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QUIZ +
Quill

MWARD

QUIZ *and* QUILL

Issue

for

1976-77

Published by
Quiz and Quill,
a literary society

Co-editors:
Elizabeth Baker
Susan Mayberry

Published at Otterbein College
Westerville, Ohio

Fall 1977

Founded 1919

PREFACE

As of the fall of 1976, the Quiz and Quill literary society was re-established. The club had not had an active membership since 1973.

Several interested students and faculty members worked to re-organize Quiz and Quill. The club has changed from an honorary to an organization of open membership. It now consists of people of various majors who want an opportunity to informally discuss reading and writing, and to criticize and obtain criticism in an atmosphere of creativity and open thought.

Current members wish to extend an invitation of membership to anyone of the Otterbein community who is interested in keeping the Quiz and Quill alive.

Susan Mayberry

QUIZ AND QUILL CLUB
1977

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LITERARY AWARDS

Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

First Award Susan Mayberry
Second Award Brad Manier

Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

First Award Lyn Benua
Second Award Ramona Huff
Third Award Mary Ann Deer
Honorable Mention Mary Bricker
Eric Costine

Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

First Award Susan Mayberry
Third Award James Dooley
Honorable Mention Lyn Benua

Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

First Award Marilyn Douglas
Second Award Arlie Adams

Quiz and Quill Children's Literature Contest

Honorable Mention Nancy Ballog

Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

Honorable Mention Lyn Benua
Amy Vanek

Walter Lowrie Barnes Short Story Contest

First Award Sarah Weinrich

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AT REHEBOTH

Daylight

brave waves that parade into shore

— such assurance —

yet those daring breakers,

so proud . . .

they don't even leave footprints behind

to be remembered

Evening

what a relief to see the shadow of the day

and all those people tucking their bronze bodies away —

now we can enjoy the freedom and serenity

of the ocean . . .

(there it goes — without looking back —

I think I hear a sigh —

Lois McCullen

DIALOGUE WITH *THE WRITER'S GUIDE*

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

PROLOGUE: Writing can be one of the most relaxing and rewarding experiences available to you. We invite you to share in some of that marvelous inner peace that bestows itself upon all writers. To start you on the road of a lucrative success, we have developed these simple guidelines to turn your creative project into a million-seller overnight. Just follow them step-by-step . . . and welcome to the wonderful world of writing!

STEP ONE: It is always best to develop the seed of your plot in your mind before trying to write it down. Usually developing a title or a heading for your work will help.

“Chapter One.”

STEP TWO: You are now ready to begin the creative process. Begin by putting down on paper your “pure-gut” feeling. Try not to be too cerebral.

“I remember that dark and stormy night, and how Laura with her budding, young, nubile body was to bring about my downfall through the Math department.”

STEP THREE: Remember to relate to the heart of the character . . .

“I very deeply remember that dark . . . ”

. . . without being too clumsy.

“I deeply remember that dark and stormy night, and how Laura with her budding, young, nubile body was to bring about my downfall through the Math department.”

STEP FOUR: Be sure that you develop a logical progression of events.

“ . . . how Laura with her young, budding, nubile body . . . ”

STEP FIVE: Avoid opening with excessive descriptions. A common fault is to begin with the weather.

“I deeply remember that night, and how Laura with her young, budding, nubile body was to bring about my downfall through the Math department.”

STEP SIX: Sensationalism is never a guarantee of greatness. Avoid the use of both sexually descriptive and violent passages for their own sakes.

"I deeply remember that night, and how Laura with her body was to bring about my downfall through the Math department."

STEP SEVEN: Avoid justification or vindication plots. Your writing is not the place to air your aggressions against others.

"I deeply remember that night and my downfall through the Math department."

STEP EIGHT: Try to avoid personal experience plots. Remember, if you must tell your own story, it is better to write a diary.

"Joe deeply remembered that night and his downfall through the Math department."

STEP NINE: Avoid writing about something with which you are unfamiliar.

"Joe deeply remembered that night and his downfall through the English department."

STEP TEN: The final test is to ask yourself a question. Can a rational person believe this story?

"Sigh."

Congratulations! Now that you have mastered the fine art of writing, be sure to check into our other books in the series, including our Best-seller, *Brain Surgery For Fun And Profit*. Here is an excerpt:

Brain surgery can be one of the most relaxing and rewarding experiences available to you. We invite you to share in some of that marvelous inner peace that bestows itself upon all brain surgeons. To start you on the road of a lucrative success, we have developed these simple guidelines to turn your patient into a million dollars overnight. Just follow them step-by-step . . . and welcome to the wonderful world of brain surgery!

Until then, this is *The Writer's Guide* for better books.

James Dooley

c 1977. The Happydale Sanitarium Press.

I AM THE SUN

Honorable Mention, Roy A. Burkhardt Religious Poetry Contest

I am the sun.
Every day I meet the clouds
And melt a place where I can see.
I reach through it,
Holding a cloud on my sleeve,
And take the world in my grasp.
I am the warmth found in holding hands.

Lyn Benua

HER DESTINATION: UNCERTAIN

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

The fuzzy outlines of houses and trees rushed past her as she gazed out of the train window. Two hours ago she had been fast asleep dreaming her idle dreams. Now, she was on a train headed west, but where she was headed was uncertain. All she knew was that her daughter needed her . . . and she must reach her.

A chilling breeze crept into the Pullman car. The woman pulled her tattered coat even tighter around her slender frame. Her frail features distinguished by age were shaded by a beam of light from the window. Her dark inset eyes were dull and lifeless. Dark wisps of hair fell across her forehead, leaving the only trace of youth she still possessed. Even that youth was attained because she applied a bottle of dye every six weeks.

Her bird-like profile darted around as a young man joined her by the window.

"Excuse me . . . This seat isn't taken is it?" He wrung his hands as he spoke.

"No, I suppose not." Her eyes sharply scanned the form of the thin man.

As the man settled back to read his paper the old woman cleared her throat.

"Uhm! Uhm! The least you could do, young fellow, is introduce yourself. I am not accustomed to sitting next to strangers." She raised her chin in indignation.

"Brad Harris, m'am." His eyes never left his newspaper.

"Brad, how old are you? I bet I have a daughter about your age. I think she is about your age . . . I get confused some times." She sat up straighter and her eyes were glazed.

"I am twenty-five. Listen . . . Lady, I have a long trip ahead of me and I would like to unwind a bit. This is supposed to be a vacation! So please could you read or look out the window." He snapped his paper as he returned to his reading.

Unruffled, the woman lay back and shut her eyes. Her thoughts drifted back to earlier that day. To the morning that she thought would never come. At 8:00 a.m. she had awakened to the muffled sound of knocking. She groped for her robe at the edge of the bed. Her rheumatism was acting up again so she was slower than usual. A telegram had been slipped under the door. Her fingers trembled as she tore at the envelope. Could this be what she had been waiting for:

Need You Stop Come Next Train Stop Got
To See You Stop

Love

Carole

The train jerked to a stop and woke the woman from her dream.

As her eyes became adjusted to the brightly lit car she noticed her traveling companion had deserted her. Passengers were hustling to the dining car. Dinner was now being served. The black porter was slowly approaching the sleepy woman.

"Mrs. Hutch . . . Mrs. Hutch, m'am . . . How have you been? How about letting me take you into dinner now? His smile was reassuring as was his kind voice. Mrs. Hutch graciously took his arm.

The dining car was crowded by the time she arrived. The only seat available was one next to the thin man. Without so much as a glance she seated herself across the table from him.

The young man's cold blue eyes were bright with anger. He dropped his eyes.

"Oh my! They are serving pot roast again. I dearly love it when they have pot roast! And from the looks of you sir, you could do with a good meal." After each spoonful more color returned to her pale cheeks.

"Lady, please help yourself to my share of dinner. I am not very hungry. And if you don't want this meal to go to waste you better eat it yourself." She politely reached across the table and relieved the young man of his plate.

The young man picked up his cup of coffee and left the car. Oh heavens, the old woman thought, I was only trying to be helpful. Imagine him not wanting dinner. The rest of the evening passed uneventfully until about 9:00 p.m. Most of the passengers who wouldn't be getting off tonight had retired to their sleeping quarters. Mrs. Hutch and the young man were left alone in the lounging car. He had tried to avoid her all evening but she continued to eye him as he walked from car to car. She really was a nice old woman, but he had come on this trip to be alone. He needed some time away from everyone. He glanced over at the old woman; she had dozed off again. She wouldn't notice if he slipped out.

"Young man!" Her head jerked up. Her eyes were alert.

"I have been meaning to talk to you all night. You really should eat more. I used to tell my daughter the same thing. So I know how stubborn you young people can be." Her voice faded as she drifted away into her thoughts.

She never really had been able to take care of her daughter. She had been taken away so quickly. But now she would make it up to her. Things would be all right again.

Her eyes opened to find the man walking towards the door. His face was dark. That young man needed someone to talk with; she knew it. Being with him would make it easier to be with her daughter again. She got up from the chair and followed the man. Where had he gone? The wind blew the open door against the side of the train.

"My God! Stop the train." she screamed.

"He jumped! Help! Someone!" She peered out the side of the train.

"He needs me! I have to help him!" The sound of the train muffled her cry.

"I am coming" were the last words she would utter.

The distorted face was covered with a sheet . . .

"I can't believe it happened," cried an onlooker.

The porter was no longer smiling. He was bent over the body. The porter turned to see a young man coming towards him.

The man's voice was low as he spoke. "Why did it have to happen?"

"I tried . . . I tried to help her . . ." His voice shook.

"It all happened so fast. The last thing she said was that she was coming. What could she have been thinking?" The thin man buried his face in his hands.

"She wanted to talk. If only I had listened."

"There was nothing you could do, sir," the porter said as he rested his hand on the crumpled man's shoulder.

"She's been riding this train a couple of times a week for the last month. I heard some passengers talking about her the other day. I guess her daughter was killed a couple of months ago. She couldn't stand the strain anymore. Don't take it so hard . . . It wasn't your fault. She was searching for something on this train." The porter shook his head. "At least her searching is over. That's something anyway."

Marilyn Douglas

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

a whiskered old man
with a grin like the Nile
and eyes like seeing craters
sat on a bench
talking as if he never stops to his
sad-eyed shaggy dog
both showing their musty-yellow teeth
but their shaggy looks
were nothing like their dreams
but they knew it was useless to try to
mold dreams into realities
the two were as Gemini

a little mute boy
with glasses thicker than coke bottles
often looked deeply
but always unknowingly into the eyes
of his smaller but larger lovely puppy
they always did together
they chewed bones
and prayed when they were in bed
one licked the other's face while
one gave the other a bath
and they all got dirty together
like the Lover's Frolic

one night the old man and his dog
went walking on earth forever
and never were in the same place twice
their memories lingered for a while
and then floated away with their souls
like buzzing balloons – they lost their air
the young boy changed into a man
and his dog along with him
they dreamed their dreams together
and cried their tears together
and every afternoon like life and history
walked an eternity of roads

dead balloon carcasses strewn on the roadside
limp like mourning worms
eating roads through the earth

a cloverleaf once turned into a dirt road
dustily lonely forlorntampled and dark
but independent straight and as free as time missing space

oldness at one time must be new and
the older it becomes the more life it allows

and the man changed into an old man
and his dog along with him

eyes-hugeeyes-
watch
ing the-equality-of
DEATHand

smiling

as thE
as-big-and-as-deep
NILE

Eric Costine

NIEBRETTO

When God began to create Niebretto, He wanted it to be "the best of all possible worlds." He placed it in a quiet, peaceful village in the middle of nowhere. He wanted this to be the finest of His creations and to be the utopia among all things in the world. Niebretto consisted of the finest of all types of the species of man. They lived in peace among each other in small barracks-like houses which He called the Quad. Man did nothing all day at Niebretto, but lie in bed, eat, and watch T.V. in the lounge. And as God looked at what He had made, He was pleased.

After a month or two God became tired of His creation and wanted something new. There was still no proper helper for man. So God took part of man and made another being called Retto Yllod, who was physically different from man and was made to be a companion for man in life. Retto Yllod lived in a different part of Niebretto than man, in a place called Cochran. God looked down on His creation and He was pleased. Man and Retto Yllod got along well at Niebretto, and lived in peace. (But only between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. weekdays, and until 2:00 a.m. weekends.)

God still quickly grew tired of Niebretto. Man and Retto Yllod had minds, but were not using them. The only things they did all day were eat, sleep, and watch T.V. in the lounge. What man and Retto Yllod needed was a way to develop their minds, so God built L.R.C.'s and towering buildings with classrooms and professors where they could take integrative studies courses. These courses taught them about the nature of man in the arts, religions, and sciences. Now man was not wasting his time. He was doing something which was constructive and learning things which developed his mind into a well rounded, liberal arts-educated object. God looked again at His creation and again He was pleased.

God then felt that man did not know how good things were for him in Niebretto because He had not created anything which was bad. So He saw the need to create the "A" and the "F". The A was for those men and Retto Yllods that did good work. On the other hand, the F was for those who had failed at their learning and weren't getting well rounded educations. And so it was, and God was pleased. He had created the valley which represented bad, so that man could look up and see the peak which was good.

God liked the things he had created, but he now pondered with the idea of how to motivate his creatures. The A and F system was a completely arbitrary system and did not teach man how to push himself toward a desired goal. So God created sports and built a Rike where man learned to compete against other men. This way man had something which would teach him to work hard and better himself at Niebretto. God saw this as a good idea for man

and extended this to the classroom, so that the men and Retto Yllods that could not excel in sports could excel in something else. He awarded A's to the hardest working competitors and F's to the lazy competitors. Again God looked at what He had done and was pleased.

As God gazed upon His creation He saw something which was lacking. When His creatures were not at class or competing in sports they were sleeping or eating but often just sitting in the lounge, watching T.V. T.V. was not so bad, for it provided entertainment for man, but he was spending far too much time in this capacity. Man needed something which would utilize his idle time and at the same time benefit Niebretto as a whole. It came to pass that God invented labor and called it the Service Department. Man was now working for the betterment of Niebretto and directing his efforts to a common good, for which everyone works.

God liked what He had made, but saw the need for one final step. God needed to make Niebretto a society of free men and Retto Yllods. They were not free in the sense that they could make their own rules, because God was still the superior being, but they could make choices within the system. Man was free to shape his own development. Men could decide whether he was going to be competitive or whether he would work for A's or F's. If nothing else, he could choose whether he would take I.S. 31, Art and the Nature of Man, or I.S. 33, Theatre and the Nature of Man.

And God blessed His creatures at Niebretto and told them not to eat the Campus Center food, for it was evil. Then God looked over all that He had made, and found it excellent in every way.

James McCurdy

If you think you don't mean
goodbye
when you walk out the door,
Then I don't mean
I Love You
when I turn to
cry.

Kathy Shaver

You never called the other night,
(but it's alright).
You had said that you would,
(though I didn't expect it).
I haven't seen you for awhile,
(and I really don't mind).
I heard you went out,
(and I think that's great).
You forgot my birthday,
(but it's no big deal anyway).
I cried all night long,
(because I was sick).
I really don't miss you,
(much).

Kathy Shaver

I COULD SEE HIM BUT HE COULDN'T SEE ME

Clarence Charles, who was to cry at Pa's fun'ral, had up and run away that evenin. We was sit'n on our front porch — me knit'n like Ma teached me 'fore she died, Pa just sit'n, not rock'n — listen'n to them birds to cheezum, cheezum, cheezum when we seen he was leav'n. He slammed his front screen door, BANG!, and run like a squirrel runs 'cross them powerlines out front. His Ma came to that door and screamed out, "Just don't come back then, ya spoilt brat!" But he didn't once turn round. He just kept race'n down past the depot toward town.

That was right after supper. Pretty soon, like Pa always made me 'cause he said I needed some women's influence, I went 'cross the street to see Mrs. Charles. She didn't bother with no nice lady talk today, 'cause she knowed I'd heard her shout'n after Clarence. Soon as I walked in, she said, "Ellen, that boy is get'n to be too much. Home ever-day after summer school, right to the kitchen mix'n chemicals. Says he's make'n some experiment. Well I'll be saved by a Methodist preacher 'fore I let 'im ruin my kitchen."

I just listened. Clarence seemed like an awful nice boy to me. Seemed like Mrs. Charles might be get'n a little upset over nothun. But I didn't say that to her 'cause I weren't old 'nough to have no experience raising kids.

When she was through — like Pa used to say if'n ole Clay Wade Bailey dropped by — "Just bending my ear," I went back home. Pa was listen'n to the last of them birds, and had started count'n lightnin bugs. I joined him, and we sat there quiet just watch'n close and count'n out when we saw one light.

Not once the whole evenin had Pa mentioned Clarence leave'n. I was wonder'n why not. Clarence and Pa always talked after I went inside and I was think'n unless Clarence came home soon, they wouldn't get to that night. Since Pa had been a medic in World War I, they talked about doctor'n Pa'd told me. He said it was alright for Clarence to hear 'cause he wanted to be a doctor, but to me like always when I wanted to hear, he's say "I've been tell'n you ever since you was old 'nough to 'member, you can't listen. Make you scared to get a check-up." So I never made no fuss when they started their talking, but went somewheres and didn't listen.

We must've sit there another hour count'n bugs 'fore I lost track 'round seventy and said to Pa, "Ain't you worried 'bout Clarence?" And he said kinda cross-like, "No. Boy's old 'nough to watch out for himself."

I knowed from the way he talked it was get'n late and 'bout time for me to go to bed, so I didn't say nothun else, but sat there a minute count'n a couple more bugs and think'n 'bout go'n in 'fore I did.

Once I's in there, I laid awake for quite a spell think'n 'bout where Clarence might be. I was think'n he might've hitched a ride over to Sandy Hook, or maybe just went to his friend's. It's hard tell'n where Clarence did go. The way he was run'n he could've been in Ohio by then.

Pa stayed out on the porch late that night. I never paid it no serious mind until I heard what sounded like Pa's rocker rock'n kinda fast. Creep'n out of bed, fix'n to spy on Pa like I'd been want'n to do for sometime, and all anxious to see if Clarence had come home, I tried pretty good to Injun step to the window that was just right for see'n out on the porch. From there I seen Pa rock'n fast like he used to, and with him, sure 'nough, Clarence.

They was talk'n and I heard Pa ask Clarence, "Why'd you go and leave home, boy?" Clarence said somethun but I couldn't hear, and then Pa said kinda loud, "Boy you gotta stay home and finish school. Ain't no doctor gonna make it without a home."

Then all fast and sudden, soon as Pa got done say'n that, Clarence went over from our swing and hugged Pa. He just went right over to him, reached down and put both arms 'round him. It weren't too good a hug, but that's what it was, and it made Pa stop rock'n.

Next 'fore I knowed it, Clarence had jumped off our porch and shot straight cross our front yard through Pa's azalea bushes, I reckon. He was head'n that way, but I couldn't see good 'cause it was dark out there and alls we had was one light bulb for a porch light.

Pa sat there a short bit but soon got up outa his rocker slow and started limp'n to'rds our front door. He looked tired or somethun but I didn't offer him no help, 'cause I reckoned he'd get mad if he knowed I'd been watch'n.

He got inside and turned back 'round to look out. Onced he was turned 'round he put his hand on the light switch for the porchlight and flipped it on and off twice real fast. Then he stood stare'n out there at what must've been nothun. I'd stepped back from the window and was peep'n round the corner when I seen him stare'n so I had to stoop down low behind the corner's wall 'fore I could look out there too. In a second I seen what Pa must've been wait'n on cause Clarence's porch light flipped on and off twice real fast just like Pa'd done urn.

I reckon satisfied, Pa shut the front door, and in a hurry I went to the bathroom and closed its door. I just couldn't let Pa find out I'd seen all that without him know'n. It was terribler than me refuse'n right to his face not to listen.

I heard him limp down the hallway by the bathroom. He must've seen the light come'n out under the door, 'cause he stopped and said kinda weak, "Ellen, Clarence came home. Said he was gonna run away till he 'membered me. I think he meant it Ellen. I think he did. He hugged me Ellen. He came right over to me and hugged me."

I flushed the toilet so's to make Pa think I'd been use'n it, then said to him while it was flush'n, "That's good Pa. That's real good."

When I heard him limp'n down the hallway to his bedroom, I opened the bathroom door, and said "Good night, Pa." And without turn'n 'round he said, "Good night, Ellen. See you in the morn'n."

* * * * *

"See you in the morn'n." I 'member that was the last thing Pa said to me, but he didn't ever see me again, cause in the morn'n when I went to tell him he'd overslept, it was kinda like that night before on the porch, and kinda like when he said good night without look'n; I could see him but he couldn't see me. I could see him but he couldn't see me.

Jay Kegley

Third Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

a world – preoccupied with beauty – revolves...
while I sit in my corner and admit to
myself that I'm plain
“Beauty comes from within,” they told me...
so I sit alone with that beautiful me
that no one recognizes
a world – searching for love – revolves...
and I can only wave as it passes by
and scream whispers that mix – unheard –
with merry-go-round music

Mary Ann Deer

SIX OF ONE AND HALF DOZEN OF THE OTHER (PART I)

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

At 12:30 p.m., I struggled into my cheerleading sweater, zipped my cheerleading skirt, and rummaged through my laundry bag for bobby socks. Jocelyn, our captain, Julie, Nancy, Truitt, and Susie were already in the car. I ran up in untied saddle oxfords and an unbuttoned jacket, juggling pompons, pocketbook, Band-aids, hair ribbons, and pumpkin bread. "Let's go," I said as I fell in. Nancy started the car.

"It takes a half hour to get to Denison's stadium," Jocelyn said. "We'll buy knee socks and still get to the game by 1:00." We split up - three to McDonald's and three to Sears. Jocelyn, Truitt and I tried to look inconspicuous in our maroon and white uniforms as we rushed down Sears' aisles. "Would you buy Susie's socks, too?" Jocelyn asked.

"Sure," I said. "Then she can pay me for the flowers and the pumpkin bread at the same time."

"I owe you \$1.50 for those flowers, too," Jocelyn said, "but I don't have any change."

"Four fifty, please," said the cashier.

"Why don't you give her your ten, keep the change, and I'll give you \$3.00," I suggested.

"Maybe you should give me \$8.00 and take the change," Jocelyn said.

"But you've got the ten," I said, "so I'll give you \$4.50 - remember the flowers." Truitt looked confused. We paid the cashier and walked away. "Who has the socks?" I asked. Two blank looks sent me back to the counter. Avoiding the cashier, I grabbed the sack and ran.

I caught up with them as they neared the candy department. "Well," Jocelyn said.

"Well," Truitt said.

"Well," I said. We investigated every delicacy and settled on peanut butter cups and peanut clusters.

"Now," Jocelyn said, "I have a dollar and can get more later. If you pay for two-thirds, I'll give you \$1.50 later which means you need \$1.25 and Truitt will owe you \$.75." I nodded, paid, and gathered our sacks. Truitt looked confused.

We had filled a lobby ashtray with candy wrappers by the time they drove up. "You guys!" Julie yelled. "It's 12:40. Hurry!" Nancy drove across six lanes of traffic to an Arco Service Station. "Fill it up with regular," she said, as Truitt and I ran to the restrooms to clean Julie's root beer off our socks. We came back in time to hear Nancy say: "You don't accept Sohio credit cards?" We paid cash, resolved to bill the college, and drove off.

"Here's some more money for the clusters," Jocelyn said. "I

ate half of them."

"Well, I ate half of them, too," I said, "so just keep it."

"Oh, I ate half of them, too," Julie said. "Here's fifty cents."

"Three people ate half of the peanut clusters?" Truitt asked, confused.

"Drop it," Susie said.

Nancy didn't know how to get to Denison. "Turn here?" she asked. We talked. "Turn here?" she asked, raising her voice. We talked. "Turn here?" she yelled. No answer. "Well, I'm turning," she said.

"Don't turn here!" Jocelyn screamed. We turned around. At maximum speed, we could make it by 1:15. "We might as well discuss some things," Jocelyn said. "I ordered the candy to sell."

"Anyone have an eyelash curler?" Truitt interrupted.

"It'll be here Monday," Jocelyn continued.

"Mirror?" Truitt asked.

"And I know you think your shoulders are getting flat from holding Susan in 'Flight,' Jocelyn told Susie, "but we can't change the cheer now."

"Does anyone have any bag creme?" Truitt asked, rolling on lipstick.

"Here, I do," Julie said.

"Great!" Truitt said. "Is this ERASE?"

"Yeah, it erases," Julie said.

"No, I mean is it ERASE," Truitt said.

"No it's not an eraser. You want an eraser? I thought you said bag creme for eye bags. What are you writing in here for anyway?" Julie asked.

"Just use it, Truitt," Susie said.

We saw Big Ed, a fellow Otterbein student, lying unconscious in a ditch along 161. "Turn around," we told Nancy.

"I know mouth to mouth," Nancy said.

"I know CPR," I supplied. Big Ed had gotten drunk and had passed out. Disgusted, we waited for a break in traffic. Ten minutes later, we were back on the road.

"We're going to be late," Julie said wisely. We leaned forward as if to assist the car, and tensed as Nancy tried to pass on the winding, two-lane highway. She braked and squeezed back into the line of traffic.

"Let's sing," I suggested.

"Let's don't," said five voices. I shut up.

We parked at the stadium as WTVN checked the time at 1:27. "Run!" I yelled and ran, followed by four cheerleaders.

"Hey!" Nancy cried from the car. "I don't have my socks on yet!"

"Hurry!" we yelled, still running. We tried two gates before we got into the stadium. Nancy brought up the rear without shoes and socks. We ran straight across the field and arrived in front of

the stands, out of breath. "Let's get fired up! Go Otters!" we chanted until we heard the whisper of a tactful spectator: "You're on the wrong side."

Susan Mayberry

FIRST

The snow
Covering the country sides
Devastating the land
Bringing cold stillness.

A fierce cold wind
Blows through an empty tree
Saying that it's winter
You've gone cold.

Walking in snow and wind
Life slows to a dull point
The suns hidden from view
Going on into another time

A ray of sun shows through
Only to be dashed away by clouds.
Once again gone away
Leaving an iced tear to show the chill.

Carmen White

TIMELESS

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

Today the rain tore more leaves from the trees and imprinted them on sidewalks and white picket fences. Particles of ice formed the nuclei of the droplets that trickled down the windows facing the pine tree windfall. The crystals lasted for an instant, then disappeared in a quick streak, leaving an artery which blurred the pine needles into brush strokes. From these swipes water dripped like ornaments falling from a Christmas tree. Silver drops of memory.

While living on Livingston Street, we put up a scraggly, short-needed pine a few days before Christmas. I hated it at first. It was small and frail, and the skeleton-like stems stood out more prominently than the needles, which were short and pliable with rounded tips, quite unlike the sharp-needed trees.

That year, when my dad and I were tree hunting, I tried to persuade him to buy one of the long-needles like my friends had. But he wouldn't. Instead, he stood near his trees, examining their heights, picking them up, shaking off the snow and checking for missing limbs which made them look lopsided or off balance. While I stood behind him, sullen and pouting, but slowly becoming more interested in the ragged little pines that looked so delicate compared to the fat, perfectly shaped long-needles, he asked my opinion. I tried to look dejected while surreptitiously inspecting a tree he had singled out. Its trunk was twisted and gnarled as if a giant of an ancient forest in fairyland had attempted to tear it out by its roots, and failing, had left it to struggle back to life. I touched the tumorous knobs that protruded, and I felt the protective wood that had grown in place of the bark. The tree was like an old man who had worked under the sun and rain every day of his life and grown wrinkled and dark, but remained strong and erect. Dad picked it up and measured its height.

Within five minutes it lay in the trunk, bound for Livingston Street, while we argued about when to put it up, where the decorations were, and whether we needed any new bulbs.

The tree sat in the garage for two days before being ushered into the house, where its battered trunk was placed through the ring of the tree stand and tightened in by L-shaped bolts. Before straightening it I filled the stand with water and lay under the limbs, smelling the fresh sap seeping from the green lace.

After the tree was placed just right, we located the decorations and pulled long strands of colored lights, which didn't work if one bulb was burnt out, from the battered hat box, spiraled them from top to bottom, hiding the wires with tinsel and golden fringed twine that wound subtly in and out of the limbs. When the decorating was complete, delicate ornaments of red and blue hung grace-

fully on bowed stems, reflecting, in miniature, the entire room. An elegant spire topped the tree, shimmering, mirroring the brilliant colors. And presents lay cluttered in piles on a sheet draped around the bottom of the tree, waiting for prying hands.

I sat on the couch, no longer envying my friends, but captivated by the simple beauty of the delicate pine and the world embodied in it. It brought not only my dad's childhood, with the winters of the depression, the heat of the coal stove, and the chill of the daily walk to school, but also something of a timeless yesterday and today and tomorrow. It brought something of a gnarled, twisted world that struggles for life, something of the world that lies rooted in the holy season.

Brad Manier

TO MY RAT, WHO PASSED AWAY FEB. 13, 1976

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

Rows of bodies, cold and still,
cover the black table.

The whiskered noses, once pink and wriggling,
are now gray, pointed toward the ceiling.

Even the curious pink eyes are glazed and silent.

All that remains of their lives
is a bit of blood on a scalpel.

They could never have understood
that their only purpose in life was to die.

It's the scientific method:
a paper towel funeral for a purpose
with a name that cannot even be pronounced.

Mary Bricker

**THE TWIN INDIAN FROGS
AND THEIR SEARCH FOR THE EDIBLE PLANTS
(A Children's Read-aloud Story)**

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Children's Literature Contest

**THE TWIN INDIAN FROGS BEGIN THE SEARCH
FOR THE EDIBLE PLANTS**

Once long ago, before Columbus discovered America, Indian frogs lived in the land of Ohio. The Indian frogs were happy frogs living together. They worked, played and ate together. The frogs ate different kinds of foods from animals and plants.

Sun and Moon Ribbet were twin Indian frogs. They lived happily with their mother and father in the tribe of the Ribbets, until one day when Chief Indian Frog visited the Ribbet's teepee.

"How!" the chief said with a booming voice.

"How!" answered Mother, Father, Sun, and Moon Ribbet.

"I've come to send Sun and Moon Ribbet on a great journey," the chief explained. "It will cover many days and be very important to the entire tribe when they have completed the journey!"

Sun and Moon looked at each other and smiled. They were going to be important to the tribe.

"You twin Indian frogs are to search for the great Indian frog edible plants of the Ohio land," the chief commanded. "You will find the plants which are edible to the Ribbet tribe."

"But what are edible plants?" Moon asked in her boldest voice.

"You will find them and tell the tribe of your discovery. You must leave tonight!" The great chief rose and left.

"How exciting!" Mother Ribbet exclaimed. "To search for the edible plants is only given to two Indian frogs ready for the membership into the tribe."

"And we were chosen over all our friends?" Sun asked with a startled voice.

"Yes, son, you and Moon are the chosen ones!" Father Ribbet said.

Thinking of their journey, Sun and Moon packed for the trip into the world of edible plants. They hoped to return with knowledge of the vast lands of Ohio and the plants that were edible.

THE TWIN INDIAN FROGS MEET THE CATTAIL

After a long and exhausting day, Moon and Sun were tired. They came to a swampy pond and hopped on lily pads to spend the night.

The big orange fireball in the sky rose the next morning and

the Indian frogs awoke. Surprisingly, they saw tall sticks with fur-like tops, like an animal on its tip end.

"How!" Sun greeted the tall sticks. "Thank you for the lily pads to sleep on!"

The tall sticks didn't answer; they just waved in the wind.

"They don't respect us," Moon said to Sun. To not respect an Indian frog was a dishonorable affair.

"Pur-r-r-r, you two Indian frogs!" said a voice behind the frogs. Both turned to face a grinning Indian cat. "How you be, pur-r-r-r-r?"

"We are fine, except these sticks are mad at us, I believe so," Moon answered.

The cat on the bank laughed at the Indian frogs on the lily pads. "Don't you know the cattail?" the Indian cat asked. Moon and Sun couldn't imagine that they were talking to cattails.

"Is the cattail an edible plant?" asked Sun.

The cat smacked his lips. "It sure is an edible plant; the most important plant for us Indians. The roots of the cattail can be baked like a potato and is one of my favorites. We use the stalk for a green vegetable which gives you good vitamins. The furry tops can be ground into flour to make cattail bread."

"Wow!" said Moon and Sun. "An edible plant - um!"

"Well, I must purr along," said the Indian cat. "But remember the cattail; it's the most important." The cat crept away.

Moon and Sun had found one edible plant on their journey and were off to find another.

THE TWIN INDIAN FROGS AND CORN

Moon and Sun Ribbet hopped into a field of tall green stalks with broad leaves and yellow fringed tops.

"What are they?" Moon asked Sun. But Sun only ribbeted.

"They're cornstalks and you're in a cornfield!"

Moon and Sun turned to gaze at an Indian earthworm. He was long and wore a bright colored feather.

"Don't look surprised. I'm just an earthworm!" the Indian earthworm said in a loud voice.

"But you talk!" said Sun. Sun and Moon had never seen a talking earthworm.

"So do you!" the earthworm yelled. He stared at the two Indian frogs, and they stared back at him. But the frogs' curiosity broke the stare.

"What are cornstalks? Are they edible plants?" asked Moon.

The earthworm turned to face the two Indian frogs. "Cornstalks are edible plants. Corn is edible. It's food for all Indian frogs and Indian earthworms," the earthworm said. The earthworm slithered through the dirt of the field and stopped directly in front of the twin Indian frogs.

"Corn is probably the most useful edible plant for all us Indians," continued the earthworm. "Many years ago the Great Spirit in the sky looked down on the starving Indians. He made water pour on the earth to make cornstalks rise to dance in the wind and to be useful to hungry Indians.

"Corn became used for all sorts of meals. Corn cakes, corn soups, succotash, and corn alone are just some of the varieties of meals which are provided by this plant. Cornmeal makes a good bread for you. All of us wouldn't survive without corn!" the earthworm finished.

"Thank you for all of your story," answered Sun. He was glad that another edible plant had been found.

Two important Indian edible plants were discovered. The twin frogs were halfway home to the Ribbet tribe.

THE TWIN INDIAN FROGS TALK TO A SUNFLOWER

The day was sunshiny and bright. The sky was blue with white cottonball clouds floating swiftly in the breeze of summer.

"Isn't it pretty today?" Moon stopped to talk to Sun and catch her breath. They had been hopping all afternoon.

"It is!" answered Sun. "But I wonder if we'll be able to find anymore edible plants!"

"Well, you can try me!!" said a tall, green-stemmed, yellow-headed figure to the Indian frogs.

"Why, you look like the sun!" exclaimed Moon.

The tall green figure tilted its yellow head back and laughed, deep and throaty, but sweetly so the frogs wouldn't be scared off. "I'm a sunflower," the laughing green and yellow figure said. The sunflower shook her yellow mane one last time before going on to explain. "I'm an edible plant!"

"HOORAY!!" exclaimed Moon and Sun. "We've found another edible plant. What do we Indians use you for?"

The sunflower turned her pretty head to let the sun dazzle her shining face. "The Indians use my seeds for nutritious food in their various meals or eat them raw. Roasted sunflower seeds are the best. Boiled seeds make excellent cooking and flavoring oils for foods.

"When I was smaller, my young flowerheads were eaten as vegetables. We also make thicker soups and breads," the sunflower added in a flourish as she swooped her yellow head to knock some of her seeds to the Indian frogs to try.

"Um-m-m, good!" said Moon and Sun. "We can tell you are very important to all Indian frogs."

"Yes, I am," chuckled the sunflower.

Saying a goodbye to the happy sunflower, Moon and Sun Ribbet hopped away. They had found another edible plant and were off to search for more.

DANDY, THE DANDELION, AND MILKY, THE MILKWEED
SING TO MOON AND SUN

When Moon and Sun heard laughter and singing coming from an open field, they hopped to the spot to see what all the excitement was about. To their surprise, Sun and Moon saw two bouncy flowers, a milkweed and a dandelion.

"We have so much fun
We laugh and play
Not doing much else
The live-long day!"

sang the flowers.

"How!" greeted Sun and Moon.

"Hi, Indian frogs.

We are Milky and Dandy
We are happy all day

Making verses rhyme sweeter than candy."

answered the two flowers in rhyming harmony.

"Are you edible plants? Moon and I have to know," said Sun.

The two flower weeds nodded their heads,

"We are very true,

We are edible plants;

As true as the wind,

Which makes us dance!"

The wind blew and happily they danced.

"Are you important to Indian frogs?" asked Moon.

"We are important to the Indian frogs,

In that we make good greens

To be eaten

Whenever frogs please!

We also thicken soups,

Of any quality.

To be sure we are good,

In all accessibility.

Milky's milk is sweet

That on any chosen spring day,

The milk is poured over Dandy's sprouts

For an Indian treat in every way!"

the flowers sang.

"So we are important

To all Indian frogs

Who dwell everywhere

In the stumps of trees or in hollow logs!"

Moon and Sun giggled at their happy reply. They were funny to hear and to see.

"Thank you for all your help, Dandy and Milky," said the two Indian frogs in gratitude.

"We thank you for listening

And wish you luck of good

On your incredible journey
To hunt the plants of food!"

answered the joyous flowers. The wind blew and the flowers began to dance.

THE TWIN INDIAN FROGS BEGIN THEIR JOURNEY BACK HOME

After seeing the happy flowers, Moon and Sun were so excited. They had found most of the Indian edible plants and could now return home.

Remembering the cattail, the corn, the sunflower, the dandelion, and the milkweed, Moon and Sun slept their last night under a pale moon before their return.

"We've done it, Sun," sighed a tired Moon.

"We really have found the edible plants," said Sun. He was tired also. They had had a rough journey over the vast lands of Ohio but now that it was soon to be over, the twin Indian frogs were sad.

They had made new friends and would never see them again. But the sun rose and the two hopped off to tell the tribe the news of their discovery of their discoveries which are known as the EDIBLE PLANTS.

Nancy Ballog

THE DIETER

(A tribute to Ogden Nash)

Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Humorous Writing Contest

Some early cave woman watched her weight.
The skinnier she got, the less she ate.
And that is why the great North wind
Has got your sister Marilyn.

Lyn Benua

THE VERY STRONG MAN

There once was a man
A very strong man
He's dead now

He lived
On the other side of the mountains
All alone

He came to town
Once a year
For a cask of wine

Because he was so strong
Everyone was his friend
Everyone
But one man

His friends
Told him of this man
But he was not afraid
He said he was too strong
To be afraid

This strange man
Visited the very strong man
And after that
The very strong man never came to town

His friends went to see
Why he never came to town
They found him . . . dead

They said
The strange man killed him
The strange man's name was . . . loneliness

There once was a man
A very strong man
He's dead now.

Mike Ritz

MIRROR IMAGE

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

I first noticed how much time Rick spent staring into the hall mirror when I was home with a broken leg. I had broken my leg when a stack of crated refrigerator parts had toppled over at work. I'm not as young as I used to be, so I couldn't get out of the way in time. Well, you can't work in a refrigerator plant with a busted leg, so I had to hang around the apartment until it healed.

I was sitting in our living room watching "Hollywood Squares" when I looked around to see what the kid was up to. Sue had left Rick with me while she went to get groceries. Rick was six and an average, healthy, active kid. He had a bit of an imagination, but nothing unusual, or so I thought.

It was Teacher's Day at his school, so he was home for the day. I looked around during a commercial and saw him sitting in the small hallway that lead to the bedrooms. He was just sitting and staring into the full length hall mirror.

"Hey, Rick," I asked, "see something interesting?"

He didn't move. His blue eyes stared straight into the mirror, into the mirror and beyond. It was at that moment that I remembered that he had been sitting in front of the mirror when I had come through to breakfast. He must of been sitting there for more than three hours.

"Answer me, boy," I barked as I reached for my crutches to pull myself up, "answer when I talk to you!"

Rick jumped, startled. He sat staring up at me, his eyes wide.

"What are you doing, sitting in front of this mirror?" I demanded.

"J-j-just sittin' here, Dad," he quivered.

"Are you okay?" I asked, starting to worry.

"Uh-huh."

Returning to the recliner I said, "Well, why don't you go outside to play or something?"

"Okay," he mumbled as he quietly walked over to pick up his jacket.

Sue got back a little later, carrying two bags of groceries.

Coming through the door she asked, "Has Rick been outside long? It's a little chilly out."

"Huh?" I mumbled, turning my attention from another game show, "Oh, he's been out for about thirty minutes or so I guess."

Her words followed her into the kitchen. "He shouldn't stay out too long, I think he's coming down with something."

"Yeah," I grunted, "He was in front of the mirror this morning, just sitting there."

"That's what I mean. He was doing that yesterday. Why don't

you call him in and I'll fix lunch?"

"Oh, hell," I mumbled as I heaved myself out of the chair.

Our door opens onto a grassy court that was situated between buildings. Parking spaces were placed at the open end of the court.

Rick had found a seat on one of a row of benches and was intensely interested in a small object he was holding in his hands. I couldn't see what it was because he was turned with his back partly toward me. I hobbled over to see what he held. He heard me coming and quickly stuffed it into his pocket.

"What do you have, Rick? I asked.

"Ummm, it's nothing."

"Don't lie to me, boy. I saw you holding something, now let me see what it is."

He sat silently, with his head bowed.

"Let me see it now!" I yelled.

Slowly his small hand slid into his pocket and withdrew the object of his attention. It was an old and worn woman's compact.

"Give it here!"

I opened the compact and glimpsed at its contents. The makeup was gone except in a tightly encrusted ring and where some had smeared the mirror. I put the compact into my pocket.

"Get inside, Mom's fixing lunch."

I didn't think much more about Rick's preoccupation with mirrors until Sue received a call from his school. My leg had healed enough for me to go back to work that next week. I was still rejoicing over having the cast removed and was trying to decide what to buy Sue for our upcoming anniversary. When I went back to work they put me on second shift so I didn't see much of Rick.

I came home one night and Sue met me at the door with a worried look on her face.

"What's wrong, Honey?" I asked, after getting a hello kiss.

"Rick's school called today," she whispered, "they want to see us tomorrow morning."

"What about?"

"He doesn't do anything, John, he just sits in class. He doesn't play with any of the other kids. They said they'll tell us more tomorrow. They tried to reach us before by sending notes home with Rick. John, he never gave me any notes. I'm really worried about him."

"Did they say how long this has been going on?" I asked.

"About a week. He's been acting strange at home too. He just wants to sit and look at the mirror."

For a minute the thought that Rick was either sick or crazy nagged at my mind.

"Let's worry about this tomorrow. Come on and get some sleep."

The next morning when I came lumbering into the kitchen I was in a black mood for being awake at such an ungodly hour. I wolfed down a pair of fried eggs and was sipping a cup of black coffee when Rick came through the hallway for breakfast.

"What's this business about school?" I growled.

Rick was acting like he was sleepwalking and went blankly past me.

Tiredly Sue said, "John, let's wait and hear what the school has to say. Maybe," her voice dropped, "maybe he's ill, maybe he's caught something."

"This isn't any illness I've heard about and I don't want to find out about my son from strangers. I want to find out what's wrong from him." I spat, "Rick, answer me!"

Rick looked at me very wearily.

I grabbed his arms. "Rick, why do you just sit in front of the mirrors? What is this fascination you have with mirrors?"

His eyes lighted as he answered. "There's another place on the other side. It's a wonderful place. Everyone's so friendly. It's really neat."

"What do you mean, the reflections in the mirror?" I asked.

"Oh no, they're different from us. They're smaller than me, and they're fuzzy. They're really friendly. They've invited me to visit on their side," Rick bubbled with enthusiasm.

"You've been letting your make believe get in the way of your schoolwork!" I barked.

"I-it's not make believe. It's r-real," he stammered.

"Don't lie to me, boy!" I yelled.

"I'm not lying!" he cried.

"John, let him be," pleaded Sue.

"I'll handle this!" I snapped at her.

Staring down at Rick I said coldly. "We are going to take you to school to talk with your teacher. From now on you will not be allowed to have, use, or play with a mirror again. Do you understand? You are not to play with a mirror again!"

Tears streaming from his eyes, Rick fled from the kitchen and ran into the hallway. "Nooo!"

In a rage I followed him into the hallway. I didn't find him. We didn't find him in the neighborhood. The police could not find him. No one knows where he could have gone.

But sometimes, when I'm walking down the hall, just as I'm passing the mirror, I can catch a glimpse of a young boy out of the corner of my eye.

Archie Adams

THOUGHTS ON A FATHER

Daddy can fix it,
From radios, a bike, a chain necklace,
To a stuffed dog that needs sutured.

Patiently, cleverly,
Wielding glue, tape, nails, needles, forceps,
Love and imagination.
Whatever the object,
Somehow he'd fix it.

Often he'd build it –
A playhouse, a bookcase.
Sometimes he's paint it –
That first real bedroom suite.

Handyman – yes, he's usually that
But more, He's handy in matters of heart.
Times of illness, worry, family strain,
Budding romances, periods of pain.

At times my life seems to crumble,
First death, then divorce, destruction, and doubts,
Daddy, I need you to fix me again.

Elizabeth Baker

Honorable Mention, Roy A. Burkhart Religious Poetry Contest

someone once told me
that when they climbed up a mountain
and stood high up, on the top-most peak,
they felt very close to God.
so i found a mountain
and climbed and climbed and climbed still higher
and when i stood high up, on the topmost peak
i felt . . . light-headed and dizzy.
someone once told me
that when they sailed out into an ocean
and sat with nothing but water all around,
they felt very close to God.
so i found a sailboat
and sailed and sailed and sailed still farther
and when i sat with nothing but water all around
i felt . . . seasick.
someone once told me
that when they knelt in front of the alter in a very large, ornate church in Europe
they felt very close to God.
so i spent \$700 to go to europe and found a very large, ornate church in europe
and knelt and knelt and knelt still longer
and i felt . . . very small and alone.
someone once told me
that when they attended a meeting on a certain day of the week
and listened to others
they felt very close to God.
so i attended a meeting on a certain day of the week
and listened and listened and listened still harder
and i felt . . . as if they were talking of their specialness
not of God's
and speaking to each other
not me.
someone once asked me to walk with them
so we walked and shared ideas and dreams
and noticed how trees and daffodils and stars were unconscious of their beauty
and how they grew and depended from their very hearts
and thought not of how high up they grew, not of how ornate they became
and suddenly i felt very close to God.

Amy Vanek

IF THE PEDESTAL FITS, STAND ON IT

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Prose Contest

The blackboards are black. The walls are green.
The floors are lacking a Mr. Clean sheen.
I have nothing to do but stare at the beams.
This school is so boring that I could scream.
The chairs are uncomfortable. The bolts tear your hose.
There are no Kleenexes for wiping your nose.
There is no escape, no possible way.
I guess I'll just sit here until I decay.

Olé

— *Jayne McAfee and
Susan Mayberry*

"Why do you get top billing?" I asked.

"It's obvious," she answered.

And she was right, of course. The feeling began in first grade, but I only recently realized that I have always thought she was perfect. Now that I am aware of that closed-mindedness, I will admit that the realization has not made any difference. She is still perfect. Her mistakes are perfect.

I won her with my confidence in the sixth grade: "Jaynie, I love Danny Crawford. I mean really. I cry every night for him, and I don't even look at Mickey Dolenz anymore."

She stared. "You're kidding," she said. "He publishes a revised list of his top five girlfriends every week. And Canterboob has been holding number one for two weeks now. Plus, he sure makes dumb remarks like: 'Look down your blouse and spell attic.' Huh. That's neat that you love him, though." That summer he was placed in the Boys' Industrial School for burning a barn with toilet paper and a fire cracker. She never mentioned it.

Nearly every weekend, I was at her house or she was at mine. In seventh grade, we began a series of songs, poems, sayings, cheers, and stories. We rattled off our creations (by request and not) throughout high school and college. ORDER: Have a good time. Just give Jayne and Susan nothing. They'll come up with something. Our mothers laughed and said, "If only they could can it and sell it." Sell it? That gave us an idea. We took an extra from my deoderant can collection and recovered it with the label of our new product, PITSTOP.

She wore a flannel shirt, blue jeans, glasses, braces and rollers. "What would you do if Mark came right now?" I asked, watching her scuff in the gravel.

"Oh, wouldn't that be nice? I'd like to see him. What do you mean, what would I do?" she said.

On a Friday night as sophomores in high school, we donned dark outfits and black scarves and crawled across my back yard.

We crouched in the grass and watched a boy she liked play basketball with the neighbors. He loved kosher dills and so did Jayne. But he asked me out. "You'd better go," she said, "or I'll kill you."

That spring we bicycled to Rita's house. Rita's boyfriend called, saying that his friend wanted to ask Jayne out. Two and a half years later, Keith gave her a ring. She kept her hand in her pocket.

They married. I cried. She didn't. Keith is good to her and she is good to him. She thinks his greasy morning face is funny and he laughs at her rollers.

Jayne called me last spring and chatted for several minutes before she announced, "I'm pregnant."

"You're kidding!" I squealed in my cheerleader voice. "I'm so excited! Can I babysit? Can I? Aren't you excited? When's it due?"

I saw Keith at Kroger's where he is the produce manager. He was a smile with legs, and I heard him call carrots "asparagus" twice and say "huh?" at least thirty times. Jayne bought "fat" clothes before I noticed any difference. "It's to be born around Thanksgiving," she said. "Maybe I'll have a turkey."

The baby died.

Two weeks later her doctor put her in the hospital. In the waiting room, Keith said, "She was in labor for eight hours. But not before they made her lie there for eight before that, listening to them screaming women while that doctor was out playing golf. She was real good, but I know she was scared. I finally went to sleep at 5:30. . . . The baby was born at 6:15. They say it strangled on that cord. No one even took her to the delivery room."

God needed a good shaking as I followed Keith past the newborns to Jayne's room on the maternity ward.

The next Thursday we played euchre over pop and potato chips.

Susan Mayberry

COMMUNION

Second Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

Earth words, explicit, bold,
Fervid yearnings deep unfold.
Manly hands, warm manly hands,
Reach me, teach me, touch me, hold.

Breathlessly I take, I yield,
Basest passions all unsealed.
Woman, man, in fusion spent;
Quiet, peaceful, tranquil, healed.

Ramona Huff

A PLACE TO CALL MY OWN

First Prize, Walter Lowrie Barnes Short Story Contest

I wiped the sweat off my face. It sure was a hot one today! My back was aching and I was feeling plumb tuckered. I squinted at the sun — Martha wouldn't have supper ready for a while yet. I should get some more work done — I still had another half acre of corn to weed, but . . . I glanced over at the trees that fringed my field. A few minutes rest wouldn't hurt none.

The ground felt cool and damp when I eased down on it. The shade felt mighty good and I guess before I knew if I dozed off . . .

"You have to live somewhere."

I knew that voice — I knew that little grey-haired woman.

My ma (she didn't come up higher than my waist) just snorted and gave me that look again. Everytime she'd do that, I always felt about as big as a banty rooster siding off against a mountain lion. But Ma was the only thing I could see clearly; everything else seemed cloudy.

"It's not fitting for any grown man, let alone a Patrick, to go galavanting over the countryside — worse than any Indian — fighting, drinking, chasing women. Only the good Lord, if Him, knows what all you've been up to! I'm just making it plain, I don't like it!"

"Ma, I'm not doing anything wrong. A trapper can't stay in one place. You know I have to go where the fur is. Now that the war is over and I can really be my own man, I've got to make up for lost time."

"But why don't you do something different?" Ma snapped. "How old are you now? Twenty-four? Do you want to end up with nothing to show for your life? What do you own right now? A rifle, some traps and the clothes on your back. Look at your brother Will. He's married, got a son, a farm of his own and he's only nineteen. I've tried to raise you boys right since your pa was taken, but if he knew what you'd become he'd roll over in his grave! Why do you have to be so different?"

I held back angry words. You never could argue with Ma, a body would think I'd have learned that by now. Ma kept staring at me and her eyes seemed to grow larger, pushing everything else out — they almost swallowed me and I stepped back.

"Ma, let's talk about it later. I've got to go to the fort and get some powder and supplies before the tavern closes."

"You have to live somewhere, Peter. Somewhere," Ma kept saying to me, then I was alone, standing on the edge of a cliff with nothing but my rifle in hand. I felt dizzy and I kept leaning over the edge, but I couldn't move away.

"I am no good! Ma's right. But I don't want —"

Sun glinted off my rifle and stayed in my eyes and I started to fall, into a black pit . . .

"Peter, are you all right?"

I sat up quickly, grabbing at my gun. Then I relaxed and smiled a little foolishly. It was only my wife, Martha.

"I sat down to rest a spell and must have dozed off."

"It sounded like you were having a nightmare. What were you dreaming about?"

I thought for a moment then shook my head. "To be perfectly honest, I can't tell you. I can't remember it, even though it feels so close and near to me."

"Are you feeling better now?"

"Sure, fine. What are you doing down this way, Martha? Is anything wrong? You know you shouldn't be exertin' yourself none — what with the baby almost due and all."

"I'm fine." Martha smiled. "Zeb came over to see you. And since I hadn't been out of the cabin all day, I just wanted to walk a piece. It's not that far, Peter, and it's perfectly safe. I thought you'd also like to know that Zeb brought a gallon of fresh corn whiskey with him."

I got to my feet quickly. "He did, did he now?"

"Since it was so close to supper and I knew you'd be working so hard in the field right now, I thought it wouldn't hurt to come and get you a little early."

"You've got me pegged, woman!" I laughed. "I reckon that's why I married you! Head on back and tell Zeb I'll be there as soon as I tend to the team. And tell that old trapper to leave some of that whiskey for me!"

"I will. Hurry."

Martha moved slowly up the trail leading towards the dabin. I watched her go before I went to my team. I stroked each horse's neck and checked their harness. They had done a good day's work, but so had I. I untied them and started up the trail, then I stopped and looked over my corn field. The corn stood waist high now and I had to admit it was mighty pretty. It was kind of funny when I thought about it — ten years ago I hated the sight of a plowed field and now here I was a farmer, married, and had two kids with the third on the way. That Martha now, she sure was a good woman. I was lucky to have found her. She knew when I felt the forest calling me and she'd let me go with never a sharp word. But Zeb and that corn whiskey wouldn't wait. I'd better get a move on.

Me and the horses moved up the trail pretty quick. They wanted their oats and me — well, I wanted . . . I grinned and raised my rifle high when I saw the cabin. Zeb saw me coming and lifted his jug in return.

Zeb was an ex-trapper, grizzled and half-crippled with rheumatism caused from wading in too many mountain streams. That water was cold the year round, but during the winter months when fur was at its prime, that's when a man's legs would be frozen stubs after ten minutes in the water. Those days were gone forever for Zeb. All he did now was run a still and do enough hunting to keep him in meat. He lived in a cave a few miles from my place and when I'd be gone on hunting trips he'd keep an eye out on Martha and the little ones for me. The only other time we'd see him was when he'd bring me a jug of fresh whiskey or a haunch of deer that he couldn't really afford to give us but he did. Martha had taken a liking to the old man and always made sure he had some fresh bread or sweets to take back with him. My two boys, they couldn't keep away from him when they saw him coming — even now one was perched on one shoulder and one was on his lap.

Zeb grinned and offered his jug to me. "Better hurry, Pete. She's goin' fast. Take a nip before me and yore boys finish this one up."

I drank deep of the clear, sharp-tasting whiskey. That would clear out a man's insides with no trouble!

"Thanks, Zeb. That sure hits the spot. How's it going with you?"

"Can't complain. Yore missus said you was a workin' in the field. I told her I'd come get you, her being in the family way and all, but she said she wanted the walk. So me and the boys have been taking care of things, haven't we, you two Injuns!"

My boys started giggling and poking at Zeb — him never seeming to notice them at all.

"How's your corn crop going to be this year, Pete?"

"Best one so far — if the rains stay favorable and the varmints stay out of it."

"If'en you need any help let me know. I know you've got your hands full with Marthy coming due pretty soon and all."

"Thanks, Zeb. I appreciate it."

We sat quiet enjoying the taste of the good corn whiskey. After a bit the boys stopped bothering Zeb and went out to play in the clearing. Martha moved quiet-like around the cabin, not paying us much mind. But by the time we had finished our jug, she had supper sitting out for us.

"Marthy," Zeb said during the meal, "it surely does pleasure me when I eat your cooking."

Martha blushed like she was embarrassed but she laughed good naturedly. "Zeb, you're a tease. Now hush up and eat some more cornbread."

"You don't need to ask me twice, Marthy."

I didn't say anything but sat back and rubbed my full belly. My Martha made me proud with her cooking — I couldn't have asked for better.

Later, while Martha cleared the table and started doing up the dishes, Zeb and me took our corn cob pipes out and lit up with some fresh tobacco. We were quiet for a while then Zeb cleared his throat and spit on the floor.

"Purty night, Pete."

"Yep."

"In fact, this is right purty country."

"Better than most."

"You've been here for a while."

"Going on six or seven years I reckon."

"Did you move around much before you settled here?"

"Some."

"Well, I may be sticking my nose in where it's not wanted – but you was down in the Ohio country a few years back, wasn't you?"

"For a while, but I didn't stay long. Who'd you hear that from?"

"I jest heard mention of it from a gent who was by the tavern a while back. Went by the name of Neil Washburn. Said he used to know you when you lived in Redstone, Pennsylvania. He was wondering how you was gettin' along."

I shook my head and relit my pipe. "I haven't seen Neil in ten years or more, Zeb. I'm sure sorry I missed him. We could have told us some tales! It was mainly because of him and his family that I went to the Ohio country in the first place."

"That's one place I've never made it to, Pete. Tell me something about that Ohio country. Is it everything I've heard tell of?"

"I don't know about that, but it's a rich country, Zeb. You'd like it," I said, pondering on my thoughts for a few minutes before speaking again. "First time I heard much about it was a bit after the war with old King George was over. I was still in Redstone and trying to get started trapping again. Well, there'd been some talk around the tavern about the Ohio country from a few who had been there. A lot of men were interested in it as I recollect. The Washburns were some of the first to pull up stakes in Redstone and head west. They ended up in the settlement at Limestone, Kentucky. Anyway, Neil wrote a few letters back to some of us in Redstone and it wasn't long before a group of us had started thinking of heading down that way and seeing what we could find." I laughed. "I was a wild one then, Zeb! My poor ma almost threw me out when I first told her about the Ohio country. I remember her telling me that was the Devil's country and if I went I'd end up with the Devil."

"Did you?" Zeb asked.

"Nope. I didn't go then, I waited for a few years. In 1785 they passed a treaty that went by the name of the Fort McIntosh Treaty that opened up a lot more land for settlers. I was married to Martha by then, and us and three other families decided to start our own settlement in Ohio. They elected me leader until we got

wherever we were going and settled since I had traveled and had the most experience in the woods."

"That was a pretty fur walk, Pete."

"It would have been if we had walked. We built us a big raft and went most of the way by water. We had to travel to where the Monongahela and Allegheny join to make the Ohio River. From there we went south on the river.

"For the most part, it was an easy trip, Zeb, surprisingly easy. You know how it is traveling by water — every once in a while we'd either hit some shallows or white water and have to unload everything and walk around it but other than that we had few problems. I can remember a few trips when things didn't go so good!"

"I can imagine," Zeb agreed. "It sounds like you had lady luck on your side."

"I'd say so. Anyway, the weather was good the whole way and the current was fast. When we needed fresh meat, we'd tie up along the river bank and I'd go hunting. You wouldn't have believed the country we went through, Zeb! Some of it made this here look like it was barren land if you'd put the two beside each other. High mountains, thick forests — the land all along the Ohio River is God's country and a prime lot. If boating had appealed to me more, I sure could have made my way going up and down that river!

"We didn't let our luck go to our heads: the whole way we tried to keep away from people. What settlements we passed on the way, we never stopped at unless we had to. That was a trade I practiced when I trapped and I found it to be a pretty smart one. You know as well as I do that you never know who you could run into and I didn't want to have a brush with the hostiles or white renegades, especially since we had our womenfolk with us."

"It seems to me that taking Marthy along was the only dumb thing you did on the whole way." Zeb said. "That would be a hard trip for a woman, especially when you didn't have any set place to end up at."

"I know that, Zeb. I would rather have sent for Martha once I had found a place and got a cabin built. But she said 'no,' and that's one thing I quickly learned about that woman of mine: once she sets her mind on something she doesn't often change it.

" 'A wife's duty is to stand by her man,' she told me, and I never said anymore. But I knew what land I wanted. I had heard a lot about the Scioto country in Ohio. The men I talked to said it was some of the richest land in the whole territory. So that's where we were headed.

"It was a good thing that I had managed to get us a pretty fair map before we left Redstone. The Ohio flows all along the Ohio territory and has a lot of streams and smaller rivers feeding into it. If we hadn't known better, any one of them could have been the Scioto."

Zeb laughed. "It would have taken you a mite longer at that, Pete!"

"Most likely. As it was we reached the mouth of the Scioto River in late March. The weather was still a bit nippy, but the last snow was gone. That was a day, Zeb! We poled upstream a few miles and made our camp. Then we celebrated. I had kept a special jug just for that day and it was worth every drop!

We talked it over and decided to camp there until I had found the place for our settlement. I stayed in camp for a day or two to rest up and also get in a supply of fresh meat. Once that was done, I set out alone, following the Scioto. The other men stayed in camp to protect the women."

"That was a pretty risky thing to do, Pete."

"Maybe. But I could move faster alone, Zeb. I didn't know what I was heading for and I didn't want a greenhorn with me. You know what I mean. So like I said, I went alone.

"This was a rich land! I still get a lump in my throat when I think about it! If God ever made a Eden like it says in the good book - it was here! I couldn't compare any of the land we had already seen to this. Everything I had heard said about it was true. They claimed that this was an ancient river valley, Zeb. I stood on a high rise and saw the hills that must have been the banks of the river. When that river flowed it must have been twenty miles wide and no telling how deep! I did a lot of exploring and there were at least four different land levels in the valley. Everything seemed to grow rich and plentiful. The grass grew up to my knees and the trees were straight and tall and grew not more than two feet apart. When I was in the forest, I walked for hours and it was like dusk, no matter what the time of day was when I was there.

"I tried to check on everything as I made my way up through that wilderness. The fur traces were some of the richest I'd seen and the game was twice as plentiful as it is around here. I saw elk that had to have an antler span of at least eleven feet. They weren't even afraid of me - I don't think they'd ever seen a man before.

"Then one day I came on a little stream that fed into the Scioto and followed it a ways. It wound back through the forest and towards the hills and eventually opened up to a good-sized meadow. When I walked out in this meadow I knew I had found the spot I wanted to make my home. It had everything I needed: water, hills around me, trees, but all placed in such a way that I have never seen the like since. I picked out the spot where my cabin would stand, Zeb. I'd build it so I could see the sun come up over the hills every morning, shining on my cornfield. I picked up a handful of the dark soil and let it slip through my fingers - it was richer than the soil you find here, Zeb. A lot richer. You could grow most anything you'd set your mind to! I stood there looking at all this for a long time, Zeb. Let me tell you, it was enough to

make me want to stay there forever! Finally, I carved my initials on a beech tree growing by the stream. Anybody who might come on this place would know that it was mine — Peter Patrick's."

"All well and good," Zeb said. "It sure sounds like some parydise. So why didn't you stay there?"

I sat quiet for a minute, remembering. I cleared my throat, a mite uneasy. "I'm getting to that. Give me time. I did some more looking around before I headed back to the others but I didn't find any more likely places. I moved fast on the way back, maybe too fast, because some Injuns came across my trail along the way and followed me back to camp. I had been real careful before I found that meadow and I guess I forgot the need for care in my hurry to tell Martha about what I had found."

"That's a good way to lose your hair, Peter. It doesn't pay to be careless."

"I know that now, for a fact. Well, I got back to camp late in the afternoon, not knowing I'd been followed. They fell upon us in the early dawn the next day. We were lucky — they only killed two of us. As it was, the rest of us barely managed to get away after a close, hard fight. But we had to leave everything — our raft, supplies and all of our belongings. We hid in the forest and managed to work our way back toward the Ohio. Two days later we waded down some boats heading for Vincennes. They took us to Limestone, the place where the Washburns had settled. The folks there helped us out a lot — Martha and me are still beholding to them for everything they did. While we were there, Neil pointed out a big man to me, a man who went by the name of Simon Kenton."

"I've heard tell of him, Pete. He's a good man — a trapper — and one of the best," Zeb said. "I've never had the pleasure of meeting him though."

"He was a big one. I talked to him a good deal and he told me a lot about that area and the people. Anyway, the others with us finally decided to stay at Limestone but me and Martha wanted to move on and look for someplace else. We kept moving and finally ended up here." I stretched and sighed. "I guess that's the most of it."

"Are you satisfied with this place, Peter?"

"I am, I reckon. But every once in a while I get the calling to go back to the Ohio country. I imagine there's people living down there by now. It's just too good of land to waste for long. But I reckon you'd still have to watch out for your hair. Kenton told me back then that I was only twenty miles away from one of the biggest Shawnee settlements in that part of the country, Chalah-gawtha. For my way of thinking that was a mite close for comfort at the time to be settling there — what with a wife and a family on the way."

"I imagine it would be, especially with a woman. Even a woman like Marthy. You probably did the best thing, Pete."

"I think so."

Zeb stretched his legs and fingered the fringe on his pants. "Peter, I just may take me a gander down that way before I get so crippled up I can't make it. It sounds like the kind of place to see."

"It's a far piece to travel, Zeb. Be mindful of that if you're really thinking of going there."

"I will be, Peter Patrick. I've been a careful man these fifty years and I don't plan on changing my ways and maybe losing my hair to some Shawnee brave. I've got too much living to do yet."

"You've got a few more years due you."

"I like to think so. Well, I'd best be going. I've got a new batch of whiskey brewing in my cave. Thanks for supper, Marthy. You take good care of yourself and those young'uns of yours. Remember, Pete, if you need anything just let me know."

"Thanks, Zeb, I appreciate it."

After Zeb left, Martha finally got the boys in bed and quiet. I had chores to do but I didn't feel inclined to do them tonight. It had been a long time since I had thought or talked much about the Ohio country. But it was good to remember. That land was still a part of me, even though I knew I could never go back. I had too many responsibilities tying me here now.

Martha came out of the cabin and joined me. She put her arm around my waist and pulled at my beard.

"You aren't doing your chores, Pete," she teased.

"I'm not going to. They can go for a day."

"You and Zeb have a good talk?"

"Yep."

"That why you're so quiet?"

"Maybe."

"Well, I'm going to bed. Don't be too long in coming."

"I won't."

"All right. Peter, I'm glad Zeb's our friend."

"So am I." I kissed her and ruffled her hair. "You go on now. I'll be in shortly. I've got some thinking to do."

Martha gave me the kind of look my ma used to. "You know if you want to go back to the Ohio country, Peter Patrick, you can. I don't want to hold you here if you've a mind to go. Me and the boys could manage while you were gone."

I looked at her then put my arms around her. "No. I won't go back, Martha. My place is here. I know that now."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm sure. Let's turn in."

A week later Martha gave me another son and we named him Zeb. The time went by fast and it wasn't long after I had got my corn crop in that I heard Zeb had gone to the Ohio country like he said he would. Truthfully, Martha and I thought we'd never see him again, because he had left without a word to us, but more than a year later, he turned up at our cabin, a jug of fresh whiskey in hand.

After our first words, I brought young Zeb out and let the old man hold him.

"Pete, I'm beholdin' to you for naming this young'un after me. Why, he's near big enough to walk."

"Just about, Zeb. Martha and I talked about it and we knew if it was a boy, he couldn't have no other name."

"What are you going to name this next one?"

"We're hoping for a girl."

"Good! Call her Marthy. After her ma," Zeb said flatly. "Here, take little Zeb, Marthy. I ain't used to holding anything this size other than a jug."

We talked about the weather and crops, but we finally got around to Zeb's trip.

"What'd you think of the Ohio country, Zeb?"

"Right purty land."

"Did you make it to the Scioto?"

"I did."

"Well?"

"Hold on, boy. I'm getting to it. Like I said, right purty land. I can see now why you were so taken with it."

"Any settlers?"

"Some. I talked to a man by name of Hezekiah Merritt. He's one of the first that stayed. Good man."

"What about the meadow I told you about?" I asked eagerly. "Did you see it?"

Zeb smiled at me and nodded his head slowly. "I did. Hezekiah showed it to me. I saw the tree you'd put your mark on. I thought you'd like to know, Peter."

"What?"

"They call that stream Pee Pee Creek."

The name finally hit. Pee Pee Creek! My land! My name! It did belong to me then. I had left a mark that would last. A part of me would always be with that stream and meadow. If I could only go — I shook my head. I had made my choice a long time ago and I had to live with it. At least Ma would be proud of me. This land that I called mine would never be the land by Pee Pee Creek but it would have to be enough.

I was a little sad inside but I also felt like letting out with a big warwhoop, so all I said was, "Zeb, pass me that jug! We've got some celebrating to do!"

Epilogue

The stream by Peter Patrick's tree did keep the name Pee Pee Creek, and this creek runs through the present day Pee Pee Township in Pike County, Ohio.

Sarah Weinrich

MIDNIGHT

First Prize, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

Midnight, when it passes, is farther gone
Than dreams in the night at the awakening hour.
What bells ring longer or louder than
Those at midnight?
All is still and quiet and restful and,
When the clock chimes twelve times,
A man turns restlessly in his sleep
And the cat gets up to walk through the house
One more time.
The damp pavement faintly glistens through
The haze of the lighted street lamps
On the corner.
A stranger walks alone in the coldness.
All is bare; he has no defense against
The dark doorways and stoops.
Only the cat looks out after him from
A blackened window with eyes large
And looking long.
The cat watches until he is gone
And then stays and just watches.
Only midnight knows what the cat sees.

Lyn Benua

