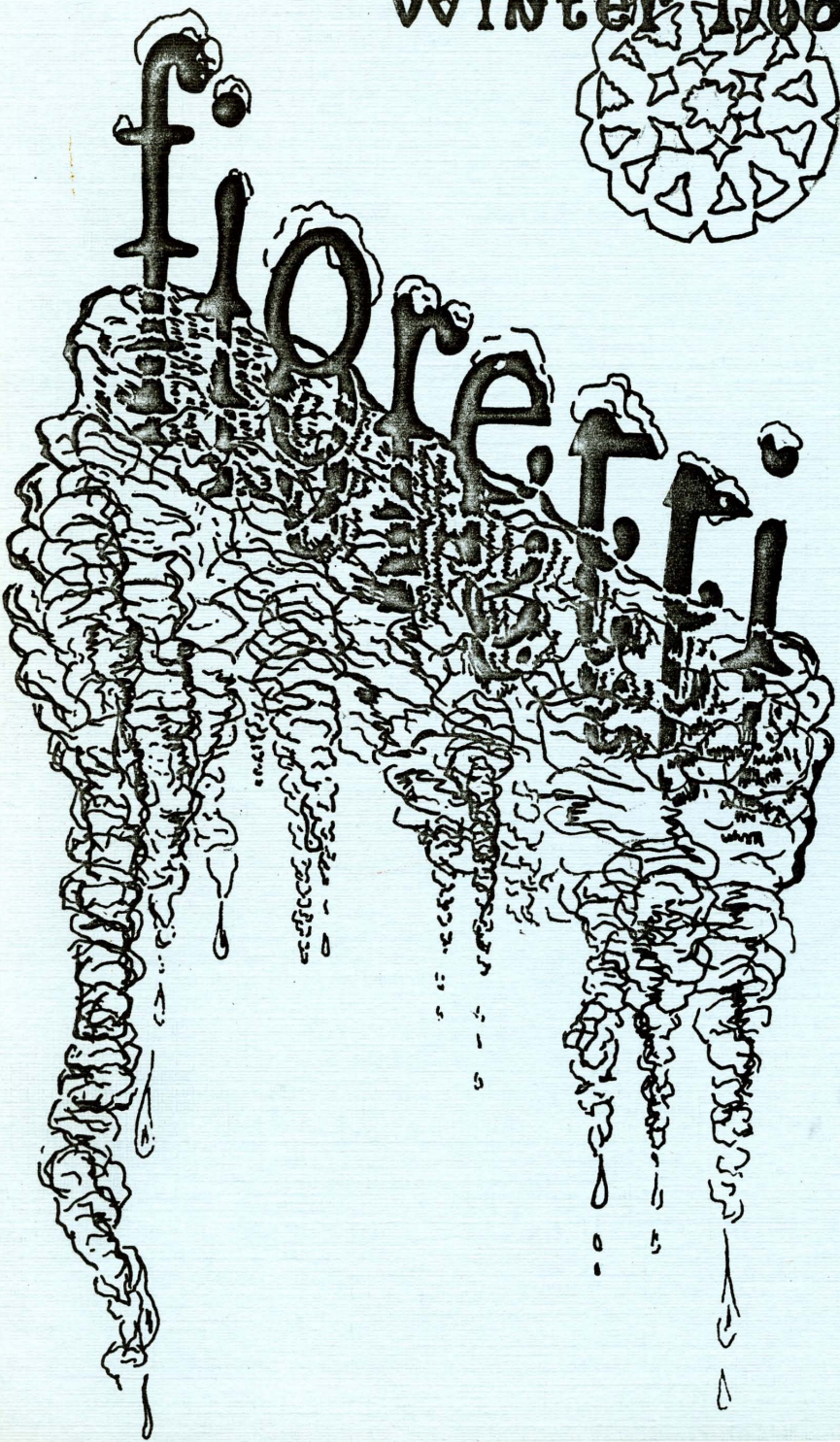
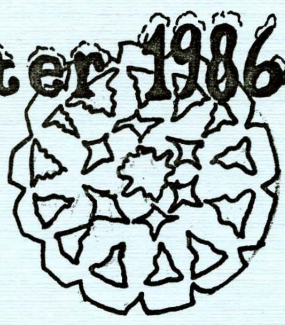


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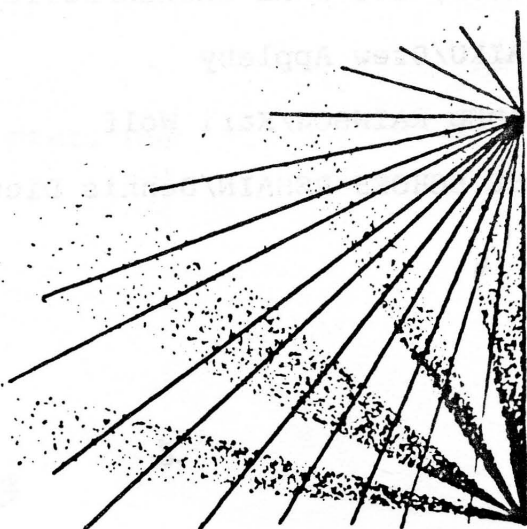
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{ THE COUNTY FAIR

} by Teresa Dehart

She was waiting outside the big area with the lead rope of her harnessed cow in hand. New sawdust had been put down since the horse show earlier that afternoon. But, Sarah didn't get to see the horses because she was tending her cow which had given birth during the night. Sarah was really tired and still a little bit worried about her cow, Patsy. All the excitement from the other 4-Hers showing their cows filled the air to make her more anxious than worried. The music from the double Ferris wheel played over and over. The contrasting smell of popcorn, cotton candy, and hot dogs tickled her nose and caused her salivary glands to work double time. She heard the barking of the booth workers. "Fifty cents for two throws!" "Knock all the cans over and get a prize!" "Snow cones, get your snow cones!" The dull murmur of the patient crowd was almost as nerve-racking as the other fair sounds. Sarah knew none of her friends or family were in the crowd. They were in the other building finding good seats for the Queen Contest which started in half an hour. She started laughing out loud when she thought about how she was still in her tight Levis, cowboy hat, and boots around her smelly cow. And in half an hour, she'd be in an evening gown, perfumed and wearing makeup. How her friends persuaded her to be in the

contest she'd never know. The only thing that was important now was that she wanted to show her daddy a big purple Grand Champion ribbon from the cow show which just started.

She bent down and whispered in Patsy's ear as she started pulling the big black cow towards the judges' table. "Come on, Sunshine. Show'em your stuff!" Patsy followed like a big dog on a leash. She was a little annoyed by all the lights and people, but mostly because she had to leave her little one back in the stall. The judges walked around inspecting every inch of pure beef on each cow. They commented and pointed occasionally to a certain cow. Then, they stood back at a distance to get a bird's-eye view of all the animals together. They all gathered for a few minutes at the judges' table to exchange decisions. Without trying to be noticed, Sarah sneaked a glance at her Mickey Mouse watch. "Oh my God, only 15 minutes until show time!"

"SARAH MILLIKAN!"

She lifted her eyes in delight to see a judge approaching her with a huge purple ribbon.

"The paper will want to take pictures so could you stay put please, Miss Millikan. Oh, congratulations!"

Sarah squealed with pleasure and tried to wrap her arms around Patsy's neck to hug her. The new mom mooded, proud of the new ribbon, but not quite as proud as she was of her new calf. The flashes from all the

pictures didn't seem to bother either one of the happy pair.

"Miss Millikan, I heard the cow just had a calf last night?"

"She sure did," Sarah grinned from ear to ear.

"Hey, how are you going to celebrate now?"

"SARAH MILLIKAN!"

Her name was heard, not from the reporter, but over the loud speaker. Pulling Patsy as hard as she could, Sarah ran out of the arena.

The queen contest was in a building only a rock's throwing distance away. She could make it. Patsy was slowing her down though. The crowd was scampering out of her way as if one girl and a cow were a herd of frenzied, unstoppable beasts. Ladies were screaming and grabbing their little ones out of their seats to the safety of their men's arms. One man dropped six snow cones and turned tail and ran to get behind a nearby tree. Sarah was laughing. She could hardly run in the cowboy boots. She had one hand holding down her hat and the other dragging poor Patsy behind her. Sarah had pinned that big purple ribbon on her shirt pocket, and it was flapping up in her face so she could hardly see where she was going. "Patsy, I'm just gonna have to tie you to this door outside. Whoa now, girl!" Sarah ran up the stairs at the back of the stage.

"SARAH MILLIKAN!"

She stopped to catch her breath as her mother frantically ran up to her.

"Where have you been child?"

"Look, Ma, I won! Ma, I'm not going out there. I didn't want to be in this contest anyway. Everybody else wanted me to be in it. Besides, I don't have a chance in a blue moon. I don't even have time to change!"

"Sarah Marie Millikan, if you think you're going to disappoint all your friends out there, you're mistaken. What about your family, too? And furthermore, you have just as much of a chance as any girl out there. Now, you march yourself out there, blue jeans, boots, ribbon and all, and just be yourself. Due to the circumstances, if those folks are any kind of judges, they'll see true beauty and personality in someone who is natural and being themselves. Now, go on and get out there!"

Sarah didn't even get her last two cents in, because Mrs. Millikan, a little annoyed but determined, walked away in the direction of the announcer. Chuckling to herself as she wiped the manure off her boots, Sarah whispered aloud, "I'll do it!" Walking up the steps, she straightened her ribbon, tilted her cowboy hat back and stepped into the lights.

"Better late than never, folks. This is Sarah Millikan." The announce continued, "Sarah is a senior at Donner High School ..."

Sarah, as elegantly as possible in boots, strolled down the platform towards the audience, stopped and smiled.

"If you'll notice the ribbon Sarah is

wearing, she is now the proud owner of the Grand Champion Holstein here tonight!"

She spotted her daddy with his arms folded across his chest, shaking his head in disbelief. She gracefully turned and strolled back to the top of the stage. The contest continued as planned after that first walk. All of the other tense competitors took their turns in the not so same spotlight as Sarah. Backstage, everyone changed into their swimsuits, listening wide-eyed to Sarah's story. They laughed and felt more at ease, because they hadn't experienced quite so much to be there. Sarah was a little more at ease too, until they asked for all the contestants to return to the stage.

All the girls lined up, jittering and holding hands and whispering good lucks.

This time Sarah was dressed in a white gown that revealed her true physical beauty. The gown fit snug over her slender build. Her makeup was perfect, and for the first time her hair was not in ponytails or under a hat. It hung softly over her shoulders, curled and combed in a way that looked as if she had spent hours in preparation. Sarah again found her daddy in the crowd beside her ma. Patsy let out a big moo to let Sarah know that she was still around.

"Miss Congeniality . . . Sarah Millikan!"

Sarah laughed and stepped forward to the roar of applause from her friends and family. Proud as a peacock, she pulled that purple ribbon from behind her back and held it up high. Her daddy stood up and applauded even louder. She knew her daddy was proud of her now. She had won Miss Congenitality, Grand Champion, and had a healthy new baby calf.



Shifting Sands

Dry, barren, and desolate,
The dusty dunes arise.
The sun flames across the land
Forming black silhouettes
Upon the shifting sands.

Passing rains pour down on
Hidden grottoes of water
Forming beautiful basins of stone.

Alone, of all the desert blooms,
The Resurrection Plant survives
With a Swallowtail butterfly
Fluttering around its graceful
bloom.

Maureen Sheehan

FIRST IMPRESSION

by Julia Hilcz

As Professor Mankerfield digressed into yet another case history, I risked a glance at my wristwatch, a recent graduation gift from my parents. Fifty-two more minutes of enforced boredom left. Although this was still the first week of school, the novelty of college had already disappeared. Across the room, I saw my roommate trying to make points with a dress-for-success blonde who inattentively filled her notebook with doodles. All around me, I saw the dilligent bent over their desks, taking copious, voluminous notes on Mankerfield's incessant lecture. They were all alike--those clean-cut, sincere young men and women--casebooks stacked neatly by their glossed penny loafers and recently acquired attache cases. Slavishly, they took down the prof's every word on which their future mobility was dependent.

Unexpectedly, the classroom door opened inward, the sound halting Mankerfield's performance. A waifish-looking girl stood poised in the doorway, conscious of the fifty-odd pair of eyes focuses on her entry. She shut the door gently, almost regretfully, her hand reluctant to slide from the knob. Mankerfield cleared his throat in wonderment that anyone could be so gauche as to cause such a disturbance during his lecture.

I cleared my books off the vacant seat

across the aisle for the newcomer, and she sat down--grateful for the anonymity that the seat offered. I watched her as she propped a large sketchpad against the chair. The book resisted her efforts and slammed into the floor. Aware that once again the class' attention was focused on her, she bent to retrieve the pad. Unlike her contemporaries, the girl didn't accentuate her face with artificial color. To me, it was quite refreshing to see a natural blush highlight her cheeks. Her almost waist-length dark brown hair half-concealed her from the cynosure of the class.

Then Mankerfield did an unforgivable thing. Perhaps he was just giving in to his biting, abrasive sense of humor, or maybe he was a secret misogynist; anyway, he decided to make an example of the girl. Steepling his hands on the oaken podium, Mankerfield addressed her. "Since you obviously found it unnecessary to attend my earlier lectures, Miss _____," he paused like a fencing master in the beginning stages of his deadly dance.

"Van Etten," she quickly filled in.

"Miss Van Etten. Perhaps you would like to answer a few questions for the benefit of your fellow students? Quirking one of his intimidating brows, Mankerfield reeled off a question that even a senior student would have found difficult, if not impossible, to answer.

Her lambent dark eyes dilated, and nervously her long tapered hands repeatedly latched and unlatched the flat, squarish case which she held on her lap. "Excuse me, sir," her voice resounded with clarity throughout

the cavernous classroom. "I don't understand. I don't pretend that I'm any great authority, but with all due respect, what does case law have to do with life-drawing?"

"Life-drawing?" Mankerfield repelled the word as if it were a foreign enemy invading his vocabulary. "IMPOSSIBLE!" he snapped, "this is room 151. Beginning case law." And to prove his point, Mankerfield left his throne-like lectern, walked over to the door and let it swing inward so that all could see the stenciled room number . . . 151.

Uncomfortably, she shifted in her seat. Her restless hands still fidgeted with the case. The sketchpad once again fell and sideswiped the case, releasing hundreds of brightly colored crayons, pastels, and drawing pencils.

The dismissal bell rang--the spell was broken--students thawed from their previous immobility and jostled their way out the door.

Silently, I collected all the crayons within reach and handed them to the girl.

"My own Sir Galahad," she said, her smile setting alight a glow in her eyes and igniting a fire within my heart.

My God, she was beautiful. Not beautiful in our commercial, mass-produced Hollywood sense, but she had the high-spirited vivacity of a Romantic heroine. A look that Shelly would have appreciated and immortalized in verse.

"Come on," I returned her smile, "I'll show you to the art department."



Turn Away to a Fading Sun

*Turn away to a fading sun
Dying in broken childhood
memories
On a final day.*

*Could life be so sad
Lacking the promise of a dawn
Only having the certainty
of the sunset?*

*Do the scars fade
With the dying light
Of a broken dream
of another night?*

*Why should I feel so betrayed
As the amber light turns darkness
to crimson red,
A stain upon the heavens?*

*This life fades before its end
To be dissolved in hope.
The next beginning should not end so.*

*Turn away from a fading sun;
Face a burning dawn
Of innocence and peace regained.*

Barbara Coleen Fields

{ PROUD TO BE PROSTAFF

} by Dennis Dietzen

Hey, watch it will you, fellas! Can't a body get any rest around here? Woe, feels like we're off to the course again. I really do hate sharing all this room with so many others. God, that Titleist over there has no manners, leaving dirt and grass all over the place. That orange Pinnacle has cute dimples though. May'be I'll work my way over toward her. Get outta my way, ya' damn Maxfli. You and you balata cover are just about worthless. My surlyn cover and 380 turncated dimple design makes me superior. Yea, you heard me. Read my box:

"Scientifically designed for consistent performance, tour proven for pinpoint accuracy." That's what the box says, but frankly, this guy carrying the bag couldn't drive a tricycle through the gateway arch.

Oh no, here comes that ugly hand now. Please, not me, I just recovered from last weekend. Come on, quit laughing, guys, you'll get your turn. Wow, it sure is bright out here today. Look at all these geeks. I wish these old men would wear normal clothes. Check out the guy in the knickers. Hey, baggie pants, didn't your wife dress you this morning. You dress about as well as you play.

Hello, Mr. tee. I see you're back again, too. Here we go again. Aaaoch! Why does this guy use those words, damn this, damn that. I feel sorry for that club when he throws it. That must hurt, too. That's it, sucker, tell me to get left. Sorry, I like these trees over here on the right where it's cool, so there. Maybe I can hide and he won't find me. Be very quiet. Shoot, here he comes with that look on his face again. Go ahead, baldy, hit me again, make my day.



A Yellow Rag

"Here I am, from the inside looking out.

Don't know where I am, don't know what it's all about.

My identity clashes
With the sound of crashes.

I fall apart
Into my separate parts
Each one different but all the same.
I lose contact, I drift and play
a game..."

~~~~~

The mother gave her daughter a sound spanking for dropping the expensive family mirror that had been a present from Aunt Clara and sent the sobbing girl upstairs.

The mother thought as she angrily picked up the pieces of the totally irreparable mirror:  
"How why would she lie and say she saw a face in the mirror?  
Kids!!"

The broken pieces of the mirror  
laughed and sucked the mother in-  
to them, never to return.

~~~~~

Headline in the National Enquirer:

DAUGHTER BELIEVES MISSING
MOTHER IS RESULT OF

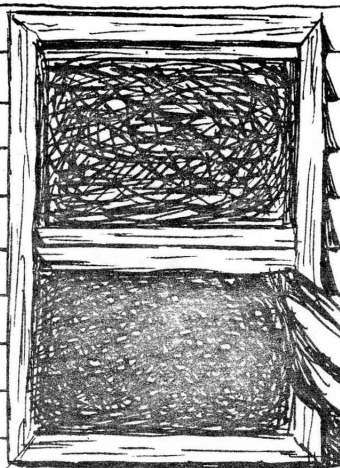
SEVEN

years

bad

luck

Patrick Hebb



THE FUNDAMENT

by James Hillman

The haze surrounded me, consuming all thoughts, feeling, and emotion. The cold morning mist fogged my glasses and filled my lungs, my very being with disgust. Mud enveloped my shoes with each footstep as I sank deeper and deeper within myself. Forest and foul weather were the only symbols of a more complex reality, a walk with myself through the woods of despair.

I was lost. Not only did I venture and stray from worn pathway, but I felt the lonely breeze which filled my soul and chilled my fibers. I ached from the crisp air that swirled around me, carressing and taunting me. Tears formed, and I fell, embracing the very earth that cursed me. As if nature yielded to the natural ways, the earth, which changes man from innocent seeker to corrupt finder, laughed in the hum of the wind.

"What is the answer?" I screamed

No reply was heard, or maybe no reply existed. I knew only of the questions which flew around the inner sanctum of my head, my brain bulging in anguish of adulthood. I prayed to my God to take me from the haunting

pains of not knowing and of the constant search.

At full vocal capacity, I again screeched, "Where are the answers?"

I try not to believe in miracles, yet the breeze faded and the haze cleared. It was almost as if my plea had caused this environmental enlightenment. I could hear the birds tweet and the frogs croak. I felt the warm secure strength of the sun's embracing rays holding me, calling forth the evolution of my own personal happiness. Elevating my fallen head to the skies, I saw my miracle. I saw my rainbow.

Hues of emerald green, deep purple, burning red, yellow and orange encouraged me to realize the power of the rainbow. All that was between the rainbow and myself was space, empty and void of expression. Only I could choose the rainbow and see the colors become a color. Retreat to the rainbow meant accepting what I knew was true, finding the answers. The answers were a rainbow inside myself that longed to merge with the skies and set me free. The rainbow was a promise and a renewing symbol from long ago which still retained meaning for today.

I followed my head and rose erect, admiring the radiant beauty of a lifetime complete. I was a rainbow, and I found peace. We need not rain for a rainbow; we need not life before death. I finally had my answers!



I see Your hand, God,
strong and large,
calloused and tanned,
lowered for me
even though I come
in a fit of anger,
frustrated, shouting,
"It's not fair!"

See me, a little girl
who jumps into your palm
and in anger runs heavily
to each finger, punching
your callouses, pulling
your knuckles, and sliding
back to your palm again
knowing it causes you no pain,
for I hear you chuckle
as I fall exhausted
on my back and stare up
at your fingers hovering
over my frail body.
Now it is my turn to chuckle
as it occurs to me how easily
your hand could close
and I would be gone.
Ah, but never!

Up again and running
(my pride is not so easily
conquered)

I stamp my feet and trip on
Your lifeline ~ so deep is its
groove.

Scrambling to my feet,
I run up and down Your fingers
around Your palm

and finally
tired, wet, emotionally drained,
I collapse at Your thumb
standing tall before me.

My arms encircle it;
I press my face close
and snuggle my body in its
cervice,
whispering softly, "I love You, God."

And though I know my
stamping and punching,
however strong and hard,
was not felt by You
save perhaps as a tickle,
the soft touch of my embrace,
my tears,
my heaving breast

pierce through
to your Divine Heart
and as a thunderclap
attract your notice.
"Gentle God," I say,
safe in your love.
"Gentle God are you."

Kelley Ross

Haiku

September rainbow:

a robin and a worm

struggle in silence

Drew Appleby

{ MAW-MAW'S MANY TREASURES

by Martha Guljas

Everyone was already seated at the table when Shelly came down for breakfast that morning. The kitchen reeked of the smells of omelets, blueberry pancakes, and warm glazed doughnuts. That's how it was every Saturday. All the Griffins got their favorites for breakfast and as much as they wanted, all that is, except for Shelly. She sat down to a plate of her Saturday morning usual, a dry bran muffin and four orange wedges. Somehow, it didn't measure up to the delectable goodies that were being passed around and gobbled up in front of her. "Mom," she asked sheepishly, "do you think the diet would allow for one doughnut?"

Mrs. Griffin glanced up quickly from her plate, her thin, bony fingers still picking at her gooey doughnut. "Are we gonna go through this again, Shelly? You know it doesn't. But, if you want to blow the steady progress you've been making, go ahead and gorge!"

"God, Mom. I didn't say I wanted to blow it. I just want a little something besides these gross dried-out muffins!"

"Well, there's always the wheat bread."

"Oh, Mother," Shelly raised her voice,

"that's not what I want, and you know it . . ."

"All right!" Mr. Griffin broke in, "I don't need to get indigestion this early in the morning."

"Dad, I'm sick and tired of this diet she's put me on. I want to eat real food again!"

"Oh, and do you want to be a little tub again, too?" her mother asked with her I-got-you type of attitude.

"No," Shelly whimpered, her voice quivering. She glanced over at her brother Chuck who was looking at her out of the corner of his eye. He shut his eyes tightly and softly nodded.

"Mom, what's the big deal? Let her have a doughnut. It ain't gonna ruin her."

"Chuck," Mrs. Griffin replied, "she isn't going to learn any responsibility and self-control if you always take her side. It's very noble of you, granted, but it won't do her a bit of good!"

"It's just a damn doughnut!"

"No!" Mrs. Griffin shouted, her sharp, skinny nose twitching. "It's much more than that. It's her attitude. She has to learn to take control of her life while she's young!"

"Uh, Chuck," Mr. Griffin barely interrupted, "what do ya say we get started

on that fence?"

"Yeah, Dad," Chuck said as he and his father rose and carefully placed the dishes in the sink.

Shelly watched her brother carefully. His tall, slender body moved with ease. "Bye, Chuck," she whispered.

"Bye, Shell." He patted her on the shoulder and left with his father out the back door.

Shelly sat motionless for a few seconds, then slowly got up from the table.

"And what do you plan on doing this morning?" her mother inquired.

"I'm goin' to Stacy's to work on some algebra," Shelly replied as she stood in the kitchen doorway.

"You are?" her mother asked in disbelief. "Have you forgotten that Grandmother Peterson asked you to come over today and do some chores for her?"

"Yeah, I guess I did," Shelly admitted.

Mrs. Griffin sighed heavily. "Shelly, please don't cancel out on her."

"Oh for heaven's sake, Mother. I wouldn't disappoint Maw-Maw. In fact, I'll go there right now."

"All right. I'll call her and tell her you're on the way."

In less than ten minutes, Shelly was at

her grandmother's. As always, Maw-Maw greeted her at the front door.

"My, you must have run over here, Honey," her grandmother chuckled, her loose bun of gray hair jiggling slightly on top of her head. "I just now got off the phone with your mother."

"Nope, Maw-Maw," Shelly assured her, "I just walk awful fast." Shelly stepped into her grandmother's cozy little home. It had a different sort of smell to it, but it was a pleasant smell like flowers and cinnamon. "I see you're not using the cane anymore," Shelly noticed.

"No. Doctor says I can do without it for awhile. Tell me, Honey, how have you been?"

"Just fine."

"I haven't seen you in over a week," Maw-Maw whined in her baby-like way. "Beginnin' to think you forgot I lived here." Shelly laughed at this. Maw-Maw always said this when Shelly hadn't been around to visit for awhile. "Come on, let's go in the sitting room and chat."

"What do you wanna talk about, Maw-Maw? I thought you wanted me to do some work or something for you."

"Oh, there'll be time for that in a bit. C'mon." The old lady led Shelly by the arm into the next room. They sat facing each other on the brown velvet couch.

"What's this all about, Maw-Maw?" Shelly inquired, her face aglow with wonderment.

"Well, Honey," her Maw-Maw hesitated, "I know you're having some trouble at home. I'm here if you need some advice or just someone to listen to you." She slowly raised her stiff, tired hand and gently stroked Shelly's rosy cheek.

"Don't worry, Maw-Maw," Shelly blurted as she abruptly rose from her seat. "Uh, what was it you wanted me to do?"

With that, the issue was pressed no further. Shelly was to sweep and straighten up the attic and bring down some heavy boxes.

It was peculiar, Shelly thought, how the attic smelled a lot like the downstairs. Attics were usually musty and damp or stuffy. This one was certainly none of these. In fact, it wasn't messy like most attics, either. It already looked straightened and cleaned.

As Shelly scanned the area in search of a spot to begin, her eyes caught sight of a small trunk sitting off to the side in front of a massive cherry cabinet. Lying over it was a beautiful lace cloth with the letter "S" embroidered on it. The "S", Shelly assumed, was for Samantha, her grandmother's name.

Slowly approaching the trunk, Shelly wondered what lie hidden inside. A surge of anticipation raced through her. She knelt down, and gently removing the cloth, found that the trunk's latch was unlocked. The rusty hinges creaked quietly as she raised the lid. Inside were some photo albums, a few books, an old diary, a bundle of letters, and a wooden box that had carved on it, "Keepsakes." Shelly squealed softly as she

lifted out the box. It was filled with keys, a miniature pocelain doll, and a little lead pony with the engraving, "Saint Louis World's Fair, 1913."

From reading the addresses and dates on some of the letters, Shelly realized they must be old loveletters from Grandpa. Though she longed to look through some of them, she felt it was indiscreet.

Shelly skipped over the photographs and picked out the diary. "Should I?" she mumbled to herself, not knowing if she should violate her grandmother's personal thoughts and feelings. She lifted the cover and caught a glimpse of the date, 1917. With a little mental figuring, Shelly decided that her Maw-Maw would have been fourteen during that year. "Oooh, I'd love to read through this," she thought. Realizing there wasn't enough time, however, she decided to choose a few pages at random.

July 22,

1917

Dear Diary, I'm feeling rather dreadful today. Mother scolded me harshly in front of my dearest friend, Anna. I went to market this afternoon without my corset. Mother was outraged! But really, how can any human being be expected to wear one of those confining contraptions in this stifling hot weather? It's inhuman!

Shelly chuckled at this short passage. She thought back to the time when her mother made such a big production out of her wearing a bra.

The next page Shelly chose was dated December 8, 1917:

Dear Diary,

I wish you could see me and tell me what you think of me. Mother has been telling me that I'm getting fat. She says I'm gaining pounds by the day. What worries me more is that she tells me if I don't lose some weight, no man will ever have me as his wife. Could this be true?

"Fat?" Shelly murmured. She couldn't believe her Maw-Maw who was practically skin and bones could ever have been even plump. Remembering the photo albums, she searched through them to find some visible evidence. Since Shelly had never seen any pictures of her grandmother as a child, she wasn't sure what to expect. She did remember being told, however, that she herself resembled Maw-Maw when she was a girl.

After leafing through wedding and family photographs, Shelly found her grandmother. The teenager in the picture did look a lot like Shelly. It was incredible! The figure was the same, kind of round, not really fat, just

pudgy. This girl had the same full cheeks and the same wild, coarse hair.

Realizing that she had lost track of the time, Shelly hurriedly placed Maw-Maw's belongings back in their trunk, grabbed two cardboard boxes that were set out by the door and scurried out of the attic and down the stairs. She met her grandmother in the living room. "Here, Maw-Maw. Here's the stuff you wanted."

"My," her grandma giggled, "you're all out of breath! Must have been quite a job up there!"

"No, not really," Shelly smiled. She hugged Maw-Maw tightly. "I've gotta be going."

"So soon?" her Maw-Maw asked.

"Yeah. But I'll be back later on tonight to watch TV with ya."

"Alright, Honey. See ya then."

Shelly raced out of the house, stopping once at the sidewalk to wave one final goodbye. Maw-Maw watched her run all the way to the end of the block. She smiled slightly to herself as she made her way up the stairs and then up to the attic. Walking over to her little treasure trunk, she carefully put back the lace coverlet that her dear Shelly had neglected to replace. From her pocket, the old lady produced one small padlock and silver key. Once again, she locked up her precious treasures. She carefully pushed the trunk back where it belonged behind the old cherry cabinet.

Jesus,
You were broken;
break me.
Like a broken chalice
that cannot hold
Your Wine,
So may I be.
Spilling over into all,
You send me.
Like a broken chalice,
Lord,
So may I be.

Kelley Ross



Haiku

Cemetery visit:

children of the mourners

collect cicada shells

Drew Appleby

Faded Rainbows

Broken, jagged, dull, useless...
The light is gone.
Only the shape remains,
No resemblance whatsoever.

Time takes its toll.
Dreams slide off to a bottomless sea.
Would that I could go with them.
The gold at the end is now worthless.

Brightest light to darkest dark,
How do we find our way?
Fear it down and start over,
Or try to repaint it?

Why was it built?
Did it have enough support?
Was there enough love?
What destroyed it?

Its meaning was so clear;
It created its own light.
When did the light start to fade?
When did it start to crumble?

Can the rainbow survive?
Why should it go on?
Who's going to give it life?
Will the light go back on?

It used to be so beautiful.
Now it's cold and colorless.
No beauty remains in it.
Take the faded thing away!

The clouds slowly covered it.
Then the lightning hit and it
was no more.
Only one hope exists...
But to grab it is to reach for
the stars.

Pray that the colors return.
Pray that it brighten the world
again.
Miracles can happen - can't
they?
Don't let it fade completely.

Kari Lynn Holf

{ THE ECHOES REMAIN
by Dennis Dietzen

The sun shone brightly, disguising the new fall chill in the air, but illuminating thousands of stocking cap and scarf clad spectators. Noise, deafening as a passing jet overhead, made deaf and dumb strangers out of those now hugging each other. A happiness to match no other shown as clearly on each radiant face as the white yard markers lining the unseasonably green carpet. Streamers danced skyward from the left and right much as a fireworks display might indicate the celebration of Independence Day. Among all this were heroes dressed in bright blue jerseys and shiny gold helmets, basking in the crowd's undying affection and the October sun's best effort.

Suddenly, there is silence, broken only by nearby squealing automobile tires and horns, and darkness, illuminated only by the moon and parking lights. A quick glance reveals empty hot dog wrappers and half-finished Cokes, lying in their own puddles. Busy flies seem to be the only things stirring. The streamers and goal posts, once a mark of celebration, now lie at rest, seemingly exhausted by their efforts. The fall chill now whistles through the stadium with a mere whimper. Among these ruins, one lone, solitary figure, a silhouette against the bleachers, smiles quietly to himself and walks slowly away.



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