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CALIFORNIA

A JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

QUARTERLY

MERIDEL LE SUEUR
WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT
RAY BRADBURY
GEORGE HITCHCOCK
BERT MEYERS
DON GEIGER

LAWRENCE LIPTON
SANFORD EDELSTEIN
WALTER LOWENFELS
PAUL ÉLUARD
HANNAH JOHNSTON
MORTON DIMONDSTEIN

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY

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A CLEAN 6 X 9 READING EDITION

Poetry Must Have as Its Aim... gives this issue its argumentative center, with Paul Éluard setting the terms. The fiction—A Legend of Wilderness Road by Meridel Le Sueur; A Man's First Duty by Hannah Johnston; As Befits Your Estate by Henry L. Wojtyla—moves among private crisis, social pressure, and public consequence, with each story's title and setting supplying a distinct point of entry. The poetry runs from The Man at Mid-Century and Shine On Us, Moses, shifting between grouped poems and single lyrics rather than settling into one house style. The printed contents bring together 3 works of fiction, 21 poetry entries, 1 prose or editorial entry, giving the issue a deliberately mixed pace across genres and forms.

This edition resets the journal's literary texts for reading. Each piece begins on a fresh reader page and identifies its original journal page and PDF scan page; advertisements and decorative matter are omitted. Artwork and irreducibly visual material appear as labelled original plates.

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Notes on Contributors

NIKOLAUS LEN AU has been called "the greatest modern lyric poet of Austria;• although he died as long ago as 1850.

RAY BRADBURY is widely known for his science fiction. His work has appeared in such diverse publications as McCall's and The Nation. His story, A Flight of Ravens, was published in the Winter, 1952, issue of THE CAqFORNIA QUARTERLY. BABETTE DEUTSCH has enjoyed a long career as poet, translator and critic. She is the author of a recent study of modern poetry.

MoRTON DIMONDSTEIN, winner of the ACA annual one-man show competition in 1951, is Art Editor of THE CALIFORNIA QUARTERLYRLY and a founder of Los Angeles' New School of Art.

SANFORD EDELSTEIN is a new poet whose work has appeared in Accent, ~ew Mexico Quarterly, Perspective and other magazines.

PAUL ELUARD, a leading poet of the French Resistance and widely read in the postwar period, died in 1952.

BEN FIELD has written fiction for a variety of publications. His three books-The Cock's Funeral, The Outside Leaf and Piper Tompkins-have recorded the lives of Americans, both foreignand native-born, who work hard for a living.

MARY FULLER has had two one-woman shows as a sculptor, besides contributing fiction and verse to New Story, Goad and other periodicals. She writes successful murder mysteries under a pseudonym.

DoN GEIGER teaches at the University of California at Berkeley. He has had poems in Perspective, Arizona Quarterly, Experiment and other magazines.

GEORGE HITCHCOCK is an ex-trade union executive now on the staff of the California Labor School. He works as a landscape gardener, doubling as an actor with the Interplayers, a non-professional company in San Francisco.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT is a widely known critic and poet who has contributed both forms of writing to our pages in the Fall, 1953, and Winter, 1953, issues. HANNAH JOHNSTON is a new Southern writer

whose passion to communicate, she writes, "is hindered by a thousand things, including the kitchen stove.'" Her appearance here marks her first accepted fiction.

AUGUST KADOW had a poem in the Summer, 1952, issue of THE CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY and has been represented in The New Yorker, Poetry, and The Western Review.

MERIDEL LE SUEUR is noted as a short story writer, journalist, teacher and historian. Among her books are Salute to Spring, North Star Country and The River Road, a story of Abraham Lincoln for younger readers published by Knopf.

LAWRENCE LIPTON has published two novels, In Secret Battle and Brother, the Laugh Is Bitter, as well as mystery fiction under other names. A sizable chunk of his book-length poem, Rainbow at Midnight, appeared in our Spring, 1953, issue.

WALTER LOWENFELS, labor journalist and poet, is the author of eight books of verse, most of them published in France and England. His latest, American Voices, appeared in Philadelphia last year. He has the distinction of being the first poet to be prosecuted under the Smith Act.

BERT MEYERS is a young Los Angeles poet, more of whose work has been accepted for a later issue of THE CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY. HowARD PHILLIPS, another young Californian, has published poetry and fiction in Accent, Prairie Schooner, Masses & Mainstream, Epos, Inferno, and various English and Belgian periodicals, earning his living by a variety of manual and brain work.

NAOMI REPLANSKY achieved stature with her first volume, Ring Song, the title poem of which first appeared in our pages in the summer of 1952.

WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT is among the best-known of contemporary poets. The list of his publications is too long to itemize. Many anthologies include his work.

HAROLD WITT has previously appeared in our pages, as well as in Discovery, Poetry and other magazines. He is represented in Eight American Poets, an anthology published in England.

HENRY L. WOJTYLA spent two years as a cadet at West Point before settling in his native Chicago to write while majoring in Economics at the

University of Chicago. The story presented here is his first published work.

Oscar DE ZUNIGA is a young Filipino- American poet. We believe this to be his first published work.

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A Legend of Wilderness Road

Meridel Le Sueur

L LOOK out the winter-grey log-cabin you had to open the door against the drifts of snow, to the blast of wind and the hounds' cry and the hungry beasts a-prowl, nibbling the bare winter's bough and finding the deep root lurking with juice under the snow; but the woman Nancy with her child Sarah asleep in the bear cover with the bread next to her to keep it from freezing and the gaunt hungry child inside her, his hands like fins, his knees knocking her as he heaved upward against her sides asking for something for his hunger and his thirst and his loneliness the woman had no roots to gnaw, no beast to savor, no book nor bell nor fine talk to bring the young un' in. The unborn child heaved upward, sounding, and she rose in alarm would he crack out now? Where is the bolt of birth, she thought, who counts the fingers, even? There was no answer but the prowling, knocking, unborn child, casting up wing or fin, gathering the substance of a tall man in the new wilderness, on such a night of howling beasts and hunger, in such an early season of a nation's growth.

Anger warmed her too when she thought of the great sea of snow rolling away to Elizabethtown where the taverns would be roaring with heat and rum, and Tom, as like as not, smoking in that awful calm he had, the warm grog down his gullet, and the laughter and talk of others who had been to far places, and his eyes on the white thighs of Millie, forgetting the seed already sowed and the harvest breaking the furrows now.

Standing in the center of the silence, with the howling of hunger outside, the eyes in the snow, in the evergreens, in all the lonely burrows of hunger, the faces arched in asking outside the door, the eyes in the frozen fur of hungry animals, and inside her the lean bony, hungry child scratching at her ribs, she heard the scratching at the door, the gnawing at the cabin roots, the popping of the frozen trees and the long belly-howl of hunger and of the chase and of one thing eating another.

In mirage came the days of her own young hunger, a fair wilderness girl running in the barrows, peering from the leaves, bathing in the sunken springs, walking the streets of Elizabethtown, bearing the pointed finger and the whisper about her mother Lucy Hanks who had brought her over Cumberland Gap with no father and singing with the sin, once posted by the city fathers with a terrible word-fornication-and given a year's probation by the man to be her husband who wore a long coat and a stern face, though now Lucy was broken to the furrow, plowed and cropped with more children than you could count, and no more singing.

Listen to the running of the gentlemen's hounds hungry for prey, they sounded now two miles to the west near the Sparrow cabin, the nearest and what if the child should come early and be born early, then who would lean over the one-legged corner bed and say a word of comfort and cut the cord of life? Count the time again from crab-apple time, and it should be February then for sure and certain; but you never could tell with this one, not round and swimming in a fair summer like Sarah had been but strange in her like a sack of rocks-was that a knee or a hand to shake hello?-as if she nourished in her a fin from the deeps as he seemed to moan in her loneliness and made her double with laughter and anxiety as if his bones shook her, rose and turned with some questing beyond her, with a pressure of delight and urgency. She had bent over, laughing, in the fall when his knocking had started, when she and Sarah had picked the forest nuts, buried potatoes, ground the corn meal; she would bend over, laughing silently, and shake her head and know that there was a friend coming to her loneliness in the wilderness.

"Hush thee, hush thee, thy father's a gentleman;" her mother had sometimes sung, and she had put ribbons brought in a caravan over her buckskin skirt and traipsed around humming the old song:

Here we come. / Where from? What's your name? / Pudd'n n Tame.
What's your other? / Bread n Butter. Where do you live? / In a sieve.

She laughed now, putting her hands on the gravid center which seemed to contain its own heat and life. "Where you from?" she asked the unborn child, in a lone cabin, in the grey light, with the hounds running for sure far off over the hills. Sarah moved, and she masked her face, neatly folding away the swollen fear and loneliness. But Sarah slept again, and Nancy ground that Tom under her heel for the silence in him, with the muteness of him, being his own man since twelve, walking west

alone, no higher than a grasshopper. He was a hunter, not a ploughman, quick to look down the barrel of a gun to get prey in his sight, and she knew how every little animal felt, doomed by his steady silent gaze. No dancing in him or singing or fancy tall talk, and no softness for the reading of a book or the thoughts from the minds of tall spired men. He ate, filled the pot; he came to bed.

When she shyly looked at his stocky figure bringing in meat when no one else could, she had thought he would be a friend to her, lonely like herself and shy in his wooing. So the banns had been published, and the country people had come in buckboards or a-horseback from way in the back country, the swamp people, the plains hunters, even old Daniel Boone; and every- [4. The California Quarterly] thing had been in Kentucky style with the guests stuffing themselves with bear meat, wild turkey, wild ducks, maple sugar lumps tied on a string to bite off, syrup in gourds, peach and honey preserves and the whiskey barrels running like spring trees. It had been right gay to mount the horse behind Tom and put your arms around his stocky waist and feel his back like a rock of ages, protecting you from the shouts and the jokes that made you blush-to ride in the blossoming of June to the one-room cabin behind the courthouse, and turn dismayed then, after that night, caught in his trap, running in the trap of a little cabin, and only then remembering the heft of a man over you, the dark head between your hands, and the will of a man not taking you in, and all the gay fixings gone, and only a terrible darkness like drowning over you, and the sound of your own weeping, like the spring she had seen Tom fire into to start it flowing, and no woman to speak of it to, each bearing her crop in silence, saying nothing, and the earth bearing in silence.

He had invaded and stupefied her mind, too. Reading, to him, was akin to wantonness. "I always suspectin' 'bout that readin'; " he said, making her hide her books as something illicit. "How you larnin' to read? From sleepin' with that golden-ha'rred preacher who come hyar to bring one o' them consarned books onc't? Or runnin' out oglin' every son of a gun with a book or a mite of larnin' comes down Wilderness Road?" She had flown at him like a magpie. "You don't larn readin' in bed. Readin' is harder'n cuttin' down a tree. I'm gonna have me a son that takes to readin'; who wants to know something besides the eye down the barrel of a gun-wants to know about the whole endurin' world and the time o' man

upon hit'.' "You talkin' mighty flighty and high-and-mighty for a plain hunter's wife'.' And he had taken her down on the bed by violence.

After that she lay under him like a whippet, turning her being out yonder beyond him, way in the wilderness, and she called for a friend out of the hurricane. She had a fury in her for the ways of men taking all to themselves, learning in the books, gallivanting around, hearing all the great talk, coming west now in every caravan.

She thought, "A boy now can go out in the pike where everyone from the east is passin' by, and he can get him a heap o' larnin' just that-a-way, and the blab schools is comin' in and I heard there was a library of books not fur from here, and there there would be all and sundry to come and speak to a boy in the wilderness and tell him what they know and what they brung with them. He could study everything out now and nobody tellin' him he's a woman and should be put in the stocks on courthouse day in Elizabethtown. There are men passin' by here every day of a truth-tellin' nature and they would give hit out to a bof She sat on the edge of the one-legged bed, waiting, her mind roving out in the windy twilight looking for food. Thoughts came to her and all were her own since it was a crime for a woman to look into a book. She felt like the smallest door in the universe through which now came a strange man-like a little cave, secret and unknown-like a pod in the frost, a centre whirling [5. A Legend of Wilderness Road J inward, now full of dreams she never knew, alive in knockings and stirrings and prescience of things and times she would never live to see.

Tough and brown and enduring she was, a storm in an acorn, wrath in a nut, a woman in a cabin, and she left Tom the poor huntsman out of the circle of her cat's cradle and turned to her own creation. The wind leaned and blew against the door, and she laughed and spoke to it. "Go 'way from my door;" she said, "all of you go 'way'." And to the hungry child, "I'll feed you, I'll find you food, I'll born you right there without no granny woman'." For she saw clearly, standing wildy and alone, her fists clenched, that she would deliver herself in February, when the snow would be deep, and nobody would come down that road through those heavy drifts, and she would wait alone the day when she would be brought to bed, nigh on February she figured it, and she would struggle alone to bring him to birth, the raw-boned hunter's spawn, this swamp

baby who would be too lean, too dark, a forest thing, made of too much squirrel meat and paw-paws and wild nuts and loneliness.

"And I'll give you warm milk, I always have big dugs for a little one, you'll trot beside me like a long-legged fawn in a bad season, lean and rangy but beautiful to me, my loneliness made tall, my hunger walking, a friend to me in the wilderness.. '.' Hugging herself against the cold that crept like wolf-howls under the door, through the cracks, she asked of the knobs pressing against her sides, "Is that your head or your knees or the butt end of you? Are you there, Abe? Are you warm?" And the awful answer came-hunger. "I am hungry in the darkness;" the knocking said, and with an awful gnawing hollowness she admitted at last the hunger that rears in flowers and beast, speaking from the bright-fanged mouth, that asks from beast's eye in darkness, from fang and fur, claw and hand. The howling wind cried hunger, and the cry of stag and dog, and even the tiny squeaking of the field mice, the tiny deer ears, as like a shadow they flitted across her vision, all cried hunger.

Death had eaten her babies-they were so tiny and unknown in the wilderness-she had left them in the hungry earth. This one should not die. Out of the air she would snatch sustenance. Beasts and berries should feed him, he would live off frozen boughs and be kin to all the hungry. She would find a way to feed him. With a blind strength she took the long unwieldy gun, loaded, rammed it, pushed with all her might against the leather-hinged door, with a gasp fell into the great space and cold of the great earth and sky, the white space and the long shadows, the frozen lyre of the grasses rasped, harped by the wind. The earth opened fanwise, stretching out in overlapping waves beyond and beyond, and the high pulsing cold struck her, and she saw it strike blue against the snow and vault in an incredible flight of light which seemed to beat her as the wintry day drifted to darkness and the frost cupped the light like a shell.

The opened door let in the baying of the hounds, and she could see within the sound their red mouths dripping. All the shadows moved, and she had the feeling of eyes looking at her from the wind, the shadow and the hill, [6. The California Quarterly] and she imagined she could hear the lipping of the spring still unfrozen under the snow. Above she felt the avaricious birds flying low, hawk or crow or owl, peering upon crouching catamount, mink or deer or tiny glass-eyed mice and hungry rabbits.

Who hunted her down? She had a mad predatory hunger, now keen as that of the animals, to smell the warm odour of meat cooking spicy and flavorsome for her young.

Cradling the gun, she pushed the door shut and turned into the cold, sinking to her knees, floundering down the barrows, and she felt the child clutch her and hang to the hungry cliff of her sides. She felt something following her, and looking back saw only the cabin almost dark, the windowless sides without eye. How could so small a space hold begetting and birth, the sorrow and the waiting? It seemed to her like herself, a cave's mouth opening inward to vast spaces of the earth.

She turned and went On down the snowy hill, and ahead in the tricky light she thought she saw many animals around the Sinking Spring, and she stopped to make her cabin eyes focus on them as she raised her gun and pointed it at the shadows. She stood in the frosty cold a long time, waiting to see what shadows moved, the snow to her knees; she blended with the swell of the frozen land, and she let the sense of touch of the land come back to her, as it always had, benevolent. But she felt then a shadow following her, stopping when she stopped. She felt it behind, along her back, at the hair roots, and she stood still.

It stood still also, and she thought it was only the secret life around her, the eye of bird, of fox, of rabbit, of nests of coiled snakes, even of chrysalis hanging from a tree limb.

She moved forward, her long dress wet now, but she thought she saw a lean rabbit in the scrub. A rabbit in the pot would send up a savory odour and there would be a little meat for the picking. But the shadow behind her again moved, and the feeling froze her neck and made her back ache. She stopped; the shadow stopped. Far off she could hear the baying of the dogs, now wild upon the chase and the kill. The gun hung heavy in her hand and she felt a moment of utter cold. Then against the sky she saw the head of a doe lift-- For a moment she thought it might be an Indian, but then, unmistakably, she saw the familiar sight of the deer, standing on the spring mound, its tender butt reared, looking in fright.

The shadow behind her moved, streaked like a breath past her. She stood with her mouth opened but did not know if it was herself or the lion that screamed, or the deer. It was a sharp rending of the cold air; the baying hounds seemed to swerve and stop; and then the monumental

shadows struggled by the spring, silently, as in childbirth, with only grunts and strange tearings and terrible tensions of blood and bones.

She stood like a tree rooted, her arms outheld. Then silence, except for a lapping sound. To her horror the big cat dragged the doe out into the light of the snow. She could see clearly as he opened the carcass, and the bright entrails shone of warm blood spread on the snow. He crouched with his blunt [7. A Legend of Wilderness Road] nose in the meat, and as she moved he raised his eyes and looked at her with a hungry look over his bloody nose and tearing fangs as if to say, Forgive me my hunger...

She saw something on the snow beside her. It was the rabbit the cat had killed and dropped when he saw the larger prey. She picked it up, still warm, and with the gun pointed at the lion she moved backward in her tracks. But the lion was gluttoned with warmth, and his hunger made a tearing noise; she could see the hot blood on the snow and the neck of the deer thrown back as in terror or in love.

Slowly the night fell around her, the blue shadows rose from the earth like a tide engulfing her. Slowly, afraid to make a sharp move, she reached the door and heard inside the child Sarah crying, wakened by her hungers too. She got in and shut the door. The wave of cabin warmth struck her. She dropped the gun, she waved the rabbit... and began a wild singing:

"Rabbit in the cooking pot Shoo fly shoo Rabbit for my Sarah I mean you Rabbit in the cooking pot Shoo fly shoo Skip to my Lou my darling!' And Sarah cried out at the gaiety of her mother.

Nancy grabbed her from the bear cover, with the small bread in her arms, swung her round the cabin, the ears of the rabbit flying, and outside the awful cry of the catamount. "Dance to keep warm, stir up the fire, skin the rabbit and pop him in our mouths!'" And to the knocking inside her, "Yes, yes, hungry mouth!'" And, skinning the coat off the gentle rabbit who said nothing and might have been her summer friend but now fed her winter's hunger: "Pardon me, friend;" she thought, "for all the hunger at the ribs of all of us, baying inside and out, crying our hunger-the fox and the squirrel and the field mice and the bugs and crickets-all, all with a beast at our ribs nipping and howling. Ah, the hunger and the cry of all brothers. Is it you, boy, knocking and splintering my ribs from hunger? You'll have in you the hungers and the

haunts and the hounds of this night, the little rabbit dropped for you from the mountain lion's mouth; ah, you'll have a tough juniper heartbeat. I am strong, and you be toO:' "Show me, mammy, show me how you dancin; " Sarah cried. So they danced together in the crazy firelight and fell laughing and tickling each other on the bed, and Nancy rose startled, listening for other times. "I always liked it;" she told Sarah, "when the folks came in winter, and the new children, born and unborn, and the fresh milk from the cow, and golden butter, and many kinds of preserves and five kinds of meat, the table groanin' and the big loaves of bread from the ovens. Bring the little bread over and let it warm with the rabbit.'" [8. The California Quarterly J "You waitin' for someone, mammy?" "No;" she said. "No track to our door now. He'll come up no path that you'll be seein'. I'll wait till February. I'll get my own food or a catamount'll bring it. Tomorrow there'll be some of the doe left.'" "You lookin' for somebody, mammy, to come?" "I'm looking' for somebody, but he ain't comin' through that door. He'll come up no path you'll be seein'. Not up that path nor through that door.'" "Is that a riddle, mammy?" "Yes; riddle me that, Sarry. Where do you live? In a sieve. Is someone walkin' in the snow? Who is leaning from the rock? Who is mangered, leashed and staked in me now? No path, no door.'" She smiled, sticking her nose in the pot where the little rabbit began to blend with the heat and spices, and Nancy Hanks hugged herself and smiled, for more than man could be the hunter, and there were no lengths she would not go to find food and fur and fire and shelter.

They sat, the kind rabbit in the pot between them, and ate and sucked the little bones and licked their lips and looked at each other smiling and the child fell over full and heavy in sleep. Nancy covered her and wrapped herself beside the fire which now must die down to save wood. Tomorrow she would find the stumps under the snow, swing the ax, bring in the logs. She had only to wait till February. She settled down with the friend coming to her in the wilderness. "You goin' to be mighty thin and swampy, but living, tough and strong. I'll have plenty for you, Abe, larnin' too, and books. You goin' to be a tall rawbone hunter's swamp baby, made o' too much rabbit meat, I reckon, lean and lonesome, but sweet as a paw-paw. You goin' to be my loneliness made tall, my hunger walking, a friend to all in the wilderness, Abraham.'" [9. A Legend of Wilderness Road]

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The Man at Mid-Century

Winfield Townley Scott

We cannot guess how long he'll wait.
He paces in his room alone
Imagining someone must come
Whose voice will force the lag of fate.
He paces puzzled, helpless, dumb,
Or sits beside the telephone
Hoping it may ring his ring
And someone solve him everything.
Television, radio:
Sessions to watch and listen to
Lest someone there let slip the clue
Of what he needs to need to know.
All possibilities allowed, -
He leaves the latchkeys in his locks
And walks among the city crowd
Seeking the face that will reveal
Someone whose quickening answers frame
His inarticulate questioning.
He hurries home to letter-box,
To rooms as empty, to the same
Expectancy of dreams and drink.
Pacing he waits for me or you
Or anyone to speak his name:
Someone to tell him what to do
Someone to tell him what to think
Someone to tell him what to feel.

[10]

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On Not Going to New Bedford

Winfield Townley Scott

(because a book-censorship trial was postponed)

Here I sit at the edge of a ravelling wood,
Air twirling with oak leaves, the far view
The burned-black architecture of trunks and limbs
Dire within the maples' orange burning; I,
Promised this morning speech in a sea-sunned courtroom
In New Bedford against the burners of books.

Authorities may promise another morning? And
• Meanwhile weather is coming: wind has whittled
The world thin, and the jays flash yakking.
But the bitten leaves and a sudden flush of bluebirds
Fly banners of weaving azure and gold across
This country's day, old bond servants of light.

Here I sit scratching a bit of scrimshaw,
Using bone at hand as best I can
Yet strange with unwitting; I was meant
To drive myself eighty miles to the sea-
Stalk in New Bedford streets white Knights of Columbus
And bear a long-prepared, a dark harpoon.

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Death in Mexico

Ray Bradbury

I thought it strange to see them on the path
That led them up in sun and lemon-shadow
Through winds that smelled of summer and of wine.

I thought that they were only passing
The delicate and fern-scrolled iron gates
The winter-white, the marble cemetery
Carrying their lunch in a little silver case.
Murmuring, all,
And chattering, and smiling;
One held a soft guitar and touched it with a whorled thumb;
And they were dark birds wheeling south at winter's call.

I saw them chewing tangerines and spitting seeds,
I saw them move, night among day-whitened stone.
And the food that they ate upon was death,
And the sustenance they bore in a silver box
Was the fossil imprint of a child.

They carried her like jewels overhead;
The father balanced her, hand up, gently as a plume,
A crated feather, a valley flower, an April grass.
And no one wept.

But each was eating of the air and of the day,
As quick, as quickly as they could.
They ate the sky with eyes,
And the wind with teeth,
And the sun with their flesh;

And it was good to be alive,
If only to be walking here
With Death crowned upon their heads,

Death delicate as moss and leaf mold
Borne in a box.

Within the box was running and laughter and dark hair,
Within the box was the eye of the antelope
And the breath of the moon,
Within the box a fevered but cooling apricot, a pear,
Within the box all life that was or ever comes to be,
Within the box some picnic tinsel, silver amulet, mountain shade.

They moved on with their murmuring guitar,
I saw the great fern shadows of the iron gate blow shut.
How strange-I smiled-that I should think them picnicking,
How strange to think they carried wine above their heads;
For, in reality,
Those souls were eating long before the noon
And long after the midnight,
They ate forever and never stopped their eating,

Even as I, hurrying in an icy wind,
Sculled down the quiet avalanche of cobbled street and hill
Eating of the clear air, and drinking of the mellow wind,

[12]

And eating of the blue sky
And taking the golden dust with my mouth
And feeding the yellow sun to my soul.
I passed a coffin shop where hammers
Were ticking like clocks.

I woke in the night so hungry that I wept.

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JOURNAL PAGE 13 / SCAN PAGE 15

A Reminder

George Hitchcock

Let us never forget to speak in anger
Of what's loathesome.
Of the general's boots on the crocuses
Of the scorpions in the apple trees.
Of the white ants which devour our love.

Let us then despise that which corrupts
And not praise it.
The hand raised to bless the bombers
The horned toad in the committee room
The television set in the urinal.

And if despite our hate they still endure
Then speak louder.
Deep in their tunnels lions answer
Butterflies stir in their chrysalids
And poplar roots enter the Library of Congress.

Tomorrow Rockefeller too
Will melt in wax drops on the parquetry
And the Swiss Guard weep amidst tulips.

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Roughing It

Bert Meyers

Mountains: their hidden movements, ambush;
noon, sullen, hot, crouched on a ledge.
But we too have sudden lightning
in the iron bough we grip ...
yet rocks the air snaps in its midnight jaws •
could be the sly circling of our death.

Screen, screen then, the hillside!
Make each bush reveal a secret!
Who knows? a stick may suddenly uncoil,
ants, beetles, lizards, carry poison.
Let paths wag their tails around our feet.
The deer, plump flesh of the mountains,
will be ours; and, at night,
with coffee pioneering through our veins,
a little music from the radio,
we'll stretch outside our tent

(no risk, but robust in our daring)
inhaling oak tang, dirt and London Dock.

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The Cougar Has Been Shot

Bert Meyers

Something of the mountains,
something that wrinkled,
muscle of sunlight in the trees,
crept like a slope at evening
to a stream, washed its paws,
sticky with sunset, death ...

[14]

When night hunched anonymous,
snarling in the leaves,
who could divide those eyes
from stars that trailed us
branch to branch overhead?
And once, I heard the gullies
raging, underbrush grow furious,
roots, rock, the air, rise up
to JOLil a giant matmg ...

Brought to life by their guns,
the weekend hunters worry:
such mountain breaking, making passion,
in a living thing is dangerous.

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Spring Offensive

Don Geiger

Winter has passed.
Quickening steel grows warm.
From humming hives
The hustling bombers swarm.

Envious grass
Turns green; and blue skies see,
Covering all
The soldiers' industry

Where men form vast
Assembly lines to graves.
But Nature learns
Established practice saves

The fruits that slow
Aggressiveness can bring.
Where soldiers bleed,
Slow tiger lilies spring.

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Mr. Metetinus in Quest of the Absolute

Lawrence Lipton

A sharpened pencil will suffice
To penetrate the infinite,
One need but contrive, he said,
To put that fine a point on it.

As a child he collected paper match folders.
Resolved to build up to the last and final
number, "What;" he asked,
"Is the last, the very last and final number,
mother?"
"Son, there is no last and final number;"
mother said.
And young Metetinus wept.

Climbing mountains was a sport he loved.
Rainier, McKinley, Aconcagua-he stood
one day upon the highest peak of Everest;
Alone, unwitnessed, unrecorded, peered
into the heavens and
Found only snow." 'Tis clear;" he said, "the eye
is insufficient to explore the sky'."

Descending into Mendip mine he took a reading,
calculated distance to dead center of
The globe, in meters, versts and furlongs,
also rods and inches to
The final fraction.: "Who can say;" he reasoned,
"where the answer lies?"
A line of exploration, he concluded,

most unlikely and perhaps unwise.

By a merchant in Tientsin he was shown a Chinese box

fitted box within box to the tenth power

And how many powers beyond powers he never knew,

for the crafty Chinese held out the final box

And would part with it only at a price he could not pay,

having left his wallet at the Metropole.

Returning with the stipulated sum, he lost his way

and never found the shop again,

Having no map of the town and not knowing

the language of the people.

Toward the last he spoke little and slept much,

collecting toy elephants, smaller and smaller

And smaller, and wept to think that he would never

see the last minutest one of them,

Owing, he said, to his failing eyesight. And thus

he died,

Impaled, groping for a paper-knife without a blade,

which had no handle.

The mourners came, placing candles at his head

and feet. That night the house burned down,

Consuming Mr. Metetinus in toto; much to the dismay

of the mourners, the regret of the mortuary accountant,

The cemetery committee, and the displeasure of

the Coroner's office of Providence Rhode Island

Which does not believe in the total extinction of matter.

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Poem

Sanford Edelstein

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At Bushkill Falls

Walter Lowenfels

Yes this is the secret spring
the Indians used to visit.
The woods cover up the sky here.
It is a sound place to make magic.

The waterfall
was there when you were asleep.
Indians used to trap around the bend.
Yes that's the wigwam your ancestor
blew to hell for a dollar and a half.
My God! who can ask them to forgive?
What tales we could tell if we could be honest

in our sleep.
You arrogant Me that stands up and dares
the world
to judge your genesis in genocide.
I free myself by association. I will be Indian,
a native of Dry Tortugas. Give me your blood
give me your copper skin my fathers.
Get me out of this fix! Help!
I am drowning Mother drowning in the blood

I have spilled
over these waterfalls ...

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Poetry Must Have as Its Aim...

Paul Éluard

(To friends whose demands are exacting)

If I tell you that sun over trees is like a passionate womb that palpitates for its love in bed you believe what I say, you approve my design.

If I tell you the crystal sheen of a rainy day sounds forever in the indolence of lovers caressing you credit my words you give me more time for loving.

If I tell you that in my bed's foliage a bird makes her nest who never says yes love yes you take my word you share my unrest.

If I tell you that in the depths of a frozen spring a flood tide opens the ways to flowering fields you believe me, even more, you understand me.

But if I open for you-nothing kept aside my life's song and my country's you turn from our unending road you don't believe me any more. You pick a deserted lane.

You advance without human aim if you do not see that mankind needs to be one in hope in struggle in understanding things in order to transform the world.

With one small beat of my heart I lead you I without army I have lived and live still more but I am astounded at speaking only to enchant you.

My mission is to liberate you make you as one with animalcules with reeds that blow at dawn as with brothers who build their own light.

-Adapted from the French by WALTER LowENFELS

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A Man's First Duty

Hannah Johnston

As the seminar broke up, the small group of students and Professor MacDonald went out on the front lawn of the Brooks building. One of the brighter students still held forth passionately on the futility of the martyrs.

"What percentage was there in all that being burned up?" he said. "I think they could have outsmarted those old foxes without going to all that trouble." MacDonald chuckled. "Read Mark Twain's Joan of Arc if you want to know the answer. He gives it better than I ever could." He turned toward home, feeling deeply content. He looked at the blue hills surrounding the little town, where the faint April green was coming out; he looked up at the virginal New England sky; he noticed the first crocus on the lawn of the President's mansion, and allowed himself the thought that perhaps one day he might live there in that classic white simplicity.

Both he and his wife Melissa loved Lowell. After the grim rigors of the big midwestern university where he had been only a small link in the assembly line of knowledge, this intimacy with nature, with his students, and with his fellow faculty members was delightful.

He liked teaching. He loved to watch the growth of young minds with their endless questioning. It was lucky that his mother, with the stubbornness of her Scotch Presbyterian ancestors, had bent him to the teaching profession. She had worked her fingers to the bone for him, and after his father's death she had poured into him all the love of her bitter life. It was a heavy sorrow to him to think of her living alone, among strangers, but two women in one house was too much. He could not expect Melissa, with her sharp efficiency, to stand for his mother's slow fumbling ways, and her dour personality. Yet he felt a pang of guilt whenever he thought about it.

Now he remembered that he had not sent the money for her board this month. No matter what he made, it was never enough. And yet Melissa was a wonderful manager. She had certainly done wonders with

the white cottage they had rented, and it gave him a great satisfaction to see the neat, ordered lawn and garden.

[20. The California Quarterly J As he opened the front door, Melissa came out of the kitchen. She too looked ordered and neat. She had been doing Nurse's Aid that morning, and was still in the blue uniform that was infinitely becoming to her bright blue eyes and clear blondness. Her slender figure was like a young girl's, in spite of the two children at nursery school. Her brows and lashes were very light, but she darkened them skillfully so that they stood out against her transparent skin. Her teeth protruded just a little so that her red mouth always looked a bit pouting, but as she held it up for him to kiss he saw no blemish in her.

"Oh, darling, I have the most exciting news! You know Lillie Gray-the President's wife-is in my nursing unit, and we have gotten to be real good friends. Now she's asked us over for cocktails to meet-guess who? Bradford Perkins himself! Isn't that exciting?"

Mac too felt pleased at this sign of recognition, although he knew that Mr. Perkins, who was the richest and most influential trustee, would likely be more interested in Melissa's sharp prettiness than in him.

He said teasingly, "So you want to be an old man's darling, not a young man's slave?"

Melissa laughed. "I'll stick to my poor old hard-working husband, although I certainly do wish he had some of the Perkins cash. Come on in to lunch. I've celebrated with a good one today.'" She had spread a red cloth on the kitchen table and put out a bottle of wine, a loaf of rye bread, and her wonderful salad of mixed greens and anchovies and cheese. She had also made coffee and picked up a Danish pastry on the way home. He was drinking his coffee with satisfaction when the postman brought the mail, and Melissa went through it rapidly. That was one of her small habits that irritated him; he did like to look through the mail first, but he knew it was silly. So he sat in peace while she sorted it into neat piles bills, of which there were far too many; advertisements, a huge stack; her mail, which was considerable, as she acted as secretary for her class at Smith; and his, which consisted of only one letter.

His face lit up when he saw it. It was marked "Berkeley, California;" and he knew it was from old Crock. Crock had been his roommate in college and in graduate school, and they had taught together the first year. But Crock, who was a chemist, had soon gone out to Cal Tech, then

to Berkeley, where he now held a full professorship, and from where he often wrote kidding and happy letters, usually with snapshots of his wife and three children.

Mac opened the letter with anticipation.

"Dear son I suppose you have been seeing in the papers that the witches are riding out here, the broomsticks are flying and the black cats are crossing our paths in every direction. Some of us, who don't believe in witches, are not signing the oath. All hell has broke loose. Of course we are trying to get support from our fellow slaves. I am enclosing a petition which I hope you will circulate among your colleagues. Also any cash that is handy would be welcome, as we have all the expense of the lawsuit ahead of us. I think we [11. A Man's First Duty] will win if we ever get it up to the court, but getting it there is tough and takes dough. God, son- I never saw such a lousy bunch of yellow, crawling bastards in my life! They all go around scared to death. What the hell is this country coming to? Will keep you informed. Do what you can.

"Old Faithful, "Crock"

Mac threw the letter over to Melissa. "Isn't that a hell of a note?" He saw her wince as she read it. She had never been fond of Crock and had made quite a point of it when he had wanted Crock to be the godfather of their first child.

"What's the use, when he's so far away, and never even been in a church in his life?'" They had compromised with his Dean.

Now she threw the letter back to him. "Just like old Loud Mouth. He would want to be a martyr to get his name in the papers:' Mac was outraged. "What do you mean? You think he should crawl on his belly for that bunch of dopes?"

"What will it cost him? He was careful to marry a rich wife in spite of all his wild talk. I think he's purely and simply an exhibitionist:' Mac stammered as he sometimes did when he got angry. "M-M-M-Melissa, stop! I don't like it! If he's doing this it's because he feels he has to, and it's damn tough, too:' "Why does he feel he must? Is he a Communist? I always thought he might be.'" "M-M-Melissa, are you crazy? You know Crock as well as I do. He never had a political thought in his life:' Melissa was angry too. "You know it doesn't make a damn bit of difference if he is or isn't. If he refuses to sign the oath he'll be called a Communist, and if

you back him up, you will be too:' Mac looked at her in astonishment. "Do you think I should just sit and do nothing while he loses his job?"

"You'll lose your job if you try and mess in this:' She began to cry. "Oh, God! I try so hard and work and contrive until I'm exhausted, and then you're so simpie and naive. I feel as though I'm married to a babi' Mac pushed his chair back and left the room without another word. When he arrived at his office he could hardly see the lock. His hand shook as he tried the key.

As soon as he had seen his students, he got out his typewriter and started a letter.

"Dear Old Faithful I exploded when I got your letter, and I am still boiling. Of course I will do--"

He looked up to see his Dean in the doorway. The Dean had a white and serious face. He was a very nice guy, and as Mac did not yet have permanent tenure, his support meant a lot. He was a middle-aged man with a pleasant manner who got on well with everybody.

[22. The California Quarterly J He sat down and took out a cigarette. "Mac;' he said, "I want to talk to you. Lock up so we won't be disturbed.'" After Mac had locked the door, he began again. "Mac, you know how much I like you and Melissa. When she called me this afternoon, she was crying over the telephone. I cut all my afternoon classes and came over.'" Mac felt his anger rise again. "Melissa will have to find out there are parts of my life she can't run. I suppose she told you about the letter from Crock? You know who he is-Dr. Charles Simpson Crocker, just about the most brilliant young chemist in the countrY:' "I know he's considered a brilliant chemist. I'm not sure that qualifies him as an expert in other lines. But what I want to do is to show you exactly what you will be doing to yourself, and also to Melissa and to me.'" "To you and Melissa? My God, man, you must all be crazy!" "Now, Mac, just take it easy. I know how you feel. It seems a small thing to circulate a petition and ask for donations, and if you had permanent tenure I would say, 'Go ahead, and God bless you; but you don't have tenure, and it won't be decided until this spring. A thing of this kind will not help you, and it won't help the Department.'" Mac stood up. He was trembling. "If you will recall, the AAUP went on record opposing the Oath, and I don't see why there should be any objection to a petition in support of the ones that didn't sign out at California.'" The Dean sat still and patient. "I simply don't

know how the faculty would react. It's a very different thing to vote for something, and to sign your name to a petition. I make it a rule never to sign anything, and I have found it a very good rule. One of our wild men like Old Man Hood will be glad to circulate the petition, but right now for you to take the initiative would not be wise. Our Department is asking for quite an increase in its appropriations. We stand a good chance if we don't rock the boat. I don't think I need tell you that you have made a very fine impression here, and we want to keep you with us.' Mac looked into his eyes. "Are you telling me that if I circulate this petition I'll get fired?"

The Dean spoke stiffly. "I said nothing of the kind. You know we don't do that sort of thing here at Lowell. I'm simply pointing out the position we're in. If you prefer to put your private emotions above your own good, and Melissa's good, and the security of your children and your mother, you're perfectly free to do so. If you prefer to think first of yourself rather than of the Department, you may. I am simply pointing out that a price must be paid for everything, and if we don't get the increase, I doubt if we can take on any more full professors. Of course, you can stay here as you are. That is, if the President and the faculty go along with it.' Mac sat down again. "And you don't think they will?" "Mac, as you know, we don't have loyalty oaths here at Lowell, and we don't require that a man be investigated by the FBI, as some of the larger [23. A Man's First Duty] universities do. But we do have a feeling of loyalty to one another that keeps us from doing things that will hurt us all.' "I don't notice that Hood has stopped circulating petitions on everything from China to Mississippi.' The Dean laughed. "Oh, yes! Old Man Hood spouts off all the time, and no one tries to shut him up. But he's been here nearly forty years. That makes a big difference. When you've been here forty years you can indulge your eccentricities too.' Mac said nothing. The Dean walked to the door. "Well, Mac, think it over. Think it over carefully, and we'll talk about it again tomorrow.' With the door shut, Mac turned back to the typewriter. "Of course I'll do all I can to help you. I don't know what the score is around here, but--" The door opened again. Ben stood there. A good-looking dark man in his thirties, Ben was one of the small crowd Mac and Melissa went with. He was one of Mac's favorites.

"Come on in,' Mac said. "I suppose Melissa called you too? Six-alarm Ben came in, took out a small bottle of whiskey which he solemnly

poured into two tumblers from the washstand. "Drink this, brother. Before you say a word, I know what you're up against.'" Mac drank the whiskey and laughed sourly. "I'll have the whole congregation here pretty soon, all trying to save me. Hell, man; what's the fuss about? We voted against the oath, and when a few guys stand up and fight it, all hell breaks loose.'" Ben said quietly, "Take it easy, boy. I know it's hard not to do the things you want to do, and I know what it's like when you do. Take my word for it.'" He paused and drank again. "Did you know I was born in a tenement on the lower East Side? My people could hardly speak a word of English and we had rough going, I can tell you. I had to fight like hell to get anywhere. When I finally got to NYU the Commies thought I would be a pushover and really sucked me in. I signed up to go to Spain with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.'" Mac looked up startled. "Now you see how much I trust you;" Ben said. "If that ever got out I'd be a dead duck. Fortunately I got sick-mumps, of all things-and when I went back to school I got a scholarship to Yale and things began to look up for me. I met Christina at Yale, and her family are pretty well connected in this part of the world, so I think we'll get along O.K. if all that isn't brought up. Of course I haven't seen any of those guys for years and realize how foolish I was ever to fall for that tripe, but just the same if you start any agitation around here they'll get me sure, and with my folks' foreign background I won't have a chance.'" Mac sat silent. Finally he said, "God, man, do you live in terror all the time?"

[24. The California Quarterly J Ben laughed shortly. "Well, sometimes the going gets rough when the lightning strikes close by, but Christina and the kids are a big help.'" Mac said with an effort, "Thanks a lot for coming. I won't say anything to anybody.'" Ben stood up. "This is a movie I've seen before, and it's tough at the time, brother, but there's no percentage in sticking your neck out for that bunch of bastards-"

Mac got up, suddenly furious. "Get out, before I throw you out!" He slammed the door on Ben, gulped the rest of the whiskey and finished his letter.

"But there are a few guys I think I can count on, and we'll see what we - can do. "Good luck, "Mac"

He had addressed the letter and stamped it when the phone rang. It was Melissa. Her voice sounded sweet and pathetic.

"Mac, are you coming home now? Do you want me to come for you?" His anger still hard, he said, "No, I'm going to eat downtown, I'll come home later.'" "Mac, I'm sorry I hurt you. Please forgive me. I'm only trying to help you. Please don't do anything until you think it over. Please, Mac darling!"

When she began to cry, Mac hung up and jammed the letter in his pocket. He left his office for the Faculty Club. He was early. The only other occupant of the dining room was Old Man Hood. Hood was a spare old man with a hearing aid. He taught Romance languages and had taken some part in the Sacco -Vanzetti defense.

Mac went over and sat with him. The old man proved attentive and sympathetic. He agreed to sign the petition, gave twenty-five dollars, and began to talk of the days of the Palmer raids. "It's worse now, though. Even the Bar Association stood up and fought then, but now everyone seems turned to jelly. I don't understand what's happened to this country.'" Mac asked him, "Did your part in the Sacco-Vanzetti trial hurt you here at the time?"

Old Man Hood laughed. "Certainly. But there were a lot of us. Now it seems to be each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost.'" As soon as dinner was over Mac went out. He meant to go and see some of his friends and enlist their support, but he felt so tired that he turned into a movie and sat through a dull picture. On calm reflection, he could not see that he was getting himself into any jam. When his name came up for consideration for permanent tenure, some of the Nervous Nellies might bring this up-and of course Melissa got upset easily, she wanted him to succeed so terribly. As for Ben, well, the ex-Communists seemed always to be the most terrified of all. But as for him, he had only to be patient, and quiet Melissa's fears, and do what he had to do for Crock.

[25.A Man's First Duty J On his. way home he even began to feel a glow of satisfaction. Old Crock knew he could count on him. From some dark place in his mind he remembered the phrase, "Greater love than this hath no man, that he lay down his life for his friend.'" But how mock-heroic that was when he was really only doing what any decent guy would do.

The house was dark and silent. He walked lightly upstairs, undressed in the dark and slid quietly into bed. He felt Melissa turn over. Then she buried her head on his shoulder and began to cry again.

"Oh, darling, do forgive me, I've felt so awful that I hurt you. You know I do love you and only want to help you.'" "Of course I forgive you, but please don't sic all the faculty on me. I have to decide these things for myself.'" "Did you mail the letter to Crock?" "I will in the morning. Old Hood has already agreed to sign and given me twenty-five dollars.'" Melissa moved over to her side of the bed and lay motionless and silent. Mac had never had much time for girls, and no money either, and when he met Melissa in graduate school, he had been delighted with her brightness and prettiness and smartness. She herself, and every place she lived in, always seemed to reflect the order and neatness of her mind. After his untidy youth, she meant a great deal to him. He had loved her very much and been a little humble and surprised that she had loved him enough to marry him.

But did he love her still? She gave him comfort and order, and was always working for his best interests. She was a careful mother, and a good one. But did she really love him, or just "her man"? He had often heard her say, "My man and I have to go now;" and everyone thought it was just another of her bright sayings...

When he awoke, she was standing by him with a breakfast tray.

"Here's your breakfast, darling. Do sit up and eat it. You look simply beat.'" He pulled her down and kissed her, sat up and drank the clear, strong coffee and wolfed the bacon and eggs. He felt pleased with himself, as though he had been through a battle and won.

When he had finished, she put the paper in his hands. "I thought you ought to see this before you sent that letter.'" The headlines read, CALIF. SCIENTISTS HAILED IN ATOM SPY QUIZ. Reading down, he came on a list of names. "Charles Crocker, of the University of California, is one of the few professors who have refused to sign the Regents' oath that they are not Communists.'" Mac jumped out of bed. "God, what a stinking thing to do, to drag them up before the Committee just at this time!"

Melissa looked concerned. "Why are you so sure none of them are spies?" Mac felt an impulse to strike her. "God Almighty, do you fall for all the slop you read? Don't you see they're just trying to prejudice the case?"

"Well, all I know is, atomic secrets have been given to the Russians. Somebody must have done it, and I hope they find out who it is.'" [26.

The California Quarterly J Mac sat down on the edge of the bed. He felt weak and shaken. "Oh, God, oh, God;" he said.

At last he dressed in silence. When he got to the office, the Dean was waiting for him. "The President wants to see us both.'" The President's office was a white-panelled room with a wood fire burning. Past Presidents looked down from their frames; books lined the walls, and wide windows opened out on the blue hills.

The President stood up to welcome them and offered them cigarettes. A pleasant, thin man, who never seemed hurried, he had made his reputation in the field of science. Now he was making his name known as a splendid administrator. Mac liked him very much.

The President began deliberately. "I do not think I need tell you, Mr. MacDonald, that you and your charming wife have made a very happy impression here. My wife was speaking of you both just yesterday, and we hope to see you at our home tomorrow afternoon.'" The Dean was impressed. "Now about this unfortunate matter out in California;" the President went on. "As you know, I have no sympathy with that sort of thing. We have never considered introducing anything of that kind here, nor have we required any security checks. We have never felt they were necessary. This community is so tightly knit and so homogeneous that we have mutual trust in one another. But while we stand for freedom of conscience and have done so since the days of old Hiram Bigelow" -he pointed to one of the portraits- "still, we do not believe in allowing the college to be drawn into a position that can do us all infinite harm. I had no idea of intervening in this matter, although the Dean brought it to my attention yesterday afternoon. But with the news in this morning's papers, it has assumed a different order of importance.'" Mac sat up and looked at him wearily. "Do you think Professor Crocker is a spy? I think you knew him well during the war days?"

The President flushed slightly. "I do not think Professor Crocker is a spy, although I can easily see how he might have talked too much. He has that habit. But until he is cleared, which may take some months, I do not propose to have this college put under suspicion by the circulation of a petition in his behalf. Have you signed up many of the faculty? And if so, whom?"

Mac sat silent. Finally he said, "No, sir, I have not yet circulated the petition.'" The President looked relieved. "I'm glad to hear it. I will tell you

something that I trust you will not divulge. The community will hear it tonight when Mr. Perkins speaks to us, and I don't want to spoil the effect of his talk. As you know, ever since I have been here, I have been anxious to build up our Science Department. It now looks as if my dream would come true.' The Dean looked up quickly. "Yes, gentlemen, Mr. Perkins has been active in Washington in our behalf, and he has been instrumental in securing a large grant from the Navy [27. A Man's First Duty J to do some interesting work in guided missiles. We'll build a plant here that will be second to none in New England, and there will also be opportunities for pure research. Not so much as I should like for the present, but of course we must look toward the future. So you can see that with such important work going on, the campus will of necessity have to be careful. Unfortunately, the FBI has already found on the campus one young man whom they regard of doubtful loyalty. It is a most distressing business, for the young man in question has deceived us all, and while I can be tolerant of heretics, I cannot put up with deceit.' Mac thought, Good-bye, Ben. "I must tell you, Mr. MacDonald, that they have found nothing whatsoever in your record. You are completely in the clear except for this unfortunate relationship to Dr. Crocker. I trust that record will remain clear.' The Dean stood up and so did Mac. He was furious. To think that snoopers had been watching and examining them for weeks, and the guy had the nerve to talk about "mutual trust.' But he did not say a word. He must be prepared to resign at once if he did, and where would he land?

The President took them to the door. "Thank you, gentlemen. Come again any time. We look to see you and your charming wife tomorrow, Mr. Mac-Donald.' Mac went back to his office. He didn't ask the Dean to come in. There was no doubt in his mind what it all meant. Either he did as he was told, or he got out. He knew with clear, exact certainty what it would be like. Writing letters all over, everyone sorry but no one able to do anything for him. Nothing definite against him, just enough suspicion to make it inexpedient.

The door opened and Old Man Hood came in. "Well, son, how was it?" Mac laughed bleakly. "It was either-or; and as I don't have tenure, I couldn't even make a good fight.' Hood looked concerned. "Do you have any outside means?" "No, sir, I don't.' "Do you have any family that could help you for a time?" "No, sir, only my mother, and I support her.' "Well,

son, how about your wife? How would she take it?" Mac sat silent. Old Man Hood finally broke the silence. 'Well, you'll just have to write to your friend and explain how it is. 'A necessitous man is not a free man'. I am sure he will understand. After all, I suppose a man's first duty is to his family. As I recall, your passion, Mark Twain, took that position about his friend Joe Twichell, when he was threatened with the loss of his church for supporting the Democratic ticket.' Mac looked up. "Yes, sir, that's true, he did say that Twichell's first duty was to his family, but Mark never went into a church again'. Hood chuckled faintly. "I'm not sure he was a church-going man, anyway.' He rose to go. "Don't feel bad. It's tough, but this is a tough world and [28. The California Quarterly J getting tougher all the time. I never got married, and that's given me a certain leeway. Just give me that petition, and I'll see what I can do with it. They can't fire me, and if they try I'll put up the biggest stink you ever saw. They'll be sorry they ever started anything'. Mac locked the door after him and then sat with his head in his hands, trying to figure out how he had fallen into such a fix. He had worked hard, tried hard, done the best he knew how, and now he was shamed and humiliated in the eyes of his friend, of all his friends, his students, his wife; worst of all, he was shamed before himself. But what else could he do? He thought about his children, of whom he was very fond. He would not mind for himself, but for them to have to know uncertainty, the ugliness of poverty, to have no settled place, to be always on the edge of change-no, there had been nothing else to do.

He thought about Melissa, and at first his anger was hard against her. But suddenly the revealing moments in which he had seen her formed a new pattern, and he saw that behind all her striving, behind her wild desire for security and prestige, she was just scared. So many times had he heard her say, "I never have anyone to count on but myself.' And when he had asked her, "Can't you count on me, darling?" she had said, "But you're naive! You don't know how cruel the world is, like cattle waiting to gore the wounded when they fall'. What had frightened her so? He had never taken the time to find out.

And then there was his mother. He had always taken his mother for granted. She had never demanded any gratitude for the sacrifices she had made for him. What would his mother say? Would she think he should defy the powers that be, or swallow his self-respect and knuckle

under? Well, she never said much in any case, but he knew that whatever he did would be all right with her.

And finally there was Crock. In many ways Crock had been the closest association of his life. Yes, he would understand. He would be properly sympathetic and God damn the sons of bitches and send them all to hell, but would he ever have any confidence in him any more? Crock had turned to him in trouble, and he had let him down. If he wouldn't stand by Crock, who would? Whom could a man count on if not his best friend? He remembered Melissa's saying: "People are like cattle, waiting to gore the wounded." Were people like that? He had never believed it. That had been just about the sum total of his philosophy, that people were pretty good and wouldn't let you down. But he had let Crock down.

How could he live with this? With the realization that he was no longer his own man? He put his hands down hard on the top of the desk and felt the hot, salt tears run down his face.

He stayed there a long time. Finally the fading light told him it was time to go. Then he went out to get a hamburger and a cup of coffee; he couldn't bear to face Melissa yet. As he passed the Faculty Club he saw that it was still open. He hesitated for a moment. He did not want to meet any of his [29. A Man's First Duty] fellows. Then, remembering from some distant past that this was the night when Mr. Perkins was to make his speech to the assembled community, he turned in.

After he had eaten, he just sat and felt tired. It would take a long time to get used to feeling like a heel. Would it increase Melissa's sense of security to be married to a man who felt like a heel? But he was too tired to pursue the thought. Finally he realized that the staff wanted to close up, and he rose to leave.

As he went out the front door, he saw the petition on the bulletin board, neatly tacked up with thumbtacks. Above it was a little note, written in Old Man Hood's crabbed, precise hand. "Any member of the faculty who wishes to support our fellows at the University of California will please sign the petition below." It was perfectly blank.

Mac took out his fountain pen and signed. "Thank God," he thought, "for once the pen isn't dry." His name looked large and scrawling. "Old About-hen Adhem himself," he thought wryly.

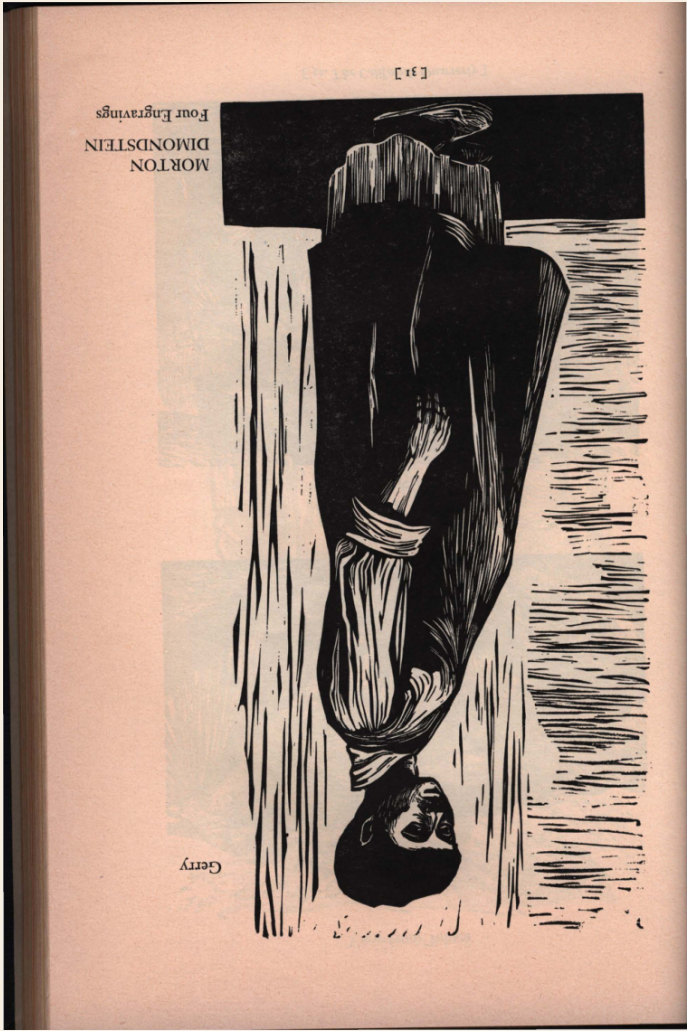
He went out into the darkness, and in the night no trumpets sounded.

[30. The California Quarterly J

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Four Engravings

Morton Dimondstein



Original artwork plate / scan page 33

View from Toluca



Musicians



[32. *The California Quarterly*]

Original artwork plate / scan page 34

Street Musicians



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Original artwork plate / scan page 35

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As Befits Your Estate

Henry L. Wojtyla

TME was when gypsies left the city stores and moved to the country when the spring came. However, times have been good lately and money has been passing through the hands of the gypsy women who tell your fortune. Their husbands and sons have been readily hired by managers of the factories, even though they are gypsies. So they stay in the city, moving now from store to store, from job to job. The city is big. In the end it may be that the city will make the gypsies a part of itself and that they will stay even when bad times come again-but there is no need to speculate about such things now. Good times bring troubles just like bad times. Sorrows, too.

They crowded into Mr. Clapham's Funeral Parlor. It was a small place in an old wooden building that leaned to one side, almost touching the brick building with the candy store to the right of it. They sat on the floor, crosslegged. The men in shapeless suits ready-made by the big factory machines. The women wore their home-made dresses very long, touching the floor. The reds and greens of their clothes looked faded and soiled, especially in the fierce early morning brightness of the sun. A hot morning, too soon too hot, in the last days of spring.

Father Edwards stood to one side of the coffin in the niche at the back of the funeral parlor waiting for the undertaker. Mr. Clapham was in the small room back of the parlor, drinking whiskey from a bottle.

The gypsies sat on the floor where they could lean their backs against the walls. They were all talking. The not overly large parlor of Mr. Clapham leaked pale streams of cigarette smoke through the open front door.

Mr. Clapham came into the parlor. The priest went to him quickly. "Let's get this show on the road;" he whispered. "I'm leaving for the weekend and have to catch the one o'clock train to Mount Holyoke." "Look. Mass doesn't start till ten. It's fifteen to. We're leaving early. What else you want?"

"Just so everything is ready at the cemetery. Last time you had a funeral, we got there, the grave wasn't even dug. Remember?"

"You've told me that before. It wasn't my fault. They got goofs running that cemetery. I do a good job. You send the bodies to me, you get your cut.

[34. The California Quarterly J I've had nothing but headaches with this bunch since you sent them to me.' "You didn't want me to send them?" "You know this is the first job I've had in months. Viniorsky gets them all.' "I throw the business your way every chance I get. If people want him what can I do?"

"I got to move out of this neighborhood. This is no place for me.' "If you had this place remodeled. People die, their relatives want them to be in a classy place.' "I don't belong in this neighborhood. These people are not my nationality. I should have stayed on the West Side.' "You ought to have fluorescent lighting, thick drapes, a thick rug. Look at this rug you've got.' "I'm gonna move and change my luck.' The undertaker turned and went to a slim young man in a brown suit and a white shirt with the collar open. He said to the young man:

"We're going now.' "It's time to go. We got to move the casket. Get the other pallbearers here.' "We go to church, now?" "Yes, we go to church, now.' Mr. Clapham turned to the priest. "Ready, father?" he asked.

"I've been ready.' "Well, start the prayers.' The priest opened his thick book and began reading from it in Latin.

Come to her assistance, ye saints of God. Come forth to meet her, ye angels...

The undertaker went over to the casket and pulled it on its wheeled truck out from the niche. He closed the lid and snapped the catches. Then he moved the pallbearers into position on either side. They raised the gray heavy box by the silver-plated rods on either side and carried it out of the funeral parlor. They went through the center of the room, the gypsies getting up off the floor and moving aside. The priest and the undertaker followed the casket. Everyone started coming out. Mr. Clapham pushed back past them into the parlor and walked to the rear room. He took the half-empty whiskey bottle from the wall cabinet and finished it. He put on his black-silk top hat.

Waiting outside in their ready-made suits the pallbearers stood holding the casket. The men and women milled about them, the women wearing awkward high-heeled shoes instead of the usual comfortable slippers. Gold coins in long chains hung on their arms or around their necks, making clinking noises when they moved. They wore large earrings and had colorful silken bandanas wrapped around their hair. They made the men in their common clothes seem out of place.

"All right, all right, let's go;" Mr. Clapham called when he got outside. They started off, the coffin leading the procession past the candy store next to the [35. As Befits Your Estate J funeral parlor, across an alley, then past the priest's home next to the church which stood at the corner of the block. They carried the casket up the church steps, set it on the small gleaming aluminum truck and wheeled the body feet first to the front of the church just before the communion rail.

Father Edwards came out in his black vestments and hurried through the low requiem mass. The altar boys wore black cassocks and the altar, too, was dressed in black. Gypsies kept coming in throughout the mass so that at the end the church was almost filled. They talked so loudly that Father Edwards almost felt irritated enough to turn around and tell them to stop being irreverent in the presence of God. Mr. Clapham kept walking in and out of the church, kept walking from the front to the back, from one side to the other.

After the last gospel the priest came to the coffin, walked twice around it, sprinkling it with holy water, then incensing it. He stopped at the foot of the coffin saying:

O that day, that day of wrath, of sore distress and of all wretchedness, that great day and exceeding bitter...

Since none of the gypsies were listening it did not much matter that they could not understand the Latin.

The priest finished chanting in Latin. The undertaker herded the pallbearers to the coffin and directed them out of the church with it. The priest came around and got into the hearse with the undertaker.

"All set?" he asked. Mr. Clapham started the engine. Following the slowly moving hearse down the center of the street was an old Packard in which sat the pallbearers, then two decrepit cars put together with parts

from various makes, and finally one gypsy family in an old ice truck they owned. The doors of the cab of the truck had written on them:

WE DELIVER

Coal Ice Wood Between and behind the hearse, the cars, and the truck, a great crowd of gypsies followed on foot in shapeless procession.

At the corner the hearse turned into a wide street. A policeman stationed at the intersection started turning cars off from the avenue. The gypsies, through Mr. Clapham, had obtained permission from City Hall for this last procession down the avenue to the cemetery.

The policeman grinned and shook his head as he watched them trudge past him. "Well," he said.

A dog ran out from somebody's yard into the avenue, yapping at the wheels of the hearse.

"Slow down or you'll lose the parade," Father Edwards said. "I thought you were in a hurry" [36. The California Quarterly J "I am. But I should have time enough to make it now." "Damn gypsies. If I weren't so hard up I wouldn't have taken this. Good thing I got them to pay in advance." "It's a wonder where they got the money so quickly," the priest said. "Oh, they got money," Mr. Clapham said. "More money than you or I will ever have. Can't trust 'em, though." "You think you should drink so much?" "I know how much I can hold. I'm not drunk." This avenue was where the gypsies lived, and as they passed by houses and stores, more of their people joined them. Other people, too, came to their porches or windows, and children ran into the street to watch the strange people go by.

"A strange people," Father Edwards said. "Must be some kind of niggers," Mr. Clapham replied. There were supposed to be policemen at every major intersection, but there had been only the one, at the first intersection, so that automobiles kept getting in the way of the procession. A street-car which had turned in from another street came clanging down the avenue. The gypsies turned off to one side; the truck followed, then the cars. The street-car bore down on the hearse, but it kept obstinately to the middle of the avenue. The motorman stood up and started pounding on the foot-pedal that rang the bell.

The undertaker leaned out, looked back at the street-car, and slowed down even more. The motorman began shouting, still ringing the bell,

and two or three dogs that were running about barked all the harder. The gypsies seemed not to notice what was going on. They kept walking.

Finally Mr. Clapham pulled over, shouting, "You're not supposed to be on here. There's a procession going on. I got a permit from City Hall.'" The motorman leaned out the door, screwing his face up and shouting every vile curse he knew. The people on the street-car watched quietly from their windows. Finally the street-car went past.

"I hope this hearse holds up till we get there," Father Edwards said. For over an hour they snailed their way down the avenue toward the cemetery. The dogs and the curious children had disappeared. They went in through the wide gates in the large iron fence, then moved slowly along the winding roads.

"Where's that grave at?" asked Mr. Clapham. "If you don't know, who should?" Father Edwards replied. "Listen, just because you're a priest.'" "You've been drinking too much"; "I always drink too much". They circled around and found the grave. The undertaker brought the hearse to a halt, jumped out and opened the side door, swinging out the platform on which the casket rested. The gypsies crowded around, the pallbearers came and picked up the casket. Mr. Clapham directed them to the grave. The priest followed praying:

[37. As Befits Your Estate J May the angels lead you into paradise may the martyrs receive you at your coming 1 and lead you into the holy city of Jerusalem. May the choir of angels receive you, and may you have eternal rest with Lazarus, who once was poor...

The gypsies moved in solidly around the grave and the casket. The gravediggers stood by the mound of earth thrown up beside the hole in the ground. The gypsies, expressionless and still, now, watched the priest make signs and speak unknown words.

Father Edwards went through the ceremony quickly, sprinkling with holy water and incensing both the coffin and the grave. The undertaker stood next to him, hands folded and head bowed. The grave had been dug beside a very old tree; half of its branches were dead, its trunk hard and thick. Old thorns, withered and dried, split off from it. New thorns, small and tender green with sap, pushed out from the black crust of the trunk. Silky grass wavered ii). the exhausted air of the cemetery. And everywhere new things pushed up from the earth toward the high thick blue sky.

The priest finished. Saying he had to make his train, he went off past the tombstones and mausoleums, his cassock furling as he walked.

The pallbearers lifted the coffin to place it on the canvas straps stretched over the opening of the grave. Mr. Clapham directed them.

"Here, now lift it;" Mr. Clapham said. One of the pallbearers slipped while tilting his end. "No... Not... Watch that.. '!" The undertaker fell against the pallbearer and the coffin; the coffin slipped out of their hands, through the straps and into the grave.

When it hit the edge of the cement vault at the bottom of the grave the cover flew open and the body rolled out into the vault. The coffin came to rest at an angle on its end and side.

"God damn you, you stupid dagoes!" Mr. Clapham shouted. The pallbearers stood around the grave, looking at him, as did the rest of the gypsies.

Mr. Clapham grabbed a shovel from the mound next to the grave and started to shovel in the dirt. "C'mon;" he shouted at the grave-diggers, "let's bury this!"

The grave-diggers did not move. The pallbearer in the brown suit and the white shirt with the collar open walked up to the undertaker and grabbed for his shovel. Mr. Clapham wrenched free and started to shovel in more dirt. The young gypsy pulled the shovel from his hands. The undertaker pushed at the gypsy, but the young man only swayed back.

"The hell with the whole damn bunch;" the undertaker said, pushing his way through the gypsies. He kept shouting and throwing his arms about as he stumbled over the grass and tombstones on his way out of the cemetery.

One of the gypsies lowered himself into the grave. Another followed. The first moved the coffin away from the body. The other would not touch the [38. The California Quarterly] body but only helped the first hold the coffin. A woman came down into the grave and picked up the body, while the two men slipped the coffin into the vault. The woman placed the body carefully down into the coffin, folding in the arms. They shut the lid and clambered out of the grave.

The oldest of the grave-diggers, who was watching, pointed out the lid to the vault, then helped them lower it onto the soft tarry edges of the vault.

When the grave-diggers were ready to fill in the dirt, the young gypsy gave up the shovel he was still holding.

The earth fell in small chunks on the white cement vault at the bottom of the hole. A few of the gypsies started walking away. Some of the women bent down to take off their high-heeled shoes. The men took off their coats or put handkerchiefs to their foreheads. The sound of clumps of earth hitting the vault could be heard. No one was talking now.

The old grave-digger straightened up and turned to look at the young gypsy who still stood beside him. He looked at him curiously. He could not discern any emotion on that impassive face.

The old man said, "He was drunk. He acted like a dog.'" Then he wondered about the woman in the coffin, and he asked the young gypsy, "Was she your mother?"

The young man looked up into the grave-digger's face. "She was mother of us all;" he said. "She was our queen'."

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A Quaker History

August Kadow

When God's supremest confidant, George Fox,
sewed on his leather garment and his thrift,
cried, Down with hireling ministers! and left
the meetinghouse, their exodus took shape.
The shock of judgment struck the orthodox,
sent dozens weeping, several mouths agape.

The seekers came (some for the sacred word
and some to feel the oil of martyrdom
soothe all their sins) to sit within a dome
of silences: Surely, the tongue will swell
and spout angelic music like a bird!
Sometimes an old man mumbled for their zeal.

But sometimes (surely) ringing in their ears
resolved to words, or one word only: love
Forget thy war, Lord Cromwell, we will serve
that law of love which holds no need for wars.
The prisons clinked. The ghetto of their fame
evolved till fear of God shook to a name.

An ocean parted by the grace of ships,
the kingdom peaceable was theirs to grow.
No Plymouth this, they soon would kiss the Jew,
make free the Negro, while their sacred thrift
thrived like a plague and clotted all their hopes.
My son, my son, why does thee waste thy gift?

Grow inward (die) ignoring the new World.
How many years they counted their own ills,
made tabulations, spoke of quiet hells
awaiting the gay wearers of bright cloth
(speakers of you) and guarded every child

from gentile ways. Time was a vicious moth.

Say you (wear red) but keep the holy Seed
growing with mustard vigor from the heart.
Some lost the gnat and sought the camel out,
worked in the world and were no longer sad,
and others in the promised land of God
found they had not what they had thought they had.

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The Neo-Romanticist's Complaint

August Kadow

Damn that ferned grot that haunts me with its green
and seacool atmosphere! I have grown tired
of mosshung live-oak trees, of being seen
still thrashing from the glade where I am mired.
Give me white cities, parched plains, but no green!

Sometimes I feel so, but the need for grace
regathers me to groves as now I walk
through tangled banyan searching for the place
where God seemed close one afternoon. No talk
will there disturb my vigil for His face.

How did I get there? On what summer day
was I first waltzed through woods by piping Pan?
Tchaikovsky's Serenade, a roundelay
repeating in my brain that I was man
in nature and would find God like Millay.

And did, I thought. And yet is it complete,
this ritual which always needs more trees?
What if I found that from my leaf-hung seat
I had been listening to the sound of bees
while He was walking down th~ crowded street?

But that is nonsense. God is all the great
and growing good of nature. I shall not
let idle thoughts confound my peaceful state
of eager watchfulness. This is the spot!
Here I shall sit among green leaves and wait.

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Solitudes

Babette Deutsch

Hurried from park and playtime, feeling
The sky turn stone, the child skips on
Down avenues that, looked at, lengthen;
Not lost, but walking, soon, alone.

Shouldered from childhood's birdy vision,
Its curvets of kid ecstasy,
Thick streets loud with decision offer
A new found, plethorous privacy.

The playtime fading, the park shrunken,
Thoroughfares petty with detour,
Barred; narrowing to a needle's entry,
The future's singular aperture .

Here, un hoped for, in voice or vista,
A brightness flowing, a freshness blown.
And here, with the one loved, as never
Now, finally, alone.

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Tomorrow Song

Mary Fuller

I look forward to the day when with profound delight
The blood runs only in the veins,
Covers no longer the parched and cracking earth,
Despoiling the concrete slabs of cities,
But with new sanity confines itself,
With love thrusts life into
The hand guiding the electric drill,
The eye turned to the microscope,
The smile of greeting in the double bed,
The wonder of our renaissance.

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To Certain Men of Learning

Charles Humboldt

It's not the emerald earth nor throbbing doves
Of summer evening that you mourn, my friends,
Though all gay nests are quelled and cries of light
Stiffen on whittled stalks; you mourn yourselves:
A formal forest stripped by a shower of stones,
An orderly festival dispersed by drunkards
Ripping the speaker's gown while a tide of trumpets
Drowns his solemn praise of revelry.
You did not think that it would end this way?
Nor does the Judas goat until they prod him
Through the familiar gate. He, too, swerves and bleats,
"But masters, I am yours, no animal!"

How calm the fate of others found you watching
The green storm blossom from your ivy haven
Who pried their hands from your eroded stoops
And got salvation with averted eyes;
How cool you were, now you are stamped and snouted
And free to fear though fearing to be free,
You crawl with rummagers on the slippery field
Where nothing, faith nor friend, belongs to you;
There each looks for his body anxiously
As retribution shrieking like a shell
Crosses his solitary days and kills
The coward crouching in his private hell.

In your bleached world where crimes took virtue on
As chairs do dust your souls could shut up shop,
Confession's bankrupts, flatter, fawn, and kiss
The metal lips of monsters for relief
From any debts of love, and you could fly
Over the rusty plow, the unwatered streets,

The innocent contemned, the oppressed as clowns
Flapping in lots to keep the crows away.

So heavenward your pitiless, pure journey,
Towers swung backward, tired hammers fell

Soundless, and knives of distance flashed between
You and the glittering mankind you betrayed.

All you disdained: the smoking funnel, the forge,
The heavy eye that follows the loom and fills
The channeled form with its unselfish dream,
Even the creased grapeskin and spiral apple rind
Shall have their celebration. But you who went
Mad with the sounds of birth and living and dying,
Who could not stand the sufferer's "What for?"

(As though you knew what for), who wished yourselves
Immortal in white linen, knowing you
Had died as others know that they have slept,
Shall join shrewd Plato caught upon ~ cross,
Clawing lean leavings where once spirit was.

For what you fear is neither here nor there
But bells that everywhere batter to tell you
What was always among you now has come:
Birds dancing on garbage are your gods and judges,
On every bench and altar you shall find
Dry peas in the skull taking the place of the mind,
Your halls of culture filled with shouts of the lost
Flailing the smooth sides of the way out of death,
The campus veiled in a dust of armored boys
Whose blood darkens your ~alls striking and crying.
Was it for this your wisdom shrugged them off
Who would not curry cover of those foul wings?

While your survival brought you to your knees,
Stretched on a rack of threats and promises
They bore the ticking pain of choice with pride,
Their answers turned like sunflowers toward the sun.
Now when the House of Reason falls in flames
And you must stagger through the howling world,

Their love, no virtue but a sense like sight,
Carries your children from the crashing columns.
Whatever they touch sorrow cannot discolor,
Whatever they study reaches upward for them,
Bread in the root, cities in rocks and iron,
Peace in the hammers that defend the earth.

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Confusion at Sunrise

Oscar de Zuniga

Blood flowed in the city last night.
Now silence looks out the windows;
A stream of eyes sees the sunrise
Glowing on a saber's blade.

Sounds of rifle shots announce the day,
Fear rocks the cowering houses,
A man goes around the empty streets
Pushing his cart of cadavers.

Confusion rushes out of dark doors
Screaming as if it were a little child
Who has seen his mother boarding
A hearse in front of a butcher's shop.

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Intelligence Report

Howard Phillips

The poet has bad teeth

(molars carious, some broken)
and a slight glandular derangement
which gives rise to obesity
and chronic rebellion

(which is much more serious:
rebellion cannot be tolerated,
and he will not be silent).

The poet has black hair
and a fair face

(which is dangerous,
for he is young and would make a good appearance
in a courtroom,
appealing to the eyes of young women,
as a poet should, perhaps;
but this is more than a little dangerous
when the poet is in rebellion,
chronic, ardent, limitless) .

The poet is a strange man
and more, much more, than dangerous
(deranged, deranged),
no good for trying
but better fitted for dying.

Can it be arranged?

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The Dream-Powers

Nikolaus Lenau

The dream was so wild, the dream was so mad,
So deeply shaking, so endlessly sad,
And filled with infinite ill.
I wish to believe that I slept sound,
That I had no dream, that I slept sound,
But still I feel the tears run down
And my heart hammers still.

I wake in weariness and fear.
Between the pillow and the wall
My handkerchief lies wet, as though
Some mourner at a funeral
Had used it so, and left it here.
Was it in dream I used it so?
I do not know.

And yet I know that they were here.
The evil visitors appeared
And held their nightly revels here.
I slept, unguarded was my house.

The door stood wide, they came inside,
They came to banquet and carouse,
These wild intruders in my house,
And then departed from the place,
But in my tears I find their trace:
How they made free with what was mine
And on the table spilled the wine.

-Translated from the German by NAOMI
R.EPLANSKY

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To a Salesman

Harold Witt

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Adam and Eve

Harold Witt

Adam and Eve me no more with tales
of the teasing god grieving good creatures
from the garden he planted how else but by seeds.
They never went out with fig leaves on,
the leaf green python slipping behind,
those apples bouncing in the sun.

It was the serpent, man, the poison tongued
wound round and round the telltale tree,
vomiting lies like toads over lovely Eve-
the same that lately blisters with bombs
the lark-alive land, its mistgreen folds
and hisses, a hydra of radios.

distorted desiring, the work that bores
his brain and his blood's bright chemistry-
And Cain, wearing no mark, dips down
toward the dark city on unbended knee.

To a Salesman

Salesman in the outsize hat
with friendly feather, guide them to God.
He may be: waiting only
the cash of kindness, a slight
high pressure and His awesome presence
sound as at a sacrifice.

Sit at your prophetic phones
ringing the new religion-
sunlight bright as money flows
onto your tie crying
red stripes in a conservative wilderness.

"Buy a deep freeze and delay dying,
be Sultan rich, your hands
drip pearls; passion,
at no extra cost, is yours'."

Gently-they
are lambs-
with lambs repeated faces;
lead them shepherd-like, salesman,
safely into the fold.

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Shine On Us, Moses

Ben Field

AND

WHAT

will you do when you ~row up?"

"I'll be a man'."

The shoemaker looked up from his work to stare across the shop.

"A man?"

"And what kind of work will our man do?"

"I'll be a fighter'."

"So!"

"I'll fight Fishy then, that big shot. I'll fight and lick him to his last inch.

He'll stop bothering people, calling them names, bossing, gypping, not-

"Not letting them live'."

The shoemaker studied the boy whose lean face burned with anger. "When

he calls you Moses the Rabbi who shits on all the stones:' he began, "and says

you will never grow up to be a man before your mother, you are insulted. He

plagues you because you sit and don't do your job which is to beat him. But

he is an ignorant one, a piece of wood, that Fishy. He doesn't know Moses.

Moses was a leader of the people and a fighter. On his flag was written, A

Tooth for a Tooth. He didn't learn to fight in his mother's belly or even in the

basket buried in the pretty flowers by the river. He learned by giving that

Egyptian foreman one in the mug so that his snot flew. By fighting
Fishy
you will end your suffering and the suffering of the other children in
the
neighborhood. At last, after much thinking, you have decided that
this
momser, this brigand must be stopped. Good. That's man's work. But
why
wait? If you push it off day after day, you will rot with waiting, and
then
where will mankind be?"

"Fishy is tough. I just can't go up and knock his block off:'

"Why not?"

"I got to think first'."

"Thinking is good, thinking is very good if it gets a man off his
behind, if

it lights up what he has to do. If it doesn't, it's worth less than a
candle end,

a matchstick. Now yesterday when Fishy dared you, you could have
given

him a butt with your head. Just for a beginning. Even a cow can do
that'."

The shoemaker waved his paw at the picture on the wall which
showed a

cow cut up for leather. "What brains does a cow have? Tell me. Yet
she

knows enough for that'."

Moishie smiled weakly. He had tried again and again to screw up
his

courage; yet at the very moment that his voice had rung out with
determina-

tion to fight, a fist had grabbed him by the throat and yanked him
back. They

had gone over his lack of guts a hundred times-there was no end to
it. He

was ashamed to talk about it any longer. He looked away from the
shoemaker

who kept on pounding, his big bald head as shiny as the last, the
claws of his
moustache hanging down over his mouth. He was a gruff, short,
very broad
and powerful man who could hammer nails with his bare fist, who,
whichever
way you looked at him, reached.

Moishie got up from the shoeshine chair and peeked out the
door-Fishy
and his gang were massed at all the corners. Pretending that
nothing had
happened, he passed under the cut-up cow and a blueprint of a
special kind
of shoes which the shoemaker had invented, stolen from him by the
company
he had worked for, artd then the boy sat down, gathering his legs
under him.

The shoemaker dropped his hammer and reached for his pipe. For
some
time he stuffed the sweet-smelling tobacco into the bowl. "I see;" he
growled
finally, "that you took a look at the world'."

Moishie flushed.

"Clear weather?"

The boy nodded.

"I thought so. We will have dear weather for a while now, weather
when
men will be able to give blows and take blows, fighting weather'."

The shoe-
maker cleared his throat with such a roar that he himself was
startled, and he
made a face, sore that anything could scare him, seized his hammer
and gave
such a whack that the walls shook.

Moishie ran his eyes around the shop, tried to gather up
something pleasant

in his mind, some explanation or defense-it did not work. Guiltily he
 slipped
 off the chair and tiptoed into the back room where the shoemaker
 lived alone.
 On the table there was a glass of cold tea, a loaf of bread, a book. He
 read
 the book's title, put the bread away, washed the glass.

Moishie had become the shoemaker's chief cook and bottlewasher,
 and
 often when his mother worked overtime in her shop, the shoemaker
 would
 have him spend the evening with him, and the boy in return would
 prepare
 the vegetables and put up the pot for supper. While they ate, the
 shoemaker
 would tell of the distant places he had been to, the West, Canada,
 the old
 countries. He spoke of teaching him his trade, said that after many
 years he
 had found the fourth leg or post and now his world was firm; for to
 his pipe,
 hammer, and book he had added a child.

The book bore on its cover a picture of a giant hand gripping the
 ball of
 the world. With such a hand one could give it to that Fishy, smack in
 the
 mug. He heard the shoemaker's thunder in the shop, compared his
 fist to the
 one on the book, and wondered whether it wasn't a book to teach
 fighting,

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to supply the stuffing that was missing in him. With growing
 excitement he
 opened it.

Most of the shoemaker's reading was about workers. This book
 seemed to

be fike his talk, that men would grow up in the not too distant
future and
there would be no bosses, no hunger, no suffering. For men still
lagged behind
the roach, the fly, the worm. Did these have to have foremen? They
had their
work cut out and each labored for itself and not for some
bloodsucker.

The meaning of tliis book was tacked in so deep, however, that
Moishie had
to back away to force it out. He pronounced the words to himself,
weighed
the hard ones, skipped here and there, and searched the last page
for a key, a
sort of happy ending in which everything would be tied up. It was
no go. His
eyes blurred, a blackness pawed. He looked up. Night had slunk into
the alley
and was blocking the window.

He darted out of the shop with a goodnight. The corners were
free. He
raced toward the tenement. As he reached the stoop, a shadowy
figure charged
from behind a can, took a flying tackle and brought him down by
the legs,
and as the stunned boy rolled over, clutched him by the throat and
started
pulling him like a log. It was Fishy who banged him on the neck
with the flat
of his hand as if he were a fish.

"Clam up, Moishie Rabenoo! As you were! Gee, you're putting on
weight,
you big bastard!" He gave a shrill whistle, and a couple of his men
(he had
only sergeants and lieutenants in his gang) came double quick to his
assistance.

"Don't mind his squawking, guys. Let him holler his head off. This is one time that old fart-smeller, that shoemaker, ain't butting in'."

Moishie struggled and hit out; he had learned not to be afraid of the sergeants and lieutenants. Again Fishy whistled, and another detail of his men trotted up and piled on their captive whom they dragged into the store. They threw him on the floor and spread-eagled him, and then Fishy put one foot on his chest, and there was silence while he went into deep thought.

The store was a fish and fruit market with stalls, barrels, tanks filled with stuff from all parts of the country. On the wall was a sign, In God We Trust, as if God were the only customer they took a chance with. When Mr. Fisher was away with his truck, his son took charge.

The men ringed the sinewy Fishy, ready to jump at his orders. Like him they had their hair greased and carefully combed and wore thick-soled, square-toed shoes and dungarees with high cuffs as if they were cowhands out of the West. He frowned, "Hold still or I'll cockalize him. We got to try something new on this bozo." He picked at his fly and jerked his fist. "I got an idea. We're going to have a pea race. Here comes the rest of the caboodle with something the pussy forgot to bury!"

Snorting and puffing and pummeling away, another squad dragged Harry the janitor's boy into the store. They dropped him next to Moishie, and then

they piled up heaps of rusty peas as hard as BBs, slimy cabbage
 leaves, fish
 guts and lobster leavings, and, forcing the heads of the kids into the
 refuse,
 started the race.

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Fishy was a whizz: he .flipped a handful of peas to the ceiling and
 snapped
 them up with his teeth, jiggling at the same time and bombarding
 the two at
 his feet. "Come, curly chnyok potz. Come, potzey. Lookee how both
 is red
 as my girl's cherry. Whoa, what's that?"

Harry spat out, roaring, "I ain't eating no lobster. I'm a Jew:"
 "What the hell do you think I am?" snarled Fishy and gave him a
 crack
 on the ear. "You think because my old man married a shicksa I ain't
 a Jew no
 more? Watch your lingo. You're disqualified for hitting 'below the
 belt. You
 lose. Don't he, gang?"

"Sure, Fishy;" the gang chorused.

"And you owe me a buck. Your old man's just been around for the
 rents,
 and you can get a buck out of him hooks, crooks, he won't miss it. I
 know
 where he keeps it till the landlord comes. It's in a little box in the
 chinee
 closet:'

"You're a crook liar. I don't gyp nothing from my father:"
 While the gang held Harry, Fishy gave him a terrific root in the ass
 that
 would keep him open for a year.

The telephone rang and he went to answer it. "Let the snotnose
 go. First

detail, hip, hip. Keep him under observation'. He watched through
narrowed
eyes while the howling kid ran into the street, followed by the
detail, and
then he weighed potatoes and roped the bag on Moishie's back, tied
his hands,
and sent another detail, his most trusted men, through the alleys
and yards
with the struggling pack-horse.

The guard shoved Moishie into the customer's flat and waited
outside. She
was a shortsighted old woman with a face shiny as if it had been
touched with
a feather dipped in sweet oil and she kept her hair on top of her
head twisted
like a fresh Sabbath loaf.

She peered at him through her silver-rimmed spectacles. "Oh, it's
the orphan
child, our Moses. And how is your dear mother? I thought you were
working
for the shoemaker'.

Moishie hated having the women in the neighborhood cluck and
cry over
him.

"And how is she?" She stroked his head and waited, peering at him
with
moist eyes.

He had talked enough, too much.
Sighing, the old woman counted out the change. "Wait, where are
you
going? I have something for you:'

He wheeled away and fled from the flat. The guard surrounded
him to
relieve him of the change. "And where's the tip?"

"I got none'.

"She always tips and gives cake and candy'.

"Sure, I didn't take it:' He laughed contemptuously.
"Dope, bastard!" With a cry of rage they tried to box him in, but,
swing-
ing his fists mightily, he charged through them and got away,
hooting.
He scooted through an alley, scaled a fence, and made his way into
the

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tenement, stumbling into the flat, and as he shut the door and put
away his
key, he heard his mother singing in the bathroom. Catching himself
in time,
he went to the kitchen sink and washed his face and hands. He
could not get
rid of the rotten guts taste. He gagged, shuddered. A pot was jiggling
on the
stove, breathing noisily. Against the wall the broom and mop
leaned, ready
for her. Her dusting cap with a tiny blue ribbon hung on a hook.

He fretted at her taking so long. That was what bothered him
most about
her, that and her never being serious, her never sitting down long
enough to
be quiet and to think. The moment she flew in from the tiny hat
shop, she
began bathing and soaking and soaping and scrubbing and
powdering as if
she were covered with the dirt and oil of a factory, the kind the
shoemaker
talked so fascinatingly about.

Moishie went to the bathroom. "Mama, what is a chnyok potz?"
The door was ajar. She had just climbed out of the tub and was
slipping
into the dress which was still over her head. She gave a gulp and
leaped around,
and he lowered his eyes.

"Oh;" she cried. "Oh!" She tugged her dress down wildly and turned toward him, mischief dancing in her eyes, her knees just peeping from under her dress which was always too tight for her. "How you frightened me;" she chattered. "You came in on mice's feet, light as a crumb, and almost frightened the senses out of your mother. And as you well know, I have so little of them. But serious-are you hungry?"

"I asked a question:'

"Yes?" and she dropped on her knees to wash the tub.

"What is a chnyok potz?"

The hot red swept down to her throat. "How you pick up words.

But then

you are growing fast with the frame already of a man!' She gave him a hurried,

troubled look, and then her face smoothed out into a smile, and humming,

she-merrily rubbed the tub with a washcloth.

"What is a chnyok potz?" he demanded.

She took a deep breath. "The first is a good-for-nothing. The other is forbidden:'

She got up, felt his forehead with the back of her fragrant little hand

and giving him a dig with the elbow, started heaping, twisting, her glossy

black hair with fast fingers.

"Why is it forbidden, that word?"

"I'll tell you when you are older:'

"You say that and say that. When I grow older! Yes. And I'll never be old enough'.

"One can always be older;" she said and burst out laughing at his look of disgust.

No use talking to her. He would have to depend on himself, think it out.
Truly, he deserved the rottenest words, letting that Fishy plaster him with every kind of label, letting him get away with saying that his father had been a consumptionist who had not had enough guts to make a knot, let alone take a woman, that his mother whom Fishy had started whistling after had slept

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with others to get him, that the shoemaker had had a hand in his making. He had his chance and muffed it again. In front of Harry, too, who had put up a real battle. What would the shoemaker say now?

Moishie could see him in a fit of temper, his veins like slings on his brow, his gray eyes terrifyingly lost, hammered back into his lined face, quarreling with a customer, bellowing, was he a tomcat on a fence to throw worthless shoes at? When would there be respect for a craftsman? Did the customer realize how much sweat and brains went into the making of a shoe? And he would drive the man out, chucking the shoes after him. And yet next day the customer would be back, hoping to find the old man in a happier mood, for there were few shoemakers like him left in the country. And it was after such outbursts that the shoemaker would disappear, and Moishie, sick at heart, would count the hours before his return, wondering whether this time the

shoemaker had packed up and gone for good as mysteriously as he
had come
into the neighborhood.

As the boy brooded, he felt heavy-headed, and a bitterness rose to
his
mouth. And it was as though Fishy were chasing him again-into the
cellar,
around the ash cans, behind the engine which pounded water to the
tank on
the roof, into a huge tomcat with yellowish eyes which exploded,
scratching,
between his legs, while his heart slugged in his throat and fiery little
shells
screamed before him. With a mighty effort around the street corner
and into
the shop, keeling over into his own vomit, the shoemaker carrying
him to
the cot, wiping the sweat and froth off his face, promising him by
all that was
holy that he would never let on about this flight to his mother.

Painfully he raised his head to see where he was. Somehow he
had gotten
to his bed, and then the fishguts burst from him in a nasty stool. At
the sound,
she hurried to him, and desperate and white-faced, her smile gone
for once,
attended to him. All night as she sat by his side, he knew what was
going on
in her mind, but she said not a word.

At daybreak while she was dozing, exhausted, he went to the
bathroom.
He had to reassure his mother; otherwise she would not go to work.
Every
little cough or bellyache floored her, filled her with the fear that she
would
lose him as she had lost his father. The thermometer showed he had
a fever.

He whipped it down to fool her and walked about though he was
wobbly
in the knees.

After she had rushed off, he bolted the door and lay down. Sick
with guilt,
he sweated and tossed. There was no way out. He would have to go
do. Only
then would his thinking get him places. Now it wearied him, just
convinced
him the. stuff was not in him. To go do. Next time to slug it out to
the end.

Feeling better, he got dressed, and as he had given his word he
would not
step out until her return, he busied himself with his books. He
finished the
two which he had drawn from the library, the tale of the fightingest
men on
earth, heroes of the Civil War, "Men of '61:" and "Men of '62.'" He was
bound
to have a little of their grit one of these days.

His mother rang the bell three times, her signal, and burst upon
him sing-

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ing, "My heart told me that you are feeling better. Oh, my heart, my
heart'."

He took the parcels with which she was loaded down and carried
them
to the kitchen, and announced he was going down.

"And you're not curious to find out what I have bought you. And
no kiss
for your mother?"

He barely touched her cheek.

"Pick, pick. I hardly felt it. An idle wind could have done better'."

"Kissing is for babies'."

"And for women. Oh, you, wait until you grow older'."

"There you go again!'

She caught and hugged him. "My tall lean one, my serious one.

Like your

father. Be patient. Teach me, talk to me. Now where am I?" She

batted her

head with both hands and then began opening the parcels. "Half a week's

pay. Just a few flowers. Get the vase you bought for my birthday.

Fresh

fruit-these are called oxhearts, these cherries!'

"The shoemaker has polish called oxblood, Mama!'

"What a comparison!'

 She wrinkled her nose. "In this bag two surprises-

books. One is about th~ cold places, stories by Jack London. Now maybe

you will stop reading about that war, the killing, and the men of '6r and '62.

And this is something special, a history, your favorite. One kiss for each

first!'

 She kept the books behind her back until he had kissed her.

He was about to go (he must see the shoemaker to find out whether the

new Fishy attack had reached him) when the cover on the other book drew

his attention. It showed Liberty holding a torch like a hammer ready to strike.

The book seemed to be a combination history and geography, a sort of

gazetteer, not only for reading but also for writing. The first part was full

of folded maps on fine paper, blue as if they had been developed in sea water.

There were sections devoted to the birth of the nation and the building of

the West and pictures illustrating important episodes in the lives of our great

countrymen: Washington surveying Indian territory, Franklin setting type

in his printshop, Jackson balking at blacking the shoes of a Redcoat officer
and getting a sabre cut across his face, and honest Abe mightily splitting the
rails, splinters in a hail around him.

He glanced at the London (he had read many of those stories) when he
heard his mother exclaim in delight, "An honored guest, an honored guest'.
She came in bowing and scraping and jerking her dress to her knees, followed
by Harry. "Go in, young sir'. She dusted a chair, placed it beside the bed, and
whisked out.

Harry was a blocky boy with black hair, swarthy skin, and eyes like bits
of coal. He stood nailed to the door, hot as a soup beet in his embarrassment.

"Don't mind her:' said Moishie a little wearily. "She's always that way,
kid. She just can't be serious'.

Harry gulped and nodded. "Fishy and his gang's looking for you. This
time they're going to murder you. They got it in for you because you
wouldn't take the tip from the old lady. They got it in for you because--"

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"And I got it in for them. Let them look out!"
Harry's mouth fell wide open at this unexpected defiance. He eyed his
friend and then spotted the books. He went wild over them. "Gee, I wish
my mother'd go off to work and bring me something. She never--"
"Then you'd have to be the man in the family. Big deal;' cut in Moishie

sternly. "Harry, you sure are talking through your hat. That means
your
father'd be dead. You don't know how tough it's being a man alone.
You
couldn't stand it one day. No, you couldn't, Harry;" he ended
earnestly.

"Maybe you're right, Moishie'." Harry's face fell, but almost
immediately
he perked up. "You know Fishy and that damn gang, they almost
killed my
father yesterday. They came to get the money they said I lost in the
race,
and when he chased them, they crooked a lot of them big paper
bags from
the bakery, filled them full of stones and water and chucked them
off the
roof. They almost hit my father on the head. The bags bust and got
him
wet and Fishy swears he was so scared he pissed in his pants. But
he's a liar'."

"Fishy'll do more when I get him'."
Harry shook his head doubtfully. "You're getting stronger and
bigger. My
father and mother they always say, 'Look at Moishie; but when I
tried licking
him that time, you--"

Moishie leaped to his feet to switch that shameful subject. "Let's
go'."
Harry backed away. It was getting dark, and besides Fishy had
made
crosses on the shop and he said he was going to knock the living
daylights
out of anybody that did business with the shoemaker.

When Moishie walked into the shop, the shoemaker ignored him.
He was
working on a pair of boots, his mouth full of nails, banging down so
hard it

looked as if he were going to smash down to the cellar. Moishie's heart sank.

Finally the heavy brows twitched and there was a rumble,
"Sholom
Aleichem'.'

"Aleichem Sholom:' crowed Moishie.

"Where have you been? Have you changed your mind? Now that vacation is here, school over, we were going to learn one of the world's trades, help mankind walk. Or did you have trouble with your persecutor again?"

In answer Moishie drew out of his blouse, hidden there against a Fishy ambush, the red book.

The old man fixed hard gray eyes on him, spat out a couple of nails, wiped his hands, and flipped the pages with a finger tip. "You have a little masterpiece here, with men who did a day's work in their time'.' He took off his apron and threw it on the bench. "Enough. Sit here and watch. I had some time with these boots. If they want to run away, let them. They call that leather and workmanship. I'd be ashamed to shit them out'.' He left the shop grumbling and rolled down the street, almost as broad as the sidewalk, in moccasins of his own making, his trousers tucked into woolen socks.

When he returned he was puffing his pipe and seemed to be in a better frame of mind. He asked for the book and slipped between the pages a golden pencil with a cartridge of leads.

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Moishie gave a gasp.

"It is all yours, my friend. A tool for the worker. You have earned it'."

The boy seized the black fist and hugged it to his chest.

"Ho;" growled the old man, "what is this? Am I a Czar or a Field Marshal

that you fawn at me? King or worker, never get on your knees to anyone'."

The claws of his moustache bristled, and he crumpled the boy's ear.

It was getting late, and so he locked the door, and they went into the back

room together, and he boiled tea and put kuchel on the table. As he drank

his tea (he could down thirty glasses at a sitting) they studied the book.

"Every one of these heroes had a trade. And Jackson, whom I don't know

too much about, he was even a shoeshine boy but naturally didn't want to

polish the boots of his enemy. And when I speak to your mother about a trade,

her answer is always, 'We have time, we have time'. A good woman, and yet

she stumbles over her mother's heart. I didn't know your father. I have heard,

I have heard: he was a scholar, and she, the beloved daughter of a merchant,

broke with her family to follow him, and she toiled in the shop so that he

could finish his studies, and when he became sick, she sent him out West and

gave birth to you and worked, a wonderful, a fine woman'."

He looked out of his black warted face at the boy and said softly, "I must

talk to her'."

Moishie's voice broke in his happiness: "I tell her and try to explain. I say,

'Mama, if I use the hammer, I'll get the fist for Fishy, you won't
worry any
more, and I'll knock the-the--"

"That is a mistake, a serious mistake, my friend!'

"Yes, I see. She always says then we'll move. She won't let me fight
him.

Fighting is for roughnecks. Just like she won't let me wear
dungarees to
school like the rest of the guys. Did you ever hear anything like
that?"

"Still, in her way, she is a fighter. A little woman, just enough to
get between
a man's teeth!'. The shoemaker cleared his throat, and the sweat
poured down
over the great ropes of veins into the hairy mat on his chest like a
tugboat's.

"She is a sensible woman. She will understand. We must be
patient. We
must show her a thinker can also be a fighter, have a trade. Moses
was a
shepherd. His brother Aaron was a juggler and magician. Now you
take to
a book like a bird to the air, you are teething to be a scholar and a
writer. But
you can't be one on nothing, on just sitting and thinking. It must be
on the
world, by doing. There are writers and writers. There i~ Jack
London, a real
American writer. He worked at many trades before he became a
writer and
so he learned what it is to sweat for his bread. Didn't he say to the
workers,
'Whoa, boys, watch your step, know your enemies, learn to be
fighters or
you'll get an iron heel on your necks?' I grew up on Gorky and
Sholom

Aleichem. Gorky writes about bakers and shoemakers like this one:'

He
thumped his chest. "Sholom Aleichem writes about our own Jews,
pieces of
mankind also. He loved them so much, he never left them. He lived
among
them, he was buried among them. Never forget the shoemaker, the
baker, the
tailor, all who clothe and feed you and help you to life. Remember.
Shine on

[57. Shine On Us, Moses]

them and they will shine on you.' He placed his hand on the boy's
head. "Will
you remember?"

"I'll remember,' cried Moishie. "I will, I will!"

"Good. Shake.' They gripped hands solemnly in a most manly
fashion. "It
is late. Your mother will be wondering about you. March. The front
way?"

"Yes;' and he marched out boldly instead of taking to the alleys
and the
backyards.

Walking into the flat, he heard his mother trilling happily. In one
of those
short thin dresses which made him so impatient with her, her body
beating
to her song. She was mending a heap of her white underthings
which she
fluttered this way and that with a teasing smile so that he couldn't
make head
or tail of them. She bobbed her head with its roped crown of
gleaming hair,
bowing to him, but upon seeing the gifts, dropped her sewing to
breathe out,
"Beautiful, beautiful. Still you shouldn't have taken them, my son.
The old

man works hard for a living'.

"He said these are my earnings'."

"Have you been mending shoes?" she asked quickly.

"No, not yet, Mama. I am waiting for you to say yes. I shined shoes
twice

and I told you about that'.

"Then keep this sweet gift and treasure it like your life'."

He slept with the book and the pencil under his pillow. He hid
them

when he went up to the roof to help his mother hang the wash. He
remained

in the flat reading and writing, seeing himself as George surveying
Indian

territory, as Ben printing, as Andy, later Hickory, throwing off sabres
whistling down on him, and as greatest of all, Abe, splitting the rails
to

acquire the strength which made him the leader of the men of '61
and '62.

He recalled his talk-with the shoemaker. He tried to recall his father
who

had hunted health out West in an effort to build up his broken body
and heal

his lungs, a man who had not been a worker, who had never had a
trade.

The factories were piping their whistles from one end of the city to
the

other when his mother hurried in from work, breathless as usual. "I
saw your

good friend'." She flushed. "'Where is our man?' he asked'." She
lowered her

voice to imitate the shoemaker's gruffness, spluttered, and burst out
laughing.

"I told him you were studying like a scholar, like your father's son.

'Good,

good, but a scholar must not be too much with himself. He must go
out into

the world also. Otherwise he will write only about the matter that
 gathers in
 his pipik'. Do you know, dear one, I am beginning to believe that
 man likes
 you'. She gave a radiant smile and crushed her lean, long-legged,
 serious one
 to her breasts.

Outside the day hung bright as a blouse which has just been
 washed, the
 color and light endlessly running from it. He went to his room to
 handle his
 book, his chest swelled, back went his shoulders. He whirled
 around. Down
 the stairs briskly. As he descended into the hallway, the door to t~e
 back
 whined, and out leaped Fishy. Moishie stood his ground.

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Fishy dropped his fists like shots on his hips, slitting his eyes.
 "Where's the
 two bits you took from the old pot?"

"She gave me nothing'.
 "Why didn't you take the tip, you sonofabitch damnfool?"
 "I take what I work for'.
 "Mama's little boy, ain't you? I'll ·bet you sleep with your mother'.
 "Keep my mother out;' Moishie said fiercely, and as he turned to
 go, he
 flung, "If I'd taken the tip, I'd have kept it'.

Fishy blocked his way. "You sure been getting snotty lately. Big as
 you
 are I can still handle you. Now gives the book and the pencil. I know
 all
 about it'.

Like two mothers Moishie's hands flew to his shirt. That was just
 what
 Fishy was looking for. Clamping a headlock on him, he brought him
 down,

ripped open the shirt, grabbed the book and-pencil and beat it
upstairs. After
him raced Moishie. The door of the flat slammed in his face. He
rang the
bell, waited, rang again and pounded with his fists.

Screaming could be heard inside, and then someone shuffled
toward the
door. When it opened, there stood a big redhaired girl with a
sagging belly
and a mouth ripped open in a puffed face. A short distance behind
her
snickered Fishy. "It's mushhead. I'll bet he's going to snot I gypped
something
from him. Let him come search me'.'

Moishie marched up and frisked him.

"I'll crown you yet for this'.'

A baby started crying, and the girl, watching the two peevishly,
shrieked,

"I know you. Give back what you took, you hoodlum'.'

"I swear on a cross I didn't take nothing'.'

"I wouldn't believe you if you had your hand on Christ, you
gangster'.'

"Hell of a way for a mother to talk!"

"I'm no more your mother than a broomstick is. Wait till your
father
comes home. Wait. And why do you look at me that way?"

He leered at her and tapdanced out of her reach.

The baby wailed louder, and Mrs. Fisher in desperation cried,
"Maybe he
took nothing from you'.'

"But he did, he did'.'" Moishie leaped to get at the boy who had
embittered
his life for so long.

"None of that. I got enough without you'.'" Mrs. Fisher hustled him
out.

He stumbled into the street and walked blindly toward the docks
 and the
 river. Above the clang of the trolley someone began calling.
 Hunched up,
 he went on. The voice grew louder. It was the shoemaker shouting,
 motion-
 ing. Moishie hesitated, and as the shoemaker's rumbling bass rolled
 down
 the street, he crossed and crept after him into the shop.

"Why does our man stand there like a leaden tombstone? Were
 you in
 battle that your shirt is torn? Did you pay him back, blow for blow?"
 Moishie hung his head.
 "What happened?"

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When the boy remained silent, the shoemaker gripped him by the
 shoulder,
 and he winced. "Good. A sign that he left you alive. Talk'."

"He stole the book and the pencil."

"He, He. Tell me You, You. What did You do?"

"He was too fast and--"

"He again. And from you not one blow in the mug?"

Moishie buried his face in his hands.

"So! And now? Do you expect me to go fight him? Or your mother
 to
 lose a day's work to defend you?" He reached in and jerked up the
 boy's
 chin, fixed the irons of his eyes on the boy and demanded,
 "Answer'."

"No;" sobbed Moishie. "No'."

The shoemaker let him sob for a while and then sent him back to
 calm
 himself and erase the marks of the attack. He called him, "Listen.
 From now
 on. If he knocks you down, get up. That is why you have legs. If he
 has a

fist, you have one, too. If he licks you the first time, you can lick him
the
second time. Must we always run away and let them tear us like
herrings?
If it is a little blood, what of it? Every man is born in blood. Go!' He
gave
Moishie a push and taking his rasp, bore down on the shoe savagely
so that
the bench- groaned.

His mother met him at the door. "What happened? I thought I
heard you
downstairs. Tell me'.'

Tight-lipped, 'he pulled away and went to his room and lay down
in the
dark. Blazing like a flare in his brain was the fight Harry had put up
for him
the time he had found a picture of his father and had raced
downstairs to
prove that there had been a real man in the family. The gang with
all the
sergeants and lieutenants dancing around, Fishy rushing, slashing,
smashing,
gashing, knocking a tooth out in a gush of blood, boasting he was
Elks and
wearing it later on horsehair tied to a watch which he had stolen
from another

If he did not straighten his accounts with Fishy immediately, settle
his hash
once and for all, he would be a goner, lost, torn forever from the
neighbor-
hood he had come to love, from Harry, and most of all from the
shoemaker
who from the beginning had understood how tough a battle it was
inside of
him, had coached him for the showdown, and now must be giving
up in
disgust

All next day he moped indoors while the boys shouted in the street, factories whistled, tugboats hooted in their throats.

"Why do you sit there as if you were sewed with iron thread?" asked his mother.

He brooded near the window, his fists sunk into his cheeks. The books of the Civil War lay, unopened, beside him.

"Enough is enough. It must be--"

"No, Mama, no!" He came to her quickly and seized her hands.

"No!"

"What then?"

He went to the window, looked out, and then squared about. "I'm thinking,

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"Will you be through soon so that your mother will be able to attend to her work with a whole heart?"

Her face puckered the way her hands did after washing clothes. She smiled and got him his milk. His teeth knocked against the glass. "Mama," he asked, "do you think I'll ever be a man for myself?"

"For yourself and for all of us. Yes, dear one. You're a man now. My man. The only man I have left." She looked into his eyes, kissed them, and pressed him to her.

"Maybe you are trying too hard. Like a little cucumber in a bottle you are forcing yourself."

He said nothing for a while and then turned to her again.

"Business is not

so hot. That isn't the big reason. No'.'

"What business are you talking about, you serious man?"

"The shoemaker's. He used to work in a big factory in Maine,
Mama.

That's where he goes sometimes. He's got friends there. He made a
new kind
of shoe but they stole it from him. The drawing is on the wall of the
shop.

Then they had a fight because they didn't pay the men enough, and
they

picked on him, called him a foreigner and all kinds of other names.

Now
there isn't one factory that will take him'.'

His mother gave a cluck of sympathy.

"That room in back where he sleeps is always dark. Our flat is so
big. He

could stay with us'.' He embraced her knees. "Mama, could you
marry him,
and there'd be a real man in the family?"

She caught her breath as if in pain and blushed furiously so that
the little
ears peeking out of her hair burned rosy. He watched her curiously
as she
leaped to her feet and started washing a couple of dishes with a
great clatter.

"Have you forgotten your father?" she asked in a low voice.

"No, Mama, but after Fishy ripped up that picture it's harder
remembering'.'

She bent her head, and faced about, still avoiding his eyes. Briskly
towelling
the dishes as if the tiny flowers were stains, she said, "Let's not be
silly. The
shoemaker is much older, but then he hasn't asked me'.'

"He isn't so old'.'

"Isn't so old;" she mimicked. "You with your men of 61 and 62. No
wonder
he isn't so old'.'

"Oh, Mama, that's the Civil War'."

"Forgive me'." She knocked her forehead with a knuckle. "I am so stupid'."

As he turned from her, her laughter died in her throat, and she said softly,
thoughtfully, "Not too old to love my son like a father'."

He was so far from her with his inward look. She touched him.

"Still
thinking?"

He nodded and came back to her.

"Think only those thoughts that will make you grow in the length
and
breadth, my man'."

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He smiled faintly. "I am almost through, and then I got work cut out and
I'll go. But first, Mama, you don't understand. He's not old, maybe he's fifty,
all right fifty-five. But that's not what counts. What counts is he's strong. He
gets mad quick, but never against children. You should see how he picked up
the grocer's little girl, Betty, when her brace began hurting her and fixed it
and carried her to the store. He's some mechanic. There's nothing he can't
do. When he makes special shoes, you should see him use that needle. He's
going to make me moccasins one of these days. Boy, he's a real shoemaker,
not just a repairman. And, Mama, he knows books, too'." He nodded vigorously. "Sometimes it's tough. Sometimes isn't it right that a fellow
my age
should just be the boy in the house? And if you marry him, maybe he won't

want you to work. You'll be able to stay home and when I come in
from
school, there you'll be--"

She came flying to him, white and shaken, but he warded her off
gravely.
"I'm not finished yet. Maybe this is our last chance with the
shoemaker.
Don't you see?"

"I see, I see," she moaned. "All this you've had in your heart, and
I've never
suspected it.'" She began wringing her hands, and then a hint of
laughter
twisted her lips. "But, oh, oh, how you take my breath away. What a
marriage
broker you make. How will I be able to say No? Tell me. How?"

He rose. His job was only half-done. Now to clinch it. To make up
for
the dead, for Harry, for the shoemaker and his mother so that she
might stop
worrying, for all the indignities heaped upon him. For the book and
the
golden pencil. If knocked down once to rise again. To go back and
to go
back, and he drew his breath, and as his mother, wide-eyed, nodded
encour-
agingly, he left, terrible in his determination. At the landing well he
hesitated
and labored up to the roof. That was the observation tower from
which he
could rake the streets and nail down his plans.

The gangway was covered with a red sentry box. Next to it
squatted the
huge hooped tank, bursting with water. The broad tinkering city
stretched
around him. Over roofs far and near, some misty in the late
afternoon sun,

pigeons floated, flashing now white, now gray, now black, like
mixed flakes
and pinches, while boys waved their hands and poked poles at them
tipped
with flags. Spanning the river from which came the jabber of tugs
and ferries
were the gleaming crossbows of the bridges. Factories, warehouses,
smoke-
stacks breathing against the sky. A hot breeze blew, strong with the
smell of
tar, -and cries ascended from the street: "Hellosir, hellosir, I'll meet
you at
the grocer'.'

Moishie climbed up on the rampart and peered down into the
street. In
front of the house girls were skipping rope. But where in heck was
that Fishy?
And then a kid shot out of the alley, the gang in pursuit. They
chased around
the corner and a wailing shriek followed, and the boys hustled back
to the
alley. Moishie rounded the rampart and squinted down into the
alley.

A fire was burning against the side of the tenement. The gang was
roasting
mickies and cooking fish in a pot, stolen from the tanks. Standing
over the

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pot with a long wooden ladle, Fishy threw back his head and in a
ringing
voice bossed orders.

Moishie ducked behind the rampart. A paper bag, the kind the
baker used
for Sabbath loaves, rustled near the tank. He caught it, half-filled it
with
stones, and wrenched at the tap. At last he had it loaded, and with a
grunt

he dragged it across the roof. He had to stop to get a better grip on it. He peered over the top of the rampart, screwed the neck of the bag tighter, and with a gasp got the bag as high as his belly, hugged it, set it on the burning tile, then aimed and let go. The bag dropped like a plummet, burst in the alley with a terrific explosion, shattering the pot and spilling its fish, killing the fire, bombing water and stones on the boys who scattered like jacks in their fright, cried out, tripping and stumbling on their behinds, and rushed together again.

Moishie crouched behind the rampart. What an eye, what an eye, he exulted. Then he bolted up and flung one leg excitedly over the rampart to reveal his identity. Fishy hopped in the street, shaking his fists, raging:

"Moishie Rabenoo kocks on all the stones!" His men ran into the tenements to box Moishie in, and Fishy -yanked something out of his pocket. He tore at it and began wiping himself. It was the book.

Moishie hurled himself off the rampart. He tore across the roof, dived into the sentry box, and plunged headlong down the stairs. Midway he encountered the sergeants and lieutenants and threw them to one side. In the street the rope-skipping little girls stared open-mouthed as he raced past them. He met Fishy in the alley and with a leap brought him down.

Both boys were rolling in the fish and spuds, banging away at one another

when a fist grabbed each and lifted him by the neck as if they were puppies.

The shoemaker shook them with a roar, "You fight on your feet!"

A ring was made. A crowd gathered. The old man stood among the boys watching that none of the gang sneak a fast one over and he stopped Fishy's mother who waddled from the store shrieking that the hoodlum would kill Moishie. "Maybe the child in him, but not the inan!" he reassured her.

Moishie fought with fury. He was beaten back, staggered, knocked down.

He got to his feet. Blood ran from his mouth. Above the taunts of Fishy

calling him to throw the sponge in, above the cries of the children, sounded

the shoemaker urging him to cut the mad rushes, to slow down, to dig the

chin into the chest, to keep the eyes on the nail and only when good and

ready to smash and hammer. Moishie hung on the calm voice, he followed

it like a beam, and shook his head to clear it and get the sense. He stood stock-

still, watching warily, waiting for the cocky, careless Fishy to come to him,

and then swiftly caught him off guard and landed a mighty jarring blow. To

dish it out as well as take it. To fight on and on so that nothing Fishy could

do could hurt him, could stop him. Stifling the sobs breaking through his

swollen lips, his body bunched behind his head, Moishie moved forward. It

was then that he saw a startled look on the hated mug. And again he struck.

[63. Shine On Us, Moses J