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THE QUIZ KILL



SPRING '85

LITERARY CONTESTS

Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

First Place	Mary Wehrle "L.H." ¹
Second Place	Mary Wehrle "Gwen"
Third Place	Greg Grant "Christmas Cheer"
Honorable Mention	Julie Lynch "Looking Back" ²

Quiz and Quill Critical Essay Contest

First Place	John Tetzloff "The Pattern Of Shakespeare's Comedies"
Second Place	Mary Wehrle "Franklin and Emerson"
Third Place	Greg Grant "A Classical Dilemma"
Honorable Mention	Mary Wehrle "Moral Responsibility in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn"

Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest

First Place	David Kimmel "The Choice of Life: Why I Read"
Second Place	Julie Lynch "From The Baby's Perspective"
Third Place	Greg Grant "The Conspiracy"
Honorable Mention	John Tetzloff "Pete Townshend — Patron Saint of Rock & Roll"

Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

First Place	John Tetzloff "In the Iowa Country"
Second Place	John Thatcher "The Power of the Unforgiven"
Third Place	John Thatcher "Gurkha Knife" ¹

Roy Burkhart Prize in Religious Poetry

First Place	John Tetzloff "Creation"
Second Place	Greg Grant "Weedwhipping the Holy Place" ²
Third Place	Julie Lynch "A Celestial Reunion" ¹

Walter Barnes Short Story Award (Historical Short Story)

First Place	John Tetzloff "Robert Morris"
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¹ Printed in Winter Issue of *Quiz and Quill*

² Printed in Fall Issue of *Quiz and Quill*

QUIZ and QUILL

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Editor's Note

I would like to end my year as editor by thanking all of the students who showed interest in the various events and endeavors that the club has undertaken during the last three terms. Not only did membership and submissions increase, but there was an overall enthusiasm in everyone that made this year enjoyable and fulfilling.

One of the chief results of this enthusiasm was the success of our student poetry readings. Not only were these readings well attended, but they were interesting and entertaining. I hope that these readings will continue for years to come. They are an excellent opportunity for students to exhibit their creativity.

Our third and final reading will be held on May 28, at 8:15 p.m. in the Philomathean Room in Towers Hall.

John Tetzloff



Susan Howell

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Diann McElhanev

Gwen

Second Place, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

I only knew her
in the summertime.

She will always be remembered
brown
abundant
smiling
stooping in her garden
straw-hatted against
the blazing Missouri sun
drawing life up magically
from the soil

dogs and cats and little boys
arranging themselves around her
somehow understanding
that with
her strong arms
and her good heart
she would always stand
at the center of things.

Mary Wehrle

The Power of the Unforgiven

Second Place, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

There are several of them squatting in the dust, sitting on the steps or rocking back in straight cane chairs with their feet on the railing of the front porch. Their overalls look large and comfortable on them, and the crushed fedoras that some of them wear all bear a crown of sweat, for it is a sweltering day in Tazwell County, Virginia. On a July day like this there is not much more for a man to do than sit with his friends, with some chaw in his lip, and talk about farming. Mr. Jefferson Davis Jeffreys owns the filling station and general store where scenes like this are common. He sits in the doorway, where he says it is cooler, and gazes out beyond his gas pumps far down the dusty county road. "Somebody's comin'," he announces. This halts the talk that has been continuing without interruption all afternoon. All the men try to discern the approaching figure through the shimmering heat that makes the traveller's image distorted and unreal. One of the farmers takes advantage of the momentary break in conversation to begin a story that has been on the tip of his tongue all day. He begins, and in a measured Virginia back-country drawl a story unfolds of the previous night's adventure that involved a wily old 'coon, a good-for-nothin' coon dog, and a spill in a creek that, as everyone present knows, is a branch of the Clinch River that runs through the county. As the tale concludes a low rolling laughter spills off the porch like molasses, out into the yard to bake with the parching grass. The farmer punctuates his story by spitting into the dust beside the porch, and as he watches the tobacco juice mingle with the earth his eyebrows arch as do those of a tired dog when it lets out a sigh and rests its head on crossed paws. "That's a good one," says Jeffreys, and all the men agree. Some laugh some more, and some notice the man coming down the road is getting closer.

The old man is nearly exhausted. His sweat-stained shirt clings to his back as tightly as he clutches his tattered shopping basket. Shuffling off the dirt road, he halts at the edge of the asphalt state route. He seems to hesitate, unwilling to cross the searing pavement. Tentatively he takes the first step and walks quickly across the tar-black road like a south sea fire walker. Once across, he starts up the long gravel drive that leads up to the store where the men are sitting.

"That's Henry Patterson, ain't it?" says Otis Gray, the man who has just finished his story about the 'coon hunt. "Shore looks like ole Henry," says another. "Looks to me like Sheriff Chambers 'persuaded' the colored boy that's got Henry's groceries the past couple years to stay home and help his daddy with his farm," says Jeffreys. All the attention of the men on the porch is on Jeffreys now, for this is something new, something to do with the Sheriff and a colored boy. This is big news. "You all seen Rafer Johnson's boy before," continues Jeffreys. "He's been comin' to my store for five, six years with Henry's basket to get his groceries for him, seein' that Henry's too ashamed to show his face around polite folks, and keeps to himself." They all agree that that has been the way of things, and before that there was a succession of boys, all colored, that performed the same task. In return, the people of the county came to find out, Henry Patterson taught the boys to read and write, since most colored children were illiterate and grew up into illiterate adults. Illiterate Negroes, however, were preferable to the people in the county over the ones who could read. What was worse was one of Henry's boys had actually gone to college and come back, to make trouble, as some white folks thought.

"Sheriff Chambers stopped by here for gas yesterday," continues Jeffreys. "He'd been out to the Johnson farm to convince the boy to stay away from Henry Patterson. Chambers said he had orders from Bluefield. Said the Klan found out!" That is the word the men have all expected to hear. The Klailiff had heard a white man, a white "Yankee" man, had been educating niggers. A white man that should have learned his lesson about the supremacy of the Klan a long time ago, right after the Great War in 1919. "The Ku Klux Klan," says Otis Gray, "Good God-Amighty, I thought they weren't no need for that no more." "They's always the need," says Jefferson Davis Jeffreys.

All this time the men have been watching Henry Patterson come up the long driveway. They have suddenly become silent after Jeffreys' declaration. Their silence buzzes in their ears as if a swarm of wasps has come to light in the rafters of the porch above the Coca-Cola sign. Henry Patterson stops at the five steps of the porch. Slowly, the old man

raises his head to meet the malevolent gazes of the men. His eyes are a cloudy grey as he looks at each man, nods, and mumbles an unheard "Good day." He plods up the steps, slowly, deliberately, and walks toward the door. He walks through a barn full of cold cobwebs as he clears his way through the cold and indifferent stares of his neighbors. He stops in front of Jeffreys' chair; "Morning Mr. Jeffreys," he croaks, his voice rusty from disuse. "Morning Henry," says Jeffreys quietly, as if he were saying, "Go to Hell." "I am doing my own shopping today," says Henry. "Are you now? Then I best move my chair," says Jeffreys, and he gets up and moves his chair like it were the hardest thing he's been asked to do all week. "I am much obliged," says Henry, and he goes into the store. Once inside, Henry can feel the talk that has begun again on the porch like a pellet from a child's slingshot on the back of his neck. The whispered words filter through the screen door, like voices of the dead when folks walk on their graves at the cemetery.

Jeffreys has waited until Henry is far back in his store, out of earshot, to begin the story for those men that were not present on that summer night in 1919. "Some of y'all remember the way things was in Tazwell county right after the war. Most of us boys just got back from France and jobs were scarce. Pretty soon we all got restless with nothin' to do. So me and Otis, and most all the young men that had farms on the ridge, began to go to Klan meetings in Bluefield. That was a time when a lot of lynching was goin' on. It was always niggers'd get lynched. Sometimes lots of folks would come out to watch. After a time we started worryin' about the way some Jews were hurtin' business in Bluefield, so it wasn't just niggers any more that had to be taught the way things are. That's about the time we all started hearin' some rumors about Henry Patterson, the schoolteacher.

"Henry come down from Pennsylvania to teach, oh, it was before 1905 anyway. He married a local girl from a good ly. But she died with influenza in 1918, or thereabouts. It was before that, though, that Henry started causin' trouble. He let a nigger in his school. And then he started talkin' out agin' the war. Well he was a 'conscientious objector' and stayed home with the women, and the communists. He

didn't like the war, and he let people know it, too. Some folks just put it down to his drinkin'. He drank a lot after his wife died. Me, I didn't hold with that much. I never liked him. Always thought he weren't good enough for his wife."

With that last statement Otis Gray remembers that it was J.D. Jeffreys who asked Henry's wife to marry him first. She said no because J.D. was an ignorant and sometimes brutal man. Otis remembers that Jeffreys seemed to like the war and did not want to stop killing when it was over. But, Otis holds his tongue. That was thirty years and another world war ago. Best to let it be as it always has been.

"About this time of year in 1919," Jeffreys continues, "some of us boys started hearin' some things about Henry we didn't like. His drinkin' had got worse, and there were some rumors. Rumors about the way he might be treatin' his daughter Roxanne. We men didn't think much of it, but our wives weren't so sure. My wife said Henry had been actin' crazy during the war. He been heard to call his daughter his wife's name, even though his wife had been dead a whole year! Then talk started that he might be forcin' himself on his daughter, and now we all weren't surprised. Anything could happen in those days. It was a night thirty years ago that the Klan had a big meetin' up on the ridge. We burned a big ole cross to scare the niggers and drank a lot of whiskey. That was the night we decided to scare Henry a little bit."

Otis remembers that night also. He remembers that Jeffreys had drunk more than his share of whiskey, and that it was his idea to scare Henry a little bit.

Jeffreys is quiet for a time before he concludes his story. His color changes as a silent rage, still not dead after all these years, begins to well up within him. "We got over to Henry's house, snuck up real quiet just like we did in the war, and rushed in his place causin' a terrible ruckus. Right then is when I saw the most sickening sight of my life, worse than anything I saw in France. We all saw it. Henry was drunk out of his head and he was on his daughter. Roxanne was screaming as her daddy did it to her. And Henry, that stinkin' son-of-a-bitch, was crying. I've never been so

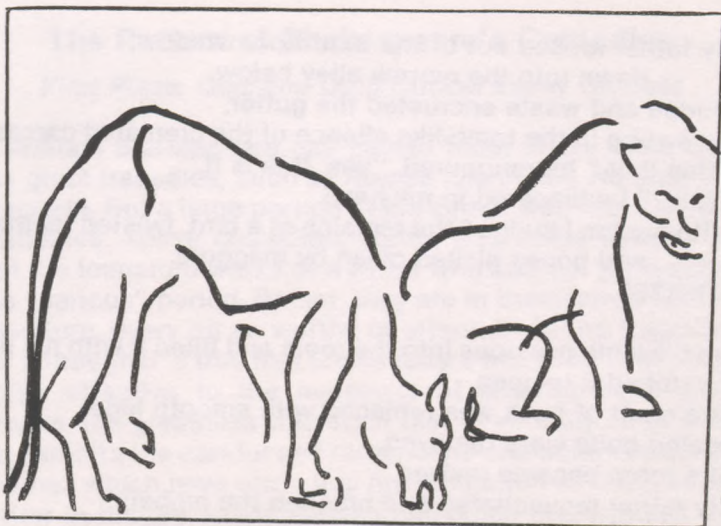
mad; we all were. Right away we grabbed Henry and carried him outside. We threw him in the back of my truck and drove off toward the ridge road. Y'all remember what happened after that. It's an insult to God himself that that bastard is still alive."

Henry stands quietly by the register now, listening to the muffled sound of the story that he knows better than any other. He remembers that he was drunk. He knew he was doing something awful. Then, suddenly, all those men were in his house, grabbing him. They had carried him out to a Model T pickup truck and thrown him in the back. He had vomited by the time they reached the ridge where the cross was still burning. The cross that night had crackled and popped like knuckles as it burned. He had been beaten until he was senseless. The last thing he remembered of that night was seeing the bright glint of the brand new hand-scythe from the hardware store that one of the Klansmen held above his head. The white-robed apparition had waved that scythe above his head in ragged arcs. He had kept on screaming, "AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH SAITH THE LORD!!!," until Henry thought he had already been killed and sent to Hell for what he had done. The Klansmen had then thrust the new scythe into the burning cross, and when he had pulled it out it glowed a menacing red against the black, moonless night. Henry remembers them all helping to jerk his trousers down. He flinches as he stands there by the cash register when he thinks of the pain when the Klansmen cut his manhood away. And he can still see what had been part of himself lying in the dirt beside him that night so long ago.

Jeffreys turns in his chair by the door and sees Henry, with his head down and his eyes closed as if in some kind of sacrilegious prayer, standing with a full shopping basket by the counter. "Henry's basket ain't been that full since 1919," whispers Jeffreys to the other men. His obscene joke is somewhat lost on Otis Gray after having heard the terrible story again. Jeffreys then hauls himself out of his chair with a grunt, and shoots a disgusted look in Henry's direction. "That be all today?" says Jeffreys coming through the squeaking screen door, setting the flies that have been motionless for hours into a frenzied buzzing. A barely audible

"Yes" is heard coming from Henry's tight-lipped mouth. Jeffreys sidles up behind the counter and begins to slowly ring up Henry's bill. "Fifteen dollars thirty-five cents," says Jeffreys. Henry peels out fifteen crumpled and greasy one-dollar bills. He lays them on the counter and begins to search his pockets for the thirty-five cents. Incredibly the money is not there. "I haven't got any more," he murmurs. "What's that, Henry?" Jeffreys also addresses the front porch to call attention to Henry's dilemma. "You ain't got thirty-five cents, Henry?" Jeffreys taunts. "Now what am I supposed to do about that? You got no credit here." Some of the men begin to peer through the screened windows, smirking and grinning like playground bullies. Henry looks up, first at Jeffreys, then at the men on the porch. He feels the shame and disgrace eddy up the back of his neck as if he were chin-deep in the swift-running Clinch River, about to feel the water run up over his head to consume him. He shakes slightly as the war that rages in him plays itself out on his face. Suddenly, he seems to gather an inner strength, a strength that can only be found when a man is stripped of everything, his wife, his family, his self-respect and human dignity. He is shot through with an utter hopelessness that leaves him as hollow as a locust's shell. Yet he clings to a power, as the shell of the locust clings to the hard bark of the tree. It is the power of the unforgiven that gives him the strength to clear his throat and speak. He speaks to Jeffreys, the man with the scythe on that night so long ago, and he speaks to those of them on the porch that were there on that night. Henry's jaw tightens, and his old frame quivers and straightens. In a slow, rolling rumble, like thunder on the other side of the mountain, Henry speaks. "I paid all I can pay, Jeffreys. You and everybody else knows I've got no more to give." Heat lightning flickers in his eyes as he hefts up his full basket and walks out the door into the sunshine. Henry Patterson leaves all the men at the store with jaws slack and useless to accuse him any more.

John Thatcher



Diann McElhanev

Reviving The Dragon's Breath

The warehouse building was the deteriorating relic of a forgotten species.

Our search for my father's painting studio led us there.

We mounted the narrow, wooden staircase like from the bowels of a decaying dragon consumed by its own breath.

The frame mewed and sagged under our weight.

The owner's voice shook black chalk from wooden ribs:

"The fourth floor burned down during a fire in 1942;
the smoke damages to this floor were never repaired."

The owner opened the door; it wheezed and struck the wall;
black snow drifted to the floor.

We entered the hallowed skull.

My father inhaled the putrid air and deeply sighed.

I coughed.

Dust-speckled sun-beams leaned from the sills—

Empty sockets overlooking industrial avenues.

Gritty ash popped under our soles.

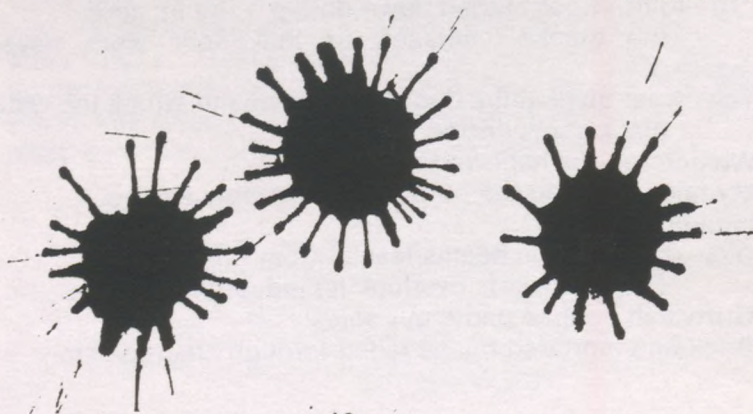
Brick and mortared bones faded through charred skin.

My father looked out of the third-floor window,
down into the narrow alley below.
Sludge and waste encrusted the gutter.
He swung in the tomb-like silence of the cremated carcass.
"This is it," he murmured, "yes, this is it."
"This?" I whispered in my head.
With my toe I nudged the remains of a bird, twisted feathers
and bones picked clean by maggots.
"This?!"

He blew his passions into the room and filled it with his life.
I watched it happen.
The crust of husk was replaced with smooth hide;
scaled boils were removed.
The room became revived.
My father resuscitated and brushed the embers.
The creative, blazing breath fumed inside him.
He spewed color and emotion in the struggle of
man and canvas.
He daubed in the wizardry of mixing paints and moments
transcending time and space.
His creations danced, twisted, and shifted,
mirroring his life on the walls.

His flames ignite a combustion in me.
The flare clears my vision.
I feel the breath burning within, boiling, surging.
I pick up my pen—my father his brush, and
we breathe fire.

Michael Hitt



The Pattern of Shakespeare's Comedies

First Place, Quiz and Quill Critical Essay Contest

William Shakespeare has gained most of his fame from his great tragedies, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*. But a large portion of his career was spent writing comedies. These comedies, contrary to some beliefs, are not the immature works of a writer who had not yet reached his "serious" period. Rather, they are in themselves serious literature, every bit as worthy of attention as the tragedies: for although it is true that Shakespeare was in all of his comedies attentive to the necessity of entertaining his audience, his greatness was such that in virtually all of them he exhibits the careful and remarkable characterization and themes which have given him his reputation as the greatest writer in history. In his earliest comedies one can see him quickly turn the relatively naive genre into a serious art form as he comes to realize the vast potential of the comic form. So while Shakespeare's comedies are of course funny and entertaining, they are also social and human commentaries that lead to a greater understanding in both the characters and the audience. Specifically, the Shakespearean comic form is a patterned transformation in which a society, which is at the start corrupt in some way, is reassembled at the end of the play into a better community: and in each play, the characters and society accomplish this transformation by a necessary combination of level-headed reason and a loving and compassionate heart.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, one of Shakespeare's earlier comedies, this pattern of transformation is already apparent. From the initial scene it is clear that the society of Athens is flawed. Egeus brings his daughter, Hermia, before Theseus, the duke, with the complaint that she will not agree to marry the man of *his* choice, which happens to be Demetrius. Egeus requests that she be forced to marry Demetrius, or be put to death in accordance with Athenian Law. Such a lack of love and compassion in a father is certainly a major flaw. But, in addition, a society that has such laws and penalties is clearly not quite right. The rest of the play, then, is a renouncement of such cold-hearted rigidity in favor of the magical power of love. Through the fantastic

dreamworld of the forest, which is filled with mischievous but ultimately benevolent fairies, we see a wild celebration of the power of love. Love drives the youths to silly acts as they run through the forest: Helena fawns over Demetrius, and goes to ridiculous ends to please him; then the lovers switch preferences (with the help of the fairies), and chaos ensues, eventually climaxing in Puck's exasperated conclusion: "Lord, what fools these mortals be" (III.ii.115). But ultimately, this love is good, and is the key to beginning the transformation of society. When Hermia refuses to bend to the law before the powerful Duke, she says, "I know not by what power I am made bold" (I.i.59). The audience, of course, knows that the power is love. Love is the force in the play that stands up to the corruption of Athens. But true to Shakespeare's form, the happy ending requires a level head as well. So in the Fourth Act, when Egeus demands Lysander's head for his plan to steal away from Athens with Hermia, the calm Theseus is needed to put him straight: "Egeus, I will overbear your will; /For in the temple, by and by, with us/ These couples shall eternally be knit" (IV.i.179-81). Theseus admits that love is good, and the law wrong. At the end, the happy new society is consummated by the three marriages, and all of the characters settle down to enjoy a theatrical production by Bottom and company. Fittingly, the new couples are able to enjoy the pathetic production and forgive the players their ignorance. Theseus compassionately quips: "Never can anything be amiss, /When simpleness and duty tender it" (V.i.83-4). Compared with the opening scene, this tolerance is an improvement indicative of the transformation which has taken place.

Compared with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the society in *The Merchant of Venice* is vastly more corrupt. In fact, a good part of the play is devoted to social commentary on the hypocrisy of the Christian merchant. The Venetian Christians show none of the values that they preach: they are strict materialists worshipping money and goods; they see love as another form of material possession, as illustrated in Bassanio's quest for Portia; and they show no compassion toward their enemy, Shylock the Jew. All these negative traits are tied up in Antonio, "the merchant of Venice." But unlike the others, Antonio possesses enough self-

knowledge to realize the true nature of his merchant life. Like everyone else, he beats and spits on Shylock in the market place. Like everyone else, his life is governed by material concerns. But his own hypocrisy torments him. In Act One, he compares the world to "A stage, where every man must play a part,/ And mine a sad one" (I.i.78-79). It is because of his hypocrisy that he is sad. But Shakespeare uses him to present and embody the problem, not to give a solution. Rather, the transformation comes as a result of the characters' interaction with Portia, who represents the ideal mix of reason and love that is necessary to transform the corrupted society. In the Fifth Act, and in contrast to the episode of the bond in the Fourth Act, Portia shows mercy when she forgives Bassanio for giving away her ring. By hiding her identity and testing Bassanio, she uses her reason to teach her lover a valuable lesson in the worth of love:

If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honor to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.

(V.i.199-202)

She then exhibits real Christian compassion by forgiving him and giving him another chance. So at the end the couples have, in most cases at least, learned the value of love and compassion. There remain, however, doubts that some of the characters — Gratiano in particular — are transformed. But Bassanio's transformation is real, and society is at least partially changed for the better.

As You Like It is perhaps the purest example of Shakespeare's transformational pattern. At the outset of the play, we are once again presented with an evil society. Oliver dominates Orlando, his younger brother, and tries to have him killed because he is jealous of his goodness. Duke Frederick banishes Rosalind for the same reason. The society is ruled by unjust tyrants, leaving the aged Adam lamenting the loss of better days when he was young and Orlando's father was still alive. But the rest of the play is a celebration of love and compassion. Unlike *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, however, this celebration is not a rampant and uncontrolled frolic in the woods; rather, Shakespeare,

through careful characterization, sets up a series of character confrontations which serve to illustrate the value of love. The chief deliver into the value of love is Rosalind. With her reason and her secret plots she studies love and struggles with it throughout the play: she is both afraid of its finiteness ("Say 'a day' without the 'ever,'" she tells the lovesick Orlando [IV.i.146]), and overwhelmed by its infinite depths ("It cannot be sounded; my affection/ Hath an unknown bottom" [IV.i.207-08]). But in the end, her intellectual reasonings are overshadowed by her basic goodness and compassion. Thus, through her hidden identity she sees to it that love prevails in the end. Of course, Shakespeare also sees to it that love and compassion have their full transforming powers put to good use. He has Oliver, the evil brother, repent of his jealous ways when Orlando selflessly saves his life by killing a threatening lion. And the Duke Frederick, while on his way to kill Duke Senior, is converted by the Christian values of an old religious man. So ultimately, the play is a direct objection to the values preached by the melancholy Jacques, who throughout the play moans and groans about the sadness of life. As the new, transformed society has learned, love makes life joyful and happy.

In his final comedy, *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare remains true to his comic form of transformation through reason and love, although, as many critics note, there are certain problems with the play. At the start, society is corrupt in two ways. First, the people of the society are corrupt with sexual freedom: whorehouses flourish, husbands and wives are unfaithful everywhere, and venereal disease runs rampant. And secondly, the ruling powers are passive, allowing these crimes to run wild. As the play progresses, Angelo, who rules in place of the absent Duke, only makes matters worse by attempting to shift from being totally passive to being totally rigid when he orders Claudio's execution for fornication. Things get even worse when it turns out that the self-righteous Angelo wants very badly to fornicate with Isabella. Further, Isabella refuses Angelo even though the act could save her brother's life. Ironically, in their arguments Angelo and Isabella are diametrically opposed — he is unchangingly rigid in upholding the strict letter of the law; she cries for total Christian mercy. Yet both end up acting contrary to their principles. Angelo wants Isabella sexually;

and she will not sacrifice her virginity for her brother's life. Thus, chaos reigns in Vienna. Only Escalus seems to be able to understand that the society needs some sort of happy medium of law and mercy. Ultimately, it takes the Duke's level-headed reason and compassion to sort things out and eventually bring about the transformation. Through the typical Shakespearean device of disguise, the Duke plots and plans events so that all the characters eventually get justice. At the end he hands out sentences to all which are at once fitting and merciful. Even the indifferent Barnardine is let off the hook. Importantly, when the Duke is going to have Angelo executed, which seems perfectly fair in light of his deeds, Isabella pleads for his life for the sake of Mariana, proving that her rigid morality has been transformed and tempered with a well-reasoned and sensible mercy. A few curious points exist in the final act — most notably the Duke's random announcement that he will marry the chaste Isabella — but overall the play adheres to Shakespeare's typical comic form, and we are left believing that Vienna is improved under the just and fair eye of the Duke.

Thus, Shakespearean comedy is characterized by this transformational pattern. In three of the plays discussed (with the exception of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), a character who possesses knowledge of the corruption of society is necessary for the transformation of the society to take place: Portia, Rosalind, and the Duke all steer the action toward the outcomes which they feel will change the characters for the better. But, in addition, all characters who are to be transformed must, under all circumstances, give themselves up to love or compassion. It is this combination, then, of love and reason, about which Shakespearean comedy revolves.

John Tetzloff



Land of Summer Mornings

1

Land of summer mornings,
 Of aimless walks through fields and woods,
Of wandering winds, warm with the breath
 Of a slowly waking countryside.
Oh, land of childhood ramblings! Land of
 Endless paths, of endless hills and knolls.
Oh, mornings sitting beneath that ancient oak,
 Beside that shaded stream slipping slowly to
 an unknown land.

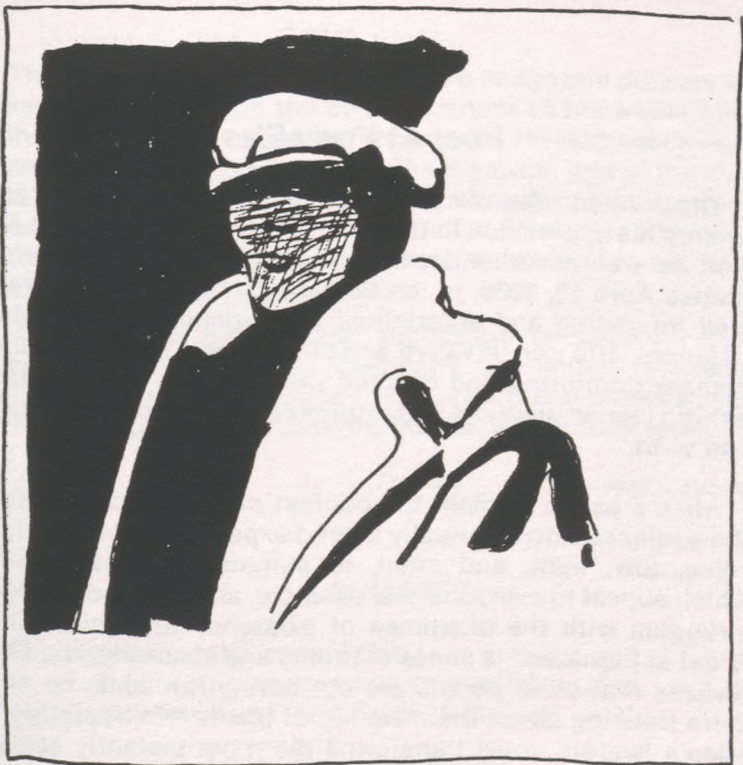
Land of quests, of day-long treks through
 Thickets and tangled growth, green and ripe,
Where have you gone? Where is your maze
 Of grassy meadows and dark groves?
Where are your drifting streams and murky ponds,
 And marshes filled with thin weeds and hopping
 birds?
They still lie softly in your gentle mists,
 While I am gone away.

2.

This morning I awoke to the deep gray
 of an early hour that had not yet
seen the orange sun drag itself over the edge
 of the earth. I had been dreaming,
and I lay there in the cold bed, waiting.
 A strong desire to return to sleep weighed on me,
while outside the window a robin sat in the apple tree,
 braced against a cold north wind in the predawn
 shadows.

Oh Land, why have you left me?
 I lie in bed and long to sleep.
Yet something wants me to rise, and strip off
 my night clothes, and run into the fields behind the
 house.
Something wants to ramble in the muddy fields
 in the deep shadows before the morning;
Something wants to run, and feel the dark corn
 brush roughly against my naked skin in the chill of
 the night.

John Tetzloff



Diann McElhanev

Religion

Ostracized for wearing logger's clothes,
He found his ways within the forest's halls.
Below the arching trees he found repose,
And learned a better judge than man-made laws.
A son of soil he was raised to be;
He broke the leavened clod with his strong hands,
Drank of autumn rains, and watched to see
The yearly resurrection of the lands.
Now with work and age his body bent,
He climbs the wooded hills while creatures sing;
He thinks of hours in meditation spent
While cricket voices high in steeples ring.
In his cathedral he kneels upon the sod
And lifts his head and weary arms to God.

Michael Hitt

Poet At Forty-Five

Dick Allen demonstrates professional expertise and shares his experience in the fields of poetry and science fiction as well as other creative writing. His reading performance April 15, 1985, in the Philomathean Room of Towers Hall interested and entertained his audience of sixty-plus listeners. His conservative appearance and conversational manner comforted and assured the audience that creative writing can be practical and profitable as well as imaginative and vivid.

Allen's asides explain the context of the poem, drawing the audience into a mutually shared experience. He uses his voice, low, light, and crisp, to communicate personnas which appeal to everyone. For example, any I.S. student who struggles with the dilemmas of existence recognizes the "Poet at Eighteen"'s sense of futility and absurdity when he realizes that other people are out having fun while he sits there thinking about the meaning of life. In "Cliffpainting," Allen's laconic drawl transforms the most blatantly sexist phrases into wry and witty jokes. His sardonic inflection in "The type of girl who leans against you and no more" draws out the ridiculousness and humor of the situation by revealing the states of mind and the shallow motives of both parties. But Allen transforms the silly knight-errant into something more — the cliffpainting becomes a desperate stab against middle-aged anonymity as well as delightful revenge against the fickle girl who initiated the event.

Allen is most insightful and communicative when recalling dissatisfied and bitter moments of a sometimes unhappy childhood. He charmingly confesses that as an adult he is unable to be as honest and direct with his mother as his psychiatrist would prefer. When introducing "James Avenue," he warns "this was in the eighth grade. Remember what they do to you." With the adult device of fine irony and the childhood resort to experiencing truth in terms of concrete certainties ("rowboats and clouds"), he lashes out rebelliously against the blindnesses and hypocrisies of the adult Establishment.

The key word which sums up Allen's image and delivery is balance. He lives with the consciousness of his whole life, rather than that of splintered fragments. He addresses and resolves the issue presented in *The Big Chill*, that of the sixties' revolutionary idealism disintegrating into the eighties' reactionary materialism. "University Students Strolling Through Midnight" illustrates the essence of this dichotomy and Allen's resolution.

Allen seems realistic and successful because he has reconciled some of the potentially conflicting interests within his life. He has blended his private and professional lives by employing his creative talents in practical uses.

Heidi Brum

Landscape

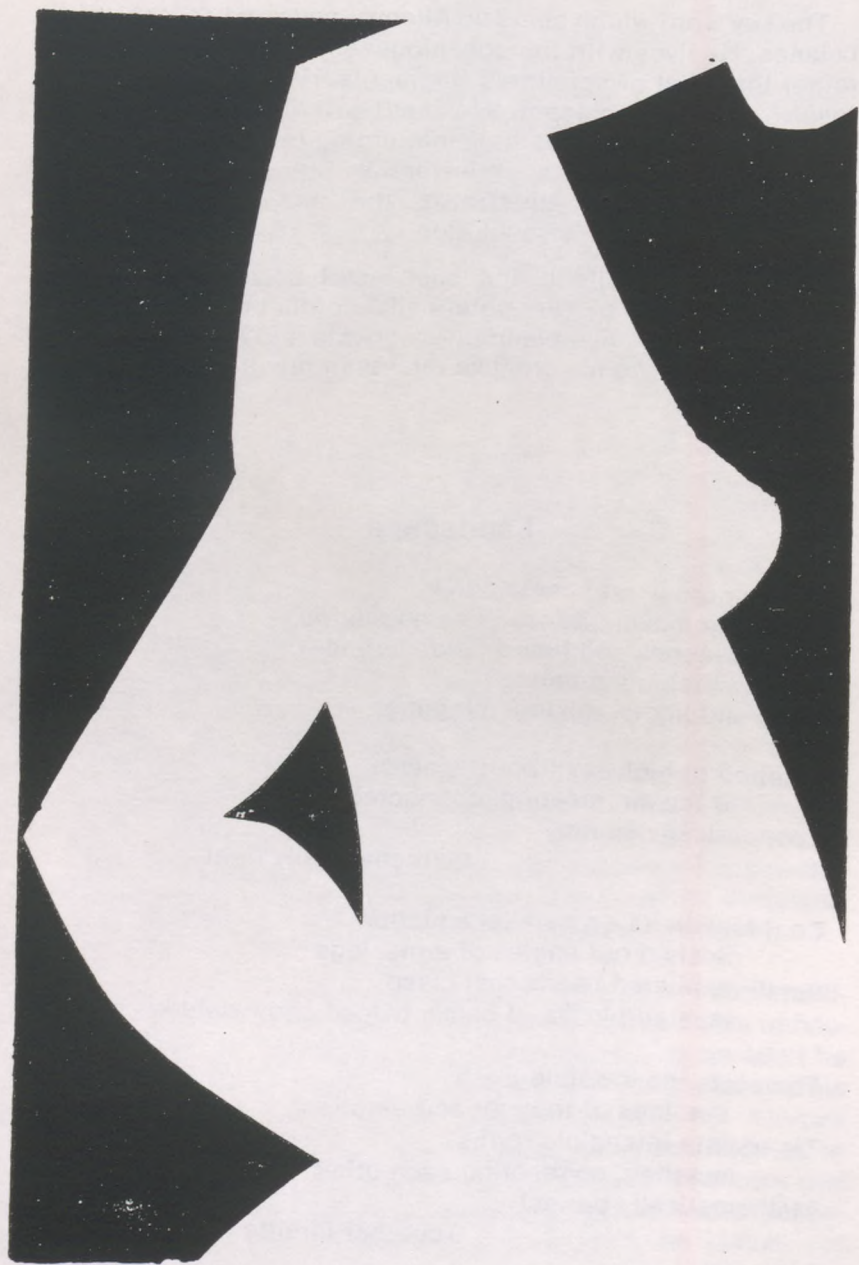
Through the winter car window
the moving horizon lies geometric,
Furry branches and blond fields in line—
matching, meeting
Darks and lights, mixing, mingling.

A ribbon of highway from the earth
to the air, meeting, connected
Geometrically sound
mathematically right.

So it is with us—a parallel equation
fleshed out angles of arms, legs
Small numbered hands that clasp
tapered blocks of backs twined and twisted.

Then too, the invisible math
the lines of thought and emotion
Tie us into intangible forms
meeting, connecting each other —
Mathematically perfect
Together infinite

Virginia Caum



Suzanne Stock

From the Baby's Perspective

Second Place, Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest

"These are my daughters Mary Ann, Ellen, Margaret and Carol, and this is my 'baby' Julie." This is an introduction I'll never outgrow. I've heard it for as long as I can remember, and undoubtedly I'll continue to hear myself being referred to as "the baby." I can recall resenting this label when I was struggling through adolescence. It was an ever present obstacle. But even though I still feel a little twinge when I'm reminded that I'm the "baby," part of me realizes the tremendous advantages of being the youngest child of my family.

The credit for many of these advantages goes to my brothers and sisters. Without them my life would be very different, and perhaps even a little less happy and fulfilling. Being the youngest has given me the advantage of experiencing their already established personalities and lives. I can watch them and learn from their examples. I remember one example in particular. When I was in high school, the decision of which college to attend loomed as a large dilemma for me. In the middle of my indecision, I received a letter from my oldest sister (ten years older than I and living overseas). She wrote to tell me that she remembered going through the same experience and wishing she had an older sister to talk it over with. She explained how she arrived at her decisions then and how she feels about them now, more than five years after her graduation. I was too young when she went through this to know and be able to learn from her experience. It was comforting to me to know that she had taken the time to help guide me in the right direction. I took heed of her words of encouragement and advice, and I think I can say with a reasonable amount of assurance that they did give me the advantage of helping me make the right decision.

The example of my sister's advice also illustrates the parental role that my brothers and sisters played. It is a characteristic I haven't always appreciated, though. In fact, there have been times when I've despised their "interfering." I know that their intentions are good, but their

methods haven't always reflected their motives clearly. My sisters especially have tried to mother me, trying to advise and protect me, to comfort me and relate to me. Times when I found the initiative to make a decision for myself often met with their disapproval. Whether it was a simple decision like changing my hairstyle or a more serious one concerning whether or not to get a summer job, I was always assured of hearing at least one comment that contradicted my thoughts and goals. Overall, though, their input has been a salvation for me, and their experiential advice is invaluable. Being the youngest has given me the benefit of so many opinions — seven opinions to be exact. Besides filling my unoccupied time with companionship, my seven brothers and sisters were substitute parents all willing to give of themselves to benefit me.

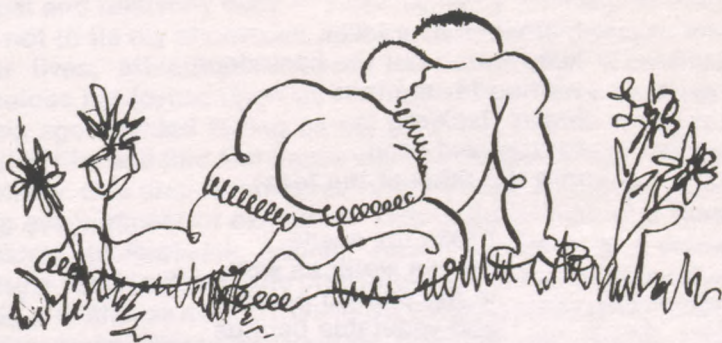
Another advantage is one that my brothers and sisters envy — having the opportunity of being raised by easy-going parents. They constantly remind me that this is the result of a favor they did for me even before I was born. When they were young they were subjected to the strict enforcement of rules — bedtimes had to be met, meals had to be eaten (even when the menu included the dreaded fried green tomatoes my mother used to make), and punishments had to be accepted. By the time my parents reached the point of having to raise me, they had become more lenient. For me the number of rules was considerably less. My brothers and sisters take the credit for this, claiming that their acceptance of and obedience to rules “broke in” my parents and softened them. They expect me to appreciate and feel indebted to them for this advantage (as far as they're concerned, probably for the rest of my life!).

The most obvious advantage of being the “baby” is an effect of the child-raising techniques of my “broken-in” parents. Everybody knows the “baby” is spoiled. I admit that I'm spoiled, but not in a way that many people would associate with the stereotypical spoiled child. My spoiling wasn't in the form of gift-receiving or getting anything I asked for. It was in the form of a special love and attention shown to me that made up for the many times I was left out simply because I was too young. My sisters and brothers probably wouldn't agree that this is an accurate description,

but I think it best describes my "spoiling." I remember wanting so much to be a part of the activities my family did together when I was little, but many times being excluded because I was too young. "Julie, you can't help with the dishes, you're too little. You might break a glass." "You can't play this game, Julie. You're too young to understand the rules." These were common responses to my requests to join in. But somebody (usually one of my parents) always caught these rejections and made up for them by making me feel loved and involving me in some other way (even if it was by giving me the title "supervisor"). Such a "spoiling" has probably been the most special and memorable advantage of being the youngest in my family.

Some thirty years from now, when the Lynch family has a family reunion, I'm certain that I'll still hear the same introduction — "This is my 'baby' Julie" — over and over again. And I'm sure my brothers and sisters will return with me to those days of long ago, rekindling the same old feelings. They may always be a little jealous; but they'll also be proud of me, knowing that each of them is partly responsible for what I am and will become. But I know I've been very lucky in having the opportunity to benefit from their experience and teaching. This advantage is mine alone because I'm the one and only "baby" of the family.

Julie Lynch





March Fourteenth

It's not spring yet—
another week until the calendar
acknowledges the new nod
in the earth's gray head—
but the throb of bird life
in my backyard belies that.
In that music there is more than hope—
there is promise of seed-life
and a prefiguring of covenants
as old as Pan.

In a sentient body
they shift in the bare trees
like musical notes
arranged on a page of sky
wheeling closer and closer
to the seed I have spread out
like a smorgasbord
along the margin of the fence.

I, anxious as a lover,
keep watch out the back door
waiting for the first
brave black rag
to float and drop
into the thick of the feast.

"Take my seeds
there's water as well
in the sunken garden
and vegetable parings
on the compost pile.
These offerings I make
in the name of the old gods."

The bird-notes in the trees
the swath of seed by the fence
and the garden-pool, cool and bright.
What spider-web memory
of the earth's old business
links bird
and seed
and water
and I—
humbled and baffled
by my own belly full
of half-created lives?

I watch from the kitchen
counting the quickening pulse of spring
while beside me at the window
the cats watch, too,
eyes cunning and cool
with that ancient appetite.

Mary Wehrle

The Choice of Life: Why I Read

First Place, Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest

Our lives are filled with choices. Some choices are superficial and relatively easy — I decide every morning whether or not to tie my shoelaces. Other choices reach deeper into our lives, affecting the way we decide the superficial choices life forces upon us — I tie my shoelaces because I long ago decided falling on my face takes some of the fun out of life, and tied shoelaces are one safeguard against that activity. One choice, however, runs beneath all others, coloring every aspect of existence. This is the choice of a value system. In *Rasselas*, Samuel Johnson speaks of a young king's need to make "the choice of life." If the story is taken allegorically, as a mind (*Rasselas*) seeking to expand its consciousness (*Rasselas*' journey into the real world), "the choice of life" becomes another way of talking about choosing a direction in life, that is, choosing a value system. By

value system I mean moral and ethical codes, philosophical maxims, prejudices, religious concepts — whatever it is that makes one react to life the way one does. Choosing a value system is *the* choice of life.

This choice of life is always with one. From birth to death, every human being must continually make decisions about his or her system of values. One may choose to reject any and all codes, yet such amorality is a value system in itself. The rapist harbors some warped system of values concerning man/woman relationships, for example. No one can be amoral, because everyone must have a value system of one's own — even if this system involves the rejection of all other value systems. To return to the Rasselas allegory, no one can leave Abyssinia behind him and merely wander about the desert — the very act of leaving necessitates the construction of a new Abyssinia, a new value system. Remaining in Abyssinia, accepting the value systems given one by parents or society, is an unacceptable choice of life. To never question orthodoxy is to lay oneself open to manipulation by the shapers and interpreters of the doctrine followed. The Holocaust was permitted to happen because the German people placed duty before any of their other values, and they allowed the Nazis to persuade them to believe duty forced them to participate in, or at least turn away from the atrocities committed against the Jews. The proper course is to question all, then build a new value system. One must shake one's Abyssinia, the value system given through society, until all that remains is of proven worth. Then, one must construct a new Abyssinia, a new system, upon what remains of the old. This construction is the choice of life, and it is a choice which never ends.

How does one go about making this choice of life? Surely, simply creating an alternative value system out of thin air, to fall into the relativistic trap, is as undesirable as accepting given systems. This relativism is the supreme egotism. To consider one's own world view and corresponding value system, fashioned within one short lifespan, as having greater insight than any of the billions of value systems already constructed is ludicrous. I believe there is a correct value system — it may be unattainable, but it is worth work-

ing toward. The answer to the problem of finding this is to observe and experience as great a variety of life activities and reactions to life as possible, and adapt those observations and experiences into a new value system. The optimum approach would be to try every possible activity and try out every possible value system, but life is much too short to make this practical. The best alternative is to learn from the experiences of others. All the forms of communication — mathematics, art, music, language, among others — allow one individual to share an experience or thought with another. Each of these modes of communication has its values and its limitations, so I cannot point to one and say, "Here, this is the best." I can say, however, that literature works best for me, and I can give four reasons why literature is a good, if not the best, method of gaining information upon which to base one's choice of life.

Like any art, literature forces one to experience the world with a heightened sensitivity. Any good writer, and especially a poet, must be able to perceive what, in the day-to-day grind of our lives, the rest of us ignore or are not able to see. The major trends in poetry and fiction differ only in what aspect of existence the writer wishes to focus his or her heightened sensitivity upon. By reading literature, one can appropriate the writer's consciousness, or at least that part which he or she lends to the work, and experience life at a higher level than could otherwise be attained. This allows a reader of literature to incorporate different experiences or different perspectives on familiar experiences into his or her choice of life.

Not only does literature permit an expanded vision of the world, it allows a reader to observe the effectiveness of particular value systems operating within different environments. It is no great revelation, for instance, to discover the environment, the world view, of a Jane Austen novel differs from that of a James Baldwin short story, or the world of Virgil's *Aeneid*, a world where destiny rules all, differs from that of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, a world where destiny is defeated. Authors generally provide several different value systems, which operate under restrictions of the given environment of the story. In many cases, a value

system that would be admirable in one environment, is shown woefully inappropriate in another, as Hilda's platinum-coated purity is portrayed by Hawthorne in *The Marble Faun*. With a good reader and a great piece of literature, this observation approaches the level of experience: after reading Faulkner, one is left with the impression of having lived in northern Mississippi — at least in Faulkner's version of it, which is not quite the same thing — for a short time. The wonder of literature, though, is the objectivity of the reader: no matter how absorbed in a book one becomes, the book is still a book and it does not really matter if a character's value system fails in his or her particular environment. What matters is the experience and comparison afforded the reader, which he or she may use in developing a value system.

Literature also allows a reader the opportunity to witness the interplay of value systems with each other. Most literature involves contact between characters; so few value systems exist in a vacuum, never affecting or being affected by another system. Since the same thing happens in real life, this interplay between literary value systems provides another rich area for observation. In "Editha," William Dean Howells shows how a young girl's romantic value system, borrowed from the newspapers, destroys her fiancé. George abandons the value system given him by his mother, one of pacifism, in order to cater to Editha's view of the glory of warfare. Editha, busy imagining herself as a nursemaid to her hero, George, overlooks what George's mother has known all along: wars kill people. When, after George is killed, Editha refuses to change her value system to accommodate this experience and retreats into her original system, the reader loses all sympathy for her value system. Literature is filled with such conflicts between value systems, each of which offers the reader an opportunity to observe and compare those observations with his or her own system.

Great literature, however, does more than allow a reader to observe; it forces him or her to react to the relationships between value systems. The writer, as Frank Kermode phrases it while defining a modern classic, "poses a virtual-

ly infinite set of questions,"¹ and it is the reader who must provide the answers. Hawthorne is better at setting up this type of questioning than most authors. In *The Marble Faun*, the plot is actually less interesting than the questions Hawthorne raises about the value systems of Hilda, Kenyon, Miriam, and Donatello. The reader must first analyse each character's value system in light of its performance in the character's environment, in this case mid-nineteenth-century Rome, then compare the performances with one another and the environment of the story with the reader's own perception of the world. The final act of a reader of literature is to choose between the systems placed before him or her: reject, consider, delay considering, ignore, or accept each and every one. Literature, then, forces one to become an active reader, to use it to make a choice of life.

I am not a very good English major, strictly speaking. If the driving passion of every English major is the mechanics of literature — styles of authors, metrical patterns, imagery, narrative structures, and so on — then I am a bit of a heretic. I know how to strip down a poem or story — scan a line, whatever is needed — and I realize the role mechanics play in affecting a reader's perception of the content of a story; but, for me, the mechanics of literature are much less important than the content, the experience afforded me through the reading of a story or poem. Literature, through the four qualities I have already explained, allows me to adapt my value system in the privacy of my own home and without the danger of wasting my life by pursuing dead-end values, because I can evaluate them without having to actually live them out. There are two traps I try to avoid at all costs. One is the tendency to become comfortable with one value system and read all literature so that it fits into that system. The other is the problem of hypocrisy. To say, "Life can only be fully experienced through interaction with others," and then to live as an asocial literary hermit is to be intellectually dishonest. The solution is to continually read, adapt, and challenge one's value system, and to try as hard as possible to put that system into effect in life. Anything less is merely a form of mental masturbation. Literature is the tool to use to create an honest value system, to make the choice of life.

David Kimmel

¹Frank Kermode, *The Classic* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 114.



Creation

First Place, Roy Burkhart Prize in Religious Poetry

Before the men of the sun-soaked Nile
Crawled from out of the dust of the desert;
Before man first came down from the caves
Of the barren mountains in Africa;
Before he climbed from jungle trees
To walk erect upon the earth . . .

Before great monsters shook the ground
With heavy steps in steaming mud;
Before life struggled from the seething sea
To gasp and struggle in the rich, heavy air;
Before the seas flowed over all
Churning and churning under the sun—

You walked quietly through Your shaded garden,
Dreaming of plans for Your beloved Adam.

John Tetzloff

The Conspiracy

Third Place, Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest

There's a conspiracy going on. I don't know who's in charge or when it started. All I know is that it exists and that it's aimed at me.

It all started this summer when I worked at a church camp. One week when I was counseling at outpost and therefore lacking electricity, I decided to do something I had wanted to do for a long time but had never had the guts to do before. I stopped shaving.

Why did I do such a rash and foolhardy act? Selfishness. I hate shaving. I especially hate shaving with a non-electric razor, because, to be blunt, I like my skin and I really hate seeing my own blood. I'm a klutz, and there's no way I'm going to allow me anywhere near myself with a very sharp blade. What's really crazy about this type of shaving is that it's done with an opaque liquid over the face so that you can't see what you're doing. If you don't give me an electric rotary razor, I'll wind up with death — by my own hands.

But, I'm digressing from the conspiracy. It started when my mom came to pick me up after camp was over and the beard had been growing for about six weeks.

"So, you're growing a beard," she said, stating the obvious.

"No, I got attacked by a malicious, wanton hairbrush. Yes, I'm growing a beard."

"How long have you been growing it?" she asked, avoiding the issue.

"Six weeks." "That long, huh?"

Pause. Pause. Silence. Longer Pause.

"I don't like it. Shave it off."

Dad was only slightly less blunt. He simply said that he'd wait to see if it filled out more before he decided he hated it. He waited, saw that it wasn't filling out like he thought a beard should, and then said that he hated it and that I should shave it off.

Of course, I think that Dad was prejudiced by an earlier experience he had when growing a mustache. Cousin Kelly was over with the rest of her family on Christmas Eve and wouldn't let Dad anywhere near her, instead saying things like "yuck," "gross," "icky," and "fuzzface." The next morning the mustache was gone.

Everywhere I've gone it's been the same reaction. My relatives started calling me Velcro-man. My friends were all very surprised and out of decency have not expressed their feelings either way, and I'm very grateful for that, but I still know what they're thinking.

There are only two types of people who have liked my beard. One type consists of men who already have beards. It's like I've been welcomed into an exclusive club. I'm not sure if it's because it makes them feel better about their own beards to see that other people grow them, or if they're secretly laughing among themselves because another sap has grown a beard. The only person of the second type is the church organist, who has complimented my beard without actually owning one. I'm not sure if she's a "type" of person or not, but it is reassuring to know that someone out there likes it even if the rest of the world loathes it.

I have an idea why people without beards are jealous of those of us with beards. I've discovered that when you have the right kind of beard you don't have to look intelligent to be considered intelligent.

Let me explain. If you don't have a beard and someone asks you a question you don't know, chances are you tell him that you don't know the answer. If you have a beard, all you have to do is look very thoughtful, stroke your beard and say that, though you've never really considered it that way, you'll think about it.

There are many people out there now with very little intelligence that have made it to where they are because they had the forethought to grow a beard and learn how to use it. It's great to have a beard to fall back on. I don't plan on needing to use it a lot, but just in case . . .

Greg Grant

Rites of Spring

Spring's arrival finds scoops
of chocolate chip snow
fading, wet on raw streets

Now is the time for first rites
tender green in pause
grab it
Smear the earth on my cheek
rip and taste the young grass

Primitive
neck bared to nature
fearless of all elements

Rites of you so similar
promise of summer in your grasp
thick golden nights full of reap
Heady earth fulfills her purpose

But in you a vein of ice persists
winter hides in your heart
and I hesitate
To bare my throat to your icy blade

Virginia Caum

Knott for Everyone

Bill Knott experiences poetry in different ways and shares that experience with other people. He teaches modern and contemporary American and European poetry at colleges and writing programs across the country, currently at Emerson College in Boston. Knott has published various collections of poetry, including *The Naomi Poems* (1968), *Auto-necrophilia* (1971), *Loves Poems to Myself* (1974), *Selected and Collected Poems* (1977), and *Becos* (1983). He recited a few poems from these writings at Otterbein College in the Philomathean Room February 11 for an audience of students, faculty, and community members.

Knott's poetry tends to focus on specific unusual, insignificant moments or events. His highly developed sensitivity to and awareness of the individual facets of his environment allows him to perceive and describe such miniature worlds as a trash can, a refrigerator, or a taxi ride. Knott concentrates upon the infinite number of individual components of his experience rather than creating sweeping generalizations about his life. His expression enlarges and enlivens specific observations, rather than ordering and streamlining them.

At the garbage dump Knott conceives the fantastic idea of a religious sect fanatically devoting itself to ruining trash, hence the poem, "Patriots." In the refrigerator, Knott visualizes ferocious battles among the frozen vegetables: "The Survival of the Fittest Groceries." Knott's peculiar modes of perception and expression expose and illustrate our own thought processes, sometimes irrational and disordered.

Bill Knott presents his poetry naturally and creatively. His stage presence is so lively and exuberant that it is difficult to distinguish between his rambling, informal conversation and his formal recitation. His physical movements, loose and swift, illustrate the meanings of his poetry. His voice is lively, forceful, and clear. Often the combined effect of the bizarre ideas and colorful delivery amused the audience to the point of hysterical laughter.

Knott's poetry is interesting and vivid. The author's breezy and lively delivery enhances its ability to charm and amuse.

Heidi Brum



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MICHAEL BLANKENSHIP, who drew the cover and many of the pictures in this issue, is a senior theatre major who has been hired by the Indianapolis Shakespeare Festival.

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