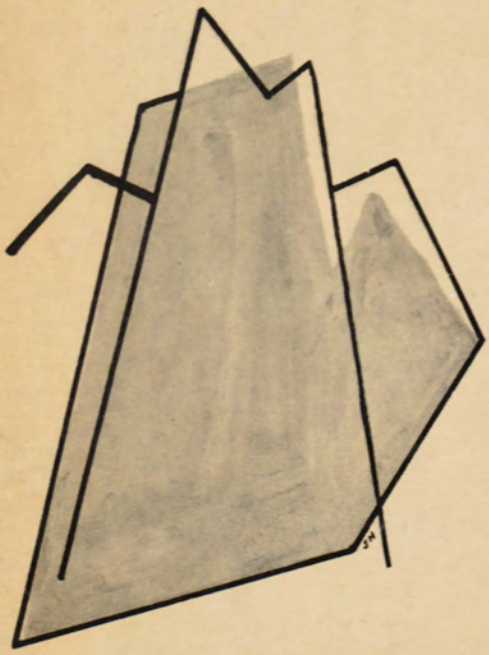

HELICON

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THE HELICON

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Rhode Island College of Education

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contents

silent plea

I demand to get out of my inside shell!
It stifles my breath, yet I cannot
Overcome my clam existence.
I want to say NO! It is not so . . .
But outwardly, silently agree.

I will get out of my inside shell!
So dark, and vacuum-damp,
But not cold - with the warmth of others
Who cling, too, in togetherness of thought.
But who can make self-made bondage?

I want to get out of my inside shell!
To selfness of expression
Of what I really feel about it,
And emphatically, freely disagree!
But would I be able, or dare?

I wish I could break loose from my inside shell!
But then whoever does?
I guess I'll sit back
Like all the rest,
And let you speak for me.

Edith Davis

it will end in fire, not in ice

It was about 1800 hours. The boys were getting in the mood for a night of beer and girls and love. They shined, showered, and shaved as the barracks trembled with song. Someone had started "The Old Grey Mare" and it now progressed into its fifth verse with the dark Italian soldier leading the chorus of "Hee-haw" in his deep bass voice. The fellow we called "Fats" started a congo line around the library-like shelves of beds, and it now bore down upon a pink-faced, skinny teenager who was trying to write a letter. The boys plagued him until he sputtered, "Hey, you guys, can the noise, will ya?" The answers came fast and vehemently. "Go to hell!" and "Come on, Bobby-boy. Don't be a dead head. Get the lead out of your pants." The latter remark accompanied the snap of a towel, a yell of pain and then a rush of cursing.

At first no one paid much attention when two sergeants from the next barracks rushed in, grabbed several blankets, shouted something indistinguishable about gasoline and fire and rushed out again only to be replaced by three other soldiers who came for more blankets. By this time all eyes were on the intruders. Little Smitty was one of them. He yelled to his audience in a funny staccato voice, "You guys better come. Explosion over in H Barracks. The whole place is on fire!"

In two seconds our barracks became the upstairs of a Paris night club in a raid. Those who were dressed ran through the door in groups of twos and threes. Those who weren't scrambled into shoes and pants and left the rest of us still fighting to get dressed. I was one of the last. Someone had taken my shirt and I remember thinking about the cold autumn weather. My reluctance to enter the open air increased along with my curiosity and concern about the fire.

H Barracks was three hundred yards away, but I could hear the shouting and smell the smoke at that distance. When I arrived it seemed as if the whole world were a bright Chinese red. At first I could see nothing but a blur and a mixture of smoke and flames. The building was made ten feet taller by the flames that stretched from the windows and roof toward the sky. Human shapes began to

appear from everywhere. Some hustled about carrying buckets and hoses. Some wandered about with charcoal bubbles on their bodies where skin used to be. Some were red with fire before they were rolled on the scorched earth. Many staggered blindly until their sobbing and screaming were stopped and they were carried away on stretchers.

I couldn't move. I stood stunned as a young soldier collapsed into my arms, crying, "Mommy, Mommy, it hurts. Mommy, it hurts." His skin hung from his body in long thick strings. It was as if he had fallen asleep on the beach under the hot sun and had just awoken to the nightmare of a marred and deformed body with bones showing through the deep pink, split skin. Someone had to take him from my arms or I would have dropped him.

A chaplain was bent over a gray hulk in front of a jeep. "Sanctam peristam uncionem . . ."

These boys who a few minutes before had loved and hated passionately, had sung and sworn violently, were now dying in the same way. I heard the screams of pain. I saw, smelled, and tasted death, but I could feel nothing but sickness and repulsion. I turned and walked away.

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust . . ."

Carol Holgate

a life of power

i am a product of time

my name is destiny

my traveling companions are twoselflessfellows

palepity and leandeath
destination unknown

For no one has Op ened a door, or Sm iled to warm my heart, or

Tu rned his head, or Re ached for my hand.

i am the heralder of time

my name is destiny

i search for you who are not afraid to run in

the night sidebyside with palepity and

leandeath.

ComeComecome with me

for i shall Sh ow you the four corners of the World

i will take you Be yond any man's Estate

i will show you Yo ur Star

I am the Conqueror of Time!

My name is Destiny!

I have found youyourstar.

runfast runfast runfastnow

throtheopendoor returnthesmile catchtheeye

claspetheoutstretchedhand

havethis and havenomore

For I am the End of Time!

Millie Mae Wicklund

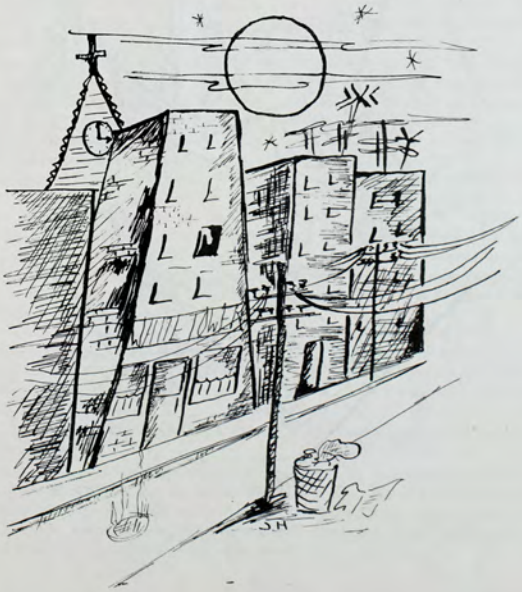
dorrance street at 3 a.m.

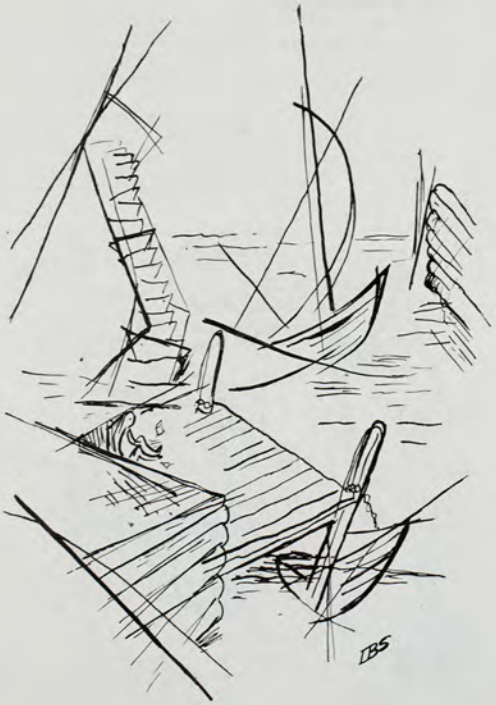
The city squats in the night. Streets,
Black asphalt veins,
Have become
Inactive.

Milky sewer-steams
Rise
Shimmering, undisturbed.
A building, angular, white
Throws a fan of light
Onto
The wide street. Black letters
Dig out words. "White Tower."
A moth
Flutters, throws itself against the window.
A man
Wobbles, trips, stops, stands
On
unsteady
Legs in the
Light
Coffee. A velvet odor. A hand
Into a pocket a lurch
Forward. A heavy blink at the coffee urn.
He shrugs, staggers along.
A screeching sound. Red, white, Ford.
Whitish headlights
Running from its own wheels.
A black car, siren
Screaming
The sound of an
Insane
Woman – – – fades, recedes, is replaced.
Vibrating wire. ". . . in the stardust of a song . . ."
Yellowing darkness. A giant, square eye
Gazes
At the street. Sudden motion. A round face
Creeping, hairy feet on concrete and ---
Nothing.
Warm sewer-steams
Rise.

A building. Square buttons of light
Stretch
To its neck. A free, yellow moon
Impaled many times
Rests
On the pointed top.

John Staknis





an ending

Summer is the saddest happy time,
For childhood always ends in summer.
And summer is life: beautiful and cruel.

A soft breeze was blowing off the bay as I bounced along the cobbles of Benefit Street on my rusty blue bike. It blew a strand of hair into my mouth and made my pony tail swing, rubbing the back of my neck. And it carried the wonderful bay smells: the drying nets, the rope, the wet piles, and, over all, the fish-fresh, old, and ancient--all mixed together. I eased up on the brake a little and went faster down the hill.

It was my first day back from camp, and like every other first day back from camp since I was seven, I was going to my place. I always went to the place to be alone and to think over the summer and to get back to myself again.

I coasted across the square, past the traffic light, and down the little incline to the docks. I got off my bike and lifted it over the curbing and stood watching the swarthy, bearded sailors lazily occupied on the deck of the Portugese schooner moored near the bridge. I watched them move languidly about their tasks, the sun glistening on their broad naked backs. Their skin shone nearly as brightly as the slender polished masts of the ship.

The schooner's being there made it a perfect day for the place. It was a real schooner, without a motor; just the kind of ship to start me dreaming. In my place I could think about the old days and pretend I was really part of them. I could be a beautiful lady in velvet hoop-skirts standing on the deck of a full-rigged clipper ship, gazing in awe at the crowded bay of the thriving seaport metropolis that was Providence. I could be a tall young man busy discussing prices and profits on the docks with the honorable Messrs. Brown, Dexter, and Carrington. I could be an unkempt, carefree boy working as a cabin boy on a three-masted schooner shunting from Boston to New York by way of Providence.

I parked my bike under the broken window of the fish house near the edge of the dock and took the brown paper bag from the basket. Stuffing the bag inside my shorts, I grasped the familiar warm place on the end of the dock and lowered myself through the narrow space between the dock and the corner of the bait shop. Every year I was sorry that I was a girl. It was so much easier for boys to fit through narrow places.

Finally, I squeezed through, and crouching, I felt my way along the familiar walls of my secret passage. It was secret, too; no one knew it was there except me. In the old days all the houses had secret passages. Well, my place had one, too. It wasn't very long, seventeen steps to be exact, but it was secret and at the end of it was the doorway to my private nook.

The crumbling, splintering old piles of the dock formed the walls of my place. My mother always says that dock piles are ugly, but they aren't. They're beautiful. They are the loveliest colors—dark warm brown, and rusty black, and green with mosses. Their colors and marks tell stories. Marks on their seaward sides tell of ships that came to this old dock and left rich cargoes and famous people. The heavy dark band on the back piles shows how high the water comes at high tide. The piles are to lean against when you want to rest or think or pretend.

I opened my paper bag and unpacked it. I put the two apples beside me to eat right away. I put the pencils, the pack of kleenex, and the double roll of spearmint life savers in the cubby hole. I found something I had forgotten about—a rusted tin of soda crackers. I remembered that I had had a real case on soda crackers the summer before. I didn't like them anymore.

I settled back into my usual corner where I could see the wonderful gray-greenness of the water through the piles. But I couldn't get comfortable. I had to hold my legs in a cramped position and my head kept bumping the plank above it. I hadn't realized how much I'd grown in just one summer. It was awfully inconvenient to be so big.

I tried to think of the old days; that was why I had come—to think of the old days and to be whatever I chose to be. I tried to think of brigs and schooners and clippers and of their cargoes of spices and rope and coffee and glass and oil and sandalwood. I tried to think about the people and what they wore and where they lived and what they said. But they just wouldn't come.

For a long while I just sat there; then I cried a little and then I squeezed out through my secret passage, knowing 'way deep inside that I'd never go back again. I struggled through the narrow space between the dock and the bait shop and climbed out on the dock. I got on my bike quickly and pedaled away from the bay. I slowed down as I started up Benefit Street hill and thought how much I hated being twelve. Then the breeze blew my hair again, and I pushed it back, being careful not to disturb the wave I had started to train at camp, and I turned the corner toward home.

Alice Corsair Reinhardt

the sea wall

They built a wall to hold back the sea,
The omnipresent they who do such things,
And the sea laughed at them deep
Within herself and at their wall.
Her hardy weeds clung and grew
And flourished upon it,
And her creatures fed upon them.
She used it to wash against
To make her sounds.
And she wore upon it for amusement
When she had little else to do.
She vented her anger upon it,
And reduced it to its clay.
And they could only stand and watch.

Alice Corsair Reinhardt

ode

Youth is wild—
Running, groping blindly.
Loving all, hating none,
Laughing at the walls of steel,
Seeing hope in empty skies,
Searching there for brave new worlds.

Age is foolish—
Hoping gently to dissuade Youth,
Telling of the hurts and sorrows
Caused by futile dreams,
Forgetting Youth has every right
To look and search for brave new worlds.

Carmen Augusto

is it life?

Is it life to sin and think Calvary your
retribution,
Is it life to hate and preach the
Golden Rule,
Is it life to boast and yet be
sure of heaven?
If this is life - how can death
be cruel!

Carolyn Carter

Darkness
Sin
And shoulders bend
With the awful weight
Of world without end.

Penance
Joy
To spirit lends
And the wonderful whisper
Of "world without end."

Jacqelyn Fontes

loneliness

Loneliness – the word has a melancholy, wistful ring to it, like the tolling of some far-off bell; loneliness – that bit of a person's nature which remains in him as the little drops of milk cling to the sides of the cup after the vessel has been emptied; loneliness – a negative quality, unlike solitude which is positive, which is willed, and which is desired by the human heart. Loneliness is unwanted solitude; it is being alone with one's thoughts and ideas for company, when what the heart really wants is something or sombody temporarily out of reach.

No two souls can be exactly alike, though close similarities do exist for individuals in order to make possible the realization of common experiences. No matter how well we may get to know a person, there will always remain a small portion of his nature which our affections and thoughts will never reach.

Here, in this area untouched by and unknown to other humans, loneliness begins. An experience in itself, loneliness is the feeling that no living mortal has ever gone through even similar experiences. Loneliness is a condition of want, where the individual, although he possesses much, seeks that which he does not have. Away from home, a man may enjoy the beauties of a Norwegian fiord, and yet sense a deep longing for the islands of his native Maine. A woman, in the company of close friends, may feel a great emptiness, and wish for the presence of her loved one. A child, tiring of play with his blocks, becomes lonely for a beloved teddy. All of these people realize that there is a void in their lives, and no effort on the part of their fellow men can fill their urgent need.

Sheila Laffan

metamorphosis

That winter the frost went deep. A cloud bank of icy mist hung over the whole of Korea. Troops moved like aimless specters through the fields, over the roads, and into the milky fog. The march to the front was half-hearted. Each plodding mile widened the gap between security and uncertainty. Mortar fire rumbled somewhere in the distance; the line slowed. The command began far up front. At first it was indistinct, but it grew in volume as it passed down the ranks. The line of marchers scattered from the open terrain to the wood. The bare trees promised little protection against the enemy or the wind.

I threw my field pack to the ground. The soldier beside me said nothing but began to clear the ground for our tent. I appraised him for a moment. He stood three or four inches under my six feet. His face was covered with dirt, yet his youth was quite apparent. A light beard complemented his matted blond hair.

Alex spoke first, "What a life—when the hell do we do some fighting?" I began to smile. "Look," he continued, "I ain't 'gung ho' or anything, but I figure the sooner we meet 'em, the sooner we knock hell outta them." We both had a laugh and then quickly put up our tent.

The chow line snaked over some hundred yards. Tall soldiers, fat soldiers, scared soldiers, brave soldiers, rich soldiers, poor soldiers, white soldiers, black soldiers, stood waiting. They breathed heavy in the frosted air. Some clapped their hands. Some stamped their feet. Some talked. Most were quiet. I looked at their faces. I wondered how many of them really felt like fighting. The soup was hot. Two officers walked by. They talked softly. They were too young, too new. Where were the old soldiers – the ones I'd often read about?

The nights were frigid, but the sleeping bags did their job well. Inside the tent Alex and I lay in the dark. I listened to the wind beat against the canvas. I thought back ten years. It was at a Boy Scout camp. Then, too, I listened in the dark as the wind and rain pelted the tent, and somewhere a lonely dog howled.

Night had always been the unreality. But now it was not so: the blue frosted valleys, the white domed hills, the terror of fleeing refugees, the rumble of shell fire – these were the unrealities.

"Are you sleeping?" Alex asked.

"If I'm sleeping, who's this talking?"

"Look, let's talk serious."

"Go ahead. Shoot. I'm listening."

"Well, it's just this. I was wondering how many of our guys are gonna get their guts blown out."

"You are getting serious; too damned serious," I answered. "But it figures that some of us are going to get it."

"That's the way I look at it," he replied, "and I'm getting six gooks for every one of us that gets it."

"We won't even see them," I said. "I hear you just shoot at where you think they are, but you never see them."

"Damn, I hope not. How the hell can I keep score if I can't see what I shoot?"

▪ ▪ ▪

It was still dark when we moved out. We hurried like hares in front of the hounds. The gray dawn brought a freezing wind.

"Today's the day," Alex said.

"Maybe yes, and maybe no," I answered without enthusiasm; but I checked my rifle closer than usual.

We fell in step behind a line of bouncing Jeeps; and now, on the move, the wind was not so biting. Alex pulled up beside me. He was in a happy mood; he sang and whistled a song I could only half remember.

To our left and right lay plains of deep snow. The only relics of life were a few despairing trees. High in the top branches of one, I saw an abandoned aerie. Birds were wiser than man, I thought; they flee from danger while man stumbles blindly into it.

Morning begot noon, and the firing became louder. The bombardment was incessant. It grew in intensity like a summer storm. I almost expected the rain after each thunderclap of shellfire. We pushed forward, becoming more and more strained as the day wore on. Even Alex's gaiety vanished. I saw droplets of sweat stream down his face, and for a moment he looked years older. I had felt this way once before. It was at a circus. And when I got separated from my older brother, I became panicky. The longer I groped in that pushing mob, the sharper became that piercing sensation in my stomach. Now, I fought that same grasping feeling that came not from the physical, but from some hidden corner of the mind.

I seldom put much faith in rumors, but under the facade of speculation and hearsay there often lies a grain of truth. We knew vaguely what we were up against. The fighting had gone bad for us. The main line was spread thin. The dead and dying were leaving big gaps in our defenses. I thought twice about that. Was I replacing a dead man?

The ground rocked from the artillery and mortar fire. We came to a halt. The setting sun hung like a fiery halo on the horizon. In the eerie orange of sunset we saw the field hospital. Dusky trucks with red crosses on their sides rolled up. Empty-faced medics lifted stretchers from the trucks, and rushed them into the tents. There were two tents. One was huge, larger than a circus canvas. This was for the wounded. The smaller tent seemed darker and dirtier than the large one. This was the morgue.

Alex stood in half disbelief. I almost wanted to ask him if he still thought he could kill six of the enemy for every one in the tents.

He suddenly turned, "I'm so damned mad I'd march all night to fight them."

I believed him, but that only made me feel worse. I wanted to be mad. I wanted to hate them, but it was no use. How could I hate someone I didn't even know? I knew then I cared little, one way or the other, about the enemy. I wondered if I was a moral traitor. Who said there could be no neutrality on moral questions? I tried hard that night to hate them, but nothing happened. The men in the hospital tent were real, and I could feel sorry for them, but the ones who put them there were not tangible, and to hate an unreality was impossible.

▪ ▪ ▪

There were nine of us in the bunker. The beams supporting the sand bag roof gave an impression of solidity, but the sand trickling on our helmets quickly dispelled the illusion. The firing window overlooked a valley that was almost always shrouded with a haze. Beyond the valley, like a silent giant, stood Hill 325. And there among the trees and barren brush, they waited. They lurked out there like birds of prey, watching and waiting until the time was right, until their victims were tired and set up for the kill.

I looked about the damp bunker. Alex, myself, and two others from our outfit stood apart from the other five. They were our age, maybe twenty or twenty-one; yet there was something different about them. A month on the line had turned them into tacit automatons. They had lost many from their outfit, but they refused to talk about it.

Nothing happened for two days. The dawn of the third day brought a crisp stinging wind. I peered through the narrow slit of a window. The haze was lifting faster than usual. The view from our position on a gentle slope offered a panorama of the valley and the Hill. Alex moved up to my side.

"They must be on the other side," he nodded toward the Hill.

"Maybe there's no one out there," I said.

"They're out there a'right, and I'll lay money they're gonna attack."

"We'll be waiting."

"You're damned right we'll be." He looked determined enough, but he had something he wanted to say.

"They must have thousands out there."

"They just might take us," I answered.

"You're nuts; I don't care if they got ten armies. We still got the firepower."

He thought about this declaration for a moment. "Besides," he continued, "we're better trained." Alex was an ideal subject for indoctrination.

"I'm not even mad enough to fight them," I said.

Alex was hurt. "Mad? Watch me if they come."

▪ ▪ ▪

It was still early morning when the attack came. First, an endless barrage of shells poured down. Some of the sand bags split. The sand poured into our eyes, and we were momentarily blinded. I heard Alex shout. The rest of us ran to the opening. The ridge of Hill 325, which shortly before had been devoid of life, was now rimmed with an endless line of humanity. I could think only of the many western movies I had seen. They looked like Indians on the ridge, outlined against the sky, and waiting for the attack signal from their chief. The signal sounded. The bugle carried clear in the cold air. Nine rifles rested on the sill of the firing aperture.

They came like locusts; but not to devour the land. We were their prey. They ran over the snow and ice with rifles, with knives, with clubs, and even with bare hands. The stutter of machine gun fire began when they were a few hundred yards away. They started to fall. There was something fascinating about the way they fell. Some of them hit the ground like laundry sacks. There was a finality about those. They fell and never moved again. Others flipped in the air like acrobats; but there was no net to break their fall. A few of them seemed like drowning men. They hit the snow, but they refused to stay down. They flayed the air, grasping for some hand that wasn't there.

Alex was on my right. He was firing in a frenzy. I put my hand to my face; it stung from powder burns. My rifle was poised, but I had not fired. Still they came and still they fell. I felt as if I had walked in on the climax of a war movie.

Now there were not so many of them; they were faltering. I heard someone shout to move out. My rifle was still cold. We ran from the bunkers like a stampeding herd. We were no more than a disorganized mob. Machine gun fire from our entrenchments cut the air. They were in mass retreat. We groped forward, slipping on the ice and falling over bodies and parts of bodies. I stopped. One of them lay sprawled face down in the snow. The snow was like a monstrous sponge, draining and storing the flowing blood from the lifeless body. Was this one of Alex's "six?" Was this what I was supposed to hate? I was sick of the whole mess. And then I went to sleep.

■ ■ ■

I knew where I was before I opened my eyes. To me the smell of popcorn had always meant circus; the smell of budding flowers spring; the smell of ozone the aftermath of an April shower; and the acrid smell of ether meant hospital. I was lying on a cot. My head felt as if there were dozens of tiny gremlins inside battering on my brain.

Something or somebody was standing near the cot. The Something was too blurred to make out.

"You're lucky," the Something said.

"I feel rotten," I answered the Something.

"Only a slight concussion."

"Oh, is that all?" and the Something came into focus. He was a sallow-faced medic.

"You'll be back on the line in a week."

"Great," I answered dryly. "Have you got any more good news?"

He ignored the sarcasm. There was something about him I disliked. There were beads of perspiration trickling down his drawn face. He hovered over me like a demanding Pharisee, telling me what ailed me, what I could do, and what I couldn't do. I wanted to tell him where to go, but I thought better of it.

"Hell," he droned on, "tomorrow I'm gonna have you on your feet."

What did he want? A citation? I noticed for the first time his green uniform; it was streaked with blood. Now on second thought he looked like a butcher; or was it a ghoul? My head was pounding again. He was getting friendly so he could take me by surprise. I beckoned him close. With a desperate lunge I got my hands around his neck. I fell back, and I felt myself falling and falling into the blackness.

■ ■ ■

I woke up with a start. My head felt much better. The same medic was at my side. I remembered him vaguely.

"I guess you're safe today," he said with a trace of a smile.

"Oh, no," and I remembered most of what had happened.

"Forget it; some of them act worse than that when the dope wears off. Besides, we have work to do."

"You mean I have to work for my keep?"

"We can't identify all your buddies," he said simply.

I had forgotten about the rest of them; but now the picture of what had happened came back to me. "How bad are they?"

"Some of them are all done." His face was a blank wall; if he felt any emotion, it was well hidden. He reminded me of an undertaker; he was solemn enough, but somehow I knew he felt nothing.

He led me into the small tent. I was still dizzy and weak on my feet. The place was unearthly; the dead lay side by side, and only my heavy breathing broke the silence. The musty smell of death permeated the air in the canvas catacomb. The medic stopped at a charred body and nodded toward it. I shook my head and we moved on. He pointed out another corpse, but again I failed to recognize it. The medic was disturbed. He was responsible for finding the identity of the bodies, and he seemed to think that I should recognize each one he pointed out. "This is the last one," he said phlegmatically. "Well, how about it. Do you know him?"

There was nothing left of his face on the right side. It was as if some wild animal had chewed out half his head. Mortar sharpnel carves grotesquely.

"Yes, I knew him," I said. I wanted to scream and tell the medic everything that was happening inside me; but I was too sick. I bent over and emptied out my stomach. He was satisfied now; I told him all I knew about Alex, and he led me back to my cot. I didn't sleep. I closed my eyes, and thought. And I thought all that night.

■ ■ ■

The truck convoy groaned over the narrow road. I sat in the rear of the lurching truck, watching the snow fall on our tracks. There were a dozen other men in the truck. They were shiny and fresh out of recruit training. I tried to ignore them; my thoughts were back at a small tomblike tent many miles away. But they were persistent. "How are we doing on the line?"

"Were you wounded?"

"Are the gooks really good fighters?"

"I heard they can land a mortar shell on a dime."

"We'll give 'em hell."

A mile up the road the convoy stopped. I heard someone outside the truck screaming and shouting. We piled out the rear. Our driver was off to the side of the road. He swung his rifle like a madman at a pack of emaciated dogs. On the scarlet snow were the remnants of a human. We joined in and finally drove the starved dogs off.

The driver looked sick. "It wasn't one of our boys," he said.

"I'm glad," I answered.

■ ■ ■

Again we waited. The air crackled with shells. We expected an attack any minute. The new men were tense. "Why are we sitting here?"

"This place is like a coffin."

"Why don't we go after them?"

"Here they come!"

They came like an army of angry ants. I raised my rifle and waited. It was cold in the bunker but my hands were moist. I watched them draw closer. I zeroed in on one of the bobbing forms; he danced crazily, and crashed headlong into the ground. I watched him roll over and over, and I remembered Alex saying he'd get six of them for every one they got. But I knew I could never stop at six. I had to fire again and again – until there were no more. I hated them that much...

John Rodgers

pseudo-ethics

Dungareed bearded inventor of destruction

Bongo-drummed and beaten

in coffee houses

Stimulator of conversation or

stifler of individual thought?

Kahki-bermudaed scraggly haired catalyst of

destruction

Poetry-read and jazzed

in dingy cellars

Accelerated unconcern or

dilatory concern?

Beatnikism and

unctuous utterings

Existentialism and

false identities

Futility of effort:

what are you kiddingmedad?

True individualists and

aloneness

But not anachronistic formalists

Necessity of struggle:

how do you like your fairhaired boy,

Mr. Success?

Millie Mae Wicklund

the end of the jelly beans

"Now, look," Rick said to his imaginary listener. "You pitched for the Hawks for three weeks, didn't you? That's a pretty long time; so you really shouldn't have any kick. And remember, we all told you when you came on the team it was just going to be until I saved enough money to get a glove. Well, I have enough now. And all the fellows think. . ."

But how were you going to say something like that to a girl? Rick fingered the money in his pocket and then shook his head. He'd been cutting lawns three weeks to get enough to buy himself the glove. But when he thought about how Rusty was going to look when he told her she couldn't play with the Hawks any more, he wished he'd never learned to play baseball.

Women were funny. Well, girls were funny anyway – even girls like Rusty. She could pitch like a whiz. Rick had to admit that. But she could cry at some of the silliest things.

How she'd cry now! But she had to understand that the team just couldn't keep a girl pitcher. They'd been kidded too long as it was.

And then he saw her. He'd been heading toward Wilson's lot while he'd been thinking. And there she was in the center of it. Blue jeans, black hair tucked under a cap, and sneakers. On her left hand was a baseball glove.

She yelled at him. And then she said, "Catch!" Her left knee rose high. Her right arm stretched behind her head. Then a ball whizzed through the air like a bullet.

Rick caught it in both hands, and held on tight. It was like catching boiling water. Rusty sure had a fast pitch.

"About set to go to the Point?" she called as he walked toward her.

He nodded, and put his hands in his pocket. The money he'd worked so hard for was there. But it felt like hay.

"Now look," he muttered. "You can't pitch forever. Girls just don't play baseball forever."

"What?" she asked.

He tossed the baseball in the air again. Then he was standing next to her, and he gave it to her.

"Guess we'd better get going," she said, beating the ball against the palm of her glove. She reached in the pocket of her blue jeans and pulled out a handful of jelly beans. "Have one," she said. "Take two if you want."

"No, no thanks."

"Oh, stop! There isn't a person in the world who doesn't like jelly beans." Rick took one. And he bit down on it hard. Rusty started for the sidewalk, and Rick followed her automatically. And then he stopped.

"Rusty, look ––"

"What?" she frowned at him slightly. "There something wrong with you, Rick?"

"No, no, there's nothing wrong. It's just that –– Tell you, we've got a few minutes before we have to be at the Point. What say we have a soda? It's on me."

"On you? Well!" She pulled out another handful of jelly beans. "Take three this time."

That had been close. He could just imagine what would have happened if he and Rusty had shown up at the Point together.

That was where the Hawks practiced. Everybody would have thought Rick had told her by then. He could just imagine the silence and then the confusion.

They walked down the block to Hoover's Drugstore. Rick noticed the sporting goods store across the street. His glove. He hadn't bought his glove yet. He had to buy it before he went to the Point this afternoon.

Wouldn't that be the easiest way of telling Rusty? Just buy the glove while she was watching. He wouldn't have to say a thing. She'd be sure to get the idea. She'd just have to get it.

Rusty was nearly to the door of the drugstore now. And Rick knew he wasn't going to tell her. He wasn't even going to take her across the street to the sporting goods store -- not unless he did it right now. When you put something off, it got so you couldn't do it. He'd been putting off telling her. And now he couldn't put it off anymore, not even the time it took to drink a soda. He just wouldn't put it off anymore. He took a breath, winced, and then grabbed her arm.

She whirled. "What's the matter?"

He twisted his head in the direction of the sporting goods store. "I have to get something," he muttered.

He didn't even stop to look at the window display. He always did that before he went into a store to buy something. It kind of made you dream about it and get excited about it before you bought. But this time he just shoved open the door without slowing his stride.

A bell rang, and a thin man with glasses appeared behind the counter. His pepper-colored hair was bushy and not very well combed.

"Yes?" he said.

Rick said, "I want to see some, some --"

The man said, "Yes?" And then his eyes began to sparkle. He looked away from Rick, toward Rusty, who had moved a few feet down the counter.

"They're nice, aren't they?" he said.

"They sure are," Rusty said. She was looking at some leather purses that were on display along the counter. She picked one up and looked at it closely. Then she held it down at her side and took a few steps with it.

"I want a want a --" And Rick pulled the money out of his pocket.

"Well," said the man. "This is certainly a nice gift. This a birthday?"

Rusty twirled. And then she said, "Rick! Rick, it's swell. It's real swell. But--but I can't--You shouldn't . . ." There was a tear starting down her cheek, and she brushed at it with the back of her hand.

Rick just stared at her. Certainly Rusty didn't think . . . He'd worked three weeks for the money. He just wasn't going to spend it on a girl.

But he couldn't tell her that, not with her crying and all. And now how would he ever tell her about the baseball team?

Then she straightened, with the purse at her side. Her cap came off. She looked different, sort of. Maybe it was the way her eyes sparkled or the way she seemed to be balancing a book on her head. It seemed that while the jeans on her were all right, she'd look better in a dress and girl's shoes.

She reached in her pocket and pulled out a handful of jelly beans and held them out to Rick.

"Take four this time," she said. "Take them all." And then she held out her glove. "Take this, too. I'm getting too old to be playing baseball. Mom's right."

Rick looked at the glove for a full second before he took it. He crammed his mouth full of jelly beans so that he wouldn't have to talk.

At last he said, "Rusty, I --" He cleared his throat. "I guess we better get the sodas."

Rusty said, "All right." She reached in her pocket, and pulled out an empty hand. No jelly beans left. Well, what lady ate jelly beans anyway?

She walked very stiffly to the door and waited. Rick opened it and began to step through. But then he held the door open wide so that she could step to the sidewalk.

George DeLuca

summer

Children laughing in tall grass
The muffled roar of the gentle monster sea
A barker cry, "Hot peanuts"
The heady sickish scent of honeysuckle
The strong sharp odor of yesterday's seaweed
Birch bark burning in a stone-ringed fire
Lovers walking hand in hand through sea fog
Cats in communal napping in the shade
Brawny suntanned fishermen
A damp pungent breeze
The stifling heat of noon
The slippery sleekness of undersea rocks
I know summer.

Alice Corsair Reinhardt

to intuition dying young

The meeting offended by eyes that belie,
And the anguished soul burdened by "is" and "seems",
Turns her head away too deeply hurt to ever tell.
The dissatisfied soul confused by disguised indifference
Prefers the pain of "was" and "used to be,"
The accepted soul runs away now and hides pretending a lie,
Accepting conformity and welcoming tradition
Perplexing the unsuspecting soul with imperative denial.
Test the dissatisfied soul with icy bitterness, raking
sarcasm, and unapologetic scorn,
But never run away and hide pretending a lie.
For non-competing "you" and "I" met before we were born,
Freed by the unborn, the living, and the dead,
Inheriting trust that lives within us instead.
Don't make me turn my head, don't make me lie too,
For one lie can't tell another lie why we do!

Millie Mae Wicklund

number vii

Their camping trip on the lonely island that lay approximately in the middle of the bay was their first real vacation in more than five years. The man had obtained permission from the state to use the island game-preserve, as long as he refrained from any hunting or trapping; there was no objection to fishing offshore, however, so that their meals for the week came from the sea. The island was about two miles long and half a mile wide, with a few coves indenting the shoreline; coves that provided shelter for the migratory ducks and geese.

The couple spent the better part of the week investigating these coves and inlets, finding immense pleasure in the sea life they saw on the bottoms of the shallow waters. The woman watched fascinated as large blue crabs fought one another, seemingly dancing just off the bottom, tearing at one another's claws, all for the privilege of carrying on nature's demands of male and female. Above the low-water mark, the man and woman played games. They stomped their bare feet on the sand, and burst into fits of laughter as they saw the slimy spurts of water come out of one of the many holes that dotted the ground. The spurt of water was the signal for both to fall on their hands and knees and dig into the sandy mud in search of the clam that had unwittingly given away its hiding place. The clams were eaten in chowder, or steamed, or simply eaten raw.

The man had set up their camp on the east side of the island, so that the couple could take advantage of the first rays of the sun as it came over the horizon and touched the distant church spire that rose, stick-like on the mainland a dozen miles away. The camp was not elaborate, but well-suited for two people; the man's experience in the outdoors was evident in the sparsity of equipment, yet nothing was lacking that might be essential for a week-long stay on the lonely island. The camp itself was situated above the high-water line, and on a low plateau-like shelf of land, an area well covered with eel grass. Further inland was a natural spring, guaranteeing fresh water for the man and woman. Downstream from the spring and to the south the man had dug a military type latrine trench that could serve as toilet and garbage pit. Since there were a few insects that were not carried off by the sea-breeze, the man lightly covered the debris at the end of each day.

What had started out as a leisurely afternoon meal turned into a scramble for cover as the sky quickly became overcast with gigantic black clouds, mile high thunder heads of an early spring storm. Before the announcer's voice had finished its "smallcraft warning" from the portable radio, the man and woman had scooped up the dinner utensils, folded the table and chairs, and carried everything within the tent. But even the wind-driven rain could not dampen their spirits as they continued their meal in shelter. The Coleman lantern barely

moved as it followed the slight movement of the tent. By late afternoon the storm had not abated as expected; the weatherman predicted continued heavy rains through the evening and night, and probably the next day. The possibility that they might be forced to stay on the island longer than either had anticipated prompted the man to decide on leaving that evening during a lull in the storm. They could cross to the mainland in comparative safety and with little discomfort for the skiff was seaworthy and powered by a large outboard motor. The man and woman dressed in oilskins and hurriedly carried their gear to the eighteen-foot boat and stowed the equipment under the forward deck. The woman sat in the bow and the man was about to push the boat out from shore when he remembered the refuse ditch. He dropped the grappling anchor in the shallow water, picked up a flashlight and headed for the camp. His mind was on the weather as he played the beam of light along the ground in front of his feet, the light reflecting the falling drops of rain. He thought of the forgotten shovel, returned to to the boat, found the trench tool, and then hurried again on his way. The distant rumble of thunder seemed to start an inner storm within the man's mind as he walked through the driving rain.

When he got to the trench, the man put the flashlight down on a rock and started to shovel dirt from the pile next to the hole onto the refuse. The light was so angled that he could not see directly into the hole, but he could hear the loose dirt make a wet, sucking sound as it fell onto the rain-soaked refuse-and-dirt now turned into a fluid mass. It was after the third shovelful that he first heard the sound. He thought it was his mental interpretation of the storm, and he continued to throw more dirt into the hole. Again the sound came to his ears, this time a little more distinct, and it reminded him of the sound of a kitten that might have caught its leg under a rocking chair. He paused to listen, now convinced that it was not the storm; a doubt lingered; he had heard this sound before, in the innermost recesses of his subconscious; hopefully he thought that maybe his ears had become dulled by the all consuming sound of the storm. . . and it came again. The man was not one to be frightened easily, but he kept a firm grip on the shovel as he picked up the flash light and swept the surroundings with the beam of light. Nothing. . . yet the sound came again. . . and he reluctantly pointed the beam of light into the hole, somehow knowing before hand that he should quit the place now. His fingers seemed to dig into the wood of the handle when he played the light into the hole. Just below his feet he saw two misshapen hands clutching at the roots of the eel grass that lined the walls of the hole. There did not seem to be anybody attached, only a round bulge pushing up some of the refuse between the two grotesque, string-like arms that joined the hands to the mud. The cry came again, and as the man compulsively watched, a bubble formed next to the bulge, rose a little, and burst, with the sound of long held air. With an agonized cry, more animal than human, the man raised the shovel and brought it down with all his strength. . . and again. . . and again. . . till there could be no more sound. Stuffing the flashlight into a pocket he furiously threw dirt into the hole till he felt his entire body bathed in sweat, and his nerves and muscles cried out for relief. With great effort he turned from his task,

sad that there could not be enough time or earth to build a mountain over what had previously been only a hole. He took the flashlight and without a backward glance he returned to the boat and the woman. Once the boat had started to move, the man thought it was all a bad dream. There was no sense saying anything to her. It was the woman however, who brought up the matter later, when they had docked at one of the lighted piers. She noticed faint streaks of a reddish color on the oilskin of the man and she asked him if he had cut himself on his way back to the boat. His answer that it was probably from the blood of the fish he had cleaned satisfied her; yet he knew full well that the oilers had remained unused up until that very afternoon. . . he had cleaned and oiled them months before this trip.

Paul Gauthier

Early: a gray road

Early: confusion and question .

Darkness: but the road shows wear.

Soon: an undulating hill

A shadow-darkened rise

to a distant erudite light.

A climb: arduous – struggling

then

Over the crest

A light: diffuse – blurred

The lamp burns –

– knowledge –

Carol Giuliano

robert frost, a teacher

As a poet, Robert Frost has made his mark. He has written about New England and its people with such insight that he has been called "the voice and embodiment of rural New England." But it is not with Robert Frost, the poet, that this writing is concerned; rather it is concerned with Robert Frost, the teacher. While I was reading several sketches of Frost's life, I became quite interested in his teaching. Although most biographers slide lightly over this facet of his life, his good friend and biographer, Sidney Cox, devotes several chapters of **A Swinger of Birches**, his account of Frost's life, either exclusively or partially to the poet's teaching career and his philosophy of education. Two other books, Elizabeth Sargeant's **Fire Under the Andes** and **Our America** by Andrew Gillis and Robert Ketchum, contain short biographies of Robert Frost which touch upon his teaching activities.*

Frost's background and formal education would hardly be considered adequate training for a teacher, according to today's standards. Born eighty-four years ago in San Francisco, of a down-east father and a Scotch mother, he was destined to become one of our greatest contemporary poets. When Robert was ten years old, his father died, and he and his mother came to Lawrence, Massachusetts to live with his grandfather. Thus he returned to the land loved by eight generations of his father's family, and thus he came to know and to love New England and its people.

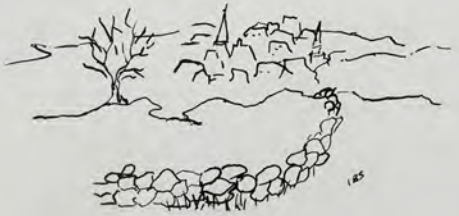
It was from New England and its people that he received his early education. Although he was

valedictorian of his high school class, Frost seemed unable to settle down to the regimen of academic life at either Dartmouth or Harvard. He tried teaching and found that not to his liking either, and then tried working in a mill. Eventually he returned to teaching. How did this come about? Miss Sargeant supplies the answer in her book: "It was not, so he tells us, until he found the storekeeper at Derry, New Hampshire . . . appraising his horse for the grocery bill that he decided to apply (with a poem) to Pinkerton Academy." He became a teacher of English at Pinkerton, a preparatory school in Derry Village, New Hampshire.

Our first clue to Frost's personal philosophy of education comes to us from his actions at Pinkerton. When he arrived there, he discovered that his predecessor had preferred dull vocational books to literature. Frost got rid of those books. According to Cox, he started his students reading aloud and listening to him read stories like Mark Twain's "Jumping Frog," H. G. Wells' "Country of the Blind," Stevenson's "Bottle Imp," and Hawthorne's "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe," as well as many poems from Palgrave's **Golden Treasury**. Cox says that "being friendly, he broke the dismal spell that holds kids back from natural experience. His own amusement and pleasure were on the side of play, not on the side of the calculated benefit; and the kids were infected. They began to sense and feel the experiences in the poems and stories -- just so long as it was fun and a trifle improper as compared with diagramming and writing out corrections. They even came to enjoy and ponder the implications, exchanging, now and then, a quick, conspiratorial glance with the tall man in comfortable unpressed clothes who didn't act the least bit like a teacher."

If Frost didn't look or act like a teacher, he was also unorthodox in the way he dealt with stories. Again I quote from Cox: "He showed them that what makes a story of a story is 'the turn,' 'the twist,' 'the wiggle, at the least.' And they began to learn about form. The point with stories . . . was not to have read celebrated authors, but to see and be pleased." Also, while at Pinkerton, he told debaters he was instructing that when they had good ideas, they should ascribe them to Daniel Webster or George Washington; their thoughts would carry weight only if the judges believed they came from some other source. This was a rather sad commentary on the perceptiveness of the average judge.

Frost departed from custom again in the matter of assignments to his pupils. He refused to assign topics for writing; Cox reports him as having told his students to find something of their own, something " 'common to experience but uncommon to expression.' Could one of them, for instance, make him see pigeons



on the street: their primly placed lavender feet, their iridescent necks, the way they poked their heads in walking, and the dainty way they picked out a grain of oats? --something as little looked at but as familiar as that?" Although his teaching methods were not in accordance with tradition, he seems to have been well-liked, for he remained at Pinkerton for six years and then went on to a position in the normal school.

The new school was New Hampshire Normal at Plymouth, where Frost taught psychology for a year. At the end of that year, he sold his farm at Derry and took his family to England. Thus ended his early teaching experiences.

During the three years spent in England, his first two volumes of verse were published. And returning in 1915, he hardly expected to find himself famous. Gillis and Ketchum point up the situation very well when they say, "Yet here were the editors drawn up on the docks, hailing him as a leader of his generation in the 'new poetry'; here were rewards and successes which . . . gave teaching a privileged academic form." The unknown teacher had become famous; his works were widely read, and colleges were vying for his favor. Then followed his work as professor of English at Amherst, as "poet in residence" at the University of Michigan, and as a guest lecturer at numerous other colleges and universities.

This new, privileged, academic form of teaching gave sanction to his educational ideas. Even before he became a celebrity, Robert Frost had rarely planned an hour for his classes. Instead he brought to class some nucleus of a discussion, and together he and the students shaped it into something. Miss Sargeant reports him as saying, "There is such a thing as random talk, but it is to be valued as scouting for gold." He refused to face a class for three hours a week and lecture to them, claiming he did not have the patience to "face an audience which has been doing nothing to help itself in the intervals." When he did lecture he gave his audience an experience which he intended to cause ideas or thoughts to be awakened in their own minds. "His purpose in teaching," says Cox, "to evoke an 'answer from within' the student, to 'get where he lives, among his realities', could only be effected lightly . . . He does what he does with a glancing touch."

Further, he had no patience with the kind of schooling which requires pupils to relate facts "in the order learned." He would stimulate the student's desire to learn, and give him the time necessary to gain knowledge through the desire to know. Frost recognized the need for the freedom to explore, question, observe, and to formulate ideas and opinions of one's own. Herein lies the key to real wisdom.

A true lover of books, Frost directed much of his effort at teaching others to share his enthusiasm. He once visited the rooms of his students and gave them credit for the quality and quantity of the books they had bought. He deliberately aroused their curiosity about all kinds of books by all sorts of writers, including Ring Lardner and Damon Runyon. In one course of literature which he taught, he had his class read a book a week. These books could not be the works of major authors, either; the students would get the classics somewhere whether he used them or not, as Cox quotes Frost, ". . .that's what education very largely means today--knowing the names that sound the loudest. That's what business means, that's what success means. Well, I'd like to get out of that