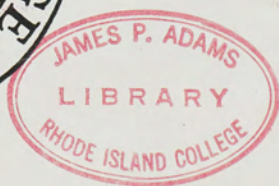


HELICON



1969

THE HELICON

*The Literary Magazine
of Rhode Island College*

*On behalf of the staff I wish to thank all who submitted
manuscripts to our magazine.*

JUDITH CABRAL
Editor

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"Musing"

Love is Blue
Loneliness without her
A wondering feeling
Holding at your heart
Tearing so you fear to move,
To breathe
An overshadowing
Hot breath on your neck
Turned on Experience
Giving of each other
Totally
A touch
Neon lights
Enveloping colors holding you bound
Tightly
Wrapped up society
Turned on
Hung up on Love.
Beautiful
Excitation
Smooth sensation of love
Splendor
Temptation
A pulse moving faster
We're one.
Mixed up generation
A part
Giving to each other
Our bodies . . . and souls
Inseparable bond.
Eternally one
Love me
And I you
It is consummated
No longer individuals
As two — one
Knowing each other completely
Tender sensation
Coming alive
Conquering time with Love
Bright and shining,
Eyes of love
Seeing truth yet blind.
Innocent
Expression of love,
A kiss.
Stealing into the Black Night
Together,
Alone. Forever.

CHRISTEN

The Void

I walked along the rain-spattered
streets
And wondered if you were there —
Though I knew you were gone.
And I talked to myself as if I
were more than one.
It seemed odd to be alone in my
loneliness
When always before you had accompanied
me
And we had been lonely together.
And when the stubborn sun's rays
pierced through the fog
And I glimpsed the shadow of light-
heartedness
I fled to my own dark alley.

CHRIS TSETSI

Conceived of Two

forming one
an individual.
(Not far away)
Conceived of two
forming one
an individual.
Twenty-one years —
two individuals
meet.
Of conflicting religions
backgrounds and
experiences
"We'd laugh away the hours
We thought they'd never end
So young and sure to have our way . . ."
But that is not
the way
of man's norm-oriented environment.
"Those were the days, my friend."

DEBBIE BEN

If I forget, for a prolonged moment,
the mammal, sensory pleasure of which
I am capable
I must toll to over-ride
The creeping guilt that destroys
me spiritually

SHELLY MOSSBERG

I sit
 watching clouds pass;
 a breeze that
 almost belongs to September
 flirts with summer flowers.
 Happy birds soar
 and
 I hear their playful voices
 rise
 when a yellow sunlight
 rests on their feathers,
 There sits a special rainbow
 in the air
 amidst the pale and
 ancient sky we know;
 just glowing there
 for me to see
 while silent trumpets
 call my eyes from earth's
 loud spectacle
 Tears cease being one
 with my senses
 And make a different path
 upon my cheek
 in a moment of quiet joy.

KATHY DeMOIA

The echoes of the wind
 Whistle softly through my mind
 And remind me of the happiness I
 once had hoped to find.

Happiness — what is it?
 (In spite of benign social laws)
 It's just a vague remembrance of
 something that was.

KATHY DeMOIA

THE ATTIC OF MY MIND

The rust-colored leaves rustled
 across the ground
 And the orange and scarlet leaves
 intercepted them at the corner.
 My own, private, closed-circuit tele-
 vision suddenly switched on
 And because the horizontal wasn't
 adjusted
 The picture began to roll.
 And though, at first, there was
 some technical difficulty
 The scene finally came into focus.
 I saw a very young girl ambling
 across a field of yellow and
 brown grass.
 She glanced at the brilliantly-colored
 vestiges of the tree's clothing
 And the magnificently painted
 back-drop of the autumn sunset.
 She stooped to grasp a handful of
 leaves
 And kicked a neat pile of gathered
 ones which lay in her way.
 She skipped down the street and
 out of my view
 So I could no longer really see her
 But I remember.

CHRIS TSETSI

jagged surface,
 glinting with reflections of
 a golden face,
 and dashing fragile beams
 head-on
 into flights through sea-washed
 air

KATHY DeMOIA

I fled to nowhere
 I sought nothing but reality
 But fantasy pursued me
 And pulled me back to everything
 that is mad.
 Life is unreal . . .
 Only imagination lives and breathes.
 Sensibility is senseless
 In this vacuum — packed world.

CHRIS TSETSI

I meant to do, I mean I really tried
 But somehow I got caught
 in the whirlwind
 of thoughts
 and dreams
 and swimming images
 of unreality crowding reality
 and
 I meant to do

DEBBIE BEN

The Flower

It was a cool crisp autumn day.
 I walked along a narrow path,
 Dimly lit by sunbeams, searching
 Their way through
 Surrounding trees; spreading
 Blankets of soft color on
 Mother Nature's cheeks.
 One little flower
 Standing all alone, centered
 In the path;
 So tiny, yet its beauty
 Gave new light to the dim woods,
 So beautiful that the tallest pine
 And mightiest oak
 Seemed to stoop with envy,
 So radiant, so full of life, that
 Every day, as I passed these woods,
 It seemed to smile a sweet hello,
 And fill my heart with love and joy.

It was a similar sunshine day
 That I skipped merrily along the
 path,
 So wrapped in joyous thoughts,
 So full of happiness, that I forgot
 The little flower,
 And trod, unaware, on its tiny head.
 I heard a faint cry and stopped.
 I looked back to see my little flower
 Bent and broken, weeping in pain,
 Spattered with mud, ground into the
 dirt,
 Crying for help. I knelt beside it,
 longing to help,
 But it was too late.
 Now the path is dark.
 There is nothing left,
 To brighten the way.
 Only a stone
 Marks the place where once my
 flower stood secure.

I kneel by the stone every day
 And pray.

LESLIE CAMERON KELLY

The Man

Slowly, gently, barely perceptible,
 I bloom.
 I find myself alone, in darkness and
 shadows.
 A noise.
 Someone is coming — a man.
 He stops and bends down to me.
 He smiles — he is happy.
 Is it I who gives him this?

Everyday he stops and smiles at me,
 Love and happiness in his eyes.
 One day he comes gayly, merrily,
 But can this be? Has he forgotten
 my tiny existence?
 His foot — so large — comes down
 and down
 until it crushes and twists.
 The pain!
 He has heard, he turns, and kneels
 Wanting, longing to help.
 The tears in his eyes, the love.
 His pain!
 Please, it is all right, I understand.
 I . . . I love . . . I forgive . . .
 I love . . .

LESLIE CAMERON KELLY

The Wedding Feast

The Wedding Feast! The cold November day was left beating at the door, unwanted and unheard. People crowding to see and crowding to get a breathing space on the periphery. Amidst the pressing faces, the delicate white of the bride, out of season on the November day, and the black of the groom's ritual floated unreal and detached. Yet somehow too the couple derived their special self from this excited, happy mob. The toast made, the sandwiches passed, everyone sat down to renew old friendships or to make tenuous new ones. The bride and groom were left relatively alone to wonder at their own importance, the importance of one day.

It was not a happy time for some. The wedding guests brought to this celebration of connubial promise the leftovers of their own wayward marriages. Some were stabbed by unconscious irony during the rite in the church; others felt they had missed too great a thing by eloping; still others saw a gap between what we promise to one another and what we actually do. And there were two who felt a very special sadness at the swirling sights of feast and love and friendship.

The parents of the bride had denied the girl a wedding feast, for some remote and unjustifiable reasons. The groom's two sisters took over. The reception was simple, held in one sister's home, but elegant with love and generosity. To this boisterous, happy time came the parents of the bride.

The father of the girl was a tall man, young-looking; his face alone bore the marks of drinking and late hours "with the boys". There were deep ravines in his cheeks and shades of black beneath his eyes, derelicts of beer hangovers and poker-table dimness. His eyes were always filmy, watery and red, and his lips had already begun to sag, giving the man a look of blighted idiocy. But he was yet a hearty man, strong in stamina and in prejudice; he had denied the gift of celebration because the groom was Irish and Catholic.

The girl's mother was a vague, wondering woman, widening her eyes at draperies and death; she followed quietly and questioned nothing. There was a hunted look, however, a brave but crumbling front that spoke of an inner strength sapped by the abuse of neglect. And because she did not fight her husband, she was his staunch accomplice. Her nature was heroic, her voice rich and soft, and she wrung her hands once or twice like a woman who is very much aware of social approval. But more, the look of one who had lived with mindless hate and unbending prejudice, a kind of harried, worn expression in her eyes, belied her deeper but more impotent nature.

Someone asked me for an ashray. The old man on the other side of the room had spilled something and was furtively and angrily wiping it from the rug. It seemed to be champagne, or beer, I couldn't tell which. The maid of honor sat with her boyfriend in a far corner and quietly conversed, looking annoyed at loudly laughing people.

"Janet!" The woman in blue turned around as if I'd answered. Then back toward the kitchen again. "JANET!" She thumped down from her tiptoes and pulled impatiently at her dress.

"Excuse me, miss . . ." I turned as the girl next to me smiled at the passing young man. He looked at her with a deprecating smile, stooped a little lower, and left.

"Steve! Over here. Look here." The man with the camera was stretching above the crowd. His shirt showed beneath his disarrayed suit coat. "No," disgustedly, "over *here!*" I saw the blond head turn and thought I saw a wan and forced smile through the crowd and smoke, but I can't be sure.

"Where's my daughter-in-law?" Janet's father had had too many beers, and his naturally husky voice was thickening with a sudsy residue. I saw Janet's panicked eyes flash sideways through the gauzy veil. Steve picked her sleeve and she turned to him with a plastic smile. "Carol! Where's my daughter-in-law?" Archie turned his ravined face and I could see his red and feeble eyes search the teeming faces. "Carol!"

"Coming!" An insipid answer seemed to come from beneath a pillow of a chair, and wisp of a pale, doe-eyed girl slid from the corner and dissolved.

"Here's my girl." Dissolved beneath the stuffed sleeve of her father-in-law's coat. "I'd thought you'd gone home!" He slapped the girl's back and guffawed into her face. "You look lonesome. You miss my boy, eh?" Another gigantic slap-hug. He turned to a bulging, pop-eyed man, dwarfish and bloated, standing beside him. "You met my daughter-in-law, Frank?" The eyes of the bloated man popped even wider in a pleased negative, and the lips blurred a drooling answer. "Sweet girl, my Carol. Married my oldest son, Jimmie." He smothered the quiet, timid form some more. "He left for Vietnam a week after they were married. Miss him, don't ya, girl?" His protruding teeth slid over his flaccid lips, and it was the first time I'd seen Mr. White attempt a sympathetic smile. Turning to Frank, "She's a good girl, a good Baptist, like Jim." Frank's bulging neck could not permit the attempted nod of approval. "You know my boy Jim? Fine boy, Jim. He can cast a line better'n anyone in Maine. He just pulls back the rod — When he pulls back that rod, he's in Heaven somewhere. And he just let it are out, smooth, perfect!" Someone offered Mr. White a piece of wedding cake. He just looked at it in answer. The person went away. "Man, can that boy of mine fish. Don't like to drink, huh, honey," squeezing the agonized girl, "but he sure can fish." The thought seemed to please him and I saw him rock back in laughter, upsetting the tray of drinks the caterer-woman was balancing behind him. Still laughing, "Oh, sorry," laughing louder, "my boy don't have to know how to drink, so long's he's fishin', he don't care about booze or women or anything." Another raucous burst of laughter.

Someone near me was speaking. "Where's your husband, Mrs.

White?" I couldn't hear her answer, but her expression was tense and straining into a smile.

"I bet you miss him, though, huh Carol? Huh?" She tried to smile up at him, but let her eyes be caught by his boutonniere. A woman needs a man more'n a man needs a woman." The fat Frank seemed to be suggesting something obesely funny and crude, and I saw the ravined face break into a still wider earthquake of mirth. The girl at his side evaporated into the kitchen.

"Hey, Steve!"

"Where's Janet? Where's the bride? Let's get the bride's picture over here by the TV set" A reddish face, pocked and plump, was smiling out the suggestion to the wearied newly-wed; the woman's dimpled little hands held an instamatic camera and a box of unused flash cubes. Her rings were in the process of being swallowed by her fingers.

It was getting late and everyone was beginning to get fidgety, those who'd not succumbed to the weariness of being festive and gone home. Finally there was no one left but the wedding party. Steve's father, an old and pinched man, was getting sentimental in his beer, and Steve was joining his aging father in nostalgic back-patting. For the groom had feasted and had drunk and now sat full and relaxed, within the warmth of father and sisters and straggling wedding cake. Janet was in the bedroom, contemplating the emptied wedding dress, stiff and white, that lay on the bed before her. The black guarding spirit of the groom was hung on a hangar on the closet-door. The feasted, celebrated bride was tired and dulled by the constant joviality. People had drawn her vitality out with them, it seemed; each, as they passed, took her hand and squeezed its youthful promise, and they kissed with hungry lips the full and joyous cheek. The girl of pale and drawn face and shrunken hand stared blankly at the blankly staring mirror. In the glass she could see the cheap reproduction of the Virgin Mary behind her, on the wall. The color was badly done, and the yellowed skin and greenish hair seemed ghastly, in bad taste. Mary's eyes were full of pitying love, the kind of love that kills and belittles and demands and strips of dignity; but the color of Mary's eyes was that of a pitiless leaden sea. Janet turned away from the Catholic relic and stared at the guardian spirit on the closet-door. It hung limp and lifeless, defeated by the fullness of the wedding promise; it too had been husked and dried and winnowed at the feast of marriage, the celebration of hope, of renewed life, the orgy surrounding the consecration of fertility.

The couple finally tore away from all these things and allowed themselves to be taken to the airport, murmuring platitudes and thanks for all that everyone had done. Finally even the murmuring stopped, and the silence was broken only by an occasional deep and soulless sigh.

LESLIE CAMERON KELLY



Janet Wallman

A Very Sad Story

I have a story to tell you.
A very sad story,
But, please, you must not cry
For tears remind me of rain,
And I do not like rain.

My story begins many, many years ago.
It was my first year
And I had just pushed my way clear
Of the soft brown earth
And into the air.
The first thing I felt was the warmth
Of the sun as he smiled down,
But gradually I became aware of something else around me.
I looked and realized
There were a great many flowers
Smiling at me.
They were my first friends — the flowers.
They had such beautiful faces
And they always laughed and sang.
I loved them and as I grew older
I, too, could play in the breeze,
And laugh with them.
Sometimes it would rain,
But it was warm and gentle
And I did not mind,
Until I saw that I was looking
Down on my beautiful friends
And they were far, far below,
Almost out of touch.
I called down to ask my friends,
Who had lived much longer than I,
What had happened.
And they called back,
"The Rain, Little Tree, the Rain,
It had made you grow."
That was when I first hated Rain.

Before I realized what had truly happened
I could not even see my friends.
Once in a while I would hear a laugh on the wind.
But I was too far away to join them.

And I was lonely.
And the tears I cried only made
Me taller and pushed me farther
Into nothing.
I tried, for a time, to make new friends,
But the sun only smiled
Never saying a word.
And the clouds were pushed away by the wind
Before uttering any answers to my forlorn questions.
My loneliness grew greater,
And it rained,
And I grew taller.
But to my delight,
One day I saw below me,
The top of a very beautiful tree.
Slowly, day by day, he grew,
Until our eyes met and my loneliness fled,
And I was filled with happiness.
For I had a friend,
Someone to laugh and sing with.
And my days became a joy.
My tree grew still taller,
But the friendship grew to love
And my tree became my world.
Then one day some men came
And chopped at my precious tree.
He cried out in pain,
But I could only watch,
Unable to help.
He began to fall.
I screamed, "I love you."
But I will never know if he heard me.
In the Rain I watched my Love,
As they took him away
And I cried,
And my tears fell to the earth
Among the tiny drops of Rain
And I was lonely once again.

Now you have heard my story
But, please, you must not cry
For tears remind me of Rain,
And I do not like Rain.

LINDA O. KIMBALL

Smiles of daisy-faced youth;
frowns;
gay madness
and the blush of our first loves.
Somber patterns of sad, grey leaves
colored with splashes of
foolish laments.
Mosquito bites and
the adventures of children in a
tiny spot
of a
vast universe.
A friendship that remains and
comforts when there is nothing
else to help. Something that
shall endure because it is
sincere.

KATHY DE MOIA

Renaissance

She lived from him, across the
street.
Together daily they would play.
Young children, so happy, so sweet;
A pity, children they cannot stay.
Through the years they grew,
A lovely pair of children, these two,
They shared the first day of school,
Now it has been eight years of the
golden rule.
Long ago they traded jacks and ball,
For tennis rackets and all.
One spring day they walked hand in
hand in the shady wood
And their lips met as they rested
'neath a budding tree;
And a wonderful golden childhood
Became a golden memory.

CHARLY TOTORO

People —
so void
immutable
transparent
aren't
they foolish
to waste
life
on such
trivialities.

DEBBIE BEN

They grope and search for things that
don't exist
And yearn for treasures that are
worthless
They cast aside valuable Time
In the effort to gain pleasurable
baubles.
Yet they do not realize their mistake
Or examine their actions
Until their lives begin to ebb —
And then the restored beamed ceilings
And the diamond chandeliers
And the elegant paneled walls
Fall around them.

CHRIS TSETSI

A. C.

two years ago she died.
not true out of sight —
out of mind. She is
dead to the world,
my grandmother,
living now in infinity
in my mind.

KAREN CONLON

Have you ever reached out and touched the sun?
 Have you ever caressed the ocean?
 Have you touched the mind?
 Have you grown inebriated with life?
 I have, each of these
 And not you also?
 Come let me touch you that you
 may touch me greater still.
 Open your eyes that I may vanish
 and be consumed in their beauty.
 Your lips that I may move
 to eternity transformed
 Your beautiful mind will and spirit
 that I may become holy in you.

P. G. ANDERSON

Let my soul
 so full and yet unripe
 Remain within me
 While it cries
 to run, to play
 to bathe in frenzied joy
 to partake of love not
 ready to be enjoyed.

KATHY DeMOIA

The Face I Love

The first time I saw her face,
 I knew that she was a paragon of grace.
 Her eyes were friendly, they did not search,
 As do, too many eyes in church.
 A face with innocence that did not vary;
 An eternally patient smile
 . . . as that of the statue of Mary.
 A face that is filled with love;
 A love as sincere as that of the Almighty, above —
 To see her happy face is all I could ask,
 For; then, to foster a smile is a menial task.
 Though to smile in church, to some, might seem quite pert,
 I have to do something to ease the hurt;
 Aside from her face bearing much consolation.
 For the face I fell in love with, was that of a nun.

ALGYRONN ST. JOHNSBURY

This Is My Country

Sock it to me, Baby!
 Twist and shout!
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Let it all hang out!
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Where it's at!
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 I'm a cool cat!
 Tell me what's happening to our world today?
 Oh its changing in many a way.
 I tell you, its a universal trend.
 Oh where will it all end?
 They cry, "We want reality."
 They're answered with police brutality.
 The poor say, "Give us Relief."
 Charly Brown sighs, "Oh, good grief!"
 Our heroes are changing their places;
 Our heroes are new and different faces —
 Once it was general Ike,
 Now its Merv and Mike!
 Once it was our senators of countenance regal
 Now our hero is Snoopy the beagle!
 Once it was 'bopper Bobby Darin,
 Now; The Bloody Red Baron!
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Make love not war
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Score! Man, score!
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Where have all the flowers gone?
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Ban won't wear off, as the day wears on!
 Our values are changing.
 To the bottom they're ranging,
 And the people concerned, are all too few.
 What's a mother to do?
 Excedrine headache sixty-nine
 Unwed mother and child doing fine.
 Lucy gets angry and exclaims, "Rats"

Nixon gets *mad*, and screams "DemocRats!"
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Flower power
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 Take a shower!
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 The "New Birth."
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 For what its worth.
 L.B.J. says "A just and honorable peace."
 Frustrated businessmen looking for any piece!
 Towels reading "Hers" and "His."
 "Where the Action Is!"
 Kids on dope,
 Bosses needing Scope.
 A housing riot.
 Another dead "Sky pilot."
 Supreme court — criminals to defend.
 Open other end.
 The Warren commission —
 An assassin's extradition
 Political intervention
 The Democratic convention.
 All the way with L.B.J. . . .
 Would you believe nuclear bombs — type A?
 Battles between Hawk and Dove.
 A proponent of free love.
 Listen to the "Overcome" song!
 "Where did we go wrong?"
 "God knows I've tried!"
 Another con just fried.
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 "God is dead!"
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 "You Commie, you Red!"
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 "The whole world is watching!"
 Sock it to me, Baby!
 "The times they are a changing."
 . . . "What's this generation coming to ?"

the house of the mind is windowless
and the breath of the soul has gone

DO NOT BEND FOLD OR MUTILATE
the wind echoes through the chambers
and the kindled fire dies
ONEWAY-DO NOT ENTER-NO U TURN-STOP
the bones creak and muscles spasm
then quiet
TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE
free at last

JOE SOUSA

Enter by this door;
Turn the knob; brass and yellow,
Watch the mirror child do the same.
With her glass-pale fingers.
She grasps the ball and flings away the sun.
Covering it with her cloudy hair.
"Do come in," says her mother
tripping lightly across her looking-glass house
to greet you with a slender, fragile hand
and eyes that reflect the yellow gold of her child;
and the violet pink of the sun;
and the amber of the floor you scar as you walk across —
to sit with this looking-glass woman
and have tea in her china cups;
and cakes from her china cake plate.
You chat awhile about things that are nothing
and nothings that are real
and just when you begin to see
she thanks you for coming and floats away
like a piece of dandelion fluff
"Do come again," she says as she disappears
into her looking-glass house
And her mirror child shows you to the door
Uncovering the sun with her glass-pale fingers
and her brass yellow reflection disappears
As you go out.

JANET WALLMAN

On Winter

So the snow has come
The sun has gone.

SHELLY ALBURY

The Blessed Snowfall

A distorted face,
A gnarled being,
Darting glances,
Pain?

A soft white snow,
A silent mask
Crystalline and pure,
Peace?

Five floating snowflakes —
A prostrate body . . .
An epiphany.

LOUIS FILLION

Snow

A sea of whiteness
Stretches and glistens brightly,
A wave in the sun

KAREN CONLON

Rather
 Than slither blindly
 To the general grave,
 It is perhaps better
 To give my life a more
 Noble form by putting it on the
 Line in opposition
 To the giant apparatus
 That if allowed to continue
 Will bring death
 In any
 Case.

SHELLY MOSBERG

is it all just a dream
 a journey into blurred images
 of
 man's invention
 utilization
 and destruction
 are we really
 just manipulative putty
 exposed to our own
 self-destructive
 forces
 how can this be
 man — awakens
 to the fact that
 we're destroying ourselves
 what of love
 giving
 understanding
 human "feeling"
 we — the race of sophistication
 have a long
 road
 to
 travel
 DEBBIE BEN



Janet Wallman

Wind-Rite

The old man picked up his pipe and listlessly tapped it into the glass ashtray next to him. "I don't know *what* the noise is," his voice was strained by his reaching for the tobacco pouch in his sweater pocket. "I couldn't even say where it's comin' from." There was no emotion in his tone; it was a dry voice, middle-age sounding.

"But Grampa!" The little blond boy shifted his weight on the ottoman in front of his grandfather's chair. His dimpled face was troubled, and the clear blue eyes began to cloud with anxiety. He looked intently at the old man. "Grampa, shouldn't we find out what it is?" Jaime knew that was the manly thing to say, but he was frightened.

"I s'pose. How do you plan to find out what that noise is, Jaime? Just how d'you propose to locate that troublesome noise?" The ancient gray eyes twinkled and were quickly averted so that the boy could not see them. The little boy looked down at the floor. "Jaime." He met his grandfather's eyes. "What is that noise, do you suppose?"

"I don't know, Grampa." Jaime was trying to hide the whine that was creeping into his voice. "Sometimes I think it's a stray cat, *myowling* outside the winder only far away. Then I think it's the wind. Or the trees moaning 'cause they're lonely. Grampa, can we take the trees in if it storms?"

"No, Jaime. They'd die."

"Grampa, I don't know what the noise is. But we got to find out before Mama comes back." The little boy wondered what his mother looked like, she'd been gone so long. She left when he was just a tiny baby, and he was almost seven now. "When is Mama comin' back, Grampa?"

"Soon, Jaime. Sooner'n you think."

The old man and the little boy sat together for a long while, each thinking about the noise, then drifting off to other thoughts. The wind screamed outside, shoving the dusk through the chinks in the old, old house. Jaime thought mostly about the noise, for it was an object of fear and of darkness. And he thought about when he was a tiny boy, afraid of the dark. How it throbbed and pulsed around him, brushing by as he huddled beneath the mountainous blankets that kept out the cold. And how the little points of white moonlight around the windowshade grew and grew into great blobs of shimmering silver. And these were ghosts; he knew. So he buried himself deeper under the mountain of blankets. It was always cold, always fearful in the old house. There were no other houses around, and until he asked his grandfather one day he did not know that there were any other people in the whole valley. But there were.

The old man was trying to remember when the last time was he'd had a good time, and he chuckled softly when he admitted he'd never had one. The work had kept him down, had made him serious and old before his time. His wife used to say it kept him down from being

human; she used to say that's why they only had the one girl. And he used to say, Yeah, but ain't she a beauty! and then that woman used to laugh her goodnatured laugh and avoid his eyes. And when she died, he knew that loving her had been the closest he'd ever come to being happy. But he kept on working the farm, and it wasn't till Moira had her son that he realized how empty his life was. Moira died in childbirth and he had raised the boy the best he knew how. He wondered if he was much of a father for the boy, because he was such an old, cheerless man. Moira never told who the father was.

"Grampa?"

"Yes, Jaime." The old man was tired, worn thin in spirit by the monotony of the farm chores and endless bills. Now his grandson questioned tirelessly, sapping what little self remained his.

"Grampa, may I stay up tonight to see what the noise is?"

"Are you sure you want to, Jaime?"

"Yes." The clear blue eyes darted from his grandfather's mouth to his eyes and back again. "Yes, Grampa, I do."

"Then of course you can."

The two sat in silence, absorbed, preparing, wondering, worrying, guessing, knowing. In a few hours, the old man would go to bed and leave his little grandson to the darkness and the fear of the old, old house.

The night bristled, and it scraped around the house with a kind of reproachful intensity. The little boy felt the circular, downward-spiraling night; he followed it with his fear, followed its winnowing circles with untaught horror until his mind lay limp from such portentous imaginings. But the night still scythed the corners of the house, still harvested the boy's fears for its own aggrandizement. Jaime wished mightily that his grandfather would not leave him alone. He wished he could know intuitively what the sound was, and then he would not have to stay up alone.

"Grampa?" The old man's head bobbed once, then snapped upward. "Grampa?"

"Yes, Jaime?" His voice was thick with sleep and he could not seem to focus his eyes.

"Grampa, can we get another dog someday?"

"Yes, Jaime. Soon. We'll get one come spring."

"That'd be good. I miss Chipper. He was a good dog."

"We'll get one, Jaime."

The little boy hunched his back and rested his chin on his knees. "Do you know what the wind sounds like tonight, Grampa?"

"No."

"It sounds like wolves. Hungry, hungry wolves. So hungry they don't howl 'cause they're too weak. They just moan. Ooowwwooooohhhh." Jaime liked to think he was scaring his grandfather, but he glanced fearfully at the glassed-out night, frightened at its wolf-sound. "Grampa?"

"What is it, Jaime?" The old man was tapping out his pipe, making little clinks against the glass ashtray. He was studying his pipe now, and did not look at Jaime's worried face.

"Grampa, are there wolves close by?"

"There may be. You can never tell where they'll hunt." His voice was calm, younger sounding than before; the even tones were soothing to the boy. "Course, now we ain't got any more livestock to speak of, the wolves don't bother us much. It's when we had the poultry and goats and such. They would come down on us; they didn't howl much then, either. Just move in quiet and fast. Some'd moan 'way off. But those that were attackin' kept real quiet. Intense, Jaime; I guess that's the best way t'describe it. Intense quiet."

"Were any of our animals ever killed, Grampa?"

"A few. But mostly they would start stammin' around their stalls and bleating and callin' and all. That'd wake me or your Grandmother, rest her soul. Mostly your Gramma." The old man had been filling his pipe, thoughtfully and carefully tamping the tobacco with his forefinger. No he puffed awhile, lighting the sweet-smelling tobacco.

"That smells like cherries, Grampa; is it?"

"Mmmhmm." Still puffing, savoring the aroma.

Jaime waited while his grandfather finished his pipe. Then he watched the old, knobby fingers arthritically tugging at his shabby gray sweater. His eyes followed the slow-moving steps and slightly hunched shoulders of his old grandfather as he made his way to the stairs. At the second step he turned to Jaime, who was dwarfed in the old, dark room. The one light gleamed off the boy's blond hair. He smiled at the little boy's wondering look, straining into a manly expression.

"Good night, Jaime."

"Good night, Grampa."

Each laborious step his grandfather took seemed to draw some of his strength with it. The little boy tensed, straining to see the old man's disappearing form in the shadows of the stairway. His ears pricked back involuntarily as the slow-moving steps edged across the floor above him. He could hear the bed creak, finally, and knew that his grandfather would be asleep very soon.

He did not move from the ottoman. The wind sucked and shoved at the house, moaning some but mostly howling and hollering. It thundered in the chimney and kicked at the door. The night seemed to edge closer to the candle, warming its chilly self at the puny flame. The trees outside creaked and groaned, and what leaves remained sobbed

uncontrollably. Once he heard a wolf scream short and loud. He couldn't help the fear crawling over his back, making the hairs on his neck tingle a little. He wondered if only boys felt that way when they were afraid. But all the while, he was waiting for the noise to come again; only it never did.

After an hour or so, Jaime wondered if the sound of the wind were blocking the other noise. He listened, straining forward. Just the wind, thrashing and marauding and winnowing. Sometimes it was just gentle scything noises — tsick, tsick, tsick — and other times it would bellow and rage, crashing against the house, shouldering its way in. And then when it seemed the calmest outside, when it seemed that the wind had stopped, there would come a far off moan, like a wolf gushing breath like a hard-running animal full of fright. And finally it would slam into the old house full force, thudding the timbers against each other and whistling through the clattering windows. But this was just the wind; Jaime knew.

Finally the calm of dawn came, and though it was still dark outside, Jaime knew that he would not hear the sound now. He went to the window to watch the sky lighten, first lead gray, then pearl white, and lastly pale, cloud-filtered yellow. There was no more wind. It would not come again until the evening. Jaime watched the squirrels busy about and thought he saw a robin down near the tool shed, but it couldn't be — not till spring, at least. He looked up at the ceiling as he heard his grandfather's steps, and he was surprised that he had stayed awake all night. He looked back to the trees and the squirrels, waiting for his grandfather to come down and see him. He was proud of himself this morning, but it was different from the time he finally learned how to milk the goat or the time he caught a rabbit in a trap he'd built. Those were times that he'd been taught, times he'd merely repeated well a thing that someone else had shown him. This morning was different, because he'd done something that was his own self. When he heard his grandfather's steps on the stairs, he wondered if he should show his pride, and he decided not to.

"G'mornin', Jaime." His grandfather chuckled softly.

Jaime turned around, smiling and confident. "G'morning, Grampa. Did you have a good sleep?" He was standing tall by the window.

"I did, Jaime. And how did you do?" He smiled at the sun-gilt hair and clear, blue eyes.

"Well, Grampa, I didn't hear the noise through the whole night. Just the wind." Suddenly Jaime's face became boyish again, his affected manliness melting into amazed wonder. "Grampa!"

"What is it, Jaime?" The old man smiled.

"It's the wind, isn't it, Grampa?"

"I believe it is, Jaime."

LESLIE CAMERON KELLY

The Colors Blue and Amber

Blue is for the past
was and what has been
turn from the sunrise
there is the blue of morning
turn from the sunset
there is the deepening blue of night
blue is past blue is the sea
eternal the depths cry out
but are lost and gone.
Blue was I blue I would
have been but are no longer
the beauty of day of life of sun
of you.

Amber is sunrise sunset each
day this day tomorrow the
warm light fills me with the
warm friendship which is
ours Warm from your warm
heart your warm face your
warm hand. Keep your warmth
close always and all ways.

P. G. ANDERSON

She breathed life as a dragon breathed fire
And what she desired, she had not
But what she had, she desired not.

A white gloved hand reached out
And caught her struggling, between pale fingers
And her fire breath heated the world —
but could not penetrate the whiteness, the oneness,
the stillness of the gloved hand
So she talked sparks and looked darkly —
And the world began to glow

And what she desired, she had not
But what she had, she desired not.

JANET WALLMAN

I Love Thee

I love thee and yet do not
know thy thoughts or thy
dreams in the black cold
lonely night. I am one and
thou one but we are not
one together. I love thee and
yet do not know thee in the
warmth of day or in the
sunlight of a smile. Reach
out in the darkness reach out
in the darkness, and I love
thee and yet do not know thee.

KAREN CONLON

Nocturnal Vigilance

Midnight, dead of night
Comes to me,
Again, too soon,
And brings with it
Coldness and dread
To my room, my solitude

I wait in apprehension for —
A noise! Where?
There in the corner!
Now closer, closer,
Around me, and —
Eyes, eyes,
Leering, glaring at me!

My body so pressed against the sheets
As if my spirit were melted,
And it seeped down into the mattress
And froze,
Making me as one with the bed.

The room begins to spin.
I grab the edges of the bed
To keep me from slipping off
As the bed dizzily tilts
From side to side
The clammy fingers of terror
Grip my neck
A gust of insanity
Breezing over my head
Penetrates into my shaking mind.

In my hour of derangement
My bed transforms into a coffin,
My room a grave.

JULIETTE MEDEIRA

Life

Oh dreams like shafts of light
diffused by a precious gem.

Desire in reality
and in pastel versions
of ourselves

We can color each other's
nocturnal fantasies.

We reach out to attain our
communion of spirit
with the joy of boundless
forevers

in a privacy that can only
be pierced by awakening.

KATHY DeMOIA

Quiet dreams
of pastel petals
of soft, shell beaches
of silent love
that cannot abandon

KATHY DeMOIA

and for the last time he cried
the lights of the city and of the road
glistened in his tears.
he was mourned by his family
because he was theirs
he was mourned by his friends
whose compassion came too late
he was mourned by her who
felt emptiness save for a picture
of them together at the park
but even that in a year's time
had been turned to ashes
and there was not even a memory

JOE SOUSA

The sounds of war,
racial riots,
terrorism in the street;
People yelling, screaming — kill
hatred overcomes them.
Beneath the sounds of them all
a
 baby
 is
 born?

LORRAINE RICCI

The Traveler

You laughed;
And I cried
And said it didn't make any difference,
But it did.
So you left me,
And this place.
And searched and found.
(At least I guess you found.)
And then you came back from there,
With what you had found
To show me.
(At least you said it was to show me.)
But where you had been,
And what you had found,
Did you no good.
For here in this place, this place you left,
You found something new, something unexpected.
When you returned, you found:
My grave.

LINDA O. KIMBALL

