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Mary Kay Bailey

Pain and pleasure come together,
Walk hand-in-hand through fields of spring wheat,
Acres of tender memories:
Reminiscences of once-upon-a-times
Like April showers in December,
Bringing tears and, often, smiles---
Slices of life like sliver dimes
treasured in a porcelain bank
Already spent---yet their worth not
forgotten, but always longed for,
Always loved.
Faded photographs in black and white,
Re-envisioned in Kodacolor.
Words echoing their short-lived truth
over and over and over and over
in the caverns of the mind.
Two divisions reunite in a fairy tale
daydream.....
 Hands still held
 Minds still linked
 Peace still alive.

Pat Paquin

TIME & YEARS

M. Annette Unser

Herb left this morning as he has for the past twenty-five years or so. He nibbled at his breakfast, slurped down his coffee, pecked me on the cheek, and managed to have the car in gear at exactly 8:15. I stood at the window and watched our trusty old Ford ramble down the road toward the florist hot houses where he has worked for well over twenty years. I drew in a deep breath when the car was out of sight and turned to go about my own business. I had to tend to the usual household chores that women busy themselves with so as not to notice the time and years slipping by.

I jotted down a rough draft of this week's shopping list. My grocery bills are noticeably smaller than they were when Andy was still here with us. With a strong growing boy around I had to have plenty of food on hand. Also, Andy had a multitude of friends, and of course they were always stopping by for an after school snack. It's strange what memories a simple shopping list can bring to mind.

A note just had to be dropped to my sister who lives in Boston. She has three lovely children---they've all grown so fast. She was a tremendous help to us this time last year. She came down for frequent visits. But now we do most of our gossiping by mail. I suppose I should go to Boston someday just to get out of the house again. Herb keeps telling me it'd be good for me.

I washed what few dishes Herb and I used at breakfast and began straightening the rest of the house.

Our house is old; it has aged along with my husband and me. It's really too big now that there's just the two of us rambling around in it. But we'd never think of selling it or moving---this is our home and has been for many years.

I began my cleaning rounds in the living room making sure the rug was spotless, the pictures hung straight on the walls, and the sofa pillows were fluffed to show their soft plump appearance. I climbed the short flight of stairs to the upper level. In our room I made the bed and put away the clothes scattered here and there about the floor. I have the same movements each time I venture to straighten our room. It has become such a joyous routine over the years, I don't mind it in the least. After all the years we've lived in this plain and simple room I still find it beautiful; the memories fill it to the hilt with love.

I delayed long enough in appreciation of our own room and sauntered down the corridor toward the other bedrooms. Of course I knew I needn't worry about cleaning these rooms for they seldom have use but as we grow into set patterns in our lives it is very hard to change or alter an old habit.

The guest room is very small but quite hospitable and homey. The walls are painted with a sky blue pastel while the bedspread and curtains bring out a more earthy floral print. A comfortable chair and matching ottoman are parked in one corner and a huge boxy chest of drawers stands in the other. The bed is well made with clean linens for it has been quite a while since the room housed a visitor. One year ago to this very day my sister and her husband stayed here. They didn't bring the children that time; they thought they might upset Herb and me. We had such a crowd in the house that day. So many relatives and old friends that we hadn't seen in years and all of Andy's friends were here too. It was quite a houseful. After reminiscing, I turned and closed the door confident that the room was neat and ready for a guest should one ever come.

The next room was the third and last bedroom in the house. As the preceding this room needed no cleaning, but seldom do I pass it that I don't stop to peek in. These walls are coated with a beige tone and the furniture, drapes, and bed spread bring out dark masculine browns. An old baby bed perches on its stick legs in the corner. My eyes nearly passed over it without hesitation for it's one of those pieces of furniture that has stood in that spot unnoticed and unused for so long that we've taken it for granted. Today I sat and gazed at it. Close examination reveals that in years past it was well used. The top railing showed wear with the rubbed shine of the finish and small teeth marks indented into it.

On the miniature mattress was folded a tiny white quilt edged in blue satin. A small tattered teddy bear was now the sole occupant of the minute, cage-like bed. Oh, how I remember little Andy clinging to that bear for dear life until dropping off to sleep. Then he'd gently let go as we all must let go our symbols of security at some time or other.

But children surely don't stay that little very long. Soon he collected the pennants for his favorite teams, then posters of famous quotes and modern race cars. These masterpieces still adorn the walls with bright contrasting colors. His high school team pictures and the pictures of girl friends stand on the bureau. How they do grow so fast as time and years slip by.

I lifted myself off the plaid bedspread and smoothed the wrinkles as my sight became blurred by the tears of year old memories. I glanced over my shoulder at the age-old baby bed placed in an insignificant corner of the house for storage purposes and again thought how swiftly his years with us were over.

My time has flown, I realize I had better prepare Herb's supper. This afternoon we're eating early so we can take some flowers to the cemetery.

If the world
Were on fire,
Would all the plastic people
Melt ?
Truly they should.
After all,
There wouldn't be room
In a world afire
For Tupperware Teachers
And Polyethylene Preachers---
Would there ?

Denise Germonprez

LOVE is A balloon

*Love is a balloon
Lifting me higher and higher
Into the clear blue sky
Toward the bright warm sun
That is you.*

Mel Arnold

Boredom
so I cut my nails
I must not concede anguish
by biting them.
I am modern man!
I like my insanity
pent and dignified
and sunny-side up.

Bob Morse

ENTREATY MINUS
MONETARY BENEFITS



mornings of complaisant ease
lying abed sleepdrunk
drugged by golden liquid
poured through venetianblinds.
broken patterns
on the walls of my refuge
pushing themselves, museshaping
into my mind.
fat and lazy pigeons
waddling in the townsquare.
trees
clutched by summerbreezes.

but for you, i am alone.
i hold you, loveclose
happy just to sleep.

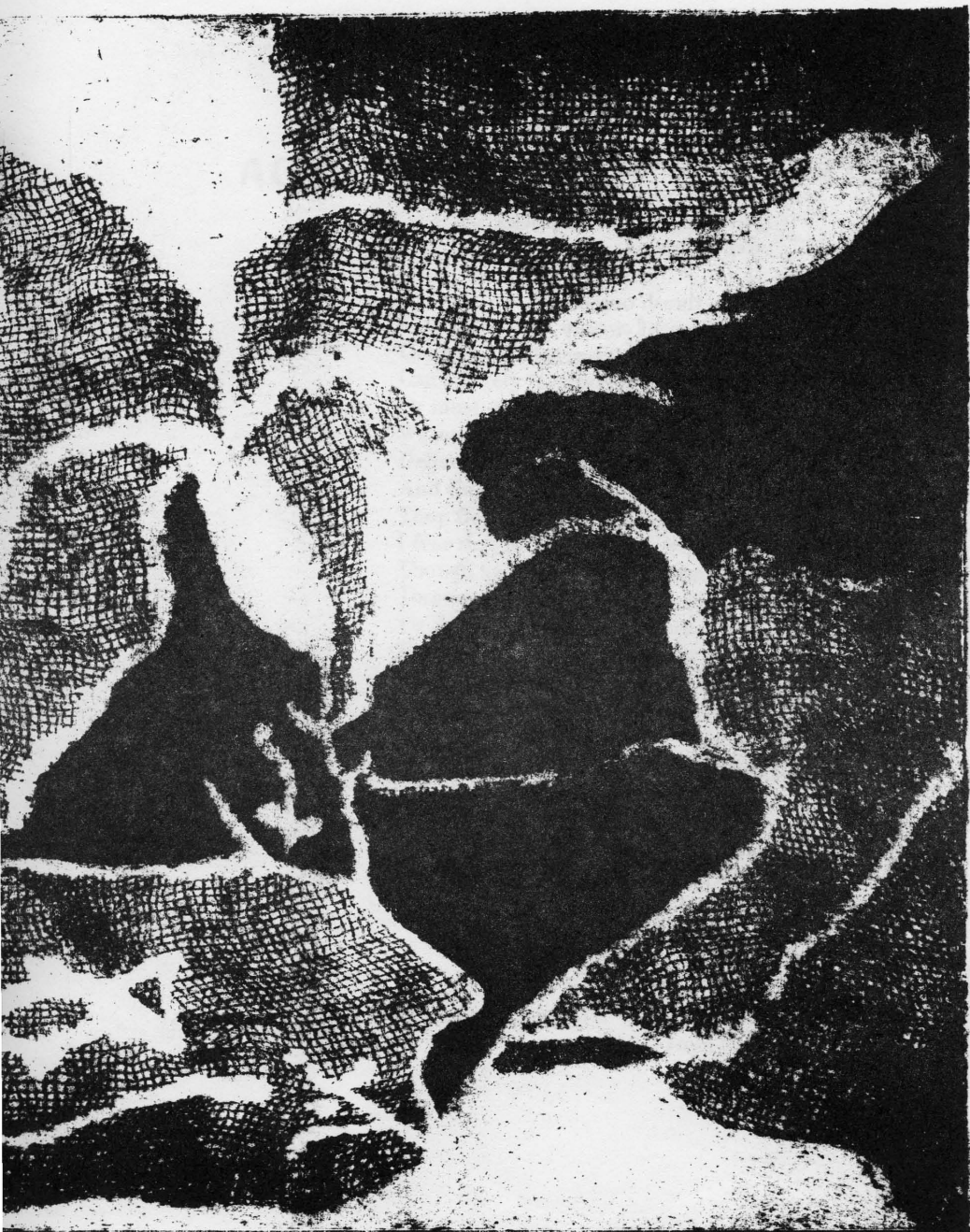
Kathleen Giesting

ENTREATY MINUS MONETARY BENEFITS

I spread myself
Open (vulnerable)
Before you
(Who are so venerable)
Begging, beseeching
That you tread lightly
When you walk
For what is
Loving
But willingness
To accept the
Beloved's "step"?
Still, being as I
Be
Because I love better
Less *discriminating*
Than sensibly
(And oh-----ever so sensitive)
Therefore, SOUL-*full*-ly
Do entreat you
Tread lightly
When you walk
My heart is
Fragile territory.

sr. m. francesca, o.s.f.





— J AUME 1974 —

THUD 'N BLARE

soft warm drops
crimson with death
pulse against needle pricks,
wet 'n driving.

limbs thrash overhead
rebellious of violent
winds, nowhere intent,
darting inanely,
then subsiding
as mad-dog patient
in strait-jacket ether.

below contest
of night 'n day;
pain and void.
shock slams sullenly
drift into frenzied sleep---
frenzy of onlooker,
passerby, spectator
in grim panorama life.
rain-pain sharers,
vicariously precarious,
peeking over chasm
waiting, anticipating
oncoming certainty.
fight in monster metal
(crushed light-pole cripple)
is their fight afterall.

Michael Lee Wallace

ACTING OUT THE GAME OF LOVE

Is that the light of love I see you wear
Or only a costume donned to play a role?
Can a lovely face pretend a look of care
Or must such brightness truly reflect the soul?
We smile and make our entries right on cue,
Delivering lines we've often said before,
And though we strain to make them sound like new,
They flop on stage and stagger out the door.
I fear that mask of love so gaily put on,
Though lovers in love love even love's show;
Just once I'd like to see your face grow wan
Or drop a tear before we turn to go.
Remember, love, that plays are never free
And what is real is you, is me, is we.

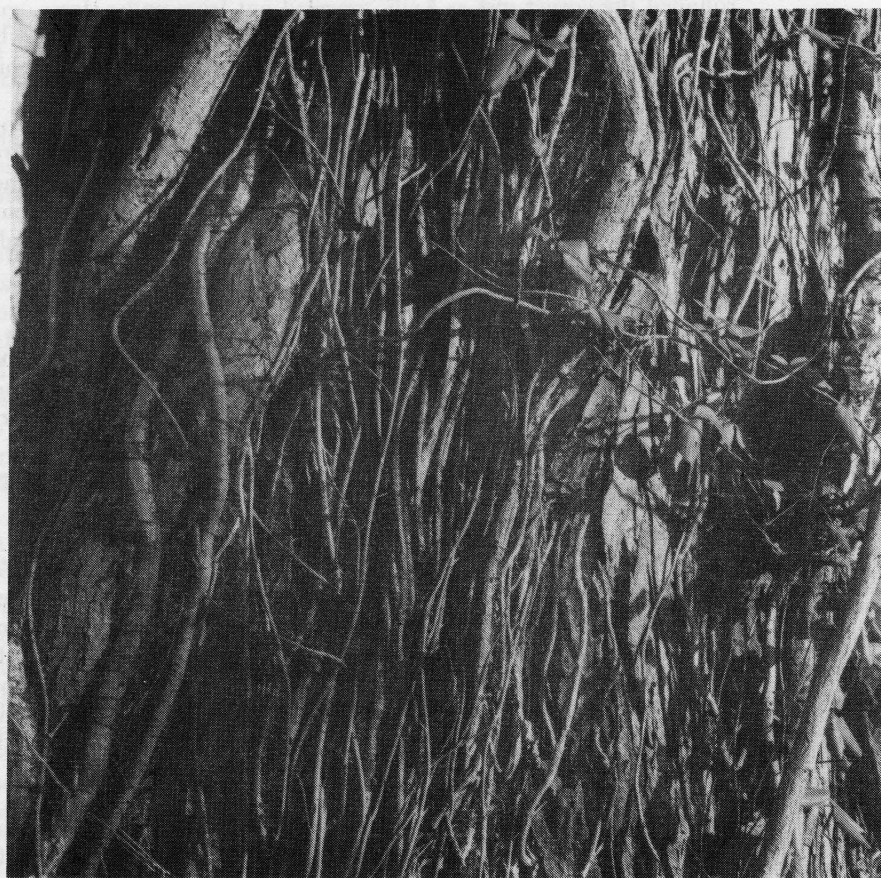
Shakespearean sonnet
communally composed in Creative Writing 104
Spring 1974 (Patty Blankenship, Bruce Council,
Sr. Marya Grathwohl, Joanne Johnson, Joyce
Joyner, Greg Leggett, Donald Kuehr, Joseph
Kempf (instructor))

I push
through the dusk's
cloud of haze
to sit
alone
with nature
as my only companion.

the flower's
gentle nodding
and sweet smell
entices and allures.
this momentary fascination
passes into oblivion
as the fog sets in.

the air
is filled with bittersweet
spices from faraway places.
i lay down only to let
the warm grass blow softly around me
crystalline visions pass before my eyes
as i laugh at the fog and humanity.

Mary Kay Riley



AND OUT OF THE RAIN

An early morning rainbow, unusual indeed in the city, vaulted the downtown skyscrapers as I neared District School No. 18. Hearing shouts of excitement and surprise, I quickened my pace--difficult to do with an armload of teacher's manuals and a How-Tall-Are-You-Getting chart--and rounded the corner just as Kelly wriggled out from under Harry, snatched up a jar, and broke for the street. Decidedly healthier--Kelly was wheezing already--though heavier, Harry soon closed the gap and was grabbing for the jar when I caught up with them.

Action stopped abruptly, as when current is cut on a movie projector. I fought to stifle a laugh; that wouldn't do now, but surprise strategies always worked so beautifully. Six years of teaching had taught me that.

Harry twisted around and grinned from his position on the curb. He tottered momentarily before regaining his balance and usual third-grade composure. "Mornin', Miss Cataldi!"

"Harry, what is your problem? Kelly, what's going on here?" Two simultaneous questions begot two simultaneous responses.

"He tried to take my jar!" Kelly's voice was indignant and pitched even higher than usual. Tears were streaming down his face, and when was the last time someone had bothered to iron his shirt? He was tall for his age and decidedly too thin, unhealthy thin.

"I did not!" Harry was shouting in rhythm with Kelly's repeated "you-did-too's!"

"Wait a minute, wait a minute, one at a time! Kelly?"

He hesitated. Undivided attention always confused him. Aside from his quick-flaring temper, he was engagingly vulnerable. And gentle, too, especially with small and fragile living things. How could anyone neglect him? Harry stood beside him: stocky, strong, his whole body held in a

The story evolved in the two expected, and contradictory, versions, the teller being, of course, the innocent party. A helpful and sympathetic knot of bystanders, the earlier cheering section, added accurate details or solemnly nodded verification of their champion's stroy.

"All right, all right, everybody! Let's--"

But look what's happened to the poor caterpillars," Kelly's high-pitched voice whined insistently. With that, he thrust the mud-daubed, finger-printed jar in my face.

The caterpillars were a sorry sight, all balled up under a jumble of leaves, sticks, and pebbles. The immediate alleviation of their apparent state of tension, and ours, seemed imperative.

"They need to feel safe, fast. All of you can help. First, let's get quiet; "----Could caterpillars even hear?----" arguments can be scary for caterpillars. You boys help with my books and the chart, please? Harry,

your things. Yes, thank you, Stephen.” Felt good to let my cramping arm relax as the chart was eased away. Kelly, at my side, carefully cradled the jar. “Harry, here’s the key. Why not run ahead to get the bug-keeper out of the closet? Bottom shelf!” I had to shout the last because he was already across the playground and nearing the building.

We followed at a slower pace, “‘cause of the caterpillars,” as Kelly had suggested. Usually Kelly’s classmates did not follow his suggestions quite so readily. He always, always had so many of them; he ‘meddled,’ they often complained.

Jerry ran ahead and struggled to open the cumbersome wooden doors. They sagged, stuck, and were in need of general repair, like much of the building they ‘protected.’ It was an old structure, ready for retirement after long years of service. Its innards had been built and rebuilt to accommodate a grade school, high school, orphanage, church, and grade school again. Quite a cycle. I often thought of it as being a patient building, accepting its own creaking floors and pounding pipes. It had become as familiar and homey as an old armchair, despite the sometimes schoolday tension.

Before entering, I turned for one last glimpse of the arching rainbow and noted how the last of the night’s rain clouds were shredded before the wind: at least the children could go out at noon today. Thank God.

As we started down the long, locker-lined hall, I spotted Harry standing in our doorway.

“Got it!” he called, giving his red curls a shake as he held the bug-keeper aloft.

“All right, football player.” I said. We were closer by then. “How about a pass to Jerry?”

Jerry fumbled, then recovered. “Here you go, Kelly,” he said as he worked to open the bug-keeper, his crossed eyes wandering off in the direction of the stairs. His smile, though, remedied everything that was wrong with his eyes. His nose crinkled.

“Thank you, Jerry.”

We entered the room and assembled around the display shelves, one teacher and fourteen third-graders: curious, excited, concerned. How were the caterpillars?

“They’re relaxing already,” Kelly whispered an octave above Middle C, as he snapped the plastic dome cover of the bug-keeper into place. A month ago it had been grasshoppers and a week before that a assortment of unidentifiable crawling things.

“Next time, why don’t you let Harry see what’s in your jar? And Harry, you could ask before snatching---”

Suddenly into the midst of the peacemaking, Jerry announced from the window that the rainbow was quickly fading.

"Where do rainbows come from?" somebody wanted to know.

"From the sky and out of the rain."

Good answer indeed.

The week wore itself down to Friday. The caterpillars had apparently recovered, were even eating. We left them to a weekend of solitude and

Monday came early. But it always did. Monday sunrises were generally slow, sometimes never. This was one of the never ones. And it was cold.

The bell rang and seven students still weren't in: Dana, always late; Carol, must be sick; Flip, probably can't find his shoes; Irma, Sandra's-babysitter, (she always said her name like that---was she ever just Irma?) had called to say the car wouldn't start; Stephen, usually early; Kelly, catching more bugs?; and whoever sat behind Jerry. "Whose empty desk is that?" I asked.

"That's Andre's place. And I saw him playing in the park," from David, being very emphatic. "I can't find my lunch money, either."

Shelly was at my elbow. "Somebody stole my lunch money, too."

"Oh, how do you know that, Shelly? Did you have it with you when you left the apartment?" Two tears welled up; how did she get that scratch across her face? "Just a minute, Shelly."

An eighth-grader was at the door asking how many third-graders wanted to buy a copy of the school paper. Have to note that on the board right now, to remind me to remind them to bring money tomorrow.

A frantic voice jerked me from my mental note: "Miss Cataldi! Miss Cataldi! Look! Somebody has been messing with the caterpillars. They're GONE!" Surprise, indignation, anger--all an octave above Middle C.

"Please, Kelly--" He didn't even have his coat off and his books were all in a pile on the floor with his lunch. "How do you know somebody did it? Let's take a look. . ."

By the time I got to the back of the room most of the children were there too, a tight, anxious knot. Oh, where was Shelly? Let's see. . .

"Shelly, remind me to give you a lunch ticket at noon. You can pay for it tomorrow." But that couldn't help much. . . Now, Kelly's caterpillars.

"There they are!" Jerry was triumphant. "In those green-grape things hanging from the top of the bug-keeper. They're in there!"

Kelly was dubious. Harry supported Jerry. They bounced the idea around a bit as Louis turned to get my attention. An alert student, his eyes seldom lacked lustre. His face and head had all the vitality and dignity of a Greek sculpture or the young David.

"Butterflies," he whispered. "Can I run get the 'B' encyclopedia?"

Hardly a minute later, as he reentered the room, he announced, "They're called 'chry-chry-sa-lis-ses!' Cold over the weekend and they turn off the heat in here, too. I'll bet the cold made the caterpillars make these green grape things."

Louis the scientist with a vast store of facts also had an unbelievable capacity for knowing how to link them. Was I wishing for more Louises? It was so easy to teach him to read.

"We're going to have butterflies," somebody chanted.

"Two of them."

"How long will it take?"

"What kind of butterflies will they be?" Harry demanded.

"Monarchs," Louis replied steadily. "Orange and black monarchs. It says here that they migrate---"

"What's that mean?" Harry again.

"--fly south in the fall. By the middle of October they're usually in Georgia."

"My grandmother lives there, Miss Cataldi." Diedra always had an interruption.

"It's the middle of October already. Our monarchs are going to be late. . ."

"---and some go all the way to Mexico and Peru." Louis was still reading aloud.

The weeks edged away. One of the green grape things fell off and 'died' while the other grew steadily darker. No more caterpillars, a monarch was growing.

"Get in here, everybody! See what's happening in the third grade! Jerry's shouts perforated the lunches-and-books-and-lockers confusion of the long hall. Diedra was already into the second grade room with the announcement; first-graders, hearing the pitch of excitement, responded adequately and typically---at top speed.

But the armed and legged tumult that descended upon the bug-keeper fell quickly hushed. The monarch was just pushing himself away from the tattered chrysalis and with massive effort was pumping fluid through the 'piping' that, umbrella-like, spread the petalled wings. The miracle billowed up before our eyes, like clouds do in time-lapse photography.

"I can't see!" Harry complained from somewhere miles away.

"Your plane will be departing in fourteen minutes. Gate nine. To your right, ma'am."

"His name's King Arthur," Kelly announced helpfully to the attendant and anyone willing and lucky enough to hear. "He'll drink sugar water from off your thumb." He held the bug-keeper up for all to see---a flash of black striped orange, brilliance enough for anyone's day.

The decision to fly King Arthur to Georgia via commercial airlines had been arrived at logically and happily. He had 'hatched' three weeks behind the usual monarch schedule. An emergency airlift would surely be a welcome assist to an already lengthy itinerary.

But it was a sober departure delegation that stood in solemn order along the observation windows and sang the butterfly song, 'Fly, Orange Butterfly,' as the plane taxied to the runway and some distant place called Atlanta. We all took hands then, and threaded our way out of the Labyrinthine terminal. We found the station wagon, four rows and two light posts from the exit, and the children climbed in, subdued beyond recognition. "Now remember, I stop driving if third-graders get too---" Why did I feel I had to say that?

That evening at the PTA meeting, I let my thoughts wander as the perennial how-to-raise-money discussion stretched to an award-winning duration of 47 minutes. I slouched down into the chair a bit to relieve an Anacin backache. Today had been too long. Diedra's ride had not waited for her to return from the airport and subsequent drive across town had been fraught with traffic---everybody wanted to get to supper soon. Then, after a quick and cold dinner, back to school for this PTA meeting. Deeper slouch. Then stiffly erect. Felt some better.

The decision was made by hand vote to postpone the money-making decision to the next meeting. Wish I could postpone tomorrow's test; still had to write it up and type it. Then, there were the area covers to make for math and the usual stack of SRA papers and bookreports to check and chart. "Fly, orange butterfly," . . . be kind to your butterflies, Atlanta.

"Miss Cataldi?"

Mrs. Johnson. At every PTA meeting. Her hair was set and perfect, make-up faultless, even expensive earrings that dangled. Class.

"Dana came home today complaining that she didn't get to go to the airport. Now, I feel that every student should be given the opportunity to participate in class field trips. Luckily, Dana has already been to the airport several times. She flies by herself now to Oklahoma to spend the holidays with her grandparents. Now how did you decide who would get to go? I don't want to interfere with school policies, but perhaps---"

"Mrs. Johnson, we could only get ten children into the station wagon. I did send a note home early in the week asking if any parents could provide---," all the usual explanations. And had I been fair in choosing the ten who got to go?

"Well, you're the teacher." she said rather inconclusively.

"Yes, I'm the teacher." My name goes on their report cards and the 'permanent records'. . . Let's see, my car keys? Atlanta. . . Yes, fly an orange butterfly.

Weeks passed, grew into months. Once Diedra drew a butterfly in the corner of her English paper. The assignment had been to write a friendly letter. Hers was to the grandmother who lived in Georgia.

Kelly's asthma got worse and he missed a lot of school. The stack of papers and books I sent home included an assortment of friendly letters for him.

Jerry faithfully marked off the winter holidays on the calendar. Daylight shortened, then lengthened. We climbed out of the winter solstice of snow and cold to feather-light showers, another rainbow, and redbuds flowering. Kelly brought in some earthworms. Harry took down the outdoor birdfeeder from the classroom window. Third graders began to act like fourth graders: super energetic and irrepressibly rowdy. It got harder and harder to get to school on time. My tardy list to the principal daily grew longer. What to do about it? "Try candy," another teacher suggested.

I say down to the beginning-day rituals. "How many are taking a got lunch today?"

Then we heard them in the hall. Heads turned. A few people stood up.

"He's back! He's back!" Harry had gotten to the door first.

"He's outside on the playground!" Jerry was tripping over Harry. Oh, if only his parents would look into getting him some glasses.

"I saw him first." That had to be Kelly, in the midst of the group, smiling and jumping, healthy with spring and friends.

"Who?" Demanding.

"King Arthur!" In perfect unison. And loud.

The class was already in a rush down the hall.

Outside, we overtook a spring breeze as we crossed the playground at Olympic speeds, then stopped, hushed, at the grassy space where Harry was indicating our reigning monarch: bright color in the tangle of greening mulberry branches.

. . . Thirty-seven third graders danced orange rhythms to the just-spring chants of butterflies. Lunch-counts and tardy slips and bells and teachers and students would always be, I supposed, or maybe never were. Wasn't it enough to celebrate returns?

"We've been looking for him all this week, Miss Cataldi. We knew he's come! Aren't you glad?"

From cocoons spun of hectic and humdrum, butterflies flower to beautify our days. As rainbows do, and children. "Yes, Harry, I am glad." And reached to tousle his shining curls.

Smile laugh frown
London Bridge is falling down
falling down

f
a
l
l
i
n
g
d
o
w
n

Bombs keep smashing all around
Mary feeds her child
Mrs. Wilson mends her hose
Johnny Paxton blows his nose

Streetcars clatter up and d_ow_n

taking people out of town
Reverend Posey has a thought
Can't be beat with Molly Green
can't have known that he was seen
in Mrs. Wilson's bedroom
"A simple visit," he told his wife,
"she's frightened by the bombings."
Molly Green has gone now too
Nothing left for her to do
All the men have gone to war
Hup two three four
Hup two three four
Down the street and through the door
they carried him. No more need Johnny
smile at me

The cost of coffin nails is up
supply demand unquestioning
of all the meaning in a ring
Ring . . . Ring . . . Ring
Is anyone there?
Hello . . . Hello . . .
please don't hang up
say something!

dead air
heat
gila monsters

s
l
i
t
h
e
r

under rocks
seeking nonexistent shade
shelter from the tyrant sun
beating on the barren land
All the world is gone to sea
washed of its humanity
When I turn and look at you
why don't I get a human view?
where have all the soldiers gone
 playing jacks with atom bombs
who is picking up the pieces?

Sunrise/dawn/light/the sea/
was it this way before
long ago when no men walked
as no men now are walking
or riding or whizzing along
in shining metal shells
burning themselves out
ashes remain
fertilizing a land grown
so infertile as to
reject the blood of
Isaac were it offered
a broken world
gaping at the universe in dazed astonishment
at what it has become
she who once thought
herself the star
demoted to a chorus girl
with nothing to say
kept on out of sentiment
"She will realize soon enough."

Kathleen Giesting



