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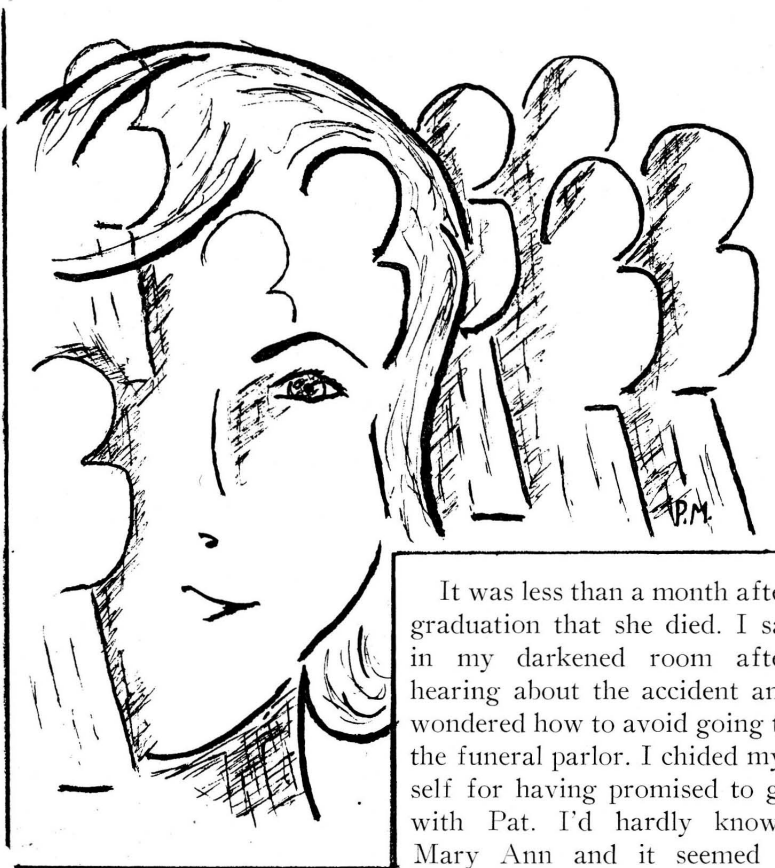
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The Awakening

MARY BROOKE BERGAN, '67

It was less than a month after graduation that she died. I sat in my darkened room after hearing about the accident and wondered how to avoid going to the funeral parlor. I chided myself for having promised to go with Pat. I'd hardly known Mary Ann and it seemed a senseless gesture.

Shuddering at my selfishness, I thought again of my first reaction to Mary Ann's death. I was shocked of course. We all were. At eighteen, death had touched very few of our lives. Yet, even for these few, Mary Ann's death carried a somewhat different impact. It was the death of someone our own age, and it brought to us suddenly the irrefutable reality of inevitable death for all of us. Death was no longer something lurking in the future, something

to be dismissed from the mind as too far-distant to ever be considered. It had become an ugly menacing fiend, reaching out its cold hand to touch one of us, and then another, insatiable, until it had finally touched us all. We would be no more, but the fiend, Death, would live forever.

My mother's voice prodded me out of my reverie. She stood in the doorway, wringing her hands anxiously, her brow wrinkled in distress. "Are you going to the funeral parlor, dear?" Little ripples of resentment churned my stomach. "Yes, Pat's picking me up at 7:30," I answered in a voice tight with suppressed anger. "You'd better start getting ready. You don't want to keep Pat waiting," she said, turning to leave.

I stepped into the closet and reached mechanically for my pink wool skirt. Then, realizing suddenly where I was going, I rummaged instead for my black sheath. I seldom wore it. It was "too severe" mother had once said. But severity was appropriate for this occasion. I changed my loafers to a pair of black pumps, and turned to gaze in the full length mirror. "How pretty you look," I said softly to

myself. Mother had taught me to take that last look for a final check. "You'll always face the world with a smile if you have confidence in yourself."

Mary Ann was always smiling, and she certainly had plenty of self confidence. Perhaps it was the tremendous self assurance of the girls in her group that made them stand out. We were all afraid of them, afraid of the disapproval they expressed in their unabashed smiles of contempt. "Even the teachers were awed by them," I'd thought in disgust. But the Group wasn't afraid of anyone. Maybe that's why the rest of us were so disturbed by them. We knew we couldn't intimidate them, because they stood together, and together they were invincible.

But they weren't invincible. Mary Ann was dead, dead, despite the fact that she was a member of the Group. Death wasn't afraid of Mary Ann or the Group.

I felt suddenly comforted by this thought, almost elated, as though Mary Ann's death were a vindication for all the humiliation the Group had caused me. I was horrified at my own callousness, but the feeling persisted. I knew then, what it

was that I'd felt besides the inevitable shock when I'd heard about the automobile accident. I was relieved. Relieved that it had been Mary Ann in that car, and not me, or someone I cared about. It was so much easier not to care.

"Catherine, Pat's here!"

Pat was, as usual, on time. "Come on," her tone was brisk and businesslike, "or we'll be late."

We rode in silence for a few blocks. Pat drove well. She did everything well. I wondered suddenly if she would cry at the coffin, and I glanced sideways at her profile. In the semi-darkness I could make out her features. Her mouth was set and her eyes narrowed in concentration. I decided she was too practical to waste time crying.

The funeral home was a small, unremarkable building. As we walked up the cement path, I felt my stomach begin to lurch. The palms of my hands were moist and sticky. The thought of seeing Mary Ann's friends so vulnerable was suddenly nauseating and I wanted to turn and run, to get as far away as possible. I didn't belong here because I didn't care. The chosen few that had

made up the Group were the only ones that belonged here tonight. They all cared. They were her friends. The rest of us were just trespassers. Even death couldn't disturb the exclusiveness of the Group.

Pat nudged me, "There's Mary Ann's family."

They sat huddled together opposite the casket. Surprisingly, none of them were crying but the effort to remain calm had contorted their pale, pinched faces, and their eyes were red with the memory of tears.

"The casket's closed. I thought it would be," Pat nodded her head in approval. "It's much easier on everyone that way."

I followed her gaze to the polished ebony box. It stood alone at one end of the room. The area around it was roped off, and this isolated it even more. There was a kneeler directly in front of the coffin, but no one was anywhere near it. It was so much different from what I had expected—no tears, or hysterics, just miserable emptiness.

I followed Pat blindly toward the casket. Kneeling before it, I tried to pray. But how could I pray? It was all too hypo-

critical. Ironical that I should be kneeling in front of the casket of a girl I didn't like. In fact, I'd hated her, her needless cruelty, her pettiness, her damned superiority. And I hated her now, even in death. I could see her sardonic smile, her flashing impudent eyes. It sickened me that I should hate her now, helpless as she was. My hatred was pointless. It hadn't changed her. Maybe it had even helped to make her what she had been. Maybe the Group understood the way we felt about them, and their contempt was only a defensive measure, just as our hatred for them was based, not on personal enmity, but on jealousy and resentment. So, in the end, we were no better than they. We were all selfish and stupid, because we wasted our time hating people we didn't know.

Impulsively, I reached out to touch the coffin to convince myself that it was real, and it struck me, just then, that I would never see Mary Ann West again. A strange, almost trivial thought, but it made me dizzy to think of it. No matter what I did, no matter what anyone did, we would, none of us, ever see her again. It was too late to wonder what she

was really like. No one could tell me now, and anyway I was so tired, so empty that I couldn't care.

"Cathy, don't you think we ought to say something to her parents?" Say something? Say what? It was too late. Didn't Pat understand that?

As Mrs. West tightly clasped my hand, she searched my face hungrily, as if trying to see something of her daughter in me. But my thoughts tumbled one over the other. Your daughter is dead. You'll never find her in someone else, and especially not in me. I didn't even know her. I didn't try to know her. There's nothing of her in me. How could there be? She never really touched my life, except as a face, and faces are only symbols. For me she never died because she was never really alive, never a person—only a symbol. And all her friends, the Group, they're only faces, symbols. Even now, I don't know what they're thinking, feeling, and yet I presume to hate them.

I looked around the room. Mary Ann's friends were clustered in small groups, whispering in muted voices. They'd been carefully indifferent for such a long time that they were

incapable of tears, but their eyes reflected a bewildered pain. I realized that I'd been wrong. None of us really belonged here except Mary Ann. None of us had ever really known her, except as we wanted her to be. Even her own mother, vainly searching for a memory of her daughter in the eyes of a young girl, couldn't have known her. She died too soon. No, it was my own fault. I had waited until it was too late.

The room was suddenly unbearably hot.

"Pat, let's leave."

"You look pale. Are you all right?" Her brow wrinkled in concern.

"Yes, I just want to go home now, please."

A misty veil of rain fell from a hazy sky. Its coolness seemed to numb my senses and my

brain. I remember little about the trip home except that I was exhausted and there was a dull throbbing in my head—*too late, too late.*

My father was standing in the hall waiting for me when I got home. "I'm sorry about your friend," he said; and his blue eyes were so compassionate that I flinched at the sympathetic touch of his hand on my shoulder. I was unworthy of his compassion.

I hadn't been sorry for Mary Ann — only for myself. I wondered, suddenly, if she'd realized when she saw death careening toward her, that it was too late, really too late. "I wish she hadn't died," I whispered, leaning my head against my father's strong chest, and cold tears soothed my burning cheeks.

epigram

What man has done,
What God began
Shows the difference
Between may and can.

EVELYNN LOONEY, '66

WINTER

Winter is a faint light shining beyond the black branches of a
barren tree

Winter is one black bird soaring toward the dull grey-white clouds.

Winter is the shivering of forgotten leaves in the wind.

Winter is a melancholy time.

Winter is a lonely time.

Winter is a time of grey-black beauty—
a time to lift the head upward,
to see the dark sky,
but look away blinded.

Winter is forgotten lovers, the hopeless, the hopeful, the longing,
the searching, the sorrowing, the sad, the weak, the poor . . .
me.

Winter is me . . .
me when I am sad, when I am hurt, when I am tired, when I
desire one . . . one who will keep me, and hold me, and love
me as I would keep, and hold, and love one with my whole
heart.

Winter cries out to be loved
as I cry out to be loved.

Love us.

Oh, love us, please!

DIANA HERBE, '68



A

MARY JANE SCHEIDLER, '67

SUMMER INTERLUDE

On a bright sunny Saturday morning four Marian College students—Katy, Carol, Patty and I — rocked and rumbled down a dusty dirt road en route to Guadalupita, New Mexico, to work as lay apostles among the destitute Spanish people there in the pine-covered mountain area.

The bed of our dilapidated army truck was loaded to capacity with bulging leather suitcases, dusty army cots and a wide assortment of cracked mixing bowls, odds and ends of china and silverware, plus a threadbare tire. We had heard that flats never came as a surprise in this part of the country.

"That's home!?" we chorused. What appeared before us was a mud-brick, cracker-box shaped house. Peering inside we discovered two small rooms, mounds of dirt, rusty cooking utensils, and odd shaped pieces of firewood, which revealed that the house had been vacant for

quite some time. The mud walls were gay with glossy chartreuse sheets of cardboard. Sitting a bit pompously in the corner was a big stately wood-fed cook stove. Splinters of wood and used matches lay scattered about. "Looks like we'll be living as our grandmothers did fifty years ago!" remarked Patty. Being brave and courageous we decided that "roughing it" would be an interesting challenge—and that is just exactly what it was. Living without running water, electricity, and refrigeration shouldn't have been any problem for four resourceful college students.

With the approach of dusk, it seemed only logical that we should do a bit of experimenting with the kerosene lantern, our only source of light. Huddling around the lantern we removed the chimney, lit a match and held our breath. The charred wick started to burn weakly, choked and then died out. With smudged fingers we re-saturated the wick and again tried our luck. Much to our surprise, the seemingly hard, dried-out wick started to burn brightly. In a matter of seconds, Katy could easily suggest, "Let's turn up the wick full force to get some light in this

dingy place!"

Carefully Katy turned up the wick. We were delighted with the immediate increase of light, but then came a sudden black-out! Complete darkness surrounded us. After some confused shouts, we investigated the situation with the help of a few matches. Too much carbon had formed on the inside of the once transparent chimney, blocking out all light. Soon not only our hands, but also our faces were black with soot.

From the first day Carol's specialty was fetching water from the well. The first time, she danced through an assortment of orange Indian paintbrush flowers and stepped onto the rickety platform of the old wooden well. Cautiously she attached an extra large galvanized bucket to the end of an iron hook resembling an anchor and then lowered the bucket. The gurgling and struggling sounds echoing from the bottom of the deep mysterious well were the signal that the bucket had been immersed. With measured tugs she started to jerk the rope through a creaky pulley. Carol soon discovered that transporting the water from the well to the house was another task in

itself. Water splashed out of the bucket and trickled down her leg at every step. Proudly presenting us with a half-filled bucket of mud-colored water, she said, "That wasn't such a rough job after all."

"Something must be burning!" was an exclamation we delighted to hear. The fact was that we usually had difficulty in getting anything to burn in our wood-fed stove. It seemed to be a simple process to follow the directions for building a fire according to the 1936 Girl Scouts Handbook we found in the house. Very creatively we built a teepee with little twigs surrounded by bits of newspaper. Dashing about we collected about a dozen matches and started our fire. Time and again, bits of newspaper would burn brightly, then die, leaving only charred remains. With growling stomachs and bitten fingernails, we continued striking matches. Finally, there was light! With shouts of joy we hugged one another and put the lid over our precious fire, guarding it as any mother hen would her chicks. Two winks later, puffs of black smoke poured from our stove. The longer we argued about a cause for the clouds of smoke, the

more voluminous they became. Choking and coughing we threw open our one small window before we went leaping out the door. A nearby neighbor suggested that our stove damper had not been regulated properly—and sure enough, she was correct.

One sunny morning, before the rooster had time to crow, Patty awoke complaining of a severe stomach ache. Being frontiers-women we brewed her a Spanish tea to relieve her ailment. Before the morning was over, we were all feeling the effects of pinpricking pains in our stomachs too. Moise Montoya, the short, dark-eyed village doctor, diagnosed our case as mild food poisoning. Scared stiff, we decided that something had to be done to help prevent food spoilage. Once again we huddled together and decided that refrigeration for our meat and vegetables was absolutely necessary. I bravely suggested that we ask our Spanish speaking friend, Mrs. Herrea, if she would refrigerate our food. The girls all agreed that I become their spokesman to Mrs. Herrea.

Guarding our precious supply of a chunk of boned ham, a half box of American cheese, a

head of shriveled lettuce and a gallon jug of whole goat milk, we presented these foods to Mrs. Herrea for cooling. The next morning as breakfast time rolled around, the smell of freshly frying ham enticed us, so I hiked over to Mrs. Herrea to retrieve our meat supply. Upon arrival my elderly Spanish friend put her arm around my shoulder and spoke softly, "My chitquita, you no more meat." A few tear drops rolled down her tanned cheeks as she explained to me that the town drunk, old Jim Vigil, had broken into her house the night before and had cleaned out her refrigerator. Everything was licked clean, except for one hunk of slightly gnawed cheese! I reassured her that there were no hard feelings and returned home, still smelling the crackling ham she was frying for breakfast.

Although we soon learned to adjust to our new environment and our own cooking, we were always willing to accept invitations for dinner. Our first formal invitation to dine was with the best Spanish cook in all of Guadalupita, Mrs. Torres. Arriving at her small adobe house, we seated ourselves around a crude wooden table, spotted and

stained from daily use. Inverted nail kegs, covered with a variety of colorful materials, were our chairs. The table was neatly arranged with tin plates and Rodger's newest pattern of silverware, "Spanish Bent." Like true gourmets we waited for the oven door to pop open, displaying our long-awaited supper. With great pleasure, Mrs. Torres served us her special tortilla, fried rather black. On top of that she piled mountains of fried potatoes, burning hot chili pepper and beans, plus crispy intestine skins! Katy, being the hungriest of us, dived into her supper, shoveling forks full of food into her mouth. Within seconds the chili peppers inflamed the lining of her throat. Tears came to her eyes as she gulped three long swallows of warm goat milk.

But like all summers, that summer also came to an end. It had not just been a conglomeration of troubles and freak incidents, but had had its share of joy and excitement. I had worked with, spoken to, argued with and possibly helped some human beings. I had been fortunate. I had perhaps touched them as they and their land had touched me.



ritual

Mighty redwood—
little flower
Live in sunlight
live together
He and I
on moss and heather
Mighty redwood . . .
little flower
Each gives beauty
to the other
little flower
Draws its being
from the great root
of the redwood

From his root-strength
comes the fluid
throbbing through the tiny seedling
bringing new life
with the union
gaining ecstasy
through contact . . .
Up above me
lies the redwood
lies the high priest
on me pressing
All but crushing
All consuming
yet consumed with
All my being
We are part of one another
On the moss floor
of the forest . . .
With the ritual of loving
With our labored, heavy breathing,
All consumed
But yet consuming
Give our bodies
In the sunlight
Highest ceremony of Nature
Highest tribute to our being
Mighty redwood . . .
little flower

KAREN ANGELA COX, '66

In the distance, a dog is barking. The sharp, explosive sound reverberates against valley walls now blanketed by the beautiful chromatic colors of new fallen leaves. The echo travels quickly through the cool, morning air, hindered only by a lazy fog returning to its hiding place among the spruce and pine at the top of the mountain, and, at last, penetrates my ears. Slowly my feet touch the icy,

THE GYPSY

SHELDON G. HOUSTON, '65

cold floor beside the bed and shuffle their way to the open window at the opposite end of the room. Down below, at the entrance to the smokehouse, Amanda pours cream from an earthenware crock into a saucer for the kittens. Butch and Coalie, the mongrels, sit under the overhanging willow branches, anxiously awaiting the breakfast scraps. The tinkling of the lead cow's bell attracts my attention to the pasture lane where VanDevlin, the hired man, is driving the herd toward the barn and the stanchions where the younger boys are preparing for the morning milking. Slowly, with a burst of brilliance, the sun emerges from behind the mountain and fills the valley with golden shafts of warmth; and, in the same moment, the black iron bell on the porch tolls the call to breakfast.

Mornings are usually the best part of the day when one lives on a farm, but the mornings recently have all been bad. VanDevlin has been teaching me how to run the farm. I was going to return to the University this year, but this farm has been in the family for over eighty years so it's my duty to

take over now that Dad and Mother are both gone. It really wouldn't be in keeping with family tradition if I didn't.

VanDevlin — VanDevlin. Now isn't that a high sounding name for a dirty old Gypsy? I guess he thinks people are impressed by his name. But I suppose every man has to have something of which to be proud. Particularly a man like the Gypsy who doesn't know when or where he was born or who his parents were. A long time ago I heard my grandfather say that the old Gypsy never was born; he just plain grew out of the earth, and I have no reason to doubt it. They say that one time a gentleman farmer over in Pennsylvania by the name of VanDevlin gave the old Gypsy ten dollars and a hand-carved cane and since that time he has called himself VanDevlin — no first name or no middle name — just VanDevlin.

What a sight he is. The cuffs of his thread-bare gray pants hang in loops around his pointed-toe, black boots. The elastic in his suspenders has long since ceased to keep his pants up around his waist where they belong, and I suppose that he has worn the same flannel

shirt every day for the last three years. Of course, I'm used to him now, but I've seen strange dogs come up to him and take a couple of quick sniffs and run, apparently panic stricken from the odor of that old Gypsy. And he walks with the most peculiar hitch in his stride that I've ever seen. I think he must have a square thighbone working inside of a round knee joint, but with the help of that hand-carved cane he gets around pretty well.

The one thing I have admired about the old man, though, is that he keeps his moustache trimmed just right. He says that everyone born in Andalucia trims his moustache in just a certain way. He doesn't really know whether he was born in Andalucia or not, but I suppose every man likes to feel that he was born somewhere so I don't argue the point with him. That moustache is really his only redemptive facial feature, because the entire surface of his face is scarred by a multitude of little vacuoles which appear to be filled with translucent grease. This most distasteful feature is further enhanced by a large, repulsive, mouse colored wart that grows exact-

ly between his piercing black eyes.

They say that the Gypsy is the only man in the state that can smell rain coming two days in advance. I've heard that there isn't a farmer in the county who picks corn until the Gypsy says it's time to be picked. They claim he has a sixth sense. He supposedly can hear when the corn stops growing or some such nonsense. Onetime there was an article in *Prairie Farmer* about our farm, because we set some kind of a per acre corn yield record. My father gave the Gypsy all the credit because he had suggested the fertilization method that was used to condition the soil. I was away at Prep School at the time, but I just imagine the damned Gypsy thought he was something extra special when his picture appeared in the magazine.

During the past years several farmers have tried to hire the Gypsy away from our farm, but he wouldn't go. He would mutter something about going back to Andalucia or that he had too much work to do to waste time talking. I suppose he feels that after all these years he has become a part of the place. And, of course, I'll let him stay.

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

and

ANN MARIE MILLER, '65

REALISM

During the Second Empire in France with its lack of political enthusiasm, its spent passions of Romanticism, and its business boom controlled by the bourgeoisie, conditions were ripe for the development of the literary doctrine known as Realism. Preceded by the Romantic realists, such as Stendhal, Balzac, and Merimee, and succeeded by most of the writers of fiction down to today, the leading proponent of Realism was Gustave Flaubert.

To Flaubert, realism was "a reproduction of normal, typical life in the form of fictions possessing universal validity." From another point of view, Flaubert characterized the real as "a world in which human feelings and ideas are *not* of any real significance."

These two definitions show clearly the main traits of realism and can serve as the basis for examination of the characteristics of this doctrine.

To reproduce life as Flaubert prescribed, it was necessary to observe with great accuracy. Maupassant, the great pupil of Flaubert, tells how Flaubert wanted the faculties of observation to be trained: Observe so that it will be possible to show the person, his attitude and whole physical aspect, including his whole moral nature, in such a way that he would never be mistaken for any other. Flaubert's descriptions bring out both the precise general tone and the minor notes which show individuality.

Where this high-level observation was not possible, Flaubert went to great lengths to document his works. Some of the most famous scenes in his works are those which demanded great research and documentation, such as the revolutionary scenes, and the scene of the child's illness in *L'Education Sentimentale*.

mentale. Very often, this documentation and realistic detail is a foundation, a bare statement, upon which a whole structure of meaning and emotion is based. From this it can be seen that Flaubert was not just building up precise description for the sake of description itself; he had a higher purpose, for he felt that only by such details and great accuracy could he convey the ideas that he wished to express.

Realistic description for Flaubert, however, did not mean the great quantity of description that some writers, such as Balzac, would use. Flaubert, rather, chose a few details which would give the reader precisely the feeling that Flaubert wanted the scene to convey, then elaborated on these details.

Part of Flaubert's doctrine of realism was his demand that the exact word be used.

Whatever the thing we wish to say, there is but one word to express it, but one verb to give it movement, but one adjective to qualify it. We must seek till we find this noun, this verb, and this adjective, and never be content with getting very near it, never allow ourselves to play tricks, even happy ones, or have recourse to sleights of language to avoid a difficulty.

Of course, this using the right word in the right place was not an easy goal to achieve, but as Flaubert himself said "Talent is nothing but long patience," and patience was certainly needed for his kind of writing. In the statement just quoted, Flaubert rejects the belief in inspiration, which is probably why he felt that precise observation and documentation were necessary before one could use the "mot juste."

Flaubert felt that style must be adapted to tone, and for this reason often recited his works aloud as a test of their acceptability.

Characteristic of Flaubert's style is his scientific precision with accuracy of detail. The great precision that he strove for could be achieved only by such emphasis as he placed on research before writing. Science and history, Flaubert declared, were the "two muses of modern times." In his *Correspondance*, Flaubert said, "Now ideas will be studied as facts, and beliefs will be dissected as organisms." The conclusions of science and history were not what interested Flaubert, however; it was the method that these two studies used that interested him, for they seemed to him to exclude the possibility of maintaining any relevant beliefs about the value of human existence.

Identifying the goal of the writer with that of the scientist, Flaubert believed that the writer should have the absolute impartiality of the scientist. In emphasizing this impersonality, Flaubert detached himself from the characters and thus undermined the significance of personal experience and destroyed the illusions that are so precious to man.

This great impersonality has led to some of Flaubert's worst faults, for he seemed to fear depicting human beings showing admirable human qualities. The fact that in his works there is not found one likeable main character is considered to be his greatest flaw, and justifiably so, for how can one achieve the identification sought in a novel which presents only unfavorable characters?

Perhaps Flaubert was so impersonal because he wished to be above ordinary men and to be able to look down upon them and laugh. To do this it was necessary not to show his emotions or depict his experiences, for in doing so he would have had to admit that he, as everyone else, was guilty of foolish, irrational acts.

In summary of the best-known aspects of Flaubert's is the following quote:

But the best-known aspects of his work—the 'realism,' or unflinching description of what is sordid or ugly; the ironic detachment; the fondness for anticlimax, for the grotesque, for satirizing any aspect of human foolishness; the scientific preoccupation with accuracy of detail—all this seems to be at variance with the sweeping vision that leads him to choose his enormous subjects—human faith, human knowledge, the vanity of human wishes—and the vital imagination that spans twenty centuries, from *Salammbô* to *Bouvard et Pecuchet*.

Actually there is no opposition between the realist accuracy and the romantic vision, for Flaubert combines the whole for the truth that he sought.

Besides influencing other writers to be realistic in their work, Flaubert's greatest contribution is in making the novel an art form in itself, not just a device for political or social criticism that it had been in France previously. Realism as a literary theory did not last long in prose and was never influential in poetry, mainly because man does not wish his literature to be so impersonal nor his characters so unlikeable as Flaubert made his, but Flaubert will always be remembered as the founder of this movement and for the great influence he had on later writers.

The Nun

Black bird
Perched on edge of chair
Wings folded now
Eyes downcast
In face of nought . . .
The wings unfold
It turns the leaves of books
With pale fingers . . .
Calm, pale, white fingers . . .
Speak of Patience
Serenity
Dignity
Hard to see a fledgling
Mouth open . . .
Screaming baby
Laughing child, running to Daddy

Jam on face . . . bright print dresses
Young girl—hair blowing long
What color was it? Brown? Red-gold? Raven . . .
Was it short—
Or to her shoulders streaming
Wild and free in the wind?
Did she walk with a lover
Through the meadow flowers . . .
Love the colors—
Perhaps wear one
In her hair . . . wild and free
Lovely peacock's colored plumes
Turn to black and white of raven . . . ?
I feel cold inside . . .
And freedom and beauty
Fade with the plumage
By choice . . .
She has chosen her lover . . .
And a tear falls wet . . . not for her . . .
For the peacock
Who laughed with the child and the lover
in the sun.

KAREN ANGELA COX, '66

little world

jeans on

tee shirt

brush teeth

oatmeal

bye dad.

up-trees, down-stairs, through-hedges, across-lawns, next-door,

run-run, run-run.

pilot-to-tower—in-a-tree

help-help-fire—garden-hose

ride- 'em-cowboy—on-a-broom.

whiz, whiz space man

bang, bang you're dead.

wash hands
peanut butter
white mustache
screen door.
up-trees, down-stairs, through-hedges, across-lawns, next-door.
run-run, run-run.
bruised knee
sling shot
arrow head
sand box.
whiz, whiz space man
bang, bang you're dead.
shiny dime
on-a-stick
ice cream
finger-prints.
up-trees, down-stairs, through-hedges, across-lawns, next-door.
run-run, run-run
news boy
dad's home
roast beef
brush teeth
God bless
water, please
Sleep now, little man, pleasant dreams.

NORA FITZPATRICK, '65



MAIN STREET

SHELDON G. HOUSTON, '65

I loved that little town during the summer. Early in the morning, the town loafers would begin taking their places along Main Street. Some leaned against the black front of the A & P store; some occupied the top sides of large, bread

storage boxes that were located in front of the grocery; others sat on the curb or stood listlessly in the gutter. I didn't know any of them by their real name. When a boy is growing up in a small town it's best to be on the right side of the loafers, so you learn to call them by the names they prefer — like Bag or Zeke or One-Eye. If you ever get on the wrong side of the loafers they will bully and tease you until your life is miserable. When you are a boy in a small town you either learn to talk the language of the loafers or you stay off Main Street.

Most of the loafers talked out of the side of their mouths with no more lip movement than was necessary to convey their message. They employed a sneering chuckle rather than good, explosive laughter. When a pretty young lady walked in their midst, their eyes would open just a little wider and their derisive chuckling would echo after the disconcerted miss until she was out of sight.

The loafers had one particular collective characteristic that fascinated me. They would reach into the wide, top pocket of their blue, bib-overalls, with-

draw a twist of tobacco, and bite-off a good size "chaw." In a short while a big bulge would appear in one cheek, then in the other. After a good deal of chewing and rolling the cud from one side of the jaw cavity to the other, they would tilt their heads back just a little, and with the aid of some apparently complex maneuvering of throat muscles and lung control, eject into the air a long, sickening brown arch of Railroadman's Twist. The fat, big jowled loafers always seemed to do it much better than their slender counterparts.

About noon, the loafers would leave the street and wander into the pool hall or the tavern, and Main Street would seem virtually empty.

The rumbling, crink-crank of the horse-drawn garbage wagon would break the monotonous silence of the summer afternoon. The recurrent clop-clop of the horse's hoofs as they made contact with the pavement produced a captivating cadence. Intermittently, the wagoner would mutter, "Har thar, Bet —Who d'wn, Fetch," and the two big draft animals would stop. They always seemed so impatient waiting there in the

hot sun while the galvanized cans were being emptied into the wagon. They would chase the multitude of flies with their tails and stamp their hoofs into the pavement as though protesting the ceaseless torment of the buzzing, black specks of winged filth that attacked them. The apathetic wagoner, however, couldn't be bothered with the problems of the animals and soon he would growl, "Hup thar, Bet—Gee up, Fetch," and the axial-symmetric wooden wagon wheels would slowly begin to turn toward the next stop.

As the wagon rolled past, I could see the wagoner's two sons riding on the tail-gate. They both wore drab worn work clothes and short-top boots. Their brown hair was disheveled and their hands were sticky and grimy from handling garbage cans and trash baskets. I really felt sorry for those two. I wanted to go up to them and ask them to come over to the lot and play ball with the gang or to meet us at the creek for a swim, but, of course, I never did. They were destined to become Main Street loafers any way, I thought, so why try to change the inevitable. Their

older brother was already one of the loafers, and with their father being a garbage man and all, what chance did they have? At that time I thought that some of us were bound to be loafers and some of us were bound for success and any effort made to alter this would certainly be fruitless.

I hadn't been in that little town for several years, but recently I had occasion to pass through it. Main Street has taken on a new appearance. The A & P store is no longer there. In its place is a modern, two story office building. On its facade is a sign in gold letters which says, *AAA Industrial Scavenger Service*. And as I looked through the large plate glass windows I saw, occupying a prominent place in the lobby, the old wooden wagon that used to rumble up and down Main Street when I was a boy. Its wooden body is varnished now and its brass fittings are highly polished. Somehow it looks rather dignified sitting there on its bright red wooden wheels. As I left Main Street and turned on to the highway, I had to blink quickly to suppress the boyish tears that sometimes moisten the eyes of a man.

EILEEN WITTE, '68

Vignette

You couldn't look down. It was just three boards, hastily slapped together, and only fifteen feet high but the menacing pile of rubble below, complemented by protruding boards and broken bottles, dismissed any confidence you might have in the nearness of the ground. The neighborhood kids called it "the walk." They often followed it to its end, an abandoned real estate office.

It jutted straight out from Martin Street and seemed to defy the sudden slope of the old backyard. Still-proud beams,

now a bit tottering in their old age, supported the walk with dignity even though they stood in the decay that engulfed the surrounding area.

Just three feet away, yet never touching, stood an old house, the third one in the block to be condemned by city inspectors. Standing on the sometimes-creaking timbers of the walk, you could survey the desolation that lay beyond the boarded windows.

Bright remnants of cheap wall paper tried in vain to lure your eyes from the shattered lamps and yellowed newspapers that almost concealed the floor. The stairway remained—minus a handrail. One last hinge gripped a falling door. In the far corner stood what could honestly be called an icebox, indicating the status quo of the former residents. Seeping through all openings came the stagnant odor of disuse, accompanied by the ghost of secret desperation that haunted the rooms. But it couldn't touch you on the walk. You were out of reach. The walk meant safety of a sort.

It was a good place for listening. In the evening as you sat precariously on the edge of a splinterless section, the quiet talk of weary working mothers

floated back to you. The local gangs could be heard laughing, shouting, sometimes arguing. Occasional hot rods prowled the street, looking for excitement. A half-hearted game of "kick-the-can" sometimes echoed between the buildings. In the mornings, early, an alien silence hovered, broken periodically by the hard heels of the two cops on the beat. They never checked the walk.

It wasn't a secret place. Everyone on the street knew it was there. Some had ventured across it once or twice. Most just chose to ignore it. They didn't know the security it afforded. Still, there it stood—a fortress repelling the hopelessness that smothered everyone, that snuffed out any spark of a dream. The walk was neutral territory. Dreams still had a fighting chance.

HOLD MY HAND

Can you hear me?
Can you understand?
Open your eyes and see
Me as I pass from this land.
Why are you crying?
It is I who am dying.
You will live on
When I am gone
You will see another day
While I will have nothing to say.
Don't cry, please, don't cry
Because if you do so will I
I am afraid of death
Hold my hand until my last breath.

ROSEMARY WATKINS, '68



SAM

MIKE HUGHES, '65

Sam was the last of his kind, a living anachronism with no place in these times. He was a professional gambler of the old school, an aristocrat who could smile warmly and shake your hand before taking the shirt off your back. He gambled with a studied silence and lack of expression that was almost frightening. Yet he was aggressive and never failed to bet his hand. His best game was five card stud, a game of nerves and bluff. At 74, he still confused even the sharpest gamblers. When someone would try to name his hand after he had successfully bluffed, he would often say "Bet you two to one you can't call my hole card." No one ever did. For fifty years he had gambled with every conceivable type of person. When you could get him to talk about his experiences he told colorful tales about playing with the cut-throat members of the Capone mob or the Purple Gang. Or, referring to his best years, he might tell of playing with the leisured class in Hot Springs or Miami Beach. In more recent years he had played with every-

one from the staid businessmen of midwestern country clubs to the excitable Mexican laborers of the mill towns. Sam had won—and thrown away—a fortune.

Sam had only one weakness. He loved to play Barbooth, a dice game of Greek origin that offered exactly even odds. It was not unusual for him to blow the fruits of a whole night's work in fifteen minutes' Barbooth. Sam had been able to afford it. For fifteen years he had centered his activities around the Big House, a two story gambling casino near the water front. Its ideal location drew not only the industrial workers, and professional men, but also the sailors from the ore boats and the service men from the Great Lakes. They came there for the tarts that decorated the bar and stayed to lose their money at roulette, craps, black jack and poker. Sam quickly became a legend in this neighborhood. Everyone spoke of Sam, the Greek, the coldest, most nerveless man ever to hold a deck of cards. Those were the fat years for Sam. The week-end excursions to the neighboring towns to fleece the farmers and small business men, the vacations in Vegas and

Reno. It had never occurred to him that the Big House would close and money would get tight. But five years ago Federal men had padlocked the Big House doors for good.

Sam was at the end of his rope. The death of the Big House was the death of an era. The no-limit games had all closed down and only the small, limit games with their exorbitant rake-off continued to function. At first Sam compensated by expert cheating, in which he filled the hand of a partner in the small games, but the players grew wary of men who won such large sums despite small stakes. He drifted to the colored section to cheat at dice but slickers of their own kind had been there long ahead of him. For a time he played no limit poker with the Latins. But their foreign tongue, thieving dealers, and constant bickering, drove him away in disgust.

He became aware of his old age, his sallow skin, sunken cheeks and weakening eyesight. Recently he had had to have his diseased upper teeth removed and his gums sewed, limiting his diet to soft foods. His Balkan accent was suddenly conspicuous in a society of people

who had been born and reared on American soil.

As Sam's luck grew steadily worse he began to change perceptibly. He took to mumbling to himself and cursing whenever he lost a good hand or failed to lure a sucker into betting against a cinch hand.

One evening he heard that Vic La Fonda was taking over the game at the North Avenue Pool Room. At forty-two, Vic was a legend. He was the only man around who still occasionally got big games. The money followed him everywhere he went, for he had a reputation for being a big loser. Actually he had a clever system of making money. By fronting a game and deliberately playing fast and loose he would soon attract a large number of fast gamblers. By keeping all the regular hustlers out of his game he was able to lure the suckers into his games. And he kept a hard knot of well-dressed soft-spoken professionals in the game to balance his losses. Due to the size of the game the rake-off served as a huge source of profit and everybody was usually happy. Best of all for Sam though, twenty-five years ago Sam had "turned Vic out" or given him his start in gambling.

Sam went to see Vic. "Vic, you got to give me job as shill in you game. I'm too old to go out and hustle on my own," Sam pleaded. But the man answering was a stranger. He wore a hundred dollar suit buttoned over his expansive waistline, fat with success. A brilliant star sapphire ring sparkled on his pudgy little finger.

"Sam," he answered, "I'm sorry. Everybody knows you and they're afraid of you. You would only bust my game. You've got plenty of money stashed away somewhere. You should take it and go back to the old country to retire."

Sam grew desperate, "Vic, I tell you I'm busted. I have to have place to work."

"No dice, Sam. You understand."

"Don't you know what busted mean? I'm seventy-four year old and I don't have penny. Look, you always need dealer. Just give me two hours a night. Dealin', that's all."

Vic pulled a large roll of bills from his pocket. "Look, how much money do you need? Fifty? A hundred? Name it. You get it, but don't waste my time."

"Keep your stinkin' money. I'm not beggar man!" Sam

shouted crimson with rage. "I gotta work. I'm gambler, not beggar."

Vic rested his chin in his hands thoughtfully. "Look, Sam I got something you can do. Easy job. It will pay your rent and give you a little money to gamble with."

"Wot kind of job is that?" Sam asked warily.

"Watch the door—"

Sam stood up, his face purple with rage. "What kind of dirty deal you try to give me. I'm not wino! not bum! I got pride. Let me out of this place."

Vic spoke patronizingly, "Think it over, Sam. Ten bucks a night and a chance to be extra dealer when the game runs late!"

Sam stamped out of the place in a rage, mumbling and cursing incoherently.

A few days later Sam walked down the street towards the Ninth Avenue Pool Room. He had finally swallowed his pride and decided to take Vic's offer. If he could save a little money he would go to Vegas or Hot Springs and find one of his old friends to stake him in the big games. But for now he would do this detested job in order to live. Angry, confused thoughts coursed through his head. Sam

was early for work, and so he stopped and looked around. It was a long familiar view to Sam: dirty clothing stores and pawn shops, pool halls and cheap, poorly lit bars, and in the middle of the block the big vacant red brick building. Its windows were darkened now and the sound of music and laughter had gone. The doors had not been open for five years and small signs of decay had set in—a cracked window, a rusty lock, a collection of debris in the passageway. The Big House.

Sam began muttering and cursing as he stared at the old building. But soon it would be time for work, so he must have a bite to eat.

Sam was just finishing his tea when a tall husky man of about sixty sat down near him and began reading the paper. Sam recognized the old Greek. "Nicoli," he rasped. "Wot you doin' in this part of town?"

"Sam," Nicoli shouted heartily, "Long time, no see!"

"You don't come here for years. You don't play no more?"

Nicoli chuckled and smiled, "No, when they close the Big House I quit. Games no good. I always lose my money to

sharpie like you anyway. Now I'm saving my money to retire."

"But there's good game at Ninth Avenue. Come and play a little bit."

"Sam, I'm not big gambler like you. I just want to go home and take it easy, drink a beer, read the paper, but if I was smart like you and made big money gambling, I—"

Wham! Sam's fist slammed down on the table. He shouted, "If you got my money! If you smart like me! Huh! Wot you do? You go to old country to retire, don't you." Sam grinned fiercely and his voice lowered. "Yes, if you got my money, retire and get on big ship for home. LIKE HELL! If you got my money you watch door in pool room for ten dollars a night. You die inside because you can't work. Can't find suckers. Can't do anything."

"You mean you broke?"

"Yes, broke—busted, old, worn out."

"But how?"

Sam pulled out his set of matched dice and held them in his gnarled hand. He turned the dice. "You see this? Two sixes. That's what I get every time I played Barbooth."

Confused, Nicoli answered.

"But you best gambler in town. If you lost in Barbooth you still could play poker."

Sam jumped to his feet, his face contorted with rage again. "What you know about it? They close Big House. There ain't no games left in this town. If they open Big House I show you. I beat everybody. I take all money. I take all you suckers without even cheating. But it's closed. They lock the door." Sam grabbed Nicoli by the coat sleeves. "Come, I show you. The bastards put big padlock on door." Sam pulled the protesting man outside and started across the street cursing under his breath. Little beads of sweat stood out on his forehead and upper lip. "There you see. No lights, no people. Just big, empty building." Sam spat at the place. "Big House, huh? You not so big now!" Suddenly he began to choke convulsively. He clutched at his chest, sending the dice he still held in his hand skidding across the pavement. "My dice!" Sam cried, and at that second he crumpled to the ground dead.

As a crowd began to gather, one curious onlooker said to another, "DAMN WINOS! They should send them all to labor camps."

I fooled them

I fooled them, didn't I?
I played their games
And looked them in the eye
And laughed out loud
And didn't cry.

I fooled them, didn't I?
I played the clown
And made them forget
The broken dreams
That haunt me yet.

I fooled them, didn't I?
I heard their lies
And told some too.
They think that I
Am over you.

I fooled them, didn't I?

JUDY SWAN, '66