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Marian College  
Indianapolis, Indiana  
Winter 1965

# THE FIORETTI

VOLUME XXIII

NUMBER 1

Indianapolis, Indiana

1965-66

AN ANTHOLOGY OF  
MARIAN COLLEGE  
PROSE AND VERSE

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It's

habitual,

Renewal in the Church has given a boost to soul-searching in the lives of modern Catholics. The Pope has given his mitre as a gift to the poor and now shares his power with bishops throughout the world. Ordinary parishioners have settled with trying to cheerfully juggle their song cards, missal, and consecration pamphlets. *Aggiornamento* has been planted and its sprout is popping above surface level. The weather forecasts on which its survival depends range from sunny approval to storms of discontent.

One area of discussion inducing perspiration on the brow of many a Curia Bishop is the future habit style for the thousands of women religious. Op-

it's

a habit

SISTER M. JERELYN, O.S.F., 67

only the plea has come to rid the Sister of her garb; she has a commitment to the world. She is stifled, imprisoned, unable to be herself and well let's face it—she's hot!

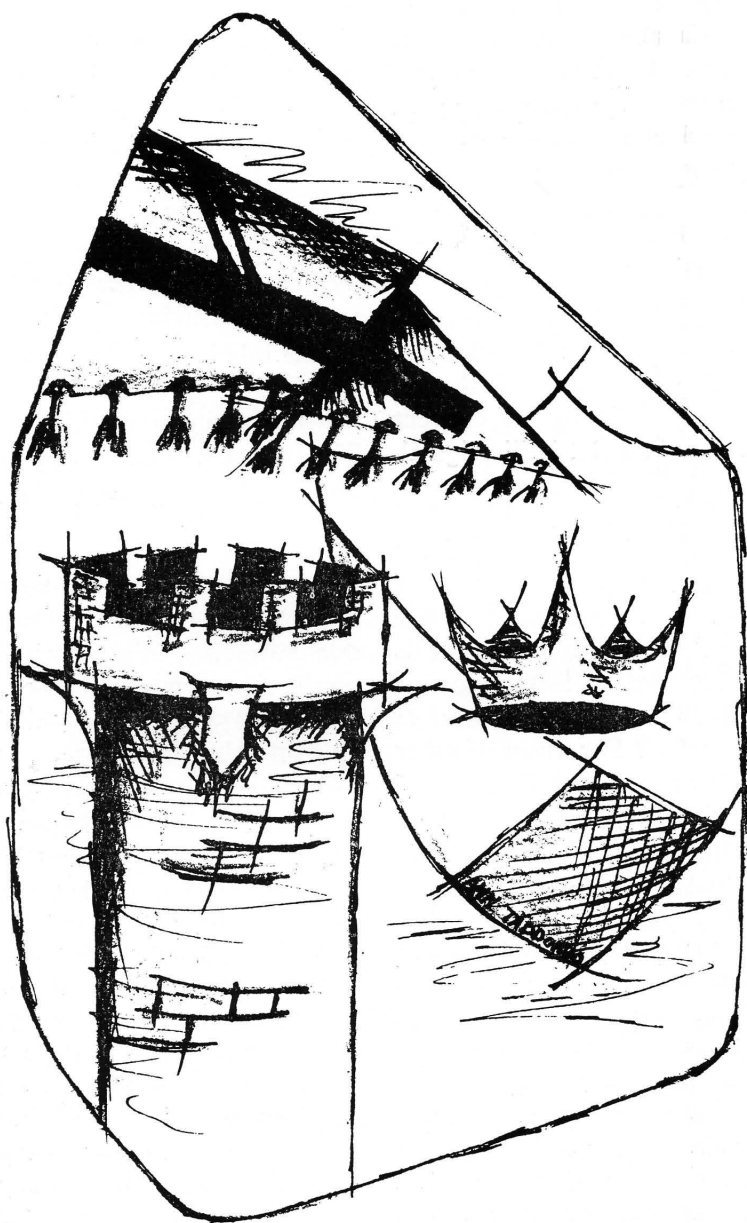
The happy newspaper editor or T.V. reporter is one who hasn't an over-abundance of nun copy. Fashion columns teem with emaciated models descending the steps of Roman ruins—the picture of convent decorum in a Botticelli original. Having donned a more modern garb, some Sisters have had their smile frozen on the front page to the approving roars of "That's it, Sister, thaw!" While the sophisticated college set is eager to pit the Sisters against the lay faculty in a game of *Is She or Isn't She*, those of other faiths are astonished to realize that she *is* a she.

Through all the comment and fresh designs, Sisters stand as black as ever and each with her own opinion. The percentage of Sta-Flo in her coif is causing the international temperature to rise, but Sister is worried about the real reason for the problem. The modern Christian mentality is yearning for a change and the religious habit has become the sounding board for new

thought. Those who advocate a complete elimination of a distinctive garb are well fortified with solid argument—breaking the barrier between the Sister and those who are repelled at the sight of a glorified penguin. They argue the impossibility of medieval apparel drawing humanity to a living Christ.

The rabid habit fans balance this liberal approach. Symbolism is the key note with them. The thought of what Sister stands for and the fact that she has looked this way for centuries confirms them in their position. When Sister comes down the corridor you know that Sister is coming down the corridor.

Yet, is Sister's effectiveness in society dependent upon the yards of protective material, or is the distinguishing factor an asset? The answer lies not in a change of wardrobe, but a renewal of heart. Commitment could be fulfilled in a burlap bag if love were present. Though the bishops will decide whether ankles will show, and the laity can watch the metamorphosis, only Sisters themselves can make effective renewal in their lives. May this realization make banner headlines.



# Poor Man's Utopia

EILEEN WITTE, '68

*Camelot* is for dreamers. It's the enactment of every man's secret wish to create a perfect society in which men live in Christian brotherhood.

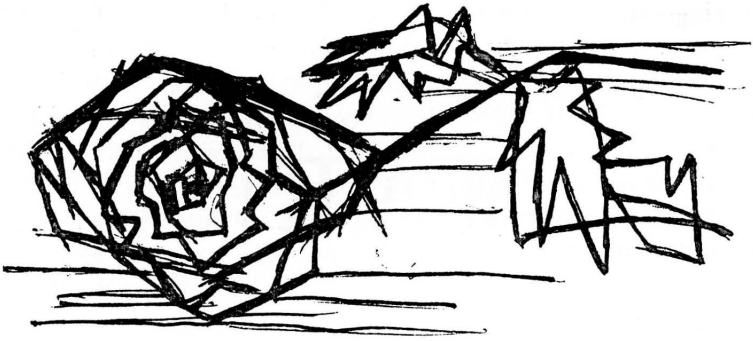
This Lerner and Loewe pageant has the suggestion of a special "something" first implanted by a professional dreamer, T. H. White. His book, *The Once and Future King*, was the inspiration for this twentieth century venture into make-believe. The story of Arthur's almost childish scheme for a perfect kingdom first appears absurd. About his famed round table he gathers the noble warriors of England. Knights who once roamed the countryside looking for the excitement of a bloody joust or a death-dealing tournament now turn all their energy to restoring and preserving Arthur's inspired principle of "Right over might." Everyone falls under the spell of his boyish enthusiasm, including the dreamers in the audience. We find ourselves silently hissing any remaining cynics and cheering another triumph as each knight and lady fall into their proper place in the new kingdom. Arthur's court glows with carefree good will and innocent joy. Then, in a flourish of pompous grandeur, Lancelot appears as the final touch of perfection. This handsome young knight is the answer to Arthur's wish for a perfect Christian knight and immediately becomes his favorite at the round table, where theory claimed there would be no rank. Arthur breathes a sigh of satisfaction as he reflects on

his kingdom—a beautiful setting, his lovely queen Guenevere and an army of knights to chase evil from England's farthermost boundary. The beauty of it prompts us to jealously guard Arthur's innocent offering to humanity so that no alien dissenter can crush it. Then, from within, comes the first hint of a weak spot in Arthur's fortress. The growing love between Lancelot and Guenevere casts shadows on Camelot's future. It hurts to know that a man so sincere is soon to be betrayed by the fruits of his own beautiful vision. Nothing in his idyllic system can stop the building forces of the dissatisfied knights under the vengeful leadership of Mordred. The warm colors of Camelot blend, then darken to a blood-red, obliterating any traces of the dream. Now Arthur stands alone on a dismal battlefield, awaiting the approach of Lancelot's army. For him, it is the death of everything that was good in Camelot, every principle he stood for. His surrender is a personal loss to every man. We are left only with the memory. Then in one last attempt to save his dream he plants a seed of inspiration in a young page who shares his grief. It becomes not the death, but rather the "sundown of a dream."

Theater critics have pummeled this fantasy with cries of "poor art, sheer sentimentality." They avow an "obvious lack of substance." Their claims are not unfounded. The very image of King Arthur is based on legend, credited to the imagination of romantic English peasants. The play is sprinkled with anachronisms and then tied together with strings of extended coincidence. All of these violate the artistic sensitivity that most critics claim to possess.

To a dreamer, these are irrelevant. They go unnoticed because of the misty potential of such a life as was proposed in Camelot. As it is envisioned by Lerner and Loewe, it is the remnant of a romantic past with a hint of its return in the future. Much is left to the imagination at the conclusion of the play simply because the theme cannot be terminated, only suspended. Although Arthur stands defeated in his "one brief shining moment," there still lingers a whisper of hope to be taken by another Arthur in another age. This is *Camelot* to a dreamer. It leaves the world with a chance to try again.





In warm damp magic world of night, the moth  
Too frantic, skirts my light, books high-piled sway  
Beside a wilted yellow rose  
That I have watched all day, and cannot throw away.  
A bud that yesterday I placed  
All new in water-glass, and watched the petals laced  
Slowly unfold. Faded now. What strange haste  
Calls a thing of beauty quick to die  
And fly away to God's ethereal face?  
Too beautiful to stay long here where I  
From day to day know thorns and taste  
A struggle or perhaps a hopeful paced  
Slow unfolding haste, my petals laced.

*Summer*

BONNIE KULSETH, '67

*Rose*

# WAR!

FAY FAIVRE, '68

He wouldn't have believed it had someone told him; but here was the letter saying so, real and tangible in his hand. The message had been written formally, expressing remote sympathy in the carefully chosen words; but for all its respect, it still said only one thing: your son is dead. Sighing, he folded the paper and shuffled, weary, onto the patio. Warm sunlight filtered through the budding trees and far away a bluejay scolded vigorously. The morning was calm and clear, lazy and bright, perfect for sunning and dreaming. But James—Jamie—was dead, one more statistic for the Viet Nam war. The idea was still penetrating his mind, seeking a place to settle and become firmly entrenched. Jamie is dead.

The letter held no mention of how he had died—bullet, flame, bomb—but that was just as well. It would make no difference now anyway. Probably he had been on mission, in a plane or parachuting from it into the soft green jungle. Or maybe he was doing nothing at all. Maybe he had been the victim of a sneak attack or a barracks bombing; maybe he had been laughing or sleeping or playing cards one minute, dead the next. But it made no difference now. The concept of death fled into reality for a moment, but he shoved it back, trying to picture Jamie as he had been, as he had left, as he had acted in a situation so unknown.

He could see a little Jamie tripping on the stones of the patio or a shamefaced Jamie reclaiming his baseball on the other side of the patio window. But this Jamie had grown up to a tall, strong, slender boy, serious by moments, never far from laughter. He could see that Jamie making decisions about college, entertaining his buddies, calling his current girl. A blond head thrown back in raucous boyish laughter, a knitted brow puzzling a math problem, a blue eye gleaming with an untold story: that was Jamie, the young man Jamie.

Had there been another in Viet Nam? He had often wondered about that, trying to picture Jamie the soldier. He saw him as he had appeared before leaving, straight and proud in his uniform, laughing and uncaring until the moment of departure. Then Jamie had knelt a moment, looking up into his father's face. (What had he seen? fear? pride? love?) At any rate, he had knelt a moment only; then they were both on their feet, saying stumbling good-byes, shaking hands. And Jamie had grasped him close, hugged him, not in an effeminate gesture, but in a hard masculine good-bye. "Go, my son." And he had left, off to his station in Viet Nam.

But from then, what had he known of Jamie? What was the Jamie shot at, Jamie parachuting, Jamie relaxing in the barracks? How did that Jamie act—and react? He hadn't known that Jamie, except for the letters. Those letters! They had been Jamie serious, Jamie joking, Jamie present all over again.

Leaning back against the wall, he closed his eyes to the sunlight and reflected on those letters. They had been truthful, sincerely worded though hastily written. He recalled the rebellion at first, the indignation. "Haven't I the right to live in my own country anymore? Is this my privilege as an American to be shipped off and shot at? This isn't *my* war or *our* war or *their* war. Nobody claims this damn war; they just fight it." And the fascination: "Little people, Dad, make a man so big. I'm a giant among the natives, and so white, even with a tan. The kids don't stare anymore, though. . . ." And there had been something running beneath each letter, something that was still proud and tall, and very American. Occasionally it emerged in words. "Dad, the situation here is critical. A man can't be anything but defensive. The

boy standing beside me today, waiting to jump with me, may tomorrow be jumping for the Viet Cong, or worse yet, reporting our activities to them. It seems like these crazy people just don't care what happens. But they just don't *know*. They can be told about freedom, but they don't know what it is because they haven't lived it. The VC promises them food for their families, and that's more immediate. They know that they're fighting, but they don't know why or for what. And yet, Dad, I know I'm here for something. Men just aren't made without a purpose, and somebody had to show these people theirs. And I guess there's something else here, too. We're fighting for freedom, and we owe it to our country to do it. I'm not discouraged, though I know I sound like it. I wish there were some other way to gratify democracy for what we've got, but this is the situation, and we have to take it. I know now what freedom is and why we must not let it be taken away, here, at home, or anywhere. . . ."

Overhead a plane shook the silence of the morning and roared off into the vast sky. "Go," he whispered, voice catching on the one word. "Go quickly, my son." The folded paper fluttered to the ground unnoticed.

### *On the Birthday of a Friend*

This I do not possess :  
The gift of show.  
Tongue-strung hearts work  
To each their way,  
And mine mute-lashed  
Laughs tear-gutted today,  
Bends pensive ear.

BONNIE KULSETH, '67

# Cats



TOM MOLNAR, '67

Cats are such awful animals—not like dogs at all. For dogs are warmhearted and understandable creatures, faithful, and man's best friend. But whoever heard that said about a cat? Instead they are associated with witches and devils and black magic. And no wonder! to see them slinking around at all hours of the day and to hear their frightful screeching at night! Cats always slink around, never will you see a feline walk upright with that brisk and purposeful stride characteristic of the dog. The way they act you might think they were always waiting for something to pounce on!

Of course some dogs will howl at the moon but they'll stand by your bicycle too when you want to get something at the store. My dog licks my face just to show me he loves me. Would a cat ever do that?



Did you ever listen to the motors in cats? Sometimes they're really loud. I think they're one of the nicest features in cats—I mean if you *do* like cats. People often speculate on what it means when the motor's on especially loud. Some say it stands for contentment, others for happiness. My guess would be digestion, but what do you think? Maybe someone knows for sure what it means.

I used to have a girl friend who loved cats. She had two cats, one black and one white. They were both male and one of them was named Pedro and the other was called George. How that girl loved Pedro, the youngest! She would cuddle him up close as girls will do and then kiss his little pink nose! One couldn't say Pedro loved it; in fact, he seemed quite blasé about the whole matter. And George, if he looked at all at his younger brother, was quite disinterested too. But she thought he was affectionate when really it was a one sided love affair—or so it seemed to me. Well, women are funny too, but that's another story. But in the meantime let me pass on this piece of advice handed down from the centuries: NEVER cross the path of a black cat!



# Questions:

## *a prose poem*

Silly men, because you fear death so, you live your lives oversleeping and taking pills, to try to stay Death's Advent. When really, no death could be as dead as is the life that you now live. Why hide from death behind a vitamin pill? What have you to live for? What good things have you done, or will you do, that should merit you extended life? In what way is your soul more innocent than those of the many now dead children whose deaths were brought to them by one of your hallowed creations, the atom bomb? Fools, the value of your life is naught. It has not been lived. You have only groped through what appeared to be darkness, and in your groping did step-on and extinguish the lives of many whose lives might have proven more meaningful than your own.

Because you futilely seek to satisfy your soul's craving for a happy state, with money and the material things it buys, you are never really contented in your life. You buy new cars and in a few years their bodies corrode. You buy new clothes, and in time their threads rot and expose nakedness to the elements. So, once again you are displeased, and you are compelled once more to buy, to get your "fix" with the synthetic means of pacification that you have created. I wonder, how much more wrong is your carnal addiction than is the addiction of a narcotic to a drug? Are you not both seeking like ends by like means? Temporary contentment artificially induced? Indeed, it appears that the society which for the sake of the community creates institutions for the correction of drug addiction, needs now, to save itself, pursue the idea of creating a similar institution for the correction of carnal addiction. Might it be said that this institution was created by life for life's sake?

I have said that your life isn't life, but death, and sincerely do I so believe. You are insensitive, blind, and cold. As the mortal body decays from flesh to dust, so too has your capacity for any humanitarian display decomposed to its now egotistical state.

By depressing the good and encouraging the evil inherent within you, you have created an economic hell whose flogging flames surpass my dread of the fire which is said to come. How much more gruesome could that hell be than the one which now scorches the souls of most Christians.

Your life, your life, how vainly it is lived. Never once do you ask yourself why you exist. Never once do you think to serve others, never once, no never ever! If, disregarding your carnal commitments, you say that you are here to live, sustain your life, propagate your species and die, wouldn't such a statement equate or maybe render somewhat less in importance your life than that lived by a dog? Surely you who have been created in the image of God have a more profitable ulterior motive for life! Don't you? Is this, supplemented occasionally with the acquisition of some material gain, to be your limit? Is this all? Oh, God will, that it not be so. I would rather never to have lived than to accept such a fate. I would turn my back to the God who would have it so! No, this cannot be the way! This is not life, but a successful attempt to create Hell.

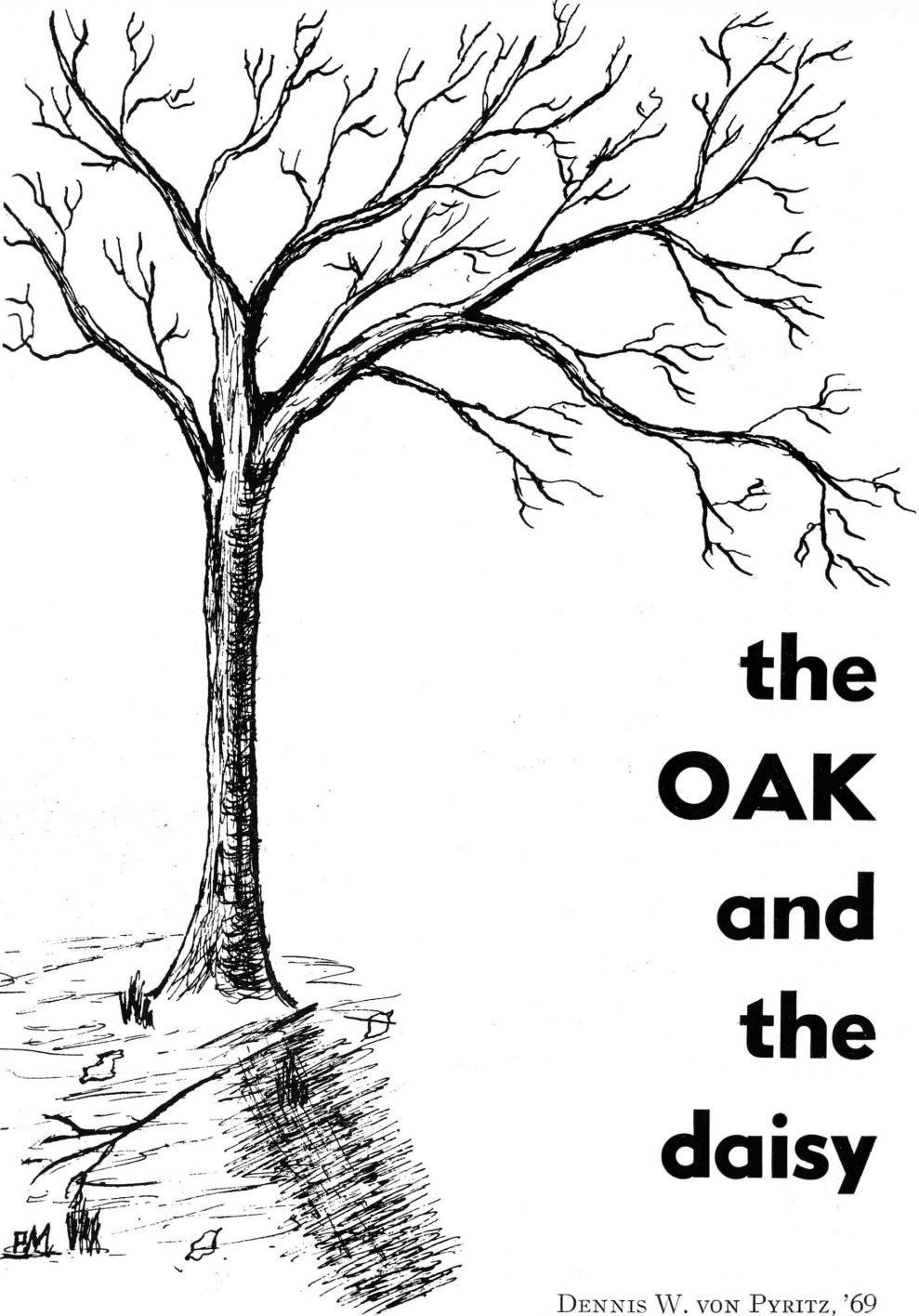
Pagans, the lot of you, serving a paper God. And now, you fear Death. Let me remove your fears by asking this, "how can the already dead in life die yet still again?" Fools, pitiful fools, the lot of you, serving a paper God.

MELVIN D. RICHARDS, '69

*it is of longing*

It is of longing,  
For what else could the wind  
Cry in the  
House of my heart,  
Silent as though  
Caught by surprise  
And joy,  
A moment of  
Happiness  
As a drop of rain  
Hitting a window  
Then running down into rivers.

BONNIE KULSETH, '67



**the  
OAK  
and  
the  
daisy**

DENNIS W. VON PYRITZ, '69



The clouds glide over the valley as they had since the Dawn. Below in the valley grow the grasses and the trees. They speak as they have always done, and, as always, the mountain wind scoops up their words and casts them into the sea, to be lost forever. A lull in the wind, we hear :

O mighty oak, your great limbs reach outward and upward, far up to catch the fleeing wind ; your thirsty roots finger down to drink the deep secrets of the earth. Long have you lived, and tall and strong have you grown ; many are the springs that kissed you and many the winters that lashed you. So much have you seen that I wish to ask a question of you.

I will answer if I can, daughter of the fields.

I ask — are you happy, great oak ?

The old tree creaked. I have reached out and I have drunk. Long, long have I lived and much have I seen, the good and the bad, the warm and the cold. I know some of the past, part of the present, and perhaps some of the future. From up here I can see the valley, almost to the mountains. And yet I wonder, for my memory dims, what does one see from down there ?

O tree, I see as far as I dare look, the bush on my right, the wildflowers on my left, and the grass all around me. I know the sun only by its gift of warmth. I drink of the rain but see not from whence it falls. This is all I see, I wish no more.

Little flower, though I see much and gather these things to me, my limbs cry under their weight. The sun is not so bright or warm that I do not see the winter peeking over the mountains. Still I seek to reach farther and to gather more. So I say that in summer I am happy but see the winter, and in winter I am sad but look for the summer. But you, simple flower, are you happy ?

Although I only feel the sun I am happy ; I merely shiver in the darkness. One more question do I ask : if you will die some winter just as I shall die this winter, why have you bothered to grow ?

The old tree heaved a sigh and said, I can give you no answer . . . I know only that I die. . . .

# The Pavilion

DENNIS W. VON PYRITZ, '69

As I awoke this morning, the air outside seemed unusually fresh and somehow beckoning. It was not so much the fact that today was today, but rather that today was yesterday, or at least one of those few yesterdays we will remember. And yesterday was clear and innocent, so nymph-like. Yesterday was when we romped across the meadow, a meadow sprinkled with dew; at the other side of the mead a fairy-like pavilion rose magically from the tall, quivering grass.

The pavilion was there every morning — that we knew. Octangular, the structure was capped with a dull red roof, the latter sloping upwards concavely into a sharp apex. Sitting on this point was a gold ball out of which jutted a golden spearhead. The roof was supported by eight wrought-iron towers, each inlaid with elaborate designs. These pillars were joined at the base with slabs of masonry; each slab depicted the story of some fairy tale character, all delicately carved, chipped, and coloured for a highly enchanting effect. One panel portrayed Rumpelstiltskin weaving yards of golden thread; another showed a dark-haired prince kneeling to kiss a sleeping beauty. The platform was actually about two feet off the ground and was reached by two stone steps.

We would scamper up the steps and hang on the towers and play in a giggle-world of witches and princes and dragons. But as the sun's heat began to seep through the mist over the meadow, we would abandon our castle and flee home. For we knew that with the day our pavilion would lose its spell and change back to its mushroom form.

The morning was cool and fresh but it is now hot and sweaty. Today *is* today.

# Rainfall

DIANE HERBE, '68

Today was not too unpleasant. Fall had spent itself and November was approaching. There were still leaves on the oaks as always at this time of the year, but they were tan and would tremble and fall only if the late October wind would blow too hard or long. Today, though, they would not fall. It was cool, and still. There would be rain, for sure.

It came and flowed in rivulets down the window pane; a jagged crack rerouting it as a gutter, too, carried it along.

Yes, today was not too unpleasant. But it has recalled old memories.

Uncle Dave would visit us on days such as this. He would seem to blow in with a gust of wind, and would stand stamping his feet in the front hall and yelling, "Annie, get a fire going." Then after peeling off his damp overcoat he'd gently shove her aside and light it himself. Then he'd sit in the large armchair facing both the fire and the rain and would lift me up into his lap. I'd climb up to whisper in his ear or tug at his thick brown hair and he'd pull me down saying, "Sit still and I'll tell you a story."

He and Dad were in the same company during the war. He told me how Dad came with him on leave to meet Grandpa and Grandma, and how Dad had met Mom. Dad must have been a wonderful person the way Uncle Dave described him. He told me, too, that it was at Sedan that Dad had died. Not heroically, "yet in war," he said, "all men die heroically."

Uncle Dave had stayed in Europe after the war. He had seen autumn in the Rhine valley, traveled the Meuse through Belgium,

and visited the Renaissance palaces of France. Uncle Dave wanted to travel the length and breadth of Europe, to see, feel, and know as much as he could.

Even those few years he spent here in Ohio when I was growing up, those few years when he had come in with the rain, he was never content.

I must have been about ten when he left again. He wrote often at first. Mom would look at the postmark and say, "St. Louis, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York." And later as the letters came more infrequently. "Paris, London, Berlin." He spoke of visiting Dad's grave, and of bitterly staring at the Wall. Then the letters came but once a year. We gathered from them that he had settled down in the German countryside southeast of Bonn near Frankfurt. These last few years we heard nothing.

"Dan. A penny for your thought."

My reverie ceased. Mom was stooping by the fireplace, looking at me. I rose to help her light the fire.

"I was wondering if Uncle Dave was still in Germany. Why do you suppose he stopped writing?"

"Sit down, Dannie. I received a letter from him today that explains everything. It's strange that you should be thinking about him."

She reached into the pocket of her dress and pulled out the envelope.

"Read the postmark, Mom."

"Frankfurt, Germany, September 28."

The fire snapped and spit; outside the rain and wind droned in a monotone.

"Dear Annie,

"I'm sorry I haven't written you for so long. Everyone in Wapok must be wondering what happened. The neighbors always knew, and even Dad used to say, that I was the black sheep of the family, that the wanderlust was in me. I guess the love for travel never left me after the war.

"How's Dannie? He must be a young man now and the perfect image of Jim. I enjoyed those years I spent back in Ohio watching him grow up. Looking back, I wish they'd never ended.

That's why I've written to explain why I left.

"I'd been in to see Doctor Raye in Wapok before I left. He ordered me to the hospital for tests but they all showed negative. After a month he suggested that I take a bone marrow test for leukemia. I know, it seemed rather far-fetched to me at the time, too, but the results were facts.

"Dannie was getting older. You were all right. There was no reason for me to stay there. And I wanted to see Jim's grave again and settle down in that beautiful country around Frankfurt.

"But now, Annie, it's getting close. I want to see you and Dannie before I die. I'm leaving in a few days.

"I expect to be back by mid-November or early December.

"But pray for me, honey.

Dave"

I had stared at Mom's face through the whole letter. She had been composed and showed no emotion, but I knew that her heart went out to her brother.

"Dannie, another letter arrived today concerning your Uncle Dave."

I saw it in her face.

"You needn't read it, Mother. I know."

I took the blue envelope she held in her hand and read the few lines.

"Dear Mrs. Huffner:

"I'm very sorry to inform you of this news. Your brother was rushed to a Frankfurt hospital the afternoon of October 3. He died later that evening. Before he lapsed into the coma he asked that you be notified upon his death. He wanted you to also know that he had made arrangements to be buried at Sedan if he died before returning to the States. I am very sorry, Mrs. Huffner. You have my sincerest sympathy.

Cannon Ward

U.S. Embassy

Bonn, West Germany"

Today was not too unpleasant. Rain falls in rivulets down the window pane, I had learned, and it also nourishes Eden's tree of life, and death.



# In the seat beside me

L. MARLENE COOPER, '68

The lumbering bus merges with the traffic. Even though the woman in the seat beside me is carefully dressed in new clothes, she still looks like what the statistics would call "the average housewife." She settles back into the chair and emits a deep sigh. She wants to enjoy this vacation. Her mouse brown hair sparkles with professional lacquer. This may have been the first time she took time out from the mundane duties of cooking and washing to have it set. My companion's figure betrays her four children.

"I'm going to Atlanta, Georgia," she said, "going to a convention for homemakers. Our church is sponsoring it. All the women of the South will be there. We'll discuss how we can more fully bring Christ into our homes. The Lord knows my boys surely could use some taming down. They are good children, but between football practice, Young Methodists dinners, and Boy Scout meetings, we aren't together very much. Maybe I'll learn how to make the best use of the time we do have."

We talk on; it becomes apparent she is the co-ordinating chairman directly responsible for organizing the whole convention for two thousand Methodist women.

\* \* \*

As the bus rolls through southern Georgia, a young blond gentleman shares the seat with me. His confident manner and constant smile remind me of an enterprising young insurance salesman I know back home. Even the gestures with his cigarette suggests a man on his way up to success. I can imagine his long

muscular hands signing important letters which his secretary has typed. In college everyone must have agreed that was the one most likely to succeed.

"You should see the ring I've got picked out for my girl. She is just the greatest. I can see it there in the store window; all gold with one large diamond right in the center. There are a couple of little ones scattered around it. I'll get it for her too, just as soon as I find a job."

\* \* \*

In Jacksonville, an elderly man comes aboard. The whole world seems to have passed him by. Hesitantly he walks down the aisle. The only vacant seat is beside me.

"Please pardon me, miss," he stops for breath. "There appears to be no other seat." He was worn out by the exertion. He starts to say more but I interrupt to ask him to sit down. He must be too weak to do anything for himself, so the man across the aisle puts his luggage up in the rack. He collapses into the seat, and soon his grey eyes close. A lock of the yellow-white hair falls across the wrinkled brow.

The bushy eyebrows and mustache seem to denote a kindly old grandfather. He probably has been to visit his daughter's family, and now is returning to the nursing home. He usually sits in the sun and whittles little totem poles for his grandsons.

"That's my boat." I turned in surprise. The man hadn't moved, but it had been his gravel voice. "That's my boat," he repeated. I stared at the picture in my magazine of a hydroplane raising a five-foot spray. The caption claimed that this particular craft had won the Gem City Cup. This race was acknowledged to be the toughest inland race. I guess the disbelief showed on my face, and he decided to convince me. "I don't drive it," he explained. "I designed it." When he retired, he needed diversion. One day he went down to the river and watched the drivers practice. He became fascinated by the skill and strength needed to handle these boats. He was convinced that a faster, smaller craft could be built if the steering column were changed. He redesigned the column which led to a revolution in the over all plan of the hydroplane.



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# The Story of Man

In the beginning, there was darkness  
And the darkness consumed the earth  
And filled the lowest valley  
And covered the highest hill  
With its shadow.

And in the dark stumbled a man.  
He shivered in the dank cold  
And stumbled on into the endless night,  
Blind.

And in the morning he slept;  
For the morn and eve and night  
And day were unchanged in infinity  
And each, like the others,  
Endless.

Then down from the heavens  
Shot a warm ray of light  
And bathed the man in its  
Soothing warmth.

And as quickly as it had come,  
It moved away, and from within the  
Darkness, the man went forth,  
Curiously.

With each new step,  
He drew nearer to the light  
But the darkness tugged at his back  
And shrouded him in its clutches.

But out reached the man, and  
Forward he went . . . on,  
Into the circle of light.

And in the warmth of the light  
Sighed the man in relief.  
In the distance, and all around him  
Was the cold, bitter dark.  
But the man knew only the warmth of  
The light.

That warming light brought with it  
A dreary stupor, and the man slept there,  
Not believing his joy could ever end.

At length, he awoke,  
Stirred from his dream by a chill.  
Once more there was darkness and the  
Light was far off in the distance.

He leapt to his feet and ran  
Into the night,  
Chasing the light  
To the bounds of infinity.  
With each step, the light  
Moved away  
And the man grew weary  
And cold.

But he could not stop,  
He would not stop.  
He had felt the warmth  
Of the light.  
So on he went,  
On into the night,  
And in the distance,  
Was a warm ray of light.

RICHARD GARDNER, '69

# *The Promise*

FAY FAIVRE, '68

Callahan shoved his chair back from the dinner table. "Goin' out to check the corn, Jamie. Come along?" Across the table five year old Jamie shoved back his chair in imitation and nodded. Together they rose and walked outdoors, Jamie consciously lengthening his steps to keep pace with his father. In companionable silence they crossed the lane and fence to the corn field and stood in admiration of the waving green stalks that pushed up tall and strong toward the sky. It was the moist, hot, quiet kind of day when corn grows fast, now and then emitting a crackling sound as it does so. The deep emerald color and the heavy growth indicated a good crop, lacking nothing except the time of maturation.

"One more plowin' ought to do it, Jamie-boy. It's growin' fast." Callahan's thick denim trousers mocked the slashing leaves as the two tramped between the rows, but Jamie's bare arms were vulnerable. Never losing stride, Callahan scooped him up onto his shoulder and continued on his way. "Looks like a good year, hey, Jamie? Nitrogen helped some, and it's been good weather right along. Ought to be able to take a couple extra feeders into the lot this fall with this yield." To this, Jamie wisely nodded agreement from his perch on Callahan's shoulder. They turned back now and Callahan set Jamie down on the other side of the fence. "Tell your ma I'll be in late for supper. 'Bye, now."

As he strode toward the waiting tractor and plow, Callahan noticed a cloud over the sun and a momentary chill in the air. "Rain," thought he, and set out to plow as much as possible before the storm would break.

And rain it did, beginning with big slow drops, then pelting down with full force. Callahan put the tractor in the shed and ran to the house. "Powerful rain," he commented. "Help the corn some." Then he heard it: first a single tap, then a steady rhythm, finally a roar of hail on the metal roofing. He said no more, only hurried to the front porch to watch, to hope.

But his hope was to no avail. The hail continued to pound on the roof; a wind rose up and thumped it down harder, smacking hail against the tender green stalks across the lane, driving hail through the flailing leaves. And Callahan could do nothing but watch. The hail ceased then and returned to a gentle, soaking rain. But the damage was done.

\* \* \*

He roamed the field alone this time, fingering gently the broken stalks, the tender shredded leaves. There would be no plowing now; stalks lay in the plow path, bent or broken, in rich black mud. Silently Callahan took inventory, made plans, sorrowed. In the morning he would call in for short-maturation seed as replacement, revise his plans for feeder steers, estimate his shortage of winter feed; but for now, he only walked slowly through his fields. The sun, half-set, colored his leathern face rusty red, showing promise of a good day ahead.



Down a suburban street lined with ranch style homes a late model sedan pulled along side the curb in front of a grey stone house. The horn honked a few times and after a moment or so a thin teenage girl still struggling to put on her coat emerged from the home and ran to the car. She entered the passenger side, the door slammed shut, and the automobile pulled away.

"Golly, Joan, you're early," the girl in the passenger seat said. "I was just combing my hair when you came and I still had to put on my sweater and coat. I almost broke my neck jumping over a footstool and running out of the house like I did. I thought you said you weren't coming until a little after seven?"

# little girl

ED ARSZMAN, '66

"It's already a quarter after," Joan said.

"It is?" the other girl asked. "I still think it's early. But maybe I looked at the clock wrong. All the clocks in our house hang lopsided anyhow. I think my mother puts them that way just to make me late."

"Hey, is this your family car?" she whined. "This is the first time I've even ridden with you and I've never see it before. Gee, I wonder what you've got in your glove compartment."

She opened the lid and a wadded kleenex fell to the floor.

"Man, you've got a lot of junk in here, kleenex, road maps, and — what's this thing?"

"A tire gauge," Joan said, "for measuring the air pressure in the tires."

"Oh," the other girl said, "I thought it might be a funny kind of ball point pen." She put the gauge back in the glove compartment and closed the lid.

"Say, Joan, after the movie can I stay over at your house for the night? My mother has been mad at me all afternoon. She thinks I'm going to run away again and that always gets her mad."

"But won't she get even angrier if you don't come home?" Joan inquired, keeping her eyes on the road.

"I don't know. I don't care either. She can burst a blood vessel if she wants to, it won't bother me. Anyhow, I could call her up and tell her I'm staying with you. She won't get mad if I do that, and it will get me out of the house for a night. Please, Joan, let me stay."

"But my room's awful small and besides my little brother is having one of his friends stay over for the night too. My mother doesn't like to put up two guests. Anyhow we're nearly at the theater, let's talk about it afterwards."

The car pulled over to the curb and stopped and the two girls got out.

"Joan," the other girl asked petulantly, "Why don't you like me?"



# CHRYSANTHEMUM

We fixed Him on button-holes,  
pinned a moment of remembered flair so  
brief it fled into unreal spasm, chasm,  
and thrust flushed flipped on wax wings riotous,  
laughed that the open mouth, the uttering  
passed for a prayer in the undeeep tide-ruined shallows.

Then touching, spun flung flailed felt sores stripped,  
Caressed blessed and grasped scarred secured pain.  
And never was the hour launched crisp, or  
racing over sun-baked stone, stood shivering clean.

Why did the hour go so that we had followed in dreams  
half waking wretchedness of indifference fear-  
fathomed, laughing languid at terror placidly  
piercing prayers unmouthed? Prayers? . . .

Oh light-wrought dawn-caught dare!  
How the clarity of it awoke in the night! Was only a  
beautiful Chrysanthemum interminably worn  
with tremulous bespeckled joy  
as the priming and well-water rushing, gushing  
and BURSTING . . .  
winters a lovely remainder.

BONNIE KULSETH, '67

# *In Defense of Nonsense*

MARGARET I. MALONEY, '67

Nonsense. Look at the word itself and consider what it means. The dictionary gives several different definitions; that which is without good sense; meaningless or ridiculous language; absurd behaviour; or things of no importance. Take your choice.

Let us consider the first definition, "that which is without good sense." We run into difficulties immediately. We ask what do you mean by "good"? Do you mean pleasant or agreeable qualities, or do you mean admirable moral and spiritual values? It is possible you might mean kindly social qualities, or you could also mean competent or adequate.

Since this word "good" is ambiguous, let us try the next definition, "meaningless or ridiculous language." Whose language? No doubt, if a Swahili were listening to our talk it could very well seem quite meaningless to him; indeed, it could even be ridiculous as far as he is concerned. Perhaps you yourself might happen to listen in on some teenagers latest "I've talk," like "thive clivess wivell nivew civemive tive iverdiver." It looks ridiculous and meaningless to you, doesn't it? However, they can both speak and understand it, so it isn't ridiculous to them.

At any rate, let us go on to "absurd behaviour." At first glance, this would seem quite adequate. On second thought, we again have that bugaboo—whose behaviour? From an adult point of view, a child slopping barefoot in a mudpuddle, squishing mud between his toes, might be absurd. On the other hand, Mother trying to squeeze a thirty inch waistline into a twenty-six inch girdle in order to dress for an evening of fun might seem ridiculous to a child.

Our last definition, "things of no importance" is really broad. Here again we ask what do you mean by "things"? Words? We have already disposed of words, actions, likewise. Do we mean specific objects? If so, let us consider a few examples; say a lock of Ringo Starr's hair. Fifteen year old Mary Jane owns that lock of hair, and to her it is most precious. It gives her status. She would not part with it for gold or silver, or jewels. Her mother—that is a different story—it is simply unimportant to her, in fact she thinks it is "ridiculous and just nonsense." Yet she keeps a package of old love letters from Father tied with a blue ribbon down in the bottom of her cedar chest.

We could go on with more discussion on the subject but rather than bore anyone, we leave you with our conclusion that nonsense is a relative thing in the eye or ear or thought of a person be he young or old. If anyone would care to refute this statement, let him; that is his privilege, but personally I think it would be nonsense.

## Web

In web-entangled life sing I  
Aloud a song of praise  
Of beast and man and in between  
Of verb and noun and phrase,  
Of black and white and greyish hue,  
Of dark and light and haze—  
The things in life that tangle it:  
All these the things I praise.

FAY FAIVRE, '68

