

The HEIGHTS

Autumn
1962



Rosary
Hill
College

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Photograph on page 32 by Linda Young

PREFACE

It is through communication with others that man enriches himself and makes fruitful his talents. Every form of art is a form of expression. Art can "be" without the audience, but it is the audience that makes it "mean."

—R. D.

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THE PLAN

Of a nightly morn, I lay and
watched the darkness sponge light
from the half-saucer of butter,

Though the toad-hogs burped
in rude ensemble and
grumbled at my eccentric presence.

How gnomish were the rain-weather
mushrooms, standing uselessly
in the dry, warm air!

Thus, when the sponge was full,
the hand of Greatness squeezed
the light out once again . . .

— *Patricia Hoftiezer '66*

PABLO CASALS

Carefully the melody begins
inching down the scale
tenaciously, and
somberly the strings are scraped
again, until
the bow is drawn
across my spine.
Another note and deeper
on a cord less taut
beyond my ears a wave
from a dark ocean slides
soundlessly
beneath the sand of an
immense black shore.
And yet a further note
behind my eyes
inside my mind
beneath my soul.

I did not know
it could go so low.

— *Marion Bunce '63*



AGE

Two old women sitting at tea eating dietetic crackers:

“You know I saw them running down the street;

He a messy adolescent

(with grass stains on his trousers!)

She with blond hair tumbling over her shoulders

(part of her skirt was torn, you know?)

Yes, disgraceful, and running (really fast) right
down this street.

They even slammed the door on their way into the ice
cream parlor!

Imagine! . . . (I used to do that . . .)”

— *Lee Fisher '65*

Feel free to ask me
 anything
Long I've held back
 masked things
 told no one everything
 some nothing
It was a hell
 but I never knew it
Not until I let him in

 It was so easy
 He crept in
 I don't even know when
We shared, and shared, intertwined
 identified, built an entity of being
 of two but one
And then halfway through it ended

Now I am alone again
 untooled now
 not regretting
 but lost regardless
Taught to give, dying to again
Won't you ask me something?
Tell me something?
 I'll answer
 I'll listen

I am reaching out
 clutching
 And at night I am alone
What I have answered
What I have heard
 Does not matter
 I am alone

The rain beats against me and only I can feel it
 I have tried
 I have spoken
 I have listened
Yet I am still I
For all would-be creepers-in are not oiled with love.

— *Antoinette Dubiel '65*

JIMMY AGE NINE

Jimmy, age nine, fastened the buckle on his armor and clambered up the gnarled stump. He was now the mightiest warrior in the meadow. Many had been silenced, slain at the hand of Jimmy.

Watch out, Jimmy! Is that a barbarian behind the hay stack? You'd better circle around and take a look. He tumbled from the stump. Twigs snapped nervously and corn-flake leaves protested. Jimmy, of course, was unhurt. Slowly, stealthily, he approached the hay stack, scaled it, and dropped his axe neatly on the intruder's head. Jimmy whooped and tossed a damp fistful of hay into the air.

In a second, he was running through the field, shouting gloriously. He jumped on the gate and clung tenaciously as his chariot wheeled toward the enemy. For good measure he whipped the horses. His trusty sword whizzed around his head to the rhythm of the bolting bays.

Victorious, but exhausted, Jimmy decided to rejuvenate himself—for his country's sake. He dusted off the chariot, unhitched the bays and ambled with them to the creek. Jimmy politely removed his armor before starting the meal. Ceremoniously, he knelt and dipped his hands into the icy water. Instinctively, he lifted the wishing rock in search of crabs. No, none this morning. He carefully wiped his hands on his shirt.

The sun played hotly on Jimmy's ears, and he retired to the shade. He was glad for the knapsack his mother had packed. Snatching the candy bar first, he unwrapped it and set it on his knee, while precisely unfolding the wrapper. He nibbled at the chocolate, holding it in his

mouth until it melted and slid around on his tongue. The almonds, he saved until last.

Jimmy yawned and stuffed the sandwich remnants into his pocket. He watched the splotchy sunlight dance on the grass and curled up on the leftover warmth.

A bird's chatter called Jimmy from his slumber. The sweet death of autumn told him that peace had been declared. The barbarians had been wise to go home to prepare for the winter.

Jimmy stretched on the ground and dreamily plucked crumbs of earth and grass from his clothing. From his position, he spied two newly-fallen acorns. He placed them in the squirrels' cache he had discovered the day before.

Jimmy whispered soothingly to the bays as he confined them to the chariots reins. They sped off, clattering over the bridge toward home.

Ahead was his mother, waiting on the porch. She called. Jimmy, age nine, shyly let her kiss him, proud to have kept her safe.

— *Elaine Kruchten '65*



A silver sphere quivers over a murky abyss,
The moon mirrored on the waters:
Diana, silver-footed queen,
Before her looking glass.
Luminous patterns play on the surface,
Pearly, dancing nymphs . . .
Beautiful, enchanting . . .
But hiding the depths,
Disguising the ebon mystery below.
Thus distracted, I would peer beyond,
Longing to fathom the unexplained.
In a rare moment I thought to perceive,
But a quick breeze set glistening naiads
Laughing o'er my vision.

— *Mary Ann Schaefer '63*

POEMS OF A CYCLE

I. *The Virgin Leaving Childhood*

I would go back to the dim dancer innocence
Dancing on a smooth path . . .
But that one is a star
That has not lived in the day.
Perhaps further on
There is one delicate as a night child,
Yet golden-firmed by the sun.

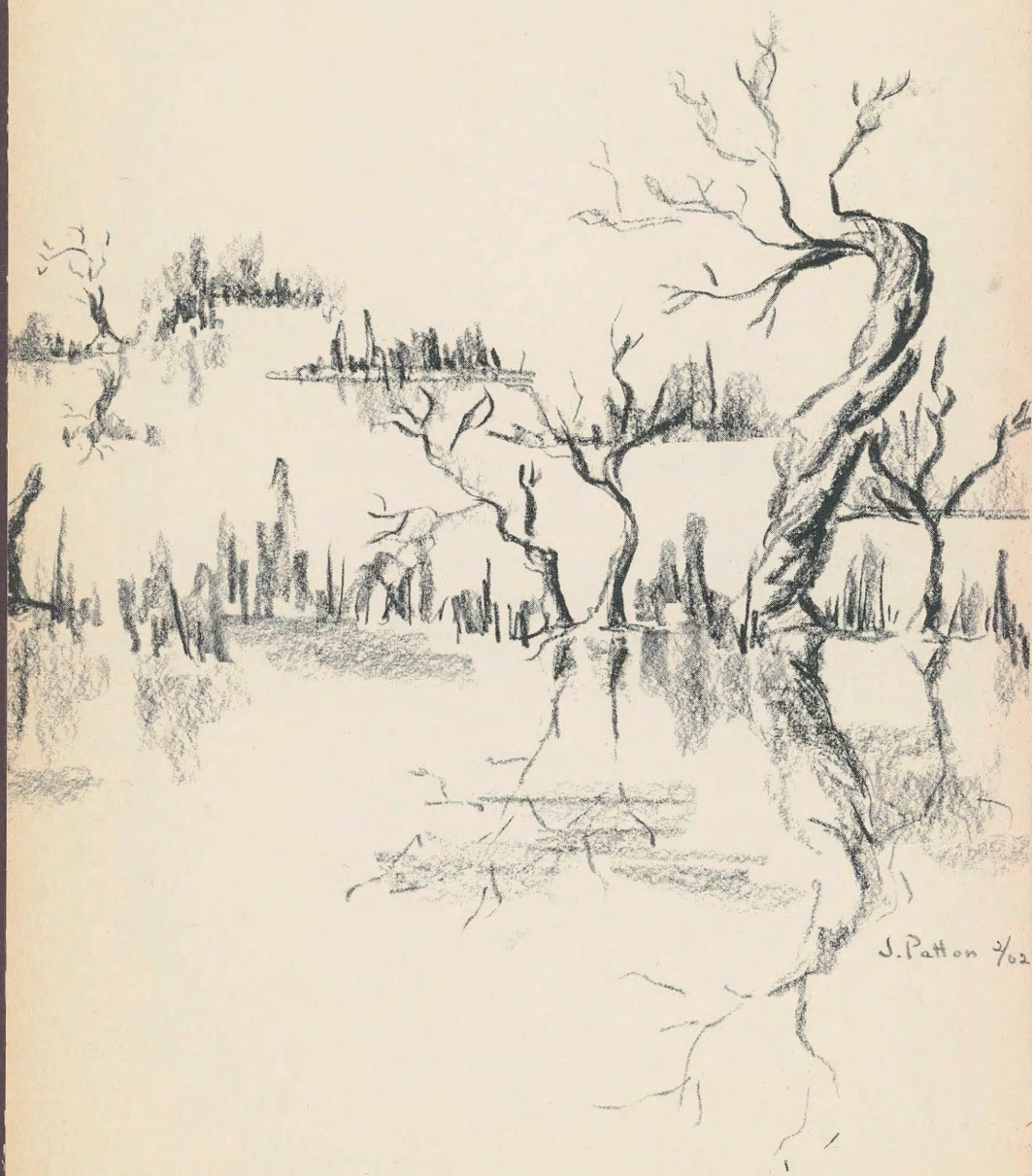
II. *The Lover and Her Beloved*

Found
A sea at the end
I drink deep
And with each draught
New water
How deep are you
How many shifting waves
And blends
And sunlight lifting shades
Drift to me
And stay swirled around me
Silence your storms
My love
Whisper

III. *The Mother Bearing Her Child*

Earth and a seed embrace . . .
I walk slowly
Carrying inside me the whole of you
A fragile, precious,
Trembling, half-felt thing,
We flow together now . . .
Inside me
You have taken root
And bloomed.
I am a broken vase
Holding a flower.

— *Mary Benincasa '65*



J. Patton 7/02

NIGHT TRAIN

How strange is the relative Somewhere of a train

Cringing, alone in her steeled isolation

Screaming, in a purple agony of wantonness

Escaping, from possession by any Someone . . .

Veiling her enervation with facades of power

Fascinated by the coyness of Wanderlust.

— *Patricia Hoftliezer '66*

Lithe young tree

Bend my way

Catch me up

Hold me.

Let me climb to glorious heights

Embrace the sky

Kiss the sun

Run the clouds.

Let your willowy boughs

Throw me

Roll me

With the wind.

Throw my hair in directions 'round

That I feel free

To fly

To be.

— *Caroline Dotterweich '63*

Life . . .

Where you can see the circus

For fifty cents

And laugh like a little boy

And wonder like a little boy

What it's like to be a circus clown

Every day.

To look in a mirror at an orange-mopped head

With a white painted mouth

And red bulbous nose,

And, wearing striped rags,

To look at the you outside

And talk to the you inside and say

That's me. I'm a circus clown

Every day.

Life . . .

Where you can go to the circus

If you have fifty cents,

Or, if not,

Make one

Out of everyday

And laugh like a little boy.

— *Kathleen Cusker '65*

THE BUS RIDE

While riding on a crowded bus,
I saw a hippopotamus.
I looked again — so saw him twice,
And thought he didn't look quite nice.
So leaning back, I closed my eyes,
And dreamt of pretty butterflies,
But wakened suddenly to see
The hippo sitting next to me.
He said, "Don't scream in shocked confusion,
You know I'm only an illusion."
Yet, while I stared in speechless dread,
The fantasy chewed off my head!

— *Kathleen Heverin '63*

RETROGRADE

a play in three acts

CHARACTERS

GEORGE

ELLEN, his wife

JOYCE, their daughter, age twenty

HENRY, Joyce's husband

JUNE, another daughter, age seventeen

GEORGE'S MOTHER

ROOMMATE at a university

A STUDENT at a university

TWO OFFICIALS in a depot

PASSENGERS in a depot

A MAID

ACT ONE

(SCENE I: A corridor which opens into the train depot of a Southern city. A well-dressed, light-skinned Mulatto of about twenty and his Negro mother are walking through the corridor approaching a bench.)

George: Please Mother, we went through all this before.
(They both seat themselves on the bench.)

Mother: You'll see the way they are, George. You'll see how they hurt. Your father, God rest his soul, thought he could help, coming down to doctor the colored folks. But his whites even turned against him. And the colored looked on me like I was different. We were all alone. We didn't belong to nobody.

George: But I have the blood of both of them. Living at the university with whites and colored, I can show them that they can work together. We've got to meet on each other's ground. (Glances at watch) I've got to hurry, Mother. The train will leave shortly. (Takes her by the shoulders) Now take care of yourself and don't worry. (Kisses her on the forehead.)

Mother: Be careful, George (Turns and walks down corridor)

(George walks into the depot and seats himself. There are a few whites waiting and two officials behind a counter. George, horrified, notices the "White" sign in the depot. He is embarrassed, but does not leave. Some of the people glance at him, but turn away again, evidently not noticing. The two officials, who look very uncomfortable, begin to whisper animatedly. One approaches.)

Official: (Apologetically clearing his throat) This is highly irregular, but — uh — pardon me, may I ask what nationality you are? Uh, are you Jewish? (By this time several of the people have turned to watch.)

George: (Who has mustered courage, replies haughtily) Why, yes. I am a Jew. And I consider this highly insulting.

Official: (Embarrassed) Yes, of course, sir. I'm — I'm terribly sorry. (Walks away, everyone resumes activity.)

(SCENE II: George's room in the dormitory of a university. The room is plainly furnished with two beds, desks, dressers.)

Student: Some of the kids think George is overstepping his bounds. Why don't you say something to him? I wouldn't like to see him get hurt.

Roommate: I know what you mean. You know I never really thought that he wouldn't win the election.

Student: He's a real leader, but there is a group that resents his attitude — his always being so sure of himself. And every once in a while his crusade for the downtrodden sticks out a little too much.

Roommate: That's just because George is such an idealist. He thinks that right will triumph, and he thinks that he's right.

Student: Very simple. Still he could have won if it wasn't for the other things. He's gotten to be such a big shot in the frat, and he's been dating that white girl, Ellen.

(George enters, looking bitter and discouraged.)

Student: Sorry, old man. Maybe next time. (Leaves)

Roommate: (Trying to cheer him) Say, there are some letters from home on your desk. Gosh, pal, don't take it so hard. It was only an election. Somebody had to lose.

George: (Walks over to desk. Looks at envelopes while he talks.) It's not that. (sarcastically) I have failed before, you know. I don't always get my way. It isn't that I wasn't better able to do the job. Was it? A lot of the fellows are acting strangely toward me. I thought I heard some remarks in the cafeteria this morning, but they stopped when I got near.

Roommate: It's just a few — a group that won't accept you no matter what you do for them. There always will be. Sure you're capable, but they'll be on your back as soon as you step even slightly from the role that they think you should play. Some will always identify you with the ugly prejudice they've been raised with. They never will see anything in you past your race. (Hesitates) Maybe you'd like to be alone. I'll be in the library. (Leaves)

George: (Bitterly and defiantly throws letters to floor.) She was right. Things will be different now. I've got to make a place for myself, not my color. I'll make that place and no barrier will stop me.

ACT TWO

(SCENE: A few years later in the small, modest living room of George and his wife, Ellen's, city apartment. Ellen, a white girl in her early twenties, is writing a letter. She looks excited and happy. Offstage, a key turns in a lock, a door opens.)

George: Ellen, I'm home. Where are you?

Ellen: In the living room, George. (George enters and kisses wife.)

George: (Taking off suit coat) Whew, it was a hot one downtown today. Dinner almost ready?

Ellen: In a little while. I just thought I'd finish this letter to your mother. She's so proud of how important you're becoming. I have so much to tell her.

George, I just came from the doctor's. It's definite now.

George: Ellen, that's wonderful. (Slowly, quietly) I just can't help wondering though if everything will turn out all right. But of course it will. We'll never let our children know. They'll never have to be afraid, never have to suffer.

Ellen: Do you think we should invite your mother to stay with us for a while after the baby comes?

George: (Suddenly defiant) No. People have just accepted me. I won't let them know. (Muses) It's funny—the first time I wasn't even aware I was passing. It was all just a harmless mistake. Later, when I used it as a crutch, I didn't like to admit it even to myself. But it was so easy. (Sits down, lights cigarette, rises. Decisively) Now I can't go back. Each day makes it harder. I never really belonged to them either. But we accepted each other as outcasts. When I used to go back home, they'd understand. They acted like they didn't know me when it mattered, but they nodded when it was safe. It was a little understanding—everyone that could passed sometimes. Some just got a thrill out of getting away with it, others needed money and had to get a job. But I've been away too long. They realize. Deep down the deserters hurt all of them. They resent it. Some try to get even. I'll never give any of them a chance to knock me down. I'll keep going. I can't turn around.

ACT THREE

(*SCENE I*: About twenty years later, in the expensively and tastefully furnished living room of a higher class home. George and Ellen, very prosperous looking, are reading. Their seventeen year old daughter, June, has just come home from a date. The boy has just left. She is well dressed and her speech and actions portray exuberance and vitality.)

June: (Bubbling with excitement) Isn't he just fabulous—what a doll! And his father just bought him a brand new convertible. Is it sharp! They live in that big, gorgeous house on the terrace. And his mother likes me. I can tell. She invited me for tea tomorrow. And Arthur said she called me a perfect lady.

George: (Amused, but proud and happy) Is that so, dear. That's wonderful. We're very glad you're happy and have such nice friends, but let's not forget our school work. Maybe you could get in some studying before dinner.

Ellen: Your sister is counting on you to make a good impression at the university next year. Joyce is upstairs napping right now. She got in this afternoon while you were out and looked positively exhausted. I insisted that she rest before dinner.

June: I've got so much to tell Joyce. (Kisses mother, then father.) Isn't life wonderful. Thanks for everything. (Leaves)

Ellen: (Calls to her as she is leaving) Dinner is at seven. Don't wake Joyce until then. (Gets up and sits on sofa next to George. Thoughtfully) Isn't it wonderful to live through your children what you never had.

George: Yes, we've both come a long way. It was hard sometimes bearing the fear for the children as well as myself. But now, they belong as I never did. And you Ellen—you gave me the strength. You risked your whole identity.

Ellen: When you love, you can't feel other's prejudice. I've never regretted anything, George.

(SCENE II: In the dining room, George, Ellen, June, and Joyce are seated around the table. Joyce, twenty years old, is a quiet and delicate, but troubled looking girl.)

Ellen: Joyce, it is wonderful having you home with us again.

June: Joyce, do you think I'll be popular at the university? Will you introduce me to everyone next September?

Joyce: (Looking down, speaks haltingly) I won't be going back to school. (The others exchange startled glances.)

Ellen: But Joyce you're doing so well. We thought you were happy at school. Did something happen to upset you?

Joyce: It's just that . . . well, I have something to tell you . . . we've gotten married.

George: (Stammering) Well if that's what you really want. We weren't prepared for this, Joyce. Of course, you're old enough to make your own decision. We've tried to teach you to make wise ones.

Ellen: (Who has regained some of her composure after the shock) I do wish you'd have let us become acquainted with the young man first, dear.

June: (Exuberant once again) Oh, is it Henry? The one you're always writing about? (Joyce nods.) Goodness Mother, Joyce makes him sound fabulous. He's popular, isn't he Joyce? He's an upperclassman, and he's from Boston, and he's a real brain, and he's studying medicine.

George: So, your young man is a doctor.

Joyce: Yes.

Ellen: I'm afraid I'm still confused though. It's all so sudden.

George: (Sensing Joyce's uneasiness) Well Ellen, we can't blame them for being so anxious. We're happy for you, Joyce. I know your mother feels cheated out of a fancy wedding, but she'll more than likely make up for it in teas and dinners. Won't you dear?

Ellen: Your father is right. We love you so and we will love Henry too because you do. June is right. He sounds like a very nice and proper young man from your letters.

Joyce: I'm glad you're not angry. For a while I was afraid to tell you.

Ellen: Don't be silly, dear. We just want you to have the very best. How soon can we meet Henry and his parents?

Joyce: Henry had to take a later plane. He promised to come as soon as he could this evening.

Ellen: I do hope he will like us.

Joyce: Please don't be uneasy, Mother. Henry is anxious about meeting you too.

Maid: (Enters) There is a caller for Miss Joyce.

(Joyce rises.)

Ellen: If that's Henry, ask him to have dinner with us, Joyce. (Joyce nods and exits. To maid) Please set another place for dinner.

(George rises as they hear approaching footsteps. Joyce enters. Behind her is a tall, dignified Negro. Ellen, amazed, rises. June is confused.)

Joyce: (Quickly) Henry, this is my family.

George: (Hysterically) No. There must be some mistake. Oh God, what have you done?

(*SCENE III*: A few hours later in the living room. George and Ellen have calmed down. June is still sobbing. Joyce, composed and determined, is standing.)

Joyce: I didn't mean to hurt you or embarrass Henry. I should have told you first. But to me, there is no difference between us anymore. And I thought you would understand.

Ellen: Joyce, we're just worried about your motives in doing this. Was it just impulsive, or are you acting what you really believe?

Joyce: I knew what I was doing. Henry is a very fine person. I wanted you to accept us, but if you won't I'll understand. I know how you feel, because I used to feel that way too.

George: But how do you think people will treat you and your children. It's something you can't escape.

Joyce: Father, our generation accepts this. Neither of you have probably ever tried to understand the Negro. Henry can help them. He's one of them who was rewarded for his courage. I think that's what I admire most in Henry—no one ever gave him anything—he had to keep on proving himself wherever he went. You can't appreciate that because you're white. You only have to defend yourself, not your whole nationality over and over. Henry is a goal for the colored and proof to the white world of Negro potential. I'm proud to work with him.

George: (Quietly) There was nothing else for you to do.

Ellen: Joyce, we do understand better than you realize.
Call Henry and ask him to come over. We must talk
with him and apologize.

Joyce: Thank you. (Exits)

George: (To June, who is still upset) I know this is a
shock to you, June, and it's my fault that you won't
be able to accept Henry now. Maybe someday you'll
see how your sister feels.

Ellen: Why don't you go up to bed now, dear. We can
talk about this in the morning, if you like.

June: Yes, Mother. (Exits)

George: (Thoughtfully) June may never understand.
Was it so wrong to protect them—to live a lie in
front of them and everyone else.

Ellen: Can they ever know? Would it really help Joyce
now if she knew?

George: No, neither of them could accept it. It's a
burden to grow into, not to have tacked on afterward.
Ellen, I'm ashamed of how selfish I was in deserting.
People who close their eyes and ears and run away
can never find peace. I was blind. And Joyce is going
back to what I ran away from. Perhaps I will get
another chance.

CURTAIN

— Elaine Kruchten '65

Bright red lips were a
day ago no more than play.
A child disappears.

— *Mary Reig '65*

A stone
sired and weathered by eons
passes time in my garden.

— *Elaine Kruchten '65*

One ray
of four o'clock filtered sun
drips down the wall
to the floor
and dies a blazing death.

— *Elizabeth Coleman '66*



HEN PARTIES

Lovely luncheons and terrible teas
Are loud with femme-ninnities.
The clatter of cups and the sprinkling of spoons,
Are background for babbles of lady buffoons.
And she who is absent, may find fit milieu
At home with the chickens. They chatter well, too.

— *Kathleen Heverin '63*

A Serpent came and taught a game.
We waited till we'd thought He'd gone . . .
The stem broke clean.
We were not seen —
We thought; then Gabriel crossed the lawn,
A sword held high.
I heard a cry.
Then we were standing in a lane,
Beside a wall. I mocked, "That's all?"
And then sobbed, "Such a freezing rain!"

— *Mary Benincasa '65*

THOUGHTS

When I fall in love . . . I shall write of laughter,
peeling over sun-swept hearts like an Arab caravan
winding its way through the sweet-sick intensity of
love; of zippered-up skies with nary a button in sight . . .

The feeling that I am Jack Frost with the glory-brush
of seasons, though I can only paint the zestness of autumn
and the intimacy of first blizzards (But I shall banish
snow from the kingdom after the glamour is done! I have
the power, you know.)

Oh, I shall dwell on winsome, searching words
caressed by the coyness of spring and the age of
youth (How very, very old and young am I!)

And there, over the ridge, there are stars
to gather . . . I'll make a daisy-chain of them and
plant their seeds all over my life.

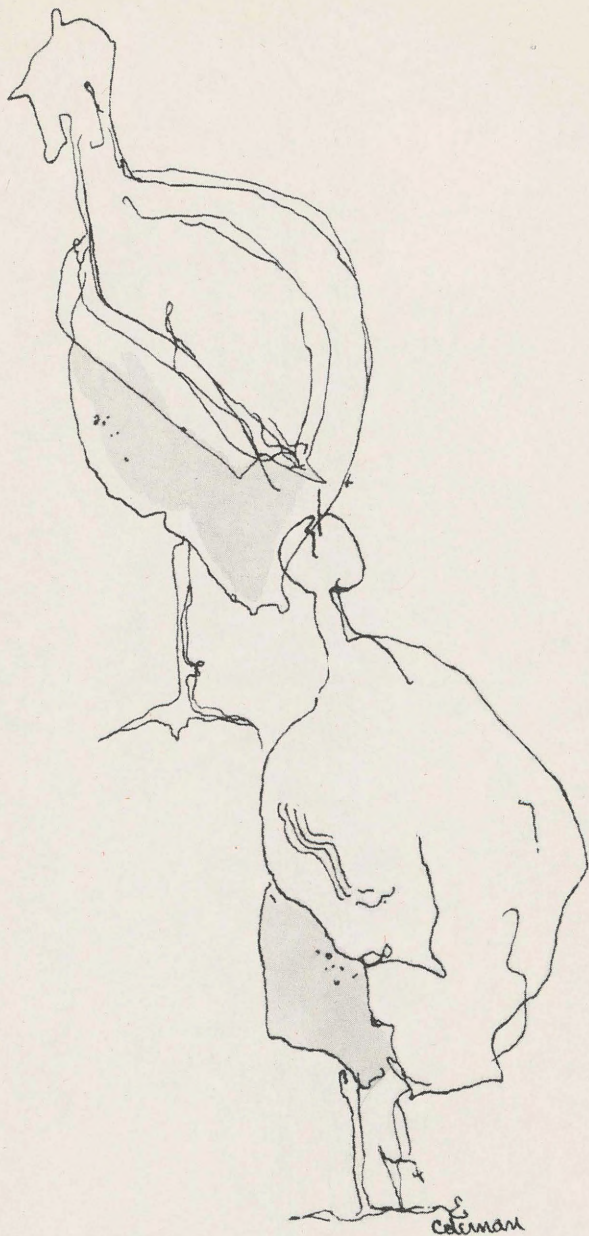
— *Patricia Hoftiezer '66*

TWILIGHT

A man travels in the twilight,
Groping down a misty pathway,
Viewing a world shrouded
in shadows
bluish gray.

Beauty that is all about him
He never sees in full display;
Only fuzzy sketches
in shadows
bluish gray.

— *Julie Hassett '66*





DEATHSONG

If Freedom dies, then I will sing a dirge.
From end to end of Heaven will I sing,
A sad, sad song, above the sonic sound below —
Above the smoke of Freedom's funeral pyre
I will sing of rain and hail and snow,
And wind, and sun, and moonlight's ghostly glow,
And of walks in wide, wide, wide wheat fields,
Beneath a blue, blue, blue and boundless sky.
I will sing of sandy, sunny seashore days,
And russet days in lovely leafy lanes,
And silver silences on hoary hills,
And pink, pink cherry trees — and daffodils.
And I will birds and dogs and kittens eulogize —
Hound dogs, especially, with mournful eyes.
From end to end of Heaven will I sing.
But for the children I will never sing.
My dirge will be for Freedom's longer lives:
For priests and chemists, laborers, young wives.
For little lives, I can no more than cry.
No, I will never sing if children die.

— *Kathleen Heverin '63*

Goodbye is not an easy word to say;

My heart rebels to find you are not mine,

And hopeless love I dared, now must repine.

It needs must come. I've prayed against this day

When you would go, and He would have His way.

Yet dare I rival love which is Divine?

To win you back I wait but for a sign —

You will not pause along your chosen way.

But as with joyful voice your life you bind

Through vows which covet no release but death,

The peace of Him Who won you now I find

And with you give my heart in whispered breath,

For in your sacrifice I claim a part.

Beside your life I lay my lonely heart.

— *Diane Broeker '65*

Upon Watching a Small Boy Play At
the Steps of a University

Don't come here

Little boy

Stay away

The grass is

vital, green and fresh

Till the summer suns

beat down.

Stay away

Little boy

Grass and leaves

and other green things

are killed by winter's wind.

Stay away

But then you can't

Of course not.

— *Antoinette Dubiel '65*

Love is like a paper rose

At first stiff and hard to bend

Love with age will fade and soften

Shape to fit the heart and hand.

Love is yours. Grasp it, keep it,

Press it in your heart, a book

So full of once-held paper roses.

Life the cover. Smile and look.

And take you then this final rose

Pick the flower before it dies

And fades away with petals crushed

And disappears before your eyes.

— *Maryetta West '66*

BLACK SAMBO

"And Little Black Sambo ate one hundred thirty-one pancakes!" The limp cloth cover closed over the yellow and black drawings of a delighted boy eyeing a mound of pancakes. Not moving a muscle, Maureen waited. She didn't look up at her father, just waited.

Then he said it. "One hudnred thirty-one pancakes!" and bounced her in his lap at each syllable. Gleefully, she joined in; louder and louder and higher and higher.

"One-hun-dred-and-thir-ty-one—"

"Shush, listen! I think they're coming, yes, here they come. The cops are coming! We made too much noise again. Now, what'll we do?"

Half-way out of the room, Maureen gave the response, "We'll just have to run away, I guess. I'll be ready in a minute." Struggling with the buttons on her corduroy jacket, she looked for her rubbers and found them in the corner next to the empty milk bottles. The rattle of the bottles reminded her of another part of the ritual, one they left out sometimes.

"Are we going to wreck the house first?"

"Oh, yes. How else would Muddy know we ran away?"

With one hand over her mouth and giggles leaking out between her fingers, Maureen helped spread newspapers out on the floor and strewed rubbers and empty milk bottles about. As an afterthought, Daddy ran back and added a finishing touch; he placed enameled kitchen chairs at silly angles against the stove and ice box. Satisfied with their preparation, they tramped noisily out the back hall and down the stairs. At the end of the long, narrow yard, they turned and looked toward the house.

"Oh, I'll bet Muddy is mad at us. She'll just have to tell the cops we ran away again. They'll never know where to look for us, will they?"

At the doorway her mother appeared, making mock-ferocious gestures and pointing to a rubber in her other hand. The pair waved to her and then ducked behind the garage.

"We just made it, didn't we, Daddy? She almost caught us again." Maureen took a deep breath and tried to match her father's long strides. "Do you think we'll find Black Sambo today. We were right behind him the other time, weren't we?" Down Dorrance Avenue they went, Maureen holding on to the hem of her father's jacket. Since their present journey didn't really begin until they passed the last of the scattered houses, they talked over the events of their last search for Little Black Sambo. But once they entered the fields which bordered the railroad tracks, their attention was intently focused on avoiding the tigers and trailing the illusive Black Sambo.

"I think he'd walk up on the tracks, don't you. That way he could see the tigers easy. And you listen for the trains, Daddy." Then, a little anxiously, "I think I'll walk in front of you, then you'll be able to hear behind us better."

After a few tries at jumping from tie to tie, Maureen gave up and assumed a bumpy gait with one step between each tie. The sharp coal cinders kept working their way into her shoes and had to be emptied out regularly. A DL&W freight train caused a head-long scramble down the embankment through low bushes that still held last fall's prickles. Half hypnotized by the rhythmic patches of light flashing between the squares of darkness, an open box car with a man standing in the doorway jolted Maureen's thoughts back to the search.

"What if he didn't walk? What if he rode the train like those men in the empty cars? Then we'd never find him!"

"I'm sure he could jump off whenever he wanted to. He's very smart you know. I'll bet he'd jump off right before the bridge. We'll look carefully around there." Daddy always knew the answer to everything.

Winding paths through the field led to a small pile of charred sticks and wood—the place where Little Black Sambo ate his lunch. A large cardboard box was the place he slept last night and an empty milk bottle traced his steps right up to breakfast this morning. They were about to find him any minute: Maureen took the added precaution of walking on tip toe and putting her finger over her lips for perfect silence. But even the most devious backtracking and circling led them to the base of the viaduct—a point beyond which he was free. They never followed beyond there.

Once on the sidewalk above, Maureen scraped the mud off her rubbers against the curbstone and began the endless job of pulling prickles off her clothes. She found a stick and ran ahead, running the stick along the black bars of the old cemetery fence until the pins and needles in her arms became unbearable and the stick was yanked out of her hand and into the air.

"Have we come to the little girl's grave yet? Why didn't they put the doll inside with her instead of leaving it out on top like that? Are all these people dead? You won't ever die, will you, huh? Oh, I think I hear the babies, it's time to cross the street."

Few cars went down Ridge Road. The change of shifts at the Plant emptied out only a small stream of the luckier ones, and most of them walked now.

A loud chorus of wailing babies out on the screened porch for the first Spring sunshine drew Maureen toward the Infant Home.

"Do they always cry? Don't they like it up there? Who do they belong to, Daddy?"

"Babies just cry, Maureen. Maybe it's time for them to eat. They all belong to Father Baker, and I'm sure he's made it nice for them up there."

The sidewalks were more crowded now with men and women making their way to the red brick Protectorate directly across the street from the Infant Home.

"Can we get in line today? You could get some newspaper and wrap up the bread and I could carry it all the way home. Can we?"

All play gone out of his voice, Daddy answered, "No. We don't have to do that—not yet at least." He reached down and took Maureen's hand tightly. Maureen wiggled free and skipped on ahead through the knots of people who were talking and waiting.

At the corner, she stopped to peer in at the playground behind the grotto of Our Lady of Victory. "The boys aren't out today, Daddy," she called to her father. "They're bad boys, huh. Mrs. Flynn said she'd send me there if I walked on her flowers again. Did all those boys walk on flowers?"

His voice, sounding very far away, he answered, "What? Oh, the flowers, oh, yes, they're very nice."

Impatiently, Maureen tugged at his coat, "No, the boys I mean, Mrs. Flynn said she'd send me there if I . . ." Then straightening up and sticking out her chest, she imitated her father's deep, quick speech, and answered herself, "They are boys from all over the country. They just needed a home, that's all."

This brought a quick smile to her father's face, but it faded just as quickly. Taking advantage of his preoccupation, Maureen steered him over toward the park. That wasn't part of this walk, but maybe he'd forget. It worked. As her father sat on a bench, Maureen dashed over to the golf tee and plunged her hands into the box of dark wet sand that was always there. A man bending over the water fountain caught her eye.

Running back to the bench, she shouted, "Daddy, I saw a man washing his face at the water fountain. Maybe he saw Little Black Sambo. He looked like maybe he came here on a train."

Startled into the present, he answered, "You didn't talk to him, did you? You know what your mother said about talking to strange men. Remember what she said the other day when you were talking to the man she gave lunch to on the back porch—" Seeing her disappointment, his voice softened. He swung her up on to his shoulder for the last block. "Well, now, you never know. We'll come back to the park tomorrow. We'll see if he's still at the water fountain and then we'll ask him. I'll say 'Excuse me, sir, have you seen anything of a little boy who fights tigers and can eat mountains of pancakes?' And then you'll say, 'He wears a bright blue jacket.' And I'll say . . ."

The game was on again. The search for Little Black Sambo, the discovery of new places to look, and the long walks filled that whole summer. Workless weeks were time for makebelieve and all the signs of want around her were absorbed into the details of the game. The policemen, added to keep order in the food lines at Father Baker's, were there to help them in their search, and the hungry men begging a meal were new sources of clues. All it took was, "Read me a story."

— Agnes Joyce '63

