suffering.

Tolstoy's character Ivan Ilyitch found the cause of suffering in human action. Ivan Ilyitch suffered physically as a result of his illness but also suffered mentally and spiritually when, on his sickbed, he reviewed his mis-spent life. He remembered his many youthful sins which he had excused because they were also sins of persons in higher society. Through his life, Ivan Ilyitch suffered repeatedly because of this self-deception. In middle age, he married not for love but because of expectations of society. He soon found that he did not actually enjoy having a family, and the responsibility became a constant source of unhappiness. He again deceived himself when he decided that financial success was the epitome of happiness. Tolstoy says, "He wanted only one thing—to obtain a place worth five thousand a year." After obtaining this position, he still did not find happiness. Consequently, he fell into the pit of self-indulgence. "Ivan Ilyitch's official pleasures were the pleasures of self-love; his pleasures in society were pleasures of vanity; but his real pleasures were the pleasures of playing vint [a popular card game of the day]," comments the author. Ilyitch's decline into self-pity was paralleled by his failing health. Says Tolstoy, "In court Ivan Ilyitch noticed, or thought he noticed, the same strange behavior toward him." In reaction to this fancied attitude of his associates, he began to draw away from his friends and, as a direct result, lost many of his companions. Tolstoy describes the next step in suffering—"And he had to live thus on the edge of destruction—alone, without any one to understand and pity him." As his illness grew more and more acute he began to realize and fear that he was going to die soon. This was his most intense and frightful source of suffering. In his sickbed Ilyitch exclaims, "I am thinking only how to cure my intestine; but this is death! Is it really death?" Again fear fell on him. . . . And in despair, all out of breath, he fell back, expecting death instantly."

Ivan Ilyitch's life was completely centered about himself. It seems that Tolstoy was attempting to tell the reader that such a life is futile, and to try to excuse oneself for such a life is an insult to the Creator of life. Had Ilyitch earlier sought forgiveness and admitted that he had been wrong, perhaps he would have received some relief from his suffering in the last moments of his

life. He did have a fleeting glimpse of such peace, and Tolstoy implies that this glimpse saved Ilyitch. Perhaps Tolstoy believed that human suffering is the result of the lack of true insight into the purpose of life and an absence of union with God.

Like Tolstoy, the author of *Bhagavad-Gita* emphasizes the need for union or communication with a Divine Being. Speaking to Arjuna (the main character of the *Bhagavad-Gita*), Krishna (the Divine Being) says, "Great souls who find me have found the highest perfection. They are no longer born into this condition of transience and pain [life on earth]." Later he says, "But if a man will worship me, and meditate upon me with an undistracted mind, devoting every moment to me, I shall supply all his needs, and protect his possessions from loss." The goal of the Hindu (for whom this book was written) is to become one with the Supreme Being. Until he succeeds, he is reborn on earth in different forms and lives. Krishna says, "The sense of individuality in us is said to cause our experience of pleasure and pain." The Indian individual and Ivan Ilyitch both suffer when they are apart from the Divine Being, but the Indian also suffers while he is attaining union with this Being, and, to him, suffering and pleasure should be the same. Life on earth is merely a fleeting moment in eternity, and the Indian seeking union with God views life in relation to eternity. Krishna explains that "A man . . . must accept pleasure and pain with equal tranquillity. . . . He must be dedicated to me [the Supreme Being] in intellect and in mind." Furthermore, ". . . age, suffering, dying; to nothing be slave . . . calmly encounter the painful, the pleasant; adore me only. . . ."

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, it is said that the Supreme Being controls both happiness and suffering. In this respect, the *Bhagavad-Gita* is similar to the *Book of Job*. Job says of God, "He increaseth the nations and destroyeth them; He enlargeth the nations, and straighteneth them again." Although Satan actually inflicted Job's suffering upon him, Satan acted only through God's permission. Job's suffering was a test of his faithfulness to God rather than a result of sin or weakness on his part. But, as revealed by the speeches of Job's three friends, suffering was usually thought to be a punishment for sin. In this way, the author of the *Book of Job* shows that he is aware of the theory that suffering is the result of sin.

Job's reaction to suffering is the same as that of Arjuna. First, he questions himself and then seeks the help of God. Actually, the majority of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is composed of Arjuna's appeal to Krishna for an explanation of the purpose of life and the method of obtaining union with the Divine Being. Ivan Ilyitch, on the other hand, seeks the relief from his suffering in physical actions. Rather than looking to God for help, Ilyitch blames God and suffers more deeply than ever. Therefore, one might conclude that a necessary step in enduring suffering is the seeking of the Divine Being. Arjuna and Job were both strengthened by suffering; but Ilyitch weakened, and fell to self-pity, hate for those who were healthy, and fear of death. Finally, Ilyitch came to the point of defining life as suffering. Tolstoy says, "And the comparison of a stone falling with accelerating rapidity occurred to his mind. Life, a series of increasing tortures, always speeding swifter and swifter to the end,—the most horrible torture."

All three books seem to imply that suffering is the result of a weakness on the part of man. In order to cope with or endure suffering, man needs the help of a higher being. This Being will not necessarily remove the suffering

but will help man to understand the reason for it. The Indian will become oblivious to suffering; the Hebrew will seek understanding through God; the Russian (as represented by Tolstoy before the Communist regime will seek salvation through God rather than through self; all will find the answer in the Creator.

THE BALLAD OF THE BEARDED BOY

Emily Hunter is a sophomore from Birmingham, Alabama. This ballad, written as a creative writing assignment, wittily portrays a Rolla engineer turned loose in the St. Louis Art Museum.

EMILY HUNTER

LATE in the month when sharp winds blow
And mufflers are profuse,
A bearded friend of mine let go
And tried the culture ruse.

"Fair Emily, with rosy cheek,
And hair a ruffled song,
Prithee, today, what say we peek
At art?" I tagged along.

He smoothed his beard, then took my arm
And led me through the arch.
On either side, in shocked alarm,
The gorgons lost their starch.

Before I more of this impart,
One thing should first be clear:
My bearded friend does not seek art,
He's just an engineer.

So with his slide rule tucked away
We trudged through the museum.
"My lord," he cried, "we're couth today!"
And then he hummed a hymn.

Why people stopped and stared at us,
I could not understand,
And then I saw it was because
I held a beatnik's hand.

By then, he too had noticed that
Some stares we had attracted,
And so he whistled, loud and flat
To see who'd be distracted.

The bearded one assumed a pose,
Took out his prized slide rule,
And with the look of one who knows,
He made the halls a school.

His knowledge vast of art and mode,
Expressed so pure and plain,
Drew for a crowd that "ooed" and "ohed"
Which made him grow more vain.

They followed near, from work to work,
And eavesdropped tactfully,
As my dear friend, from tear to smirk,
Raved on dramatically.

And then he finally turned and said,
"Hey chick, let's cool this crypt,
My pad's a-rockin', this hole's dead."
Then his composure slipped.

He laughed. He howled until he cried.
He broke the deadly quiet.
He his disciples calmly eyed

And blamed it on his diet.
The moral to this story odd
Of my friend on that day:
If you're with a beatnik fraud,
You too will look that way.

NO MATTER WHAT

Kathy Tuepker, a freshman from Holden, Missouri, placed second in the Freshman Writing Contest with this story. Kathy received a President's Scholarship this year and is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta.

KATHARINE TUEPKER

THERE WAS ONE RED BALL on the Christmas tree. It caught up the small living room, distorted it, and threw the image back into the cluttered space. Jolted, the limb shook; the ball lost hold, slipped, and with a shallow clank on the linoleum, the cheap plastic scattered—throwing back a hundred more reflections of confusion.

"Larry!" she hissed. "Now look! you've backed right into the tree!"
"You pushed the box into me—"

"Shhhhhhhhhhh."

"Now what?" Without taking her eyes from the large dusty box she and Larry had been dragging into the room from the closet, Barbara could see in her mind their mother's four sharp steps from the kitchen, the ditches (as Larry called them) in her forehead, and her wet hands wiping on her apron.

"She pushed too hard!" Larry would get his word in first.

"That's exactly what I thought you'd do." At least Mother was ignoring Larry. "What did I tell you not to do? Not to dig into the decorations now. They're all arranged; they're dusty; they're too easy to break. But you wouldn't listen. Just see what happened, and I can imagine the mess that closet's in now. Get the broom right now, Barbara, and stay out of that, hear?"

Larry whined, "But Mother, it'll be prob-ly a long time 'til Daddy's home and—"

"You heard me. No matter what, we're going to do one thing together this year. We'll decorate. It's already dark, and Brad will be home soon, I hope; so come set the table, Larry. We have to try to get things in order 'cause he'll want to get the feeding done right after we get through. You know he hates to take time out to stop and eat as it is." She started for the back of the house, turned quickly to see if they were away from the box and continued, "Rather take care of his cows. Sometimes I wonder if his two jobs are worth it . . ."

Barbara didn't catch all the words, but she was glad to see Mother back wiping off the table's green oilcloth. Anyway, Mother was talking to herself. Barbara wondered why she had been so crankly lately. She wouldn't even let Larry and her eat supper early and they always got hungry long before Brad—that is, Daddy, got home. And what difference did it make if they ate together anyway? Barbara was grinding the bits of glass into the throw rug. Daddy always just came thumping in from his ride, ducked under the back porch clothes line, and clanked down his lunch pail while Mother announced, "All right, Brad's here, we can eat." Barbara knew if she'd had a trip to St. Louis every day to a big plant, she'd have lots to tell. But Daddy never said much.

He just ate in a hurry and said in a hurry with a puff of put-out-ness, "Oh, my Lord!" when they fussed or a glass tipped over by mistake. Mother always said, "Can't you tell Brad's nervous?" and her voice scratched Barbara. They'd all be quiet then for a while, except Daddy made gulping sounds and Larry wouldn't close his mouth. Mother made her stop when she tried to make him have manne—

"Ouch! Mother! Larry threw the broom at me."

"She didn't catch it."

Two driving longs and two cutting shorts of the crank phone suspended their mother's lunge toward them. Mother's wrist bent as if the receiver were heavy.

"Elsie? Oh, tired and hungry and . . ."

Oh, good. It was a church lady. They'd talk for a long time.

"You gotta set the table 'cause I gotta make some chains for the tree," Larry taunted.

Here it was again! Larry always took advantage when she was supposed to be old enough to keep quiet. But now this every-year argument must be put out before it blazed again; so she whispered back loudly, "No! We're not having any chains. It's my turn this year to choose. No chains, no popcorn, no old pictures." She was getting louder and louder. "Just lights and simple—"

"No, it's my turn; it's my turn! We made them at school. Trees need lots of chains and we made tin can slices and tin-foil covered walnuts and it's my tree, too."

Mother swatted her hand at them as she listened to Elsie. Her eyes threatened. "Well, that's one thing I'm glad of. I decorated those cookies all yesterday afternoon, had to practically fight the children away from them. I just knew that there weren't enough for them, too . . . There weren't many out to circle, you say? I guess lots of the women are just like me. Just can't do everything. But I said to myself, 'Elsie needs those cookies worse than me—than she needs me, that is. What?'"

The thought of those cookies and Mother's attention to meetings made Barbara furious. She had to get her way on the tree. "A Christmas tree looks like a trash pile your way," she challenged.

"Well then, get a little tree for yourself if you don't want any good decorations." Larry hurled the words over his shoulder as he haughtily left the room.

That wouldn't be any fun and the living room would still be a jumble. "Mother promised me," she fought back.

"She didn't!" was the retort from the distance.

Another you-just-wait-till-I-get-through look from Mother pierced the air. "Yes, we're putting up the tree—finally. It will just be up and down this year."

Larry shouted from his room, "I can't find my paste. She took it."

"Merry Christmas to you, too, Elsie." She was finished.

To Barbara the room felt like the time between the thunder and lightning. She waited for the crash.

"Larry, get right in here." He came. "All right, you two. That's the last thing. What will Elsie—Mrs. Barnett, think of us? You being so wild? She'll think I'm a poor mother, that's what. And so help me, if you make one bit of trouble when Brad gets here. We can't have another like last night. That's all."

Larry crawled out of the room. He was going to start pasting those horrible newspaper chains. Barbara had to get Mother on her side, so although

she knew what Mother would say, she watched and listened. Mother had begun straightening again. She was always straightening and it never showed.

"I'll never get caught up. You're old enough to be doing this," she said in a tired voice as she gathered up the unread last four days' papers, wadded up candy papers in a chipped ashtray, and balanced it all on one arm as she stooped to collect threads under the sewing machine. Barbara was fascinated by the acrobatic feat. Maybe she'd tip over. But she kept on talking instead.

"The trouble is that you two don't know what appreciation is." She repeated clearly, "Appreciation." She was using her sad type again, Barbara thought.

"I came home from 4-H last night and still had to put clean sheets on your bed. And did you say 'Thank-you, Mother'? And before that, Brad didn't even have time for dessert because he had to jump up and take you to school for the party."

"But Larry had to go to the Sunday school one, too."

"And who had to take him—your father. And did he complain? No, he came home and went out in the cold to break the ice and milk. Did you know that he could have gone to a meeting, too—his Masons?"

As she shoved important words into the room, she shoved the chairs closer to the dining room table with her hip.

Didn't Mother know that she hadn't had fun last night either? Being late for the party, and then not giving as nice a gift as the others. She had drawn Jane's name and Jane hadn't liked the puzzle at all. Mother had had it in the saving suitcase a long time. And at home no one had even said 'good night' to her when she went to bed.

"Right now he's probably crowding in Sears to get your Christmas." Mother was thinking more than she said. Barbara could tell when she got softer like now. "We don't know what he feels inside—"

"Oh! No!" Flinging the newspapers on the table and scattering candy wrappers over the floor again, Mother fled to the kitchen. A black, singeing-feathers smell soaked the rooms, and the sizzle of cold water hurriedly poured over burned potatoes made a cloud over the sink which swallowed Mother. The cloud spoke fiercely like in genii stories, "Why doesn't he hurry up?"

Barbara plunged her hand into the box, squeezed it around, and yanked out a blue ball. She put it on the tree and then, remembering that Larry was still turning out decorations, determinedly ran to his room.

* * *

Only the blue ball moved, swayed by the draft through the frayed weatherstripping. The house was so quiet. Barbara wondered if she could still talk. It seemed such a long time since she had. Was the last time at supper? They had finally eaten without Daddy. Mother had done most of the talking. She had seemed to change from one feeling to another like the butterfly in Barbara's science book. First she had been miserable and said things like, "After all my work at this meal. It's just no wonder some people give up trying." She tasted the bread dried from being out too long and said, bitterly, "It serves him right to miss. Probably stopped to help someone else instead of his own family—someone's in the ditch or something." And they had turned on the radio to hear the weather or was it the news of accidents that Mother had listened to? But all they had heard were noisy songs about rocking

at Christmas. Once Mother had even said, "He's always come home." Barbara thought that was a silly thing to say, but Mother didn't sound silly.

It seemed such a long time since Barbara had given in to having popcorn on the tree and had been surprised that Larry even paid attention to Mother's idea to decorate his room with chains. Mother really hadn't demanded, but something had told them to help her and give in. The tree didn't seem so much fun now either, and it hadn't been at all exciting to explore the old box after all. It had the same old things—salvaged icicles from last year's tree, lots of old cards, dented reflectors, the lights which were never enough to show both out the window and in the house, and the grey-red cellophane wreaths which Mother said were too fire dangerous to hang this year. They had put the things on, and Mother had left them many times to go to the basement-way, turn on the yard light and look up the road. She and Larry put their hands to the cold, wet windows and peered, too, but they hadn't been able to see far and for some reason it hadn't seemed right to shout about the snow as they usually did. Then they would hear the heavy yard-light switch knock over and Mother's shoes slowly on the stairs. When it had been dark again, the wind had seemed louder. Each gust had been a loud running car in sky traffic—shifting and reversing. Motors dying, starters coughing, wheels throwing sleet on the glass, but they were only cars of wind. There hadn't been much left to do so they were now in bed.

Larry was asleep, Barbara thought, but she could hear him rolling around in his bed in the next small room. She wasn't sleepy. It didn't seem like the night before Christmas. She lay listening as Mother got up, walked to the phone, then stopped and went back to the living room. It seemed strange to hear her doing nothing. Maybe it would be better to turn more lights on. When she had left for bed, Barbara had thought that the room had been like the church at night with only the candles flickering and people waiting for words to begin. Only the living room was smaller and Mother was fidgety instead of her and neither of them knew what to say.

From her bed she could see the blue ball dangling.

Suddenly, it trembled, echoing heavy footsteps on the porch and a pound on the door. Barbara clutched the sheet and could not move. She heard Mother rush to the door and struggle with the lock she had taken such a long careful time to hook earlier.

"What is it? What is it?" Mother was frightfully shouting.

Barbara's stomach started rising like a gas balloon into her neck. She felt the cold wind slicing into the house. Why didn't Mother say, "Oh, Brad!"?

"What is it?"

"Mrs. Meade?" Barbara could hardly hear the low words, but it was a man's voice.

"I'm Joe Morris. Work in the same plant as your husband, same line, same ride."

Barbara could picture the dark, drifted porch. The man was coming in with the gusts of wind. It was a dragging sound and—a groan?

"What's happened to him? Sit him down. Lie down!"

"Don't worry. He'll be all right. Saw your car swerving, thought maybe old Brad needed help—though I've never seen him this way before."

Mother gasped, "No! He's not—He's just sick. Someone made him take it. What can I do for him? I don't know!"

He must have been helping her and telling her. There were hobbles, deadened noises, sluggish words. Barbara strained her ears, but the air sounded only heavy, stagnant, and helpless. Her head felt like a rock. It wouldn't think. The fat Negroes leaning by the depot wall got—got—got drunk. She said it in a breath and swallowed. Maybe this wasn't Christmas Eve at all. Maybe it wasn't anything or anytime at all. She'd make herself sleep. Yet she couldn't.

The shuffling had stopped now. Mother and the man had been in the bedroom and Mother had kept bringing water in the wash basin, and she had turned on the coffee pot when the man told her to. If Daddy would just talk, but he sounds like a baby or an animal.

The man left. Mother thanked him and her words sounded more deep and true than any other thank-you in the world. Barbara heard her stir around, sit on the creaky bed springs, and speak calm—not barb-wire—words for a long time. Then Barbara heard her coming. She was walking toward Barbara's room. She came in as if she knew her daughter was awake.

"You heard?"

"Yes."

Faster and in a shaking way she said, "No one saw him. He told the store that the wine was a gift. So many fathers are like this all the time. He didn't wreck the car. We're lucky—" Then she crumbled on the bed and her words weren't weak anymore, but more like a prayer. "It's our fault, but we'll start over. You've wanted to run away, haven't you? We all do sometimes. So did Daddy, but he couldn't. We made him feel that way and now he needs our help. Barbara, he needs our help. He'll be all right tomorrow; everything will be all right. So don't worry." And she kissed their child goodnight.

* * *

A green ball, glowing from morning sunshine, mirrored a quiet family. Mother was dressed exactly as she had been the night before, but her words were different. They went up instead of down. Huddling there in the big chair, Daddy didn't look as tan and strong as usual; but the most unusual, most strange, thing was to see him in a robe.

When they had first come out into the living room and seen the gifts, Barbara hadn't known how to act—to be happy or sorry, quiet or extra helpful. But Larry had been so excited over his new farm set that she had soon almost forgotten. Daddy had helped him fit the little fences together. Then she had unwrapped a game for them to share. Daddy showed them how it worked. You poked one wire in a hole by a written question and the other wire in one of the holes by the pictures which were answers. If you were right, a tiny bulb lighted up. This was, of course, too hard for Larry, but she let him plug it as she read from the question side, "I pledge allegiance . . ." Larry plugged in the flag's picture right away, but he kept on listening as she read and when she finished, even asked, "What's 'invisible'?"

"Indivisible," Mother said with more feeling than a plain word gets. "Let's talk about it over breakfast."

For an instant the image of a family was centered in the green ball. Then as they moved farther away, their edges drew closer, their bodies merged, and a radiant unspotted ornament was left tossing sunshine about the room.

SUMMER RAIN

Pat Schuermann, a sophomore from Centralia, Illinois, is majoring in English. She is secretary of the Poetry Society.

PATRICIA ANN SCHUERMANN

THE rain sizzle starts slow
on the warm walk.
Misty umbrellaed figures stroll
the steaming streets,
and the hissing echo of
puddle-splashing cars
wavers in the leaves
of silver, shimmering trees.

PROCRASTINATION

Linda Winegarner, a senior, is a human relations major from Markham, Illinois. One of Linda's interests is writing, and she wrote this poem for an assignment in Creative Writing. She plans to do public relations work after graduation.

LINDA WINEGARNER

SOMETIMES at night when all day's deeds are done,
All meetings past and after dinner's fun,
When doors are shut and silence is the rule,
Then books send out their challenge to a duel.
This now received, one's honor is at stake,
So proper preparations one must make.
Do see that the appointed place is clear,
Remove all odds and ends that rest too near.
But should that place reveal a bit of grime,
Take care to clean it well though that takes time.
Now should some water fall to wet the floor
And spread to show neglect and dust galore,
Be quick! Grab up those shoes — the rug — and chair —
Drop them — go get a mop, but now beware
Of prints that find their way to door and wall
Which rubbed reveal the need to scrub it all.

WILT THOU BE MINE?

Kay, who is planning to major in English and Spanish, lives in St. Charles, Missouri. She has received a President's Scholarship for next year and is currently a member of THE GRIFFIN staff.

KAY HEITHECKER

BERT WANTED an answer tonight. Three years was a long time to keep someone waiting, and Matilda had run out of excuses. Her mother had said repeatedly, "Neither of you are getting any younger." Matilda gave a shrug of annoyance at the remembrance. Mother's habit of pointing out the obvious, as to a child, was a nuisance; but, being a dutiful daughter, she would smile and parrot, "Yes, Mother."

It was now three o'clock and Bert was coming to dinner at eight. Only five hours before she had to commit herself. It wasn't that Bert was so unattractive. He was quite nice, in a solid way. He had done very well in the hardware business. He could speak for hours on the intricacies of the business; on how well the new line of hammers was selling; or about the promotion of his new sidelines of kitchen utensils. Matilda would sit and listen, nodding at the right moment, smiling on schedule. She was well trained in listening to subjects that held no fascination for her, because Mother always said, "A man likes a good listener."

If Dad were alive she would go to him, as she used to do. He had died five years ago, when Matilda was only twenty-four. We had seemed almost glad to go. Lying on his bed, watching the clock, he had squeezed her hand and said, "Matilda, I have found it better to give in to your mother." At that time, Matilda hadn't known what he meant. Now she knew. Mother owned those she loved. To her, they were placed upon this earth to make life more pleasant for her, and to abide by her decisions. When Dad died, Mother took care of all the arrangements: collected the insurance, cried the correct amount of tears, and wore black one year to the day of his death. When she spoke of her late husband, she would add, "God rest his soul," though she had never allowed it to rest on this earth.

Matilda thought of the day she had first brought Bert home. Mother had been charming to him, insisting he come back again. When he left, Mother turned to her with a pleased smile, "I like your young man. He'll make a good husband." For three years that phrase had been repeated innumerable times. Mother never hesitated to point out that the insurance money would not last forever. Matilda should be thinking of the future for both of them. A good marriage would solve the problem. When one's parents had provided for her for almost thirty years, turn about was fair play, you know. That, to Mother, was the one compensation of having a daughter. If a good marriage could be arranged, the obligation of the parent was over. Then, too, Mother liked to remind her that people thought something was wrong with you if you didn't marry. People forgot that you had been asked, and only remembered that you were a spinster.

It was now five o'clock. Matilda stretched out on the bed. She must have more time to think. She watched the same clock her father had counted his last hours on. Had he felt like this? Thank heavens, Mother was out. The

way to do this was to be very practical. Let's weigh the facts. Anyone twenty-nine years old can't afford to be romantic. On the other hand, it wasn't altogether impossible that someday she would look at somebody and find a meeting of spirits; "communication of the eyes" she believed it was called. She kept trying it on every strange man she met. So far, nothing had happened. Bert's eyes were a level gray with no undercurrents of emotion. Bert was to be considered, too. He had been patient with her. She knew that if she refused him flatly he would find another woman he liked just as well. He was looking for a wife, not a soul mate.

Mother was getting old. It was Matilda's duty to provide for her in her old age. The security of a marriage with Bert was not to be overlooked. Last night Mother had wept, wiping the corner of her eye with her handkerchief, "How sharper than a serpent's tooth . . ." Bert and Mother had an understanding that Mother was part of the marriage. That had been decided the first year they had gone together. The two were firm allies.

Perhaps a nap would help. It was very taxing to make decisions when one wasn't used to it. That was a comfort about Mother. You could always rely on her for decisive action. Yes . . . a nap might help. Mother would be home soon and prepare the dinner so she could sleep without worrying about the food. Sleep does things to one's thoughts. They are pulled out of focus. Matilda saw herself leaving home. "Good-bye, Mother, I'm on my own now. Take care of yourself as best you can. I have a job with a handsome bachelor. We're going to travel around the world, visiting exotic eating spots. Ta, ta, I'll write you from Hong Kong."

"Matilda, don't you dare." Mother forgot her handkerchief in her excitement. "What will people think? Besides, Bert promised me a room of my own."

"But I don't love Bert, and love means everything. I'm going to find my own true love."

"Nonsense, there is no such thing as true love. The only things that count are money and position. I was never in love and I haven't missed it."

"Good-bye, Mother, good-bye, good. . . ."

"Matilda, wake up, it's seven-thirty. You just have time to dress for dinner. You know Bert is always early. 'The early bird gets the worm', and tonight . . ."

"Tonight I'm the worm. I'll dress now, Mother. Do you think I should wear the green or the black tonight?"

"Green, dear. Let's be festive—there's the door-bell—I'll get it."

Green was for spring, spring was for hope, hope was for love.—She must still be asleep to think such foolish things. She couldn't spend any more time dressing. It was time to go downstairs.

The stairs seemed steep. She descended them, one by one. What should she say to Bert? Perhaps she should laugh in his face and order him from the house. No, she wouldn't do that. She knew exactly what she would say. "Hello, Bert,—flowers?—how sweet (Bert was always so sticky sweet)—yes, we can talk a minute before dinner—you want my decision? Yes. I'll marry you, Bert."

She reached the bottom of the stairway. She leaned against the stair post for a moment before walking into the living room. There stood Bert with his square figure warming itself at the fireplace. He turned at her approach and offered her the flowers he held in his hand.

KIM

Margaret Ahrens, a junior, is an art major from Centralia, Illinois. She is a member and past president of the Poetry Society. In this poem about a cat, Lei Wen is the Chinese symbol for the beneficial forces in nature. It resembles a Greek key and is seen on ceremonial bronzes.

MARGARET MARIE AHRENS

A big orange chrysanthemum curls his toes,
making a lei wen,
Squints his eyes, and hums his little song.

He is not an inscrutable Oriental,
Just a silly chrysanthemum.

How fat and round he is
As he curls and uncurls his tail,
Looks at his lei wen toes,
And hums his little song.

BIRD-SOULS

Nancy, a senior from Fort Smith, Arkansas, is majoring in English and Christian education. She plans to enter graduate school next fall. This is Nancy's first publication in THE GRIFFIN.

NANCY RUSSELL

ON ruffled lake beneath a lowering sky
Where clouds are tossing, tumbling with their fire,
One may, among the trash afloat, espy
A tiny mite, forlorn, amid the mire.
Above the clouds and toward a reddening sun
The rest fly onward, heedless in their flight
(In search of that for which their bird-souls burn)
Of one mute speck, despondent in its plight.
Will they, when his turn comes to set the pace,
Recall their friend and feel that he is gone,
And, wheeling, turn them from their headlong race
To seek him, find him, join him with his own?
Or will they fly an arrow toward the mark
While he below drifts hopelessly in dark?

LONG SUNDAY AFTERNOON

NICOLE JOHNSON

THEY HAD BEEN SITTING in Joyce's room all through that long Sunday afternoon. Joyce thought that she would never forget the eternity the two of them had spent looking at those hideous brown walls, streaked and grimy, looking out of the window at the grey sky and the dish water color of the dead earth—staring blankly and talking.

She moved restlessly on the unmade bed and decided to light another cigarette. There had been so much talk and so little said, she thought. But maybe it had helped Barbie, that incoherent babbling. She didn't seem to be fighting it so hard any more. Maybe the first shock was beginning to wear off. If only Barbie would stop talking about it. It wasn't good—that eternal question, the endless grieving over Patsy lying dead in a crumpled ruin of a car.

She shivered, and then shook herself. It was no good sitting in there any longer. The air was thick with smoke and stale with the smell of cigarette butts heaped in the ashtrays. Even her thoughts were stale, curling aimlessly and hazily and always coming back to the same question. Why Patsy instead of all the bored, the tired—Patsy, the golden girl, more alive than anyone Joyce had ever known.

Tears were stinging her eyelids, but she pushed them back. There had been too many tears already, she thought. Look at Barbie.

She looked at Barbie. Suddenly the face she had thought almost beautiful was ugly in the half light. It wasn't so much the tear streaks and the redness of her eyes. It was the bitter twisting of the soft mouth, the listless way she held her head.

"Look, Barbie," she said, choosing the words carefully, "why don't we go to supper?"

She groped for another sentence. "You haven't eaten since yesterday noon," and blurted on, "Then the best thing for both of us would be a good night's sleep. We've got classes tomorrow morning and Patsy's clothes have to be sent home."

"Go on, Joyce. I don't feel like it. I wouldn't eat anyway. I just want to sit here and think a while."

"But there's no sense in that, Barbie. We haven't been outside this room since—since we found out last night."

"Why did it happen to Patsy?" Barbie's voice rose in a shudder. "That's what I want to know. She wasn't ready to die. She wanted to live. She was so young."

Jerking herself from the bed, Joyce walked to the dresser and stood with her back to the limp figure hugging the bed.

"The young die, too." She said it slowly, almost wonderingly, as she stared down at the orderly array on the top of Patsy's dresser. She picked up a bottle of Chanel. Patsy had never used it. She didn't like perfume. And yet she had always had a sweet, fresh smell about her, like all young, growing things.

She put the bottle down in hatred. It sat on the dresser, inanimate and yet existing, while Patsy, who had been alive, was dead.

"They shouldn't have to. It isn't fair." The fear in Barbie's voice exploded in the room. "There's too much to live for. Tell me why, just tell me why, right now, this minute."

"I can't tell you. I don't know, Barbie. But someone must know or we wouldn't be here and the world wouldn't be going on."

"Yes, we're here. Yes, the world is going on. But where's Patsy—and how do we know that tomorrow or the next day we won't be here any more either?"

"We don't know, do we?"

"How can you be so hard? Look, do you want to die, Joyce? Now? Before you've begun to live? Don't tell me about heaven and hell now. Just answer me—do you want to die?"

"No, I don't want to die. I'd be crazy if I did. Patsy didn't want to die either, but she did." Joyce turned around suddenly and looked at the bulletin board hanging over the bed that had been Patsy's. How could anyone look at that board and ever believe that Patsy wanted anything less than to live, she wondered. There it was—Patsy's past, her present, her future. But mostly the future. Patsy never left the past up very long. Down came the swimming, the tennis, the golf ribbons. Down came the dead corsages and souvenirs. Up went the future—a newspaper article about summer work for college students, tickets for next week's concert, an invitation to a golf tournament.

"I don't care." Barbie's voice was a whimper in the gloom. I don't want to die. I'm afraid to die. Maybe Patsy wasn't. Maybe you aren't. But I am." She began to whimper again, the terrified whimpering of a frightened cur.

Joyce looked away. "Everybody is, in a sense, but you have to hold on to yourself," she said. "How can worrying or talking about death stop its coming? Fear is a kind of death. It can keep you from living. Don't you see, Barbie—?" She stopped as the door flew open, and a tall, heavy girl ran into the room. Her broad face was a splotchy mass of tears. "Oh, God," she cried hysterically, "I don't believe it! I can't believe it. Not Patsy. How can you stand it in here where she was?"

Joyce asked her quietly, "When did you get back, Marilyn?"

"Just now. I just found out. It's awful, simply terrible." She stared at Barbie slumped on the bed, and then ran to her. "Oh, you poor darling! It must be awful for you. I'm so sorry I wasn't here when you needed me. Is there anything I can do?"

"Nothing right now," Joyce replied tonelessly, "but tomorrow you could help us pack her clothes."

"Oh, God, I couldn't possibly—not tomorrow. It's too soon. I'd just feel too terrible, handling all her things. How can you stand to do it?"

"It has to be done." Joyce felt the anger growing in her. She wished desperately that Marilyn would leave, but she was already crying uncontrollably with her arms around Barbie.

The dinner bell rang.

Joyce moved abruptly to the door. "Let's go to dinner," she said but there was no answer from the two girls on the bed.

Marilyn was murmuring to Barbie, "Poor baby, I know how you feel. We all loved her so. I'm going to miss her so terribly. No one else ever understood me. It's so rare that you find such complete understanding between two people. The last time I saw her she was running to the car. And now she's gone. How can we bear it without her? Part of me died with her. Everything died with her."

Joyce looked at Barbie whose body was shaking with the sobs torn out of it. The scene before her angered her so that her stomach was churning spasmodically. She knew that they weren't crying for Patsy, not even Barbie who had known her. While Marilyn, yes, here was Marilyn who hadn't known Patsy at all, who had rarely spoken to her.

She remembered suddenly the day she had walked into Marilyn's room in time to hear her say, "I'd like to cut that Patsy down just once—her with her 'Look who I am' air."

"Why? Why?" Barbie was asking. "You tell me—why?"

Marilyn sat a moment fingering an enormous pimple on her nose. It was red and angry and about ready to come to a head, Joyce noticed.

"God has a plan for all of us, dear," Marilyn said slowly to Barbie. "Patsy was needed in heaven. Or maybe her mission on earth was completed." She dried her eyes and looked suddenly sure of herself. "That's it."

Joyce clenched her hands. That was the way then. Let the smooth complacent words fall. Just hold on to those words of wisdom she's heard so many times she had memorized them. They seemed to have helped Barbie. That was what she had wanted to hear. She looked more cheerful already.

"Now that we have Patsy all taken care of and labeled, let's go to dinner." The harsh, ugly words shocked her as she said them.

Marilyn turned on her savagely and Barbie's eyes were wide. "You don't care, do you!" Marilyn almost screamed it. "You never were as close as you pretended to be, were you! Or else you wouldn't be so hard, so cold. The big twosome. Hah!"

She sat back and surveyed Joyce. Her hand moved to her nose and she rubbed the red lump again.

Joyce was silent. Don't answer her, she warned herself. You don't have to defend your love. Patsy knew. Patsy wouldn't want you to cry. Patsy never cried for herself. She knew—she knew.

"Oh, Joyce, didn't you love her at all?" Didn't you care?" Barbie echoed. The three of them sat in silence, staring angrily at each other.

Marilyn got up abruptly and stalked to the mirror. She stood for a moment examining the pimple, scratching at it with her thumbnail.

"I'll simply die if this God-awful thing doesn't go away before this week-end," she said disgustedly. "I've got a big date."

Joyce glanced at Barbie and their eyes met. A slow awareness and understanding crept into Barbie's face.

"Let's go to dinner, Joyce. I guess it's not too late," she said, "and it's been a long Sunday afternoon."

ANTIPHON

(Parody on Robert Greene's "Song")

Mary Hughes, a sophomore from Liberal, Kansas, is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta and THE GRIFFIN staff. She received a President's Scholarship for the coming year.

MARY HUGHES MC CUE

SWEET are the sherbets coaxing cool content
To stomachs crammed with beef and corn and rolls;
Sweet are the hours before the TV spent,
The washer rinses dirty cups and bowls:
For such content, to eat, to sit, to stare,
The average man denies a world of care.

The house is closed with thermostatic heat;
The picture window's just to show inside;
The music has a tranquilizing beat,
Allowing sleep so thoughts need not abide:
'Obscured life sets down a type of bliss;'
The cautious man withdraws himself for this.

URGENCY

Cornelia Childs, better known as "Corny," was editor of THE GRIFFIN last year and a staff member since her sophomore year. She was also president of SCA and the Poetry Society. Corny is at the University of Indiana this year studying English and personnel under a graduate fellowship.

CORNELIA CHILDS

WHAT is the rush within the bulb
That says be out, be out
Before the burst of sun that
Quickly fades?
Is it the hurt that asks
More hurt,
But of a different kind —
Its own?
It may be frost it asks,
But asks it of itself,
With inward light that knows
It will want nurturing too late
And cries with burning push of hope,
"Be out, be out, now."

THE EASTER KALEIDOSCOPE

Judy Petterson, a freshman from Syracuse, Kansas, has written an expressionistic short story that mingles reality and unreality. Judy is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta and Poetry Society.

JUDITH PETERSON

WOULD PHILIP LIKE HER NEW EASTER HAT? That was the most important thing in Meg Butler's life at the moment. She rose anxiously from the massive leather chair in the hotel lobby where she sat waiting for Philip, her steady boy friend, and she crossed the Nile green carpet to a full length mirror on her left. It wasn't a shocking hat. Philip didn't like shocking hats, and she'd known when she went into The Hat Bar last Wednesday that she'd be spending this Easter weekend here in Denver with Philip, who was stationed at a nearby Air Force base. That was why she'd purposely selected this hat—a black straw pillbox with one salmon-pink rose hovering breathlessly over the edge. Meg loved all roses, and this one was especially happy and gay—just perfect for an Easter weekend. She scrutinized the breathless rose in the mirror. There'd been another hat at The Hat Bar that Meg would certainly rather have had. It was picture style, done in yellow straw, and it was literally covered with laughing pink roses like this one. It wasn't too expensive either, but Meg knew that she couldn't buy it. She knew it the minute she saw herself in The Hat Bar mirror, with her coal black hair wisping rather seductively around the nape of her neck under that glorious hatful of roses. Sophisticated, she would say. Frivolous, Philip would say. Oh dear, perhaps Philip wouldn't like even this one rose. It wasn't too pink, was it? But Mother had said that Philip would like the hat, and Mother seemed to know a lot about men.

Philip had been terribly surprised that night she'd called him long distance to tell him that Mother and Daddy had decided to allow her to make the bus trip to Denver alone. After all, she was a senior in high school now, and she hadn't seen Philip for well over three months, and since school was out for a five-day vacation, this was the perfect time to go. Meg smiled at herself in the mirror as she remembered how Daddy had winked slyly at Mom after she'd asked to go to Denver, and how he'd looked long and lovingly at Mom before he answered Meg. Mother's eyes were sparkling blue stars as she nodded her assent. And then Daddy had said, his deep voice growing tender, "Meg, you know that we trust in you and believe in your judgment. You do a little castle-building occasionally, and that's every girl's privilege, but you know right from wrong, so your Mother and I have no qualms about sending you to the city alone." And then Mother chuckled to herself and said, "I guess we'll just have to face it. Our Meg's passed those years when lighted candles were golden tigers with long stiff whiskers, and rotten old pumpkins laughed like . . . What was it she said they laughed like?" Daddy grinned warmly at Meg. This was one of the innumerable family jokes about her imagination, and of course he knew the answer. "Cheery Chinamen, I think, with Cheshire-cat grins."

Meg giggled out loud, and then, remembering that she was not at home in the living room with Daddy and Mom, but here in the lobby of one of the biggest hotels in Denver, she glanced around her, feeling a little foolish. But she was safe. Apparently no one had noticed her.

Meg walked slowly to the maroon leather chair in her shiny patent high heels. If she sat just a little side-ways she was able to watch the people bursting in and out of the revolving door. They whirled around her in a kaleidoscope of color—mothers in fresh white gloves and fathers in new blue suits and children with chocolatey chins carrying lavender bunnies, accompanied by aunts in last year's polka dots with new pique cuffs. And there were boy friends with stiff crew cuts and pale yellow bow ties, too. It was all so exciting! Each time the revolving door spun around an entirely different pattern of colors and people appeared in the lobby.

Philip was obviously going to be late. Meg looked at the plain white gold watch that Philip had given her for her birthday, and the tiny round face reflected the patchwork of color that filled the room. Meg's heart began sounding in her ears as she gazed at the little watch, just like she'd raced up three flights of steps to answer the telephone or something. She knew that she was in love with Philip, but she'd never had nerve enough to tell him so. And what's more, he'd never told her that he loved her, either. Perish the thought. But Meg had a feeling that he did love her. Well, it was more than a feeling. She could tell that he loved her by the way his voice had sounded that night she'd called him long distance and by the box of her favorite Russell Stover bonbons that he'd sent to her room at the hotel. A tall black man whisked importantly in front of Meg carrying a yellow daffodil in a flaming red pot. Meg smiled at him. The card on the candy had only said, "As ever, Philip." Poor Philip just wouldn't know how to whisper sweet nothings into a girl's ear, and that was really too bad, because the scenes in the movies where someone like Charleton Heston made verbal love to the slave girl in a purple tent were the very best parts. In fact, Philip never had been much of a lover at all, and they'd been dating for three years now. Everyone knew that Meg's relationship with Philip was quite a bit different from that of say, Alice and Merle, who always left the school dances early, or Rogene and Galen, who never even came at all. But Meg didn't want Philip to be like either Merle or Galen. Yet, on the other hand, a little Charleton Heston in him wouldn't do any harm.

Meg watched the Easter Kaleidoscope gyrating in the mirror on her left. The colors were gaining speed as the revolving door whizzed around again and again. Meg was enchanted with the new patterns of people that emerged with each revolution. She didn't see Philip's uniform and horn-rimmed glasses in the crowd anywhere, but there was an extremely fat lady with kinky strawberry hair occupying the center of attention right then. She must surely work in a German delicatessen—even her forearms looked like sausages. Close on her heels was a great pink grandfather carrying a box of marshmallow eggs. Playing Easter bunny this year, no doubt. And there was a sleek young woman wearing a bunch of violets on her lapel. Heavens! Violets were \$10.00 a bunch this time of the year. Philip would never buy Meg flowers. He thought they were a waste of money. Meg would just have to grow her own.

Adjusting her already-in-place hat, Meg saw the crowd was growing thicker and thicker, and the patterns of starched cotton blouses and plaid taffeta hair bows and white Mary Jane shoes were changing faster and faster. The spring air blowing in from the streets with the crowds was exhilarating. Meg easily detected whiffs of carnation boutonnières from the vending stand on the corner along with traces of spicy double-bubble gum from the five and ten across the street. And there was fresh newspaper print, and black coffee,

and ambrosial toilet water, too—the kind found only in city barber shops. The people themselves were intriguing as they popped in and out of the spinning door—all rustling and swishing and fragrant as a great Easter nosegay. The kaleidoscope was so adventuresome!

And then Meg noticed them—the most elegant couple she had ever seen in her life. They were standing in the very center of the miraculous patterns. He was a dark and swarthy-looking man—quite continental in appearance, with a white tube rose in his buttonhole that accented his even white teeth. She was a ravishing blonde in a curving black sheath and an exotic, coral-colored leather coat. The blonde wore matching coral shoes, too. Now they were approaching the desk.

“The key to room 309, please.” The dark man had a superb French accent. Meg shivered at the sound of it.

“Jacques, hurry.” The ravishing blonde was excited, too. Her dangling pearl earrings quivered expectantly.

“Yes, darling.” The man snatched the key off the desk, and the two hurried toward the elevator, weaving in and out among the myriad of pink tongues licking twisted clove sticks and silver-haired grandmothers knitting turquoise afghans. It was funny though, the blonde wore no rings. Evidently the couple was not married. And they were going up to the same room? Meg’s neck tingled at the naturally-following deduction. An affair! The couple was having an affair here in the big hotel in Denver where not a soul knew them. An affair—a kaleidoscope. What could be more thrilling? The rushing, ever-changing pinks and greens and yellows picked up speed. A little girl with fat chubby legs and brown curls waddled by, clutching a green Easter chickie in her fist. An affair! The thought fascinated Meg. What if the couple were not the ravishing blonde and the dark man, but Meg herself. Meg and Philip? But they were so much younger than that couple. How would they ever get up to Meg’s room without arousing attention? The colors were racing so dizzily that Meg could hardly distinguish one from the other. They were blue-green and lavender-yellow and pink-purple. A green egg pirouetted by, and a tall brown boy in a sailor suit propelled himself around and around chirping frantically, “I don’t want to be an Easter chickie, I just want to play a big bass viol. I don’t want to be an Easter chickie, I just want to play a big bass viol.” An then it hit Meg. Of course! She could take the elevator, and Philip would take the stairs. It was all so simple. The kaleidoscope became a maddening, dizzy round. Charybdis was never so violent.

* * *

“Why, Philip darling, you brought me yellow roses! One dozen long-stemmed yellow roses! Oh Philip, I love you!”

“And I love you too, Meg. Yes, I do love you—deeply. I know I haven’t ever said it before, but—well—the time just wasn’t right. You do understand, don’t you?”

“Of course I understand, Philip. I understand because I love you with all my heart.”

Philip set his roses beside the box of bonbons on the dresser in Meg’s hotel room, looking at her full of desire. Then he slipped his arms smoothly among the blue chiffon folds at Meg’s waist, and he drew her close to him. So close that the silver buttons on his uniform hurt Meg. She’d have to check and see if they left indentions on her chest like they left on Fanny Bloom’s

in *The Last Moments*. Meg turned her face slightly upward to receive the burning kiss that she knew should come now, and Philip kissed her passionately—feverishly. And what's more, Philip wasn't wearing those darned horn-rimmed glasses, either!

"Philip, we need music. Music and champagne. Yes! Champagne for this our first affair. Oh do you suppose we could get some champagne?"

"Anything for you, Meg my sweet. Anything."

Meg floated over to the radio with more grace than any of Charleton's slave girls could have mustered, and Philip was saying, "We should have a fabulous dinner, Meg. To celebrate—yes?" His gaze seared clear through. He had such unusual brown eyes. Meg had hardly ever noticed them behind those horn-rimmed glasses that he always wore. And was Philip developing a continental accent? How romantic!

"But Philip, you know we just couldn't order a dinner for two. Remember, there's only one of us checked in for this room."

Philip's face fell. Poor dear. He wanted them to celebrate so badly.

"Listen, Philip, I'll call down and order a wonderful dinner for one. Roasted capon. All right? And you can eat it. I'm not very hungry anyway."

It was a big sacrifice, but she'd do anything for Char—Philip. Meg extended her red oval finger tips toward the ivory white phone.

* * *

"What are you doing, Margaret? Did you lose something?"

The ivory white phone was snatched right out from under her fingers, and the kaleidoscope of Easter colors swirled back into place. Meg was grasping only the gyrating air. And there was Philip at last. His shoes shone from an hour's spit shining, and his shoulders were stiffly square in the blue Air Force uniform. Meg's face flushed as she thought of those shiny buttons pressing against her body. If only Philip would kiss her right now! Right here in the middle of the big hotel lobby at Easter time. But no, Philip would never do that in public. And for some reason she became obsessed with the idea that Philip must kiss her. He must put his arms around her and kiss her in a way that he'd never done before. And he must tell her that he loved her. Meg glanced quickly at the stairs and then at the elevator. Perhaps . . .

"Margaret, you look awfully nice today." Philip was peering at her through those black horn-rimmed glasses.

"Why, thank you, Philip." Meg felt herself growing hot all over from restraint, and her neck was tingling again. She thought she heard the traces of a French accent in Philip's words. She really did! Just like the dark man had used when he asked for his key at the desk.

"Margaret, the most unusual coincidence has occurred. I didn't want to tell you about it on the phone when you called me this morning to tell me where you were staying, but—"

"But what, Philip?" Oh he must take off his horn-rimmed glasses and look at her. She had the most exciting plan. And no one would ever know.

The Easter kaleidoscope raced on and on, faster and faster. The chocolate chins were eating the marshmallow eggs, and the sleek lady gave her \$10.00 violets to a lavender bunny. The great pink grandfather kissed the fat lady's strawberry curls, and somewhere in the hotel there must be a coral leather coat in swarthy dark arms. And here was she—Meg Butler in the midst of yellow lavender and pink and blue. And here was Philip, too, wearing his Air Force uniform and wasting their precious time by telling her

of a strange coincidence, when right now he should be mounting the stairs to her hotel room, while she rode up the elevator. Philip was droning on.

"And since I thought you might think I'd done it intentionally, I wanted to tell you here and not over the telephone."

"What's that, Philip?"

"Margaret, you haven't heard a word I've said." The horn-rimmed glasses were looking at her with an air of incomprehension. "I told you. It's about the hotel reservations that you and I have. I didn't know where you were staying when I decided to spend the night in town on a pass, and I unknowingly made my reservations at this same hotel."

The little girl with fat chubby legs dropped her green Easter chickie, and the propelling brown boy squashed it flat. Meg had the feeling that she was supposed to be shocked at the idea of her and Philip spending the night in the same hotel, even on different floors.

Philip was laughing nervously, and he looked shyly at Meg, blushing at having gotten them into such an embarrassing situation. Meg was only aware that the blush was the wrong hue for the Easter kaleidoscope, and that the patterns had suddenly begun to slow down.

"Say, I like your hat." Meg had quite forgotten that she was even wearing a hat. "But isn't that rose a little flimsy?" The rose was not flimsy.

"Mother said that you would like . . ." Meg's voice faded into the slowing pattern of colors. Mother! What would Mother think of Meg daydreaming about affairs? She'd curl up and die—that's what she'd do. The kaleidoscope was quite still now. What made her even think things like this? Why did she always get so carried away? Affairs and eggs and chickies and daffodils! Why, this was even worse than candle tigers and pumpkin Chinamen. Besides, it was absurd to daydream of an affair with Philip. How would she ever get him to take off those darned horn-rimmed glasses? And surely it wouldn't be much fun watching him eat that beautiful roasted capon alone.

Meg rose from the maroon leather chair, and looked Philip right in the eyes—right in the glasses. "It's OK. about the reservations, Philip. My folks will understand." Meg glanced at the laughing salmon-pink rose in the mirror. "Philip, do you really think this flower looks flimsy?"

BETWEEN CLASSES, GENEVA

HELEN RICE

UNIVERSITY people pass through the halls
Ensoleillés . . .
A young beat girl rangy in black slacks, green socks,
Smokingly shows how too much she knows.

There's an American from Smith
With camel coat swung any-way across her shoulders,
Attentive to the young man she's being clever with.

Germans tall and primitive, Italians sleek and
Small skirts quite short
Filter towards the Interpreters' School . . .

The atomic sun dust lays the hall as open as a wound,
A cave of brightness where benches die in perspective.
Silhouetted is a bent figure (two black strokes of the brush)
Studying Spanish through glasses forward on a Jewish nose.

Hear the sound of silence before the bell?
Feet shuffle on dirty stone.
There is the noise of right-wrist bracelets
Busy with the jangle of writing:

"And we on the brink of a third world war
Attach our hopes to a shooting star;
Being relieved that exams are over,
Lie reading poetry in Swiss clover;
Unmindfully drain the sweetened flask
Tasteless to those with a statesman's task."

"Still might this sometime not have been
The time between
Distress and dying outward; lean
On the wind, 'tis good.
O Lord, we thank Thee for our food
Gathered somewhere we ever stood
With palms turned in.
Still may the autumn harvest bin
Break for us, though we sow in sin."

THE MARRIAGE

Emily Simmons, who tied for third place in the Freshman Writing Contest this year, is interested both in English and art. In her high school at Potosi, Missouri, she received the Pen, an award for the outstanding student of English literature.

EMILY SIMMONS

BARBARA STOOD IN FRONT of the wavy dresser mirror and tilted her small, stiffly-curled head from one side to the other. From the arrangement of bottles and jars of Avon perfumes on the frilly lace doily, she picked up a slim, dark container of "Nearness" and sprayed the cool, sweet-smelling mist generously, careful not to get any drops on her dress. Her wedding dress. She stepped back from the mirror to get the full effect of the lace and net dress which almost reached her plastic heels, sprinkled with rhinestones. My, don't I look sort of like a doll, she thought as she gently pressed the tiara of imitation pearls holding the short net veil down on her crisp new curls.

"All right, girls, I'm all ready!" she called. The maid of honor and two bridesmaids rustled and clacked into the room, stiff in their blue net dresses, breathless with the excitement of their coming walk down the aisle, their brief moment in the spotlight. "Oh, Barb, you look just bee-you-ti-ful!" they chorused.

Smiling smugly, Barbara turned back to the mirror she had looked into every evening before she had gone out with Jackie, and again when she had returned. Now, she thought with a flutter of panic. Now, after all these years! This is the most wonderful day of my life. Gosh, everyone is just so jealous that we're getting married first and having a big wedding with two bridesmaids and a bakery cake, and Jackie and I already have a trailer and towels and sheets and dishes and everything. It was worth waiting for until after high school. Two days after graduation and Jackie has a job and we're getting married at last!

"Barb, are you ready?" her mother called. "We're all here and Jackie's wantin' to hurry!" There was an appreciative cackle of laughter from the guests assembled in the living room.

The ride to the church was short, but the wait in the dun-colored vestibule was an eternity. Finally the untuned piano crashed out the Wedding March. The walk down the aisle to the "oohs" and "ahhs" of relatives and friends, the shock of seeing Jackie standing by the baskets of white flowers, his tall body looking ill-at-ease in his summer suit, the face she had seen so many times in the blurred glow of the dashlight of his car now drained and anxious under the harsh glare of the overhead lights; it was a feverish dream that whirled by and caught up the reception in the church basement in its dream-like quality.

Suddenly, she was coming out of the door of the church and tossing her stiff bouquet of carnations to the frantic hands that grabbed for it.

At last she and Jackie were alone in the familiar front seat of his car. "Oh, Jackie," she said, "did you hear everybody? They thought it was the prettiest wedding they'd ever seen!" "Yeah," Jackie said, his hands gripping the wheel as though to force the car forward. "It was nice okay, and you really looked nice too."

"Did you really think so, honey?" Barbara said.

"Yeah. Where do you want to spend the night?"

"Spend the night? Why, I don't know . . . I thought maybe in our trailer."

"Are you crazy? Right in your parents' back yard? Hell no, I'm not going to!"

Barbara turned her face away and felt hot tears of self-pity ooze down her cheeks. In a choked voice she gulped out, "Don't be hateful . . . you're trying to spoil everything after the wedding was so nice."

"Aw, I'm sorry, Barb, but I don't want to be under your parents' noses on tonight of all nights." Jackie's voice broke a little.

"All right, honey," she said, snuggling against him and leaning her head, covered with the stiff spray of net and pearls, against his shoulder. "Go anywhere you want to."

Jackie swung the car hard to the right, spraying gravel against the pink stucco of the motel. As he started to close the door, he said in a gruff voice, "You go on in and look around, I'll be there in a minute."

Slowly Barbara slid out of the car with a swish of skirt and crunched across to the dark brown door, half open. Hesitantly, she pushed it open the rest of the way and stepped into the dimly lighted room. There it was, dresser, two chairs, night table, two lamps, depicting chartreuse and black people holding up a fish on which the ruffled shade rested, and the bed. Large, larger than any she'd ever seen, or did it just seem that way? covered with a white chenille spread with a peacock covering almost all of it with its multicolored tail. Two glasses and a pitcher stood on the dresser, the glasses nudging each other, their paper wrappings touching. She heard the scuff of footsteps approaching the door and a wave of dark red panic swept over her. For a second she hesitated, then pushed the dark door shut and heard the snap of the lock.

They moved into their trailer the next day and Barbara happily arranged doilies, cooked, did all the little domestic things she had seen her mother do. Jackie left early in the morning with the lunch meat sandwiches she had packed and came back to the stuffy trailer just as the hot orange summer sun was slowly slipping behind the dust-covered trees. They watched television at her parents', and the flickering black and white figures seemed mechanical and the bellowing laughter Jackie emitted seemed too loud. Their friends never came by, because they all had things to do, places to go. Barbara and Jackie didn't fit into their plans. They were married. They wouldn't want to go to the show or just ride around, so why ask them? Sometimes at night, lying beside Jackie in the smothering darkness, she would lie quietly for a while, remembering the things they'd done in high school, how much fun she and Jackie had had on summer nights like these. Why, it was only *last* summer they had been coming home from the drive-in now, full of the whirling glamour on the screen and slightly rumpled from the breathless necking. Turning over, she would experience a slight feeling of emptiness.

As the leaves flew by in bursts of red-orange and gold, then listlessly dropped to the ground in tightly-curved claws and were covered by snow, the

pregnancy Barbara had sensed during the time when the leaves started to die became evident. Suddenly, there didn't seem to be anything to talk about anymore. After questions about how each other's day had been, there was nothing left to say. Through the slush and bleakness of winter Barbara and Jackie spent more and more time in her parents' house where there were other people and there was no need for strained conversation between them.

When the pale green buds burst from the trees, Barbara felt the first feeble awakening within herself. It frightened her, because already the baby had pushed her once flat abdomen into an awkward caricature of a pregnant woman. Her face was splotched and bloated and Jackie didn't seem to like to look at her any more, but found excuses to stay after work or go to his parents' house.

As the soft June morning, with the promise of another sticky, dust-streaked day, pushed into the small trailer, Barbara stood at the tiny sink wrapping Jackie's lunch in a brown paper bag. The pale, lemony sunlight was unkind to her tired face and bloated body.

"Jackie, your lunch is ready and it's time for you to go." "Okay." She heard his voice answer from the bedroom. "Just quit yellin' at me." "I didn't yell," she said, as a pulsing hand seemed to press her throat. He came into the kitchenette, picked up the package of lunch and said "Goodbye."

"Jackie," Barbara haltingly said. "What's wrong? You don't seem to ever want to be near me anymore . . . Are you . . ." her voice choked, then went on . . . "tired of being married to me?"

With the look of someone whose emotions have been stretched taut as a twanging wire, Jackie's face tightened and in a thin voice he said, "Look. Barbara, I married you, and you were just as hot for it as I was . . . I'm tired of living in this damn trailer and never doing anything. I can't try to get another job or move because of you and . . . and . . . your baby."

Turning abruptly, he walked across the yard. Barbara stood immobile, her hands hanging limply, and watched the sun glint off his hair, the way his work clothes hung from his thin shoulders, how worn his shirt looked. He slammed the car door, impatiently started the motor, and roared down the street.

Silently, Barbara stared at the gold wedding band on her left hand. The thin sunlight made it sparkle. How beautiful it had seemed when it was new; now it was worn and beginning to dull.

Still absentmindedly staring at the ring, she slowly walked to the door of the trailer and lowered herself to the step clumsily. Slowly her eyes focused on a web a spider had spun from the step to a nearby twig. It glistened in the sunlight and she noticed there was a fly in it . . . she reached over to free it, but the spider came quickly down the shining strands on spindly legs, its body gleaming obscenely. Just as the spider reached the trapped fly, caught in the wondrous mesh, Barbara put her trembling hands over her eyes and began to cry helplessly.

IMAGE OF AUTUMN

PATRICIA ANN SCHUERMANN

DEEP and guttural
Blows the wind through the bones.
Aged, they creak in torment
As their flesh skitters along the ground.
Shrieks and screams
Issue from the naked being skinned alive.
And another piece drops to the grave of human trample.

TO MOTHER

MARY E. COX

MY Mother remains
A girl who read Shelley under a shade tree
And remembered lines for me
To say, chased fireflies for their light
And wore the stones upon her golden head
As queens might
My Mother walks with feathers in her hat,
Absurd!
"Ghandi is a saint,
J. C. Penny, Man of men,
Save your money and someday . . . Oh, I saw the bluest dress for you!"
Gentle, wildly apart into one contradicated being
My Mother
Has fireflies in her greying hair
And evening dew on her bare feet . . .
"If you mow my zinnias one more time . . ."
She waves her garden shears.
My Mother
Counts her amber beads at night
Falls asleep in prayer
". . . Full of grace, the Lord is with . . ."
My Mother
". . . A pound of butter, pound of sugar, pound of eggs"
and all the house smells sweet,
Wash flaps on the line
Even in morning my Mother has fireflies in her white hair.

THE VOICE

This short story by Ann Donnohue tied for third place in the Freshman Writing Contest. Ann is from Centralia, Missouri.

CAROL ANN DONNOHUE

LOUISA BENNETT turned the tarnished key in its lock and let herself into her small apartment. Through it was the end of February, the days were still short, and the gray shadows of the later winter afternoon filled the tiny living room with dark silhouettes. Reluctantly Louisa stepped into the room and automatically looked behind the door—she always did that. Sometimes she wished that just once there might be a man crouching there. At least he would be someone with whom to talk. But then she would push the thought from her mind; that was much too daring a thought for Miss Bennett.

This was the very worst part of the day, thought Louisa as she hurriedly snapped on a light. Her days at work weren't so bad; there were people there—busy people—who talked, and she could listen to them and perhaps forget about her quiet, so quiet apartment.

She turned on the radio. It came on blaringly, and immediately there was a pounding on the paper-thin ceiling. "Turn that damn thing down!" shouted Mr. Ackley from above.

"Yes, of course," said Louisa in a weak voice. Why didn't he just once say please? She wouldn't mind that so much.

She jumped at a knock at the door. "Yes, Mr. Gillis. How much do I owe you?"

"Two twenty-five, Miss Bennett. Your steak always costs two twenty-five."

Why was he always so impatient with her? Maybe if she could just once say something clever he wouldn't be so anxious to leave.

"Thank you, Miss Bennett." The words came through a hastily closed door.

"Put a little fun in your life; try dancing," came a voice on the radio.

My, what a pleasing voice. It surely must belong to a very good looking man—a man about thirty. Just her age, only most people thought she looked older. Maybe she would learn to dance, but what would be the use? What would she do after she learned? How nice it would be to go dancing just once with a really attractive man—a man like the one on the radio. What was his name now? Oh, yes, yesterday they had announced a new program, "The Spence Haywood Show." What an exciting sounding name! He probably knew hundreds of clever things to say.

That was a lovely song he was playing now. She couldn't think of its title, and that irritated her. She listened to the radio every evening and felt sure she knew more song titles than almost anyone. It certainly was a beautiful song. Yes, now she remembered. How silly of her not to have recognized "Some Enchanted Evening."

The song ended, and with it ended the picture she was visualizing of a couple dancing. Funny how the lovely young woman had resembled her. But it couldn't have been her; she didn't own a pale pink chiffon cocktail dress—goodness no, not a cocktail dress. When she thought about it, she hadn't

even had a dance dress since the last one she bought in college. It had been a pretty dress, but it was a conservative navy blue faille—she always bought conservative things. She had been so excited; the May Dance was the biggest social event on campus. Somehow, though, the evening had turned out all wrong. Her date had seemed to be very nice, but he hadn't said two words all evening. When he did speak, she had nothing to say in return.

"They sure have a cool band tonight, don't they?"

"Yes, they sure do."

She wondered why things like that always happened to her.

Her reverie was broken by the low, magnetic voice of Spence Haywood. His words drew Louisa from her small burrow in the soft green cushions of the sofa to the rose arm chair next to the radio. Why couldn't she have had a date like Spence for the May Dance? Then she surely would have had a good time. Someone as exciting as he would have made that night one she could never forget. Of course, she hadn't forgotten it yet, but it certainly wasn't because it had been the most exciting night of her life.

Again the lovely pink figure whirled into view with her handsome escort. His dark hair and eyes and his tanned skin were in sharp contrast with the white of his dinner jacket.

"Louisa, I feel as though I'm dancing with a beautiful pink cloud."

Yes, it certainly would have been a night to remember if Spence had been her date.

Glancing at her watch, she noticed that it was almost ten. The evening had passed so quickly, not at all like most of the ones she spent. Usually the mundane tasks of fixing dinner and cleaning the apartment seemed dull and boring, but tonight she could hardly remember doing them at all. It was surprising how all thoughts of herself and her own problems were lost in this new program and its star. She really ought to go to bed. It wasn't that she was tired, but it was her habit, and habits could be quite difficult to break. ". . . so, ladies and gentlemen, I hope you can join me at this same time tomorrow for another evening of listening pleasure. Until then, this is Spence Haywood saying 'So long'."

Well, that settled her problem. There was no longer any need to stay up. Reluctantly she turned off the radio, darkened the room, and moved into her bedroom. Yes, she certainly would join him tomorrow evening.

Two weeks had passed—what a wonderful two weeks! The days were filled with thoughts of Spence, and she had found herself anxiously watching the office clock and wishing the minutes away for the hour when she could go home to the radio and his voice. Louisa swung through the door of the apartment, hurriedly laid her new coat and bag on the rose arm chair, and rushed to the window. There was still a soft glow on her cheeks left by the brisk March breeze. Tiny rays of the late afternoon sunlight entered the room and danced on the slightly worn green fabric of the couch. The days were getting longer now. She looked out the window. Yes, spring was surely on its way, yet she hardly recognized it as being like any of the other springs she had known. Every night Spence mentioned some new sign of spring he had seen that day, and Louisa was beginning to notice things she had never been aware of before. Strange how she got excited by the smell of a soft shower or the sight of tiny green buds that were beginning to appear on the trees and shrubs.

She crossed the room, picked up the latest edition of *Charm*, and flipped through the pages impatiently. Would it ever be seven o'clock? There were

some smart looking clothes in the magazine, things she was sure Spence would like. On one page was a gossamer creation of pink chiffon, and really not too expensive. She'd have to stop by Goodman's and look at it as soon as she had time.

How slowly the time was passing today! She could turn the radio on now, but there wasn't much use. Spence didn't come on until seven.

It was a little hard to get used to not hearing Mr. Gillis' footsteps in the hall, but Louisa didn't mind. She enjoyed the walk to his shop. That man certainly had changed recently. So friendly. Why, she'd spent almost twenty minutes talking to him the other day.

Muted gray shadows of evening began to fill the quiet room. How strange it seemed just to sit and wait now for the time to pass! Lately there had not been enough hours in the mornings and early afternoons. But she didn't mind waiting—not for Spence. Goodness knows he was certainly worth waiting for. She could take a walk to help the time pass, but she might be late for her date. She did have a date with Spence; she had one every evening at seven. Other people might not call it that, but she could if she wanted to. He wouldn't mind. He was such a wonderful person—so interested in others—she could tell that just from listening to him. His deep masculine voice was engaging and everything he said was clever. She crossed the soft pile of the carpet, retracing the pattern she made every night at this time. Just a few minutes now. How exciting it was! She could almost hear the rapid pulsating of her heart. Her hand trembled slightly as she reached for the dial. There was immediate response. Over the blaring of the station identification chimes came Mr. Ackley's familiar pounding. No matter, he would get tired and stop in a few moments, and she was certainly not going to turn it down. Her small watch said seven exactly. In just a moment she would hear his voice. Then it came.

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. This is your friend from daytime radio, Bruce Benton, saying 'Greetings.' It's going to be a pleasure spending the next two hours with you, both tonight and every other evening from now until next September."

With a fumbling gesture she groped for the dial and switched off the radio. As she sank back down in her chair, she glanced at her new black kid heels—they were much too extravagant.

THE SPARROW AND THE TOAD

MARY E. COX

OUTSIDE, the orange heat licks the cracked earth,
Licks the scarred flat face of August.
Dry snake grass rustles under foot.
A sparrow convulses in the powdered dust.
Within my hands his throbbing body stops,
Stone-like and silent, with his bill agape.

Inside the dark spring house a toad hops, thudding . . .
And the sweet sweat of the earth's mouth wells up
To lips of a rusting pump and tumbles,
Giggling into my hands, down to the damp floor,
Trickling coolly on my feet and dusty toes.
I let pebbles plop, plop . . . and echo up.

CHILDHOOD, 1940'S—

HELEN RICE

HOW brave to live among such gentle folk . . .
Star light, star bright,
I ran away to a goldfish pond.
—Was colored ice in summertime
“After nap,” she said. Lost early
Easter eggs, but stories rhyme in the bathtub.

Seven years: tarnished things, thugs
In the garden (left his glasses), sparrow
Sings in the attic. Tranquil things;
The silver morning trail of slugs
On sidewalk. Eight years rained
The iris out and drowned my cat.

Nine, the ginger of red tarlatan;
Began to sew. At ten, the Stewarts
Back again. Limes on the dresser.
I mash mulberries in cool corners
For Robin. O the ginkgo trees
In one's eleventh autumn! Secrets at twelve . . .

THE AFFLICTION

Caroline Drane, a sophomore from Kansas City, Missouri, is an English major. A member of the GRIFFIN staff, Caroline won first place in the Freshman Writing Contest last year. She is also a member of the Student Artists' Guild and holds a position on the SCA Cabinet.

CAROLINE DRANE

"DINNER'S ON THE TABLE, BESS," said Louise as she briskly entered the room. "Do you need any help?"

Bess entered the dining room leaning heavily on her sister's arm. She beamed radiantly at Clay as he held her chair.

Carefully spreading the large white napkin in her lap, she said, "I shudder to think where I'd be if it weren't for you two kind, generous people."

"Now, that's no way to talk," interrupted Louise, hoping to offset the tears that usually accompanied this subject. "You aren't anywhere else; you're here with us and we love having you. Clay, start the meat around."

Picking up a serving dish, Bess seemed to notice it for the first time.

"Beets?"

"Why yes, dear," her sister rejoined. "We haven't had them in so long; I thought everyone would enjoy them."

"But, Louise, you know how beets affect me." Ladling three great spoonfuls on her plate, she sighed, "I shan't be able to sleep a wink tonight; I know I shan't." She viciously speared a pork chop and continued, "And loss of sleep makes me so nervous. Louise, dear, could I please have some catsup?"

When her sister had left the room, Bess turned to Clay and pattered, "Imagine her forgetting my catsup! Louise always was inclined to be absent-minded though. I remember when we were little girls, Mama used to tell her she'd forget her head if it wasn't attached."

Louise, having heard the conversation through the open door, returned from the kitchen. The muscles around her mouth were tightened ever so slightly, but she said nothing as she placed the tall bottle in front of her sister.

Resuming her place, she addressed her husband, "Did anything exciting happen today, honey?"

"Oh!" trilled Bess in ecstasy. "Daphne has decided to give Lance a divorce. You know, on 'Daphne Hilton, Law Secretary,' I told you about yesterday's episode when Lance said to Daphne . . ." The remainder of the meal was dominated by the escapades of Daphne H. It was only by rude interruption that Louise was finally able to ascertain who wanted dessert.

When her piece of lemon meringue pie was set before her, Bess eyed it and looked sympathetically at Louise.

"Dear heart, your meringue is weepy again. If, when you beat your egg whites, you'll just . . ." Dessert was transformed into a cooking lesson. When they had finished, Bess was steered back to the living room, settled in her usual chair, and the TV turned to her favorite program.

As Louise cleared the table, her mind flicked over the events of the past

six months: the agonizing afternoons when Bess had filled in visitors on all the details of the operation, the reticence on the doctor's part when Louise had questioned him about Bess's slow recovery, the daily struggles with her sister's walking exercises, the day in the sewing room when Bess had expressed her concern about disrupting their home life . . . then it had seemed to Louise that she couldn't do enough for her only sister. But things hadn't gotten any better. As far as Louise could see, there was no difference in Bess's condition since she got out of the hospital. It was while she and Clay were in the kitchen doing the dishes that Louise gave voice to the thought which had entered her mind frequently of late.

"Dinner was awful tonight, wasn't it?" she said by way of opening.

"Why, honey, I thought it was delicious. Nobody can cook pork chops the way you do and . . ."

"Oh Clay, that's not what I mean and you know it." Louise furiously scrubbed at a dirty pan and sent soap suds flying in all directions.

"I'm talking about Bess and the way she completely monopolized our whole conversation. And, Clay, lately she takes up practically all my time. I'm not complaining for myself, but I know I neglect you terribly. Since she needs so much help with everything, I was wondering what you thought of sending her to a nursing home." She stopped and eyed her husband expectantly.

For a long time he stared at the shiny surface of the aluminum pan he was wiping.

Finally he said in his slow, deliberate way, "Louise, we can't do that. It wouldn't be right. She's your own flesh and blood, and the only sister you have, and we can't turn her away from our door when she's got nowhere else to go."

Louise stared into the dirty dishwater as though she viewed her future in its depths. She said nothing.

"You see that, don't you, honey?" Clay asked earnestly.

Louise straightened her shoulders and tipped the dishpan, letting the brownish water slip down the drain.

"Yes, of course, Clay; I know you're right."

* * *

Bess remained seated in the living room until ten o'clock, at which time she announced, "Well, it's my bedtime."

Louise helped her rise and labored up the stairs with her.

At the door to her room, Louise repeated her nightly question, "Now you're sure you don't need any help in getting ready for bed?"

Bess smiled a sad, tired little smile and patted the strong supporting arm.

"I'll manage to do it, sweet. It's slow work, but I must do a little something for myself. I can't allow you to wait on me hand and foot." Opening the door, she tottered into the room while Louise reached in and switched on the light.

"Don't hesitate to thump on the wall if you need me any time. Good-night."

When Louise's footsteps sounded on the stairs, Bess began hurriedly to doff her clothes. Over her long white nightgown, she wrapped a worn chenille robe. Then she stooped and explored with one hand the darkness beneath the

bed. Upon finding what she was looking for, she straightened and placed the objects on the bedside table. Quickly she got into bed. Situated comfortably, she reached over and opened the box of candy. Slipping a chocolate cream into her mouth, she opened the copy of "True Romance" to the page with the folded corner and began to read.

AN AFTERNOON

MARY E. COX

IT seems right to hear
My yellow sandals slap, slap . . . slap,
Smell burning toast and know
It's late as always summer seems
Slowly to creep behind, tugging
Ever so gently at my tanned heels.
Strawberries, mint ice crushed coolly
Into our warm mouths . . . you smile,
Slowly, simply to say "good."
Turpentine and stump brushes paint
Radish-red thoughts while you fall asleep.
As if to cry dramatically, rain runs down
Off gutter cheeks . . . yes fast and I wish . . .
It seems right to wish in summer rain and
Mud seems right to bake as chocolate cake
As I run to break your sleep.

THE GREEN JACKET

EMILY SIMMONS

THE WIND SCUFFLED PAPER CUPS across the fast emptying parking lot as I hurried out of the supermarket into the wind, pushing and hurrying to get home. I paused for a moment and glanced toward the flowing streams of cars, watching the pale sunlight ricochet off their gleaming swift sides. A young Negro woman in a worn green corduroy jacket was walking slowly along the side walk. A wide-eyed little boy in a cap with gray fur earflaps that matched the collar on his coat clung to her skirt and solemnly chewed on a pink-frosted cookie.

As I stood vacantly watching them, the woman's steps hesitated and she plunged doubled over to the gritty sidewalk. Her grocery bag split open and the contents spread over the pavement; four gold balls of oranges rolled into the street under the bumping wheels. My feet couldn't move! My arms were granite columns hewn from the same stone as my body. The neon lights snapped on and shed a sickly green haze on the crumpled jacket and the dark head pressed against the cold concrete and the wide, frightened eyes of the child, standing motionless, cookie half-way to his mouth. The stiffness went out of my limbs and left only a quivering weakness as I ran and knelt down beside the woman. Her face was purple-gray and her eyes were the black void of death.

"Somebody, somebody, please help!" I screamed out of breathless, shriveled lungs. The now glittering-black cars swept past oblivious . . . another drunk—shame to carry on like that with a kid along—that kind doesn't know any better—Oh, I could see their thoughts! Why couldn't they stop? People came out of the brightly-lighted supermarket, glanced curiously and melted beyond the eerie lights. My throat was closed . . . soundless. The little boy, the dead woman and I . . . a dead dumb composition in the midst of so much sound and life. Then a car slowly pulled out of the parking lot and caught us in the glare of headlights. It pulled up beside us and stopped. The steamy window creaked down and a colored man thrust his head out and said "What's going on here?"

"She's dead, get help, do something!" I heard my voice say, high and wailing. His eyes grew large and the car spun out of the drive-way, hiding our grisly tableau for a moment in gray clouds of exhaust. Oh Lord, where could I find help if not from one of her own race? Surely someone . . . suddenly the hideous wail of a siren sliced the air. A whirling red light loomed above us. The sidewalk was crowded with ghostly white coats. Murmuring voices filled the space under the arc-light. "What happened?" "What's that woman doing there?" "Is she sick?" "Drunk?" Floating faces, disjointed voices swirling up like moths to the light, dying against the sky. The green corduroy coat was lifted by sharp white coats into the yawning mouth of the ambulance, a smudge of brown with grey fur earflaps pressed against another coat . . . one shoe fell off the mother's foot, exposing a wrinkled and badly-darned stocking. Then the siren wailed farther and farther away in the distance and the winking red light blended with others. The wind and I leaned against the streetlight and wept for our weaknesses.

