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Spring 1987

### 1987 Spring Quiz & Quill Magazine

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Quiz  
and Quill 1987  
SPRING



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## LITERARY CONTESTS

### Quiz and Quill Critical Essay Contest

First Prize .....	Candace Hartzler "God and the Importance of Story"
Second Prize .....	John Fisher "The Parable of Words in William Faulkner's <i>As I Lay Dying</i> "
Third Prize .....	John Fisher "On the Absence of God in Dante's <i>Inferno</i> "
Honorable Mention .....	Vickie Kayati "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn as an Adult Novel"

### Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest

First Prize .....	Greg Grant "The Fight"
Second Prize .....	Greg Grant "Every Child's Dream"
Third Prize .....	Vickie Kayati "My Childhood Mentor"
Honorable Mention .....	Jennifer Olin "The Holy City"

### Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest

First Prize .....	Greg Grant "Childhood Fantasy"
Second Prize .....	Candace Hartzler "Winnie" <sup>1</sup>
Third Prize .....	Cathy Griffiths "Of Art, Poetry, and Essay Exams"
Honorable Mention .....	Phyllis Magold "Patriots"
Honorable Mention .....	Greg Grant "Crossing the Cuyahoga River"
Honorable Mention .....	Jennifer Olin "Morningtime" <sup>1</sup>

### Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest

First Prize .....	Candace Hartzler "The Ride"
Second Prize .....	Greg Grant "Periodicals Unbound"
Third Prize .....	Phyllis Magold "Laughter"
Honorable Mention .....	Greg Grant "Christmas Anonymous" <sup>1</sup>

### Roy Burkhart Prizes in Religious Poetry

First Prize .....	Greg Grant "Te Deum"
Second Prize .....	Greg Grant "The Great Photographer"
Third Prize .....	Candace Hartzler "Dread of the Hereafter" <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Printed in Winter Issue of *Quiz and Quill*

# QUIZ and QUILL

Otterbein College  
Westerville, Ohio

Spring 1987

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## Editor's Note

Once again the spring issue of *Quiz and Quill* is an expression of tradition as it highlights many gifted Otterbein writers through publication of this year's winners in the annual literary contests. We hope you enjoy these glimpses of creativity.

With new formatting, revised production procedures, and increased interest, *Quiz and Quill* has grown and flourished in the past year. As I turn over the helm of Editor, I would like to express a sincere thank-you to both the contributors for their abounding submissions and my faithful staff for their constant dedication to the tradition of literary excellence. It is because of these fresh and exciting ideas that *Quiz and Quill* continues to thrive.

Beth Helwig



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## Te Deum

*First Place, Quiz and Quill Religious Poetry Contest*

Today, I am one of many penguins  
As I stand on stage  
In my borrowed tuxedo  
Shifting awkwardly from foot to foot,  
A face in an ocean of black and white.  
On cue I raise my voice in triumph  
To the Lord who moved upon the face of the waters.  
I feel a spark pass up my spine  
For I know what the music means.

Yesterday, I stood upon a hill  
And pointed out a water tower  
To the children behind me.  
I dared them to roll farther down the hill than I.  
My head grew dizzy,  
My shirt grew green,  
And I smelled the new mown grass.  
I lost, and we laughed,  
Did somersaults, cartwheels,  
Played tag, and dropped on the hillside  
In exhausted hilarity.  
I felt a spark pass up my spine  
For I knew what the music meant.

*Greg Grant*

## THE RIDE

### *First Place, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest*

Olivia and Jane are eating a late breakfast at Swope's, a coffee shop one block from Olivia's apartment. It is Saturday, four days before Christmas.

"Think he'll go for it?" asks Jane.

"These eggs taste like styrofoam," says Olivia, and pushes aside her plate of link sausage and soupy scrambled eggs. She leans against the back of the orange booth, folds her arms across her chest and sighs. "The only way Dad will go south is if we take him Rambo-style. Toss him and his oversized stroller into the back of your van and just take off."

Jane stirs cream into her mug of hot coffee and smiles at her sister.

"If we're thinking assault, maybe we could start with Frank. Use him as warm up. A kind of punching bag."

Frank is the man Olivia has been married to for eight years. He is a State Trooper who deals with the problems in his and Olivia's troubled marriage by moving out of their apartment, so he "can think more clearly about the things that are wrong." After living apart from Olivia a month or two, Frank moves back in, and for a short while their marriage rides on air. One week ago Frank moved out. This is the fifth time, and Olivia is calling it his last.

"He has a place on Kenny Drive."

"Does Dad know Frank is gone again?"

"No way. Another 'I told you so' from him will set me crazy."

Olivia has become concerned with folding the corners of her paper napkin. She folds the corners into four precise triangles, all equal in size, so the napkin is again a square. Sliding it beneath her plate, she stares out the large window at the bleak, cold morning. She watches a young couple head toward the entrance to Swope's. They are sharing the mittened hands of a young child who is walking spraddle-legged in a pair of bulky snowpants. Clouds of the child's warm breath float like airy balloons in the cold and he is smiling.

"I wish Ohio had more winter sunshine," Olivia says, and wonders if divorce will feel as lonely as marriage.

Jane, who is five years older and eternally single, sips her coffee and thinks not of the confusing phenomenon of Olivia's revolving-door marriage, but of a way to coerce their father, Jake Williams, into spending Christmas in Florida.

"Maybe we could convince Dad to go for a ride in my new van. To check the gas mileage. He'd go for that. He was going to buy one, remember?"

"You mean we should avoid mentioning the 'ride' will be from Ohio to Florida? Sort of kidnap our own father?"

\*\*\*\*\*

Jake Williams had retired as manager of Lewistown's struggling shovel plant on October 31. At his retirement dinner in the banquet room of the Holiday Inn, Jake had made a short speech after receiving a gold Bulova wristwatch and a collapsible metal fishing rod.

"Thanks fellas," he said. "Now I guess I'll have to get that van I been watching on Wenger's lot so I can get myself and this fancy pole to a body of salt water. I'll nest this baby inside the mouth of a sailfish and let you know if it was worth your money."

His friends had all chuckled and said they would hold him to that.

On November 10, Jake suffered a stroke while watching Wheel of Fortune in the living room of his small ranch-style house on Turner Drive. His whole left side droops now, hanging limp as a raggedy-doll's. Jake's sense of male dignity has been twisted into knots, and he is bitterly angry.

Since his stay in St. Joseph's Hospital, he has refused therapy. The left side of his mouth droops, and his tongue feels thick as cotton wool when he tries talking. His words are neanderthal grunts.

Olivia takes time away from her job at Europena Skin Care, and Jane plans her suburban deliveries for Sunnydale Foods, so they can help care for their father. Three times a day they visit, helping him dress, eat his meals, and use the toilet.

Other than Jane and Olivia, Jake refuses all visitors. With his pain and pride pulled closely in around him, he frequently balks when Olivia tries helping him in and out of his clothes, and often straightens his lips into a childish line when Jane tries helping him eat tomato soup or tapioca pudding.

\*\*\*\*\*

It is Sunday morning. Jane and Olivia arrive at Jake's a little before nine. While Olivia helps her father eat a bowl of warm Quaker oats, Jane slips through the house, packing his travel needs.

After Jake has finished his oats, prune juice, and black coffee, Olivia pushes his wheelchair into the bedroom where she will help him dress. She parks the chair next to her father's single bed. He motions with his good arm to the pair of brown trousers draped over the chair by the window and grunts a command. Olivia understands he wants to try and dress himself.

"Go for it," she says, and hands him the trousers. She sits in the cane-seated chair next to the small oak dresser.

Beads of perspiration rise shiny and wet on Jake's face as he struggles to guide his right foot into the trousers. He rocks from his left hip to his right, working to gain leverage and strength as he tries propelling his foot into the pants leg.

Olivia watches from the chair as Jake rocks on his bottom, from side to side, like a bored gorilla, and a bubble of laughter grows in her throat. She covers her mouth with one hand, and feels for the thousandth time a guilty pleasure over the power she has finally gained over her father.

Olivia and Jane were only six and eleven when their mother died, but learned quickly the ways of survival in their father's emotionally-chilly household. Quietly nursing their own sense of loss, the girls endured shadow-like in their father's house while he focused his tired energies on the things he felt most responsible for: food, roof, shoes for their feet. Steered clear by his gruff manner, both daughters grew up without ever piercing their father's cold sensibilities, but it was Olivia who felt the most deprived. She was the youngest, and missed very much her mother's softness and warmth. Several months after her mother's death, Olivia had tried letting her father know of her loneliness.

Jake, bone-tired after a fourteen-hour shift at the shovel plant, was leaned back in his gray easy chair. Following a silly discussion in their

shared bedroom, the girls decided they would slip behind their father's chair and kiss the back of one of his ears. After the idea was hatched, Jane decided against it; she was almost 12 and growing very dignified.

Olivia's small heart thumped with determination as she scuffed across the worn shag carpeting in her fuzzy slippers. Standing directly behind Jake, she took a deep breath and leaned around the edge of his chair. She had never been this close to her father, and was surprised at his manly smells of dried sweat, tobacco and oil.

The skin of his ear felt cool when she touched it lightly with her mouth, but the intimacy suddenly frightened her, and she flew back to her room. She jumped into bed beside Jane and lay there trembling. Jake had not moved in his chair, nor did he act any happier the next day with his daughters, or his life.

Even though Olivia shared his jawline and deeply-set brown eyes, Jake continued to remain a stranger, a weary man who paid her \$5 a week to pack his lunch bucket and vacuum the carpet. She had married Frank when she was 17.

Olivia continues to watch in silence as Jake makes several prideful, but unsuccessful, attempts to dress himself.

"Let me do it for you, you stubborn ape, or we'll be here all day," she says.

Olivia pulls the trousers over Jake's pale legs and zips his fly. He sits with a grimaced angry look while she buttons the cardigan sweater over his blue plaid shirt.

"Can't even cover my own butt any more," he says in his low grunting way.

"There are worse things," Olivia says.

"Haven't seen your man for awhile. He gone again?" Jake's words are thick, but his tone is bitterly familiar. "What's her name this time?"

"Why don't you tend your own business and stay out of mine?" she says, and begins guiding his chair down the hall toward the kitchen.

It is ten o'clock and Jane has packed the van and pulled it into the garage. Olivia wheels Jake toward the kitchen side door and something inside him senses betrayal. His face becomes flushed, and he begins pounding his right hand up and down on the arm of his chair.

"Jane wants to take us for a ride in her new van," Olivia says.

Jake shakes his head wildly from side to side as the two women hoist him into one of the bucket seats. His thin gray hair is combed haphazardly to one side and his scalp shines an angry pink through the wide zig-zag part.

Olivia fastens the shoulder-lap belt around his body while Jake's large eyes turn the color of coal.

"You can't make me go somewhere I don't wanta go!" he shouts with his mouth full of tongue.

Jane has slid behind the wheel and starts the engine.

"What kind of mileage you think, Dad? With two 16-gallon tanks on board?"

"You can't make me go somewhere I don't wanta go," he repeats while pounding the seat's padded arm.

"What's in a ride, Jake? Relax and enjoy," says Olivia, climbing into her seat.

"It better be short," he demands in a quieter tone.

With a red pencil, Olivia begins tracing their southern route on a road map, while Jane heads the van southeast on Route 23, heading for the Ohio border.

During the first few hours, they drive through a slow, cold drizzle. Since his stroke, Jake's energies are easily spent and he dozes often. His gray head is sunk lightly on his chest while the van hums down the highway through an increasingly heavy rain.

"We need to look for Route 35 out of Wellington. That'll take us to the West Virginia border," she says. "And cross your fingers the old man stays asleep."

Jake opens his eyes just minutes before the yellow van crosses the line, and his sense of betrayal is realized; his daughters are in full command. When he catches sight of the big green "Welcome to Wild and Wonderful West Virginia" sign, he is overcome with feelings of helplessness and begins wailing like a child.

No tears, just one of those dry-eyed fits children throw when they're too bored or tired or frustrated to cry. Jake bangs at his seat buckle until it opens, and throws himself onto the carpeted floor where he lies sweating and pounding the floor with his good hand while hoarse, guttural sounds rise from the back of his throat.

Olivia turns and watches her father throw himself, watches his anger beat against the carpeted floor and against the black wall of his own fate and pride. His strong emotions frighten her, but so does giving in to them. If they turn around now, 150 miles into the trip, and dump him back in that dark house on Turner Drive, what then? She feels her heart pounding loudly in her ears, but speaks calmly to her father.

"And you thought being wheeled around in a chair was undignified. When you're through acting like a spoiled two-year-old, we'll stop for lunch."

By Christmas morning, they are driving in the heat along A-1A, Florida's coastal pleasure drive. Jane is driving and watching the horizon, a thick mist where the sky meets the ocean. The sun hangs low in the pastel sky, cutting a sparkling path across the water.

The windows of the van are open, and the warm air, fresh with the scent of the ocean and the sounds of squawking gulls, nudges both Olivia and Jake awake.

"Check out the Christmas glitter, you two," Jane says, and points toward the sun's bright path across the water.

Jake yawns, tightens the grip of his right hand on the seat's arm, and leans into the seat belt, stretching to catch sight of his first ocean. While the sunlight warms his face, he looks sadly out over the water, watching as endless small waves roll white and frothy toward the shore.

Olivia is fully awake and her voice rings with enthusiasm.

"Jane, let's find a place to pull over so we can walk the beach."

"How about it, Dad? Want to warm your toes in the sand?" asks Jane.

Jake answers with a frown, but doesn't struggle a few minutes later when his daughters hoist him out of the van. Olivia slips his right arm across her shoulders. Jane supports his left side while gently placing his weak arm across her shoulders, holding his hand so it won't slip. The two women support his weight, but Jake's foot still drags the sand as they walk toward the water.

Stopping several feet from where the morning tide pushes smoothly against the shore, the women lower Jake onto the beach, and the three of them sit watching as a pair of white-bellied seagulls strut across the sand. The stretch of beach is almost deserted: just four teenage boys who are sculpting a woman's body out of a large heap of damp sand, and a skinny, middle-aged jogger dressed in a pair of red nylon running shorts, red T-shirt, and a red fur-trimmed Santa Claus hat.

"Think it'll snow?" he says with a smile.

"I'll sue your mayor if it does," says Jane, and the three watch the skinny jogger disappear down the beach.

Jake slowly pushes both heels of his feet into the warm sand and the line of his mouth softens. He looks up at the clear blue sky as a small plane passes over. It is pulling a long advertising banner: MERRY CHRISTMAS CHINESE BUFFET TONIGHT 5th AND PALM. He nudges Olivia, lifts his arm, and points up to the banner. The boundary separating his fear and anger from a will to proceed is less defined, and a sound rises from deep in his throat.

"Sure, why not?" Olivia says, and pats Jake's weak arm. "We've made it this far. I guess we can find 5th and Palm."

*Candace Hartzler*

## Of Art, Poetry, and Essay Exams

### *Third Place, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest*

The red glow of the clock pulls me  
Minute by minute into the future.  
I am supposed to be aging  
With my head bent to this textbook —  
Soaking up knowledge like an Einstein sponge.

Instead, the scroll of my mind unrolls  
In a different direction  
As I doodle in its margins,

Daydreaming of Calder's suspended  
Shifting metal ribbons in space;  
Dancing across a canvas like Matisse  
With paint on my toe shoes;  
Twirling a parasol on a Seurat Sunday;  
Imagining the clouds opening to reveal  
The Sistine ceiling painted on the sky;  
Trying to smile like Mona Lisa,  
Without moving my eyes;

Hearing a throaty howl emerge  
from Ginsberg;  
And the bell of cummings' typewriter;  
Running from Plath's father;  
Swatting Dickinson's annoying fly;  
And listening to Whitman sing.

Damn Descartes and his doubt —  
Which I reread with heavy eyes  
And a lighter heart  
Fearing I have missed some  
testable word...  
Some key to a pressurized essay.

CATHY GRIFFIS

**An Exercise in Imitation:  
The Parable of Words in William Faulkner's  
*As I Lay Dying***

*Second Place, Quiz and Quill Critical Essay Contest*

Words are both a success and a failure of humankind. Words do much, perhaps more than any other human construction, to give form and meaning to our lives. Without such form and meaning we could scarcely bear living. The form, however, often proves to be illusory. The comma, colon, and period often seem to be entirely without direction, traveling in meaningless circles of self-definition and self-deception. William Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying* reflects both in its content and in its style the concern of its author. Faulkner both admits the failure of words to encapsulate human experience and celebrates the power of words to provoke it. The odyssey of the Bundren family is in no small part a parable of the power of words to shape human responsibility.

"We had had to use one another by words," says Faulkner's Addie, "like spiders dangling by their mouths from a beam, swinging and twisting and never touching . . ." (164). Addie expresses a twofold condemnation of words. First, she suggests, words describe life incompletely and dishonestly. Faulkner records her testimony:

That was when I learned that words are no good; that words dont ever fit even what they are trying to say at. When he [Cash] was born I knew that motherhood was invented by someone who had to have a word for it because the ones that had the children didn't care whether there was a word for it or not. I knew that fear was invented by someone that had never had the fear; pride, who had never had the pride. (163)

Words obliterate the nuances of human experience, defiling feeling in attempting to convey it to people who are not themselves the feeler.

Nowhere is this axiom truer than in the formation and use of religious language. Oxford don and Cambridge lecturer C.S. Lewis recalls, in his volume *Mere Christianity*, an R.A.F. officer who balked at just such definition. "I've no use for all that stuff," protested the officer. "But, mind you, I'm a religious man, too. I *know* there's a God. I've *felt* Him: out in the desert at night: the tremendous mystery. And that's just why I don't believe all your neat little dogmas and formulas about Him. To anyone who's met the real thing they all seem so petty and pedantic and unreal." One can argue, as Lewis does, that words, definitions, and theology are all "maps" that reflect the life experience of countless generations of human beings. But this is not to say that the word, the definition, or the theology is the experience (135-36).

Words fail Addie in a second way. Addie lies beside her husband in the dark, meditating on his name:

Anse. Why Anse. Why are you Anse. I would think about his name until after a while I could see the word as a shape, a vessel, and I would watch him liquefy and flow into it like cold molasses flowing out of the darkness into the vessel, until the jar stood full and motionless: a significant shape profoundly without life like an empty door frame; and then I would find that I had forgotten the name of the jar. (165)

Words fail not only because they are not true to life, but also because people and their perceptions begin to take on the shape of the word. Leo Buscaglia, a nationally known educator and human potential advocate, remarks:

Sometimes I get really sad, because in a supermarket I hear mama with her little kid talking to her neighbor, saying, "This is the *dumb* one." She'll say, "Now, his sister, boy she is the genius."

As if the little kid were deaf! It's a self-fulfilling prophecy. He hears, and what is he hearing? That he's stupid. You become what you believe you are. (246)

Curiously, it is in this way that Addie's words have their greatest effect. C.S. Lewis suggests, again in his treatise *Mere Christianity*, that the "putting on" of ultimate meaning is a wholly legitimate way of shaping character:

May I once again start by putting two pictures, or two stories rather, into your minds? One is the story you have all read called *Beauty and the Beast*. The girl . . . had to marry a monster for some reason . . . She kissed it as if it were a man. And then, much to her relief, it really turned into a man and all went well. The other story is about someone who had to wear a mask; a mask which made him look much nicer than he really was. He had to wear it for years. And when he took it off he found his own face had grown to fit it. He was now really beautiful. What had begun as disguise had become a reality. (160)

"My revenge," says Addie, "would be that he [Anse] would never know I was taking revenge" (164). In exacting from Anse the promise that she will be buried in Jefferson, Addie perpetrates a "truthful lie." It really matters very little where she is buried, but in exacting a very few words from Anse she sets the entire family on a mission in which they (like Lewis' man in the mask) begin to take on the form of her last wish. Addie's mask is not beautiful, but it does become a reality. As readers, for all we know, the only real initiative, the only real success, the only real loss that Addie's whole worthless clan ever experiences is a direct result of her dying "fiction," a direct result of her "revenge."

Faulkner's distortion of the ordinary suggests the form of a parable (McFague 51). Even Faulkner's sentence construction betrays his "wordless" aesthetic, in which words are at the same time everything and nothing. Faulkner's words often have little or no value as statements of fact, functioning instead as "expressive verbal gestures" (Bedient 136).

Faulkner's parable of words is deeply religious because the questions the words try to answer, questions of meaning and form, are profoundly religious. Faulkner's own idea of religion, particularly Christianity, was not far from this idea of imitation. "Christianity," suggested Faulkner, "is a code of behavior by means of which [man] makes himself a better human being than his nature wants to be, if he follows his nature only" (quoted by Brooks, *The Hidden God* 24).

Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* is both a parable and a paradigm. It is a parable of a family driven to heroism by the demand, in a word, that it be heroic. It is a paradigm of the power of words to provoke the very same experiences that they can never fully convey.

John Fisher

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## Periodicals Unbound

### *Second Place, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest*

It still puzzled her that she was on the cover of a major U.S. news magazine, but she decided to enjoy life on the current shelf as long as it lasted.

She remembered coming out of the press and rolling down the conveyor belt with dozens of other identical magazines. She remembered the pain of having the address sticker attached. Then the pushing and shoving going on in the mailbag. Finally, there was the dreadful librarian who stamped the date across her forehead, as well as "Centerville Public Library," and then carried her out to the shelf here.

Actually, it was kind of nice here on the shelf. She could watch the people as they came into the library. She could see what they looked like, what kinds of books they checked out, how they did their research, and all sorts of neat things . . .

"Hey, babe."

She had a strange feeling that someone was talking to her. She looked around, or tried to. This two-dimensional deal was tough to get used to.

"Beside you, in your line of sight."

Luckily, the photographer had posed her looking a little off to the right to get a "dynamic profile," as he called it. She wasn't sure how dynamic it was, but it did allow her to see the next magazine over.

There, on the cover of that magazine, was the most gorgeous hunk of man that she had seen in a long time. I could get used to being two-dimensional very quickly, she thought.

"What's a nice girl like you doing on a periodical like that in a library like this?" he asked very suavely.

A little corny, but very smooth, she thought.

"I'm an overnight sensation," she said. "I wrote a best-selling novel."

"Really, what about?"

"Oh, about 350 pages."

He laughed. She was very witty, in addition to being very attractive. She was going to be much easier to talk to than her predecessor, Ronald Reagan, who began his sentences, with "Well, . . ." and never directly answered any of his questions.

"This is your first time on a magazine cover, isn't it?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, flashing him a smile. "Perhaps you can show me the ropes."

"The way I understand it," he said, "somehow we enter a separate dimension at printing where our entire personalities at the time are transferred onto the page. It's rather like being frozen in time. There are probably six million of you traveling around the United States having the time of their lives."

"That's fascinating," she said. "Now what?"

"You've got to enjoy it while it lasts because in a few days it'll be gone," he said. "Grab for the gusto. Bask in the public acclaim. Tomorrow, you'll be a nobody. That's Rule Number One."

"Are all the rules cliches?" she asked.

"It may be cliché, but it's true," he said. "You're on a weekly. You've only got one week out here in the spotlight before they take you back to . . ." He paused for dramatic effect. His voice took on a sinister tone: "The stacks."

"What are the stacks?" she asked, feigning naivete. Men always go for the naivete.

"Oh, you don't want to know."

"Yes I do. I can handle bad news. My book was rejected by seven publishers."

"You've got a lot of fortitude," he said.

"You've got to do what you can to get by."

Suddenly, she was much more attractive to him. She was no ordinary media darling. She had substance. She had the glow of toughness, that glow that says "I'm gonna pull myself up when I fall down." She had faced adversity and won.

"Now, about those stacks?" she asked.

He didn't mind telling her the cruel truth now.

"When the new magazine comes in, they take you to the back and put you in a pile on top of other magazines. Then, as they come in, they stack the newer magazines on top of you. It's stifling. You can't think. You're just smothered. Then, after enough magazines come in, they send you to a place called 'The Bindery' where they sew you together permanently."

"Oooh, that does sound dreadful," she said. A shiver went down her spine. "How did you find out these things?"

"When you're a quarterly, you hear things," he said. "Some magazines get checked out and escape from the stacks, and they talk, but most are never heard from again."

"How did you get the privilege of being on a quarterly," she asked, batting her eyelashes.

"I won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor." He beamed at her.

"You don't look familiar," she said, "but I've been so busy taking care of my daughter and working on the novel, and stuff, that I just don't see many movies. My town doesn't even have cable." With the last line she sounded disappointed.

"You're married?" he asked, trying to hide the tension in his voice, hoping the answer would be no.

"My husband died in Vietnam. It was seventeen years ago last month. Beth will be eighteen next week. She'll graduate in June."

What a remarkable woman! He knew that he wanted her. He wanted to know everything about her. He wanted to sit with her in front of a fireplace on a cold winter night. She would wear a sexy, yet conservative dress like she had on now. They'd sip champagne and talk about deep things. So much better than the cheap one-night stands with bubble-headed beauties. Sure, they were fun, but there was more, and he could see that more in front of him now.

She looked at him. He was being so wonderful about all this. It was all so new, and it was kind of him to help her through. Then, she saw in his eyes what he was thinking.

"I want you," he said. "More than I've ever wanted anyone before."

It was too good to be true, she thought.

"I want you, too."

"But . . ."

"I know," she said. "We can never even touch."

"Maybe someday."

"Not likely. You said so yourself." She looked deep into his eyes. "It's just not fair. You're so sensitive, like Jerry was."

"Your husband?"

"Yes." She wanted to cry, but forced back the tears. "He didn't want to go, but he had to. He was so kind — So understanding. He would never hurt anyone. And they put a gun in his hand and told him to kill. He wanted to be an English teacher. He never even saw his daughter." She cried, letting the tears fall in heaps.

"I wish I could hold you," he said soothingly.

"So do I. Oh, you're so unlike all the macho brutes at home with their chewing tobacco, and their lust and insensitivity and their pickup trucks," she said. "They just use you and throw you away like chaw in a spittoon."

Just then a teenage boy walked over to her, picked her up off the shelf and started browsing. He then started towards the checkout desk.

"Farewell," she called.

"Farewell," he said. "I hope we meet again."

The teenager walked off.

Suddenly, he was more alone than he'd ever felt, despite being surrounded by hundreds of magazines.

She pined for him. As she was fingered she pined for him. As jelly was spilled on her blouse at the breakfast table she pined for him. As she stared at the top of the teenager's desk and his ceiling, she pined for the one true man she'd found in seventeen years.

She was returned to the library, but he was gone, back in the stacks. None of the other magazines were very good company after that.

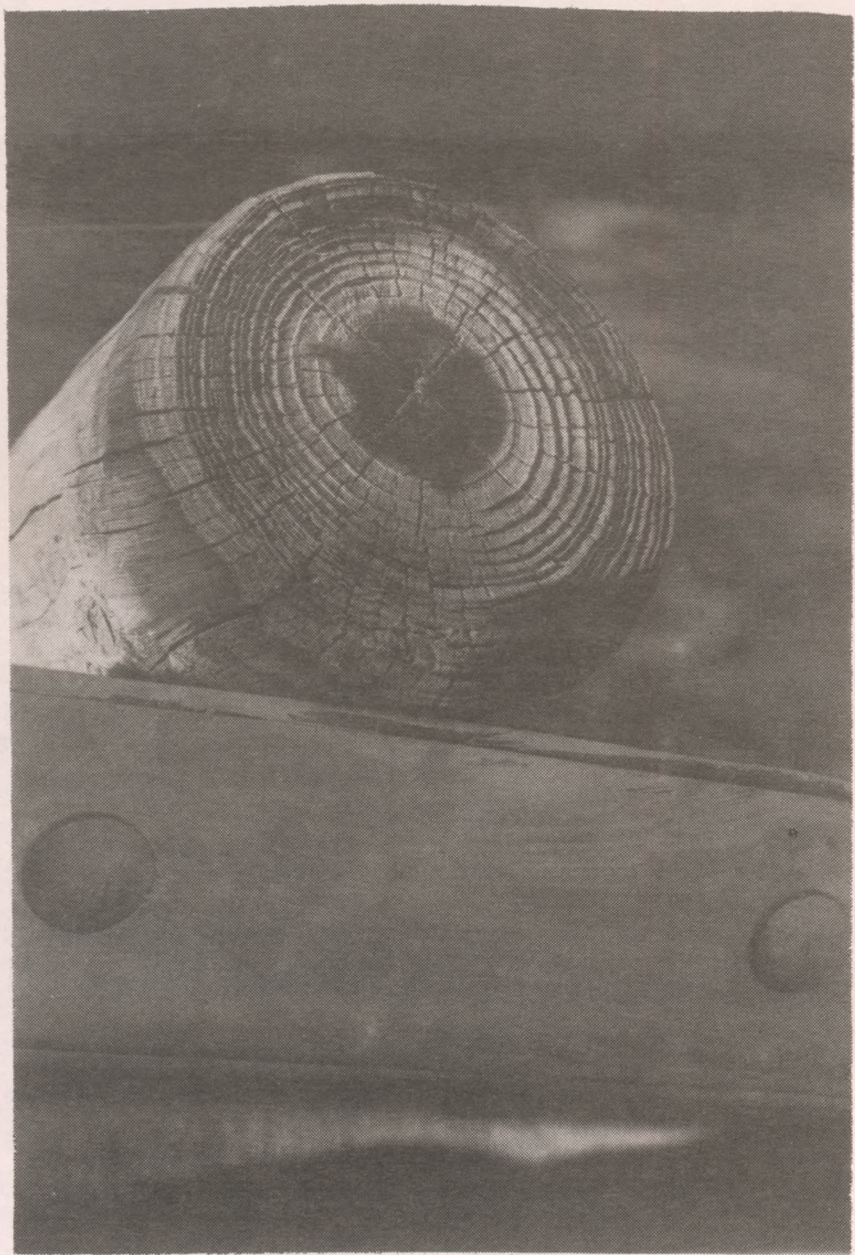
One day the librarian came by and took her back to the stacks. She was on top for a while, and it wasn't that bad. The air was okay, and she could see the shelf above her and talk to some other magazines.

A week went by. A librarian came by and dropped another magazine on top of her. She felt smothered. She labored for breath. Then she heard a male voice from on top of her:

"What have we got here? You're a right fine little filly. I think you'll be mighty fine company."

It was the Marlboro Man. She screamed, but nobody heard.

*Greg Grant*



## Laughter

### *Third Place, Quiz and Quill Short Story Contest*

As Mary drove out of the church parking lot, she could feel her tongue curling behind her teeth into her cheek, pushing the side of her face till it could stretch no more — the sound of a crackling chortle burst from her mouth and left an uncontrollable smile on her face. She self-consciously glanced around searching for eyes that might have been watching her laughing as she sat all alone in her car.

The source of her guffaw was her 13-year-old, Jacqueline. Jackie was attending Bible School voluntarily for the first summer in thirteen years. She had successfully convinced her mother that she was seeking God and spiritual growth. When Mary dropped Jackie at the church this morning, she finally observed the “spiritual growth”; he was about 5’5”, tanned, with dark straight hair, and a smile so white-hot it would melt any 13-year-old’s heart.

“So much for spirituality,” laughed Mary. As she drove home her thoughts focused on motherhood and teenagers and the wonderful horror of it all.

Mary pulled into her driveway and parked the car a little distance from the house, so she would have room to get the grass cutter from the attached garage. When she reached her front porch, she could hear the phone ringing.

She cursed the fifteen keys she had crowded on her key chain, and hurriedly tried to unlock the door so she could get to the phone. As she moved quickly through the front room into the kitchen, she observed it was going to be a hot, humid day, and resolved to get her housework done quickly so she could take the kids to the pool.

Finally she snatched the phone, interrupting the seventh ring.

“Hello!” she said, a little out of breath.

“Mar,” came the raspy voice from the other end of the phone. Mary knew from the voice that it was her friend Karen, but she noticed the sound was even lower and raspier than usual — something was wrong.

“Mar,” the voice quivered, “This is Karen, I have a favor to ask. I’m so upset I can hardly talk, so please bear with me.”

Mary was frozen with thoughts of at least a thousand terrible reasons why Karen could be so upset.

"Little Gary died this morning. He had surgery a few days ago and complications set in . . . he just didn't make it. Barb needs help, and I'm supposed to babysit four kids today. Do you think I could leave them with you for the day?" Karen spoke so quickly and desperately that Mary didn't

"Of course, Karen, bring them over whenever you want."

"Thanks Mar," said Karen, and the receiver clicked.

Mary stood holding the phone with a white-knuckled grasp, not being able to move.

"God," she thought, "I never even knew his name. I've seen him so many times and talked to him and talked to Barb and watched him play, and I didn't even know his name."

Gary was a little boy from the neighborhood who went to the same swimming pool as Mary's children. He had a rare disease which left his body twisted and deformed. He was about thirteen years old with the mental capacity of a four-year-old — and an inner capacity of an angel.

Mary had observed him and his mother, Barb, on many occasions at the pool. Gary would sit and play in the water while Barb would watch him — just watch — not with an unnatural protectiveness, but with a loving, enjoying eye.

It was impossible not to notice Gary's physical appearance, but Gary's real difference was his innocent playful nature . . . and his laugh.

"Oh, God, that laugh," thought Mary. She relived the many moments she had enjoyed Gary's laughter. He made a raucous, seal-like sound that emitted an almost primal joy. And he seemed to find joy in everything... so he laughed a lot.

Mary considered her own uncontrollable laughter of just a few moments ago. The smile that had commanded her face was now giving way to an overwhelming sadness. She began to cry.

She cried for Barb and the loss of her son . . . she cried for all parents who had children taken from them . . . she cried for Karen, overcome with grief . . . she cried for all friends . . . she cried for all mothers . . . she just sat and cried.

The doorbell rang.

Mary quickly searched for something to dry her eyes and nose. She had to settle for an unbrand paper towel that scratched her already red-dened face.

“Amazing,” she laughed aloud, “one minute I’m weeping for humanity and the next moment I’m worrying about a runny nose. The eternal and the mundane are separated by a very fine line indeed.”

As she passed through the living room, eyeing her new furniture and carpeting, her thoughts grew even more mundane as she realized that four diaper-clad, drooling toddlers would soon be scurrying through her house.

When she saw Karen, pale and red-eyed standing at her door, Mary chided herself for her trite concerns, and again succumbed to the sadness.

A few days after Gary’s funeral, Mary invited Karen over for coffee. Eventually the conversation turned toward the death.

Karen told Mary, “Barb seems to be holding everything inside. She’s being strong for her other kids and her husband — hell, I haven’t even seen her cry once through this whole thing.”

Mary was quiet and concerned as Karen spoke. She had wanted to call Barb, but felt she might be imposing.

“Karen,” Mary said, “the day after Gary died I sat down and wrote a poem. It was just something I had to get out of my system after a discussion I had with my kids about Gary. It’s really not that good of a poem, but I thought I might like to share it with Barb. Read it over and see what you think.”

Mary walked over to the large, oak rolltop desk in the family room and removed a piece of paper from the top drawer. She handed it to Karen. Karen read . . .

## The Little Boy Who Liked To Laugh

A little boy my children knew  
died the other day.  
His life and death touched my family  
in a special way.  
Until today, I must admit  
I didn't even know his name.  
But I realized, as did all who saw him  
he was "different," not the "same".  
He had some illness, his body was twisted,  
yet he didn't seem to mind.  
His playfulness, his love of life  
made him one of a kind.  
His mother's eyes were filled with love  
whenever she looked at the boy.  
And my children said he liked to laugh —  
a laughter filled with joy.  
We'll miss this boy who liked to laugh  
of whom I write this poem.  
But God shares His angels for just a while  
and then He calls them home.

Karen's hands were trembling and her eyes were glazed as she laid the poem down on the table. "Mary, this is beautiful. Barb will treasure it. Give it to her today."

Mary called Barb later that afternoon and asked if she could stop at Barb's house for a little while that evening. Barb explained that her husband was going out of town and she would welcome the company.

At 8:05 Mary rang the doorbell of Barb's two-story colonial home. Barb answered with a bellowing "Come on in, it's open!"

Mary could see Barb at the kitchen sink, elbow deep in Joy liquid dish-washing detergent. Barb was short with premature white hair, and a mischievous pixie grin that was imported directly from County Cork.

"Grab a beer from the fridge if you want, Mary, and have a seat. You'll have to drink from the can, because every damn glass in the house is in this sink."

Mary laughed and helped herself to a beer. She hadn't known Barb very long, or very well, but she always enjoyed talking to her, because the conversation was always genuine, no air of phoniness. Barb reminded Mary of her close friends back home in Cleveland — a balanced mixture of earthy, streetwise personality, piqued with intelligence and warmth.

They chatted idly for a few minutes. When Barb finished the dishes, she sat at the table across from Mary. Mary changed to a serious tone.

"Barb, I've been wanting to talk to you since little Gary died, to tell you how sorry I was and to offer my help in any way possible . . ."

"You've done so much already," Barb interrupted. "You babysat and sent food. I can't tell you how much I appreciate it."

"Well, I guess I just never expressed my sympathy or my feelings about Gary . . . and, well, I wrote this poem I want you to have. It's no big deal, not Shakespeare or anything, but, well, I wanted you to have it." She handed the paper to Barb.

Barb looked at Mary with that pixie smile and said, "It's not dirty is it? I heard you Cleveland people were into smut."

Mary just smiled and said no. She noticed that Barb's voice was a little weaker than it had been before. Mary remembered what Karen said about Barb trying to be strong, never crying. She wondered if perhaps Barb was a little afraid to show her emotions.

Then Barb began to read. As she read, tears began to stream silently down her face. No sobs, no sniffs, just a silent steady stream of tears.

When she finished, she laid her head in between her arms on the table and began to weep quietly. Mary looked around for a box of Kleenex, found one, and placed it beside Barb on the table.

After a long minute had passed, Barb looked at Mary and said, "Hell, does this mean I have to be your friend forever?"

"Yes," Mary laughed.

Barb then began to tell Mary how important it was for her to know that people saw Gary in special ways, not related to his appearance. She and Gary had developed a worldview of love and laughter, and Mary's poem reassured her that this view shone through her child.

"And I gotta tell you," Barb said, "Gary had such a crush on your daughter Jackie. She was always so nice to him. He used to talk about her all the time. It will really make his halo shine knowing Jackie will miss him."

Mary and Barb sat and talked and had a few more beers. They said goodnight, knowing that the seeds of a powerful, loving friendship had been planted.

When Mary pulled into the church parking lot the next day to drop Jackie off at Bible school, she gave Jackie a big hug and kiss, nodded playfully at Mr. Spiritual Growth who was waiting, and drove home with a big, laughing smile on her face . . . not caring who noticed.

*Phyllis Magold*

### **The Great Photographer**

*Second Place, Quiz and Quill Religious Poetry Contest*

Lightning is God taking Pictures  
with a Flash,  
or so somebody once told me.

Imagine all the Angels  
lined up in place,  
God behind the Camera saying,  
"Michael, a little to your left.  
Gabriel, could you lower the Trumpet  
just a wee bit.  
Perfect.  
Now, think of those Streets of Gold  
and Smile real big for Me here.  
One, two, three,"  
BOOM!!!

"One more time," God says.  
"That Cherub on the left  
in the third Row  
had his Eyes closed."

*Greg Grant*

## GOD AND THE IMPORTANCE OF STORY

### *First Place, Quiz and Quill Critical Essay Contest*

In Freedom City, theorizing about God is forbidden, so when Theopatra Holyoke speaks metaphorically about God, she is punished. Each time she speaks of God in other than time-worn phrases, her ears are tagged with small pieces of purple lead. Her ears have become very colorful over the years, and now her head full of lead throbs in pain while she spends her days quiet and alone in a hut on the outskirts of Freedom City. Bent on lopping off creative imagination, the leaders fear Theopatra's influence on others, and so have banished her from the city.

#####

Disallowing human beings the right to engage in creative speech and thought enslaves our sensibilities and chokes the growth of our imaginative powers. Metaphor, the language of the imagination, acts as a catalyst for those powers. Metaphoric language enlivens our sensibilities, feeds our intellect, and when used in the realm of theology, makes us stewards of our own faith by offering visions of the divine. Through its use of vivid imagery, metaphor builds readers a swinging bridge between the ethereal and the temporal, affording access to an ever-widening pool of spiritual vision.

Frank Burch Brown, a noted theologian and writer, is concerned with how language influences the reality of human religious experience. In his book *Transfiguration*, Brown makes distinction between the expressive language of poetry, myth, parable, etc., and "steno," the language of everyday communication (15). Brown feels theology today must articulate the truth of Christian faith as well as explicate the meaning of that truth "in a way that is adequate to contemporary experience" (153). While admitting such religious terms as grace, faith, and God are "unquantifiable phenomena" (179), Brown claims any hope for human understanding and conceptualization of the abstract must occur through a combination of expressive and steno languages (177).

Human beings need imaginative stories, but in order to conceptualize and elucidate metaphoric meanings, we also need everyday language. The two modes of discourse must interrelate, one boosting the other, with metaphoric language "giving rise to symbol and symbol in turn giving rise to a level of understanding not fully encompassed by the symbol itself" (Brown 177). Viewing religious faith as an ongoing, growing pro-

cess, Brown sees metaphor and steno languages as important partners, both affecting our spiritual growth.

Northrop Frye calls the motive for metaphorical language "a desire for the human mind to associate with what goes on outside it," and describes metaphor as educator of our sensibilities (80). He repeatedly stresses the importance of our intuitive, expressive side, referring to the imagination as "a universe entirely possessed and occupied with human life, a city of which the stars are suburbs" (Frye 80). While dealing with the values inherent in enlarging the scope of human imagination, Frye calls literature the grande dame of scholarship. Because "love, death, passion, and joy" (Frye 28) are the primary forces present in literature, the study of literary art is imperative for human social and intellectual development. Our ability to "see" beyond our objective world, to intuit meaning from symbolic imagery used in works of literary art, serves to keep our human race morally sensitive.

Poetry, the most concise model of expressive language, is at present an active connective force for the politically oppressed in Poland. A recent newspaper article referring to the many thousands of copies of esoteric poetry being written, published, and sold in the Polish underground, quotes Czeslaw Milosz, a poet in exile: "At moments of cataclysm and upheaval, poetry becomes popular as expression of people's hope, aspirations and identity . . . poetry is the most expressive voice of freedom" (Maddocks). Human imagination as creator of poetry, and hence creator of hope in the Polish underground, broadens the value and importance of spiritual and aesthetic expression.

William Blake, a pre-Romantic literary and visual artist, often explored the nature of spirit, God, and Universe in his art. Born the son of a London haberdasher and educated only in visual art, Blake claimed to have received his highest education from the Bible (23). While his drawings and engravings are mostly depictions of Biblical scenes, his poems are explorations of man's spiritual sense and being. His poetic purpose often conjoins with what Frye describes as motive for metaphor: desire for humans to connect with what goes on outside their minds (80).

Blake often poked his poetic pen into matters of the human soul. In a series of poems entitled *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, Blake writes of contrary states of the human soul. While never claiming to write easily understood poems, "That which can be made explicit to the Idiot is not worth my care" (23), Blake steeped his *Songs of Innocence and Experience* in Hegelian philosophy. With innocence being a stage negated by experience, the soul will eventually reach a third state, a syn-

thesis of the first two, which he calls "organized innocence" (Blake 31). Blake explores notions of spiritual growth by embodying two basic images in his series: images of vulnerability for the innocent soul, predator images for the experienced soul. In the series, each poem has a partner, i.e. "The Lamb" from innocence is paired with "The Tyger" from experience.

In "The Lamb," Blake's tone is as light and airy as the innocent soul he proposes to explain. "Dost thou know who made thee?" the poet asks, with "thee" serving as double image for soul and child. The poem refers to a gentle, loving God as creator and is chock-full of positive, visual pictures of human life, an existence meant for "softest clothing" and "tender voices." When read alone, this poem may discourage reader engagement, but Blake's depth becomes apparent when "The Lamb" stands near "The Tyger." Here readers confront a darker world, a world containing evil. Personifying evil as Tyger, Blake asks: "What immortal hand or eye/Could frame thy fearful symmetry?" Could the same God who fashioned the impeccable world of innocence also have made evil, the predator of human souls? Laden with harsh images of fire and terrors, the poem invites readers to question the presence of human misery in the world, to conceptualize beyond the notion of good, to speculate on matters of faith. The human soul has traveled, via experience, to a state bereft of innocence, and Blake's artistry leaves readers the task of reflection and introspection.

William Wordsworth, a key Romantic poet, also shares artistic sensibilities with Northrop Frye; Wordsworth calls poetic language "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge," while referring to a poet's job as binding "together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society" (171). Wordsworth celebrates nature more directly than God, but readers gather a sense of deep spirituality present in nature, and come to understand the poet's theology: nature/spirituality/God are interrelating forces.

In "Tintern Abbey," Wordsworth speaks to his sister, Dorothy, of nature's inextricable link with human spirituality. Within reach of mountain springs and ripening fruit, Wordsworth sits on the banks of the river Wye and claims nature has had "no slight or trivial influence/On that best portion of a good man's life" (ll. 32-33). Nature, rather than God, has fed the poet's sense of purpose and hope over the years. Having responded as a child with physical passion to nature's streams, mountains, and countryside, the poet's sensitivities have enlarged over the years, and as

an adult he's able to counter his passions with intellect. Pitying those persons unable to experience and enjoy the power and beauty inherent in nature, calling them "The still, sad music of humanity" (l. 91), Wordsworth supplants prayer with an appreciation for nature. Sensing in nature a "motion and a spirit that impels/All thinking things, all objects of all thought/And rolls through all things" the poet continues to commune with his God. Worshiping nature as "The anchor of my purest thoughts . . . the guardian of my heart and soul" Wordsworth presents his concept of the Ultimate.

While language serves as man's way of communicating religious ideas and concepts, metaphor serves as the grand illustrator. It draws for us a colorful path toward inspection of the divine; without its artistic rendering of the religious, we walk the beaten path of conventionalism. With metaphor as our guide, readers can swing toward the stars with high hopes of meeting God along the way.

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Change in attitude is slow in coming to Freedom City. The administration still fears those persons with broad imaginative powers. Yearning for spiritual connection, education, and development, Theopatra Holyoke grieves alone in the darkness of her hut. She is as yet unaware that just a mile from her hut walks a woman, an old friend whose ears are also tagged with lead. She is a poet, recently banished from the city, and in her head floats music, laughter, and imaginative verses about God.

Candace Hartzler

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## The Fight

### *First Place, Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest*

Fighting, to me, has always seemed like a ridiculous way to settle an argument, unless the argument was over who was the better fighter. I always avoided that kind of argument. I was taught from the time I was very little that fighting never solved anything and that problems could always be solved by talking things out. One of the biggest lessons I learned was that reason doesn't always work and that sometimes you have to stand your ground and fight, even if you are defending something as silly as the right to whistle.

In seventh grade I became an entrepreneur: I got a paper route. It was wonderful. I made about thirteen dollars a week, which was great money to a seventh grader, and I got to ride my bicycle around town after school. What else could a thirteen-year-old boy ask for?

I had an old, klunky, three-speed bicycle that Dad and I rigged up with a basket on the book carrier in the back. I rode that bicycle through the streets of Cardington through nearly any weather imaginable, including rain and snow. As I rode through town I often whistled to keep my mind busy. Sometimes I fancied myself as someday being a great composer who would write music for movies like *Star Wars*. I remember spending the better part of two weeks working on a march I called in my head "The Coronation of Aragorn," a majestic piece to be played by bands of Condor while the great Strider was being crowned king near the end of "The Lord of the Rings." I forgot the piece a week later.

The whistling became a trademark, and customers said that they really liked it. They knew when their paper was coming because they could hear me whistling. They said that I always seemed so cheerful. Being an entrepreneur, I knew I had a good thing going, and so, even when I didn't really feel like whistling, I whistled anyway, which often made me feel better.

Not everybody liked my whistling. Neither Eric, the local bully, nor Mike, his cohort, could stand the whistling. They screamed at me, saying "Stop whistling, you !¶ @ \$ % & \* & % \$, or I'll beat your brains out," an appeal I ignored, not having the remotest idea what any of those words meant. Besides, I was on bicycle. They were on foot, and Eric was fat. I could outrun him with little or no exertion.

These impolite exchanges went on for several months, and winter rolled around. Sometimes the roads were so bad that I couldn't ride my bicycle, and so I walked the route, which put me at a disadvantage because I had to carry a big bag of papers on my shoulder.

One sunny winter day I was walking the route and whistling my heart out, and suddenly Eric and Mike attacked me from behind the side of a house. Before I knew it I was rolling around the ground grappling with Mike. I had a snowball in my face, my glasses were on the ground, and Mike was trying to shove another snowball in my face. Eric, meanwhile, was pelting me with snowballs as quickly as he could make them.

I grabbed for some snow and shoved it in Mike's face. He pinned me to the ground and sucker-punched me in the stomach several times. Eric started laughing.

"He's had enough," said Eric. "Are you gonna keep whistling, you \$@#!%&\*&?"

"Not if you keep calling me that," I wheezed.

Mike punched me again, harder.

"He's learned," said Eric. "Let's let him find his glasses, the %&!%." They turned and went the direction from which I'd come.

"You jerks!" I screamed. "I'll get you for this. Everybody will know that you're bullies." They laughed. This threat obviously did not faze them because everybody knew they were bullies already. They knew that I was too proud to admit to being beaten up. "I'll get you. You'll pay for this," I screamed at the top of my lungs. They were gone.

I brushed the snow out of my coat and looked around for my glasses, which were in a snowbank ten feet away. Luckily, they were unbroken, and I trudged off in my wet coat, wet pants, and wet shoes carrying wet papers to finish the rest of my route, about a mile and a half of walking.

Two weeks passed, and I thought about how I could repay Mike and Eric. I would be ready for the next time they attacked. I knew that they would do it again. Dad suggested buying a pair of boxing gloves and challenging Mike to a fair fight with referees and rules. He said that they

just attacked me because I was alone and it gave them a thrill to attack somebody weaker, and that he probably wouldn't accept the challenge. I knew that this was a bunch of hooley. Not only would Mike accept, but after he accepted he'd beat the living snot out of me because he was taller, quicker, stronger, and faster. His suggestion did give me an idea, however, and so I waited . . .

A week and a half later they were waiting for me beside the post office. I saw them coming so I dropped the paper bag on the sidewalk, quickly made a snowball, and ran behind a tree. I threw the snowball and hit Mike right in the face. He got mad and tackled me easily. We rolled around on the ground for a minute or so trying to push snow in each other's faces. I succeeded and pushed him off of me and stood up. Once I stood up, he stood up and started to walk away.

"No, you don't," I screamed. I could feel the blood rushing to my cheeks. "Don't you go anywhere. If you want to fight me you're gonna have to do it right here in this parking lot."

He shook his head.

"You want me, come get me," I screamed at the top of my lungs. The sound echoed through the still winter air. "Or are you chicken to fight me one on one like a man?" I took off my glasses. "It's a fair fight now. I don't have my glasses on. Come get me. Come beat me up. That's what you want, isn't it?"

Mike just stood there looking at me like I had lost my mind. Eric spoke. "You are going to fight him, aren't cha?"

Just then a man in his early twenties came by.

"Hey, what's all the screaming about?"

"They attacked me with snowballs and now they don't wanna fight me in the open like men," I yelled. "C'mon, come get me." I handed my glasses to the bystander. "Right here in the parking lot."

"Is this true?" he asked Mike.

"I'm not gonna take it from you anymore," I screamed. "I'm tired of being pushed around. Come and get me." I took my gloves off and held my hands up in fists in front of me.

"I guess yer gonna have t'fight him," said the man to Mike.

Mike came up to within a couple feet of me and held his fists up. I lowered my head and put my shoulder into his gut. He kicked his leg out under mine and I flipped over him. He got up and jumped on top of me. I put my arms around him and we rolled around on the ground for two minutes that seemed like a slow motion instant replay of World Championship Wrestling. He was on top, and he tried to sucker-punch me in the stomach; then I was on top and I tried to punch him in the nose. (Dad said that was the most vulnerable spot.) I missed. He missed. I missed. He missed. He landed one good shot to the face, then another. He threw me back to the ground.

"C'mon, Mike," said Eric. "You've given him enough. Let the %@\$% go deliver his %\$@! papers."

They walked away, and despite the fact that Mike had beaten me, I knew I had won. The man handed me my glasses, said "Good fight, champ," and walked away. I knew then that I was a champion. I put on my glasses, picked up my bag of papers, put on my gloves, and whistled as loudly as I could.

*Greg Grant*

## **Patriots**

### *Honorable Mention, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest*

She said it was wrong	He said it was right
She said don't go	He said I must go
She went to college	He went to war
She joined the protests	He joined the Berets
She burned buildings	He burned towns
She watched friends get beaten	He watched friends get killed
She popped pills	He smoked grass
She was arrested	He was ignored
They	are
Am	er
ic	an
s	

*Phyllis Magold*

## MY CHILDHOOD MENTOR

### *Third Place, Quiz and Quill Personal Essay Contest*

I think kids need someone to look up to—a childhood mentor. My sister Sharon had Grandma Bachelor. My other sister, Kathy, had Dad. But I had the best one of all—Grandpa Bachelor.

Grandpa was my own Santa Claus 365 days a year. I was *his* baby granddaughter. I can still see the shiny spot on his freckled bald head that was encircled with silver gray hair, the black-rimmed reading glasses that perched on the end of his nose as he studied “The Racing Form,” the colorful golf shirts that covered his flabby pot belly, the ornery twinkle in his light blue eyes, my eyes now, and the purple ink stains on the fingers of his right hand from marking groceries. He owned the local grocery store in downtown Worthington and was loved by his family and the community.

When I was five years old, a rival grocery chain came to town. Mom took my sister Kathy and me to check out the competition and then took us to Grandpa’s store. I was so excited by our excursion that I ran into the back of the store and shouted to Grandpa, who was on the front cash register, “Hey, Grandpa. We’ve been Krogering!” The store’s customers broke up laughing with Grandpa leading the way.

Then there was the time Mom and Grandpa took me to Norma’s Restaurant, which was next door to the store. The head cook was a man named Robert Lindimore, Lindy to his friends, who lived in the apartment above my grandparents’ three-car garage. The “grown-ups” had a little game they liked to play, when no one was around. The first one to flip the bird at the other always won. Little did they know that young, innocent Vickie would take their game public! My grandpa and I snuck up to the counter and spied Lindy flipping greasy hamburgers on the grill. Grandpa suggested I yell to Lindy the moment he stood me up on the counter. I had other plans. As soon as my feet were solid on the countertop, I yelled, “Hey, Lindy!” and promptly flipped him the bird. My grandfather was horrified, but the other customers got a big chuckle out of it. Grandpa never set me up on the counter again after that episode.

Grandpa’s main hobby was breeding and racing thoroughbreds. He would take my sisters and me and Grandma to the track with him. I accompanied him to the betting windows, and then we’d all go to his box

seats and wait for the announcer to snap "And They're Off!" If one of Grandpa's horses won, we'd go to the winner's circle and pose for pictures. Those pictures are precious to me now because he usually was holding *me*.

I suppose the "meanest" thing Grandpa ever did to me was with watermelon seeds. He'd take them straight from the melon, all slick and sticky, and pinch them between his thumb and index finger. Splat! He'd hit me on the cheek. Splat! He'd get my forehead. Believe me, it stung.!

The main thing Grandpa taught me as a child was love. Love of God. Love of Man. Love of Nature. I watched him bring out the good in people. I remember one lonely woman who was nicknamed "The Old Biddy." She was a grouchy old woman who acted as if she had no use for people and just wanted to be left alone. She came into the store every Saturday morning to do her grocery shopping. Grandpa liked to play practical jokes on her such as putting groceries in her cart when she wasn't looking or locking the door when he saw her coming. Once he even goosed her with a broom handle and then acted all flustered and apologized right and left! No matter what he did, instead of getting mad, she'd chuckle and say, "Clyde Bachelor, you ornery old man!" She'd always leave the store smiling.

Through the years Grandpa taught *me* to look for the good in people, and to love them for what they are. He said whatever I'd give I'd get back tenfold, and those who didn't give back just didn't know how. So he taught me patience and understanding.

When he died, I found out I wasn't the only one who loved and respected him. The funeral service had to be held at one of the largest churches in Worthington to accommodate everyone. From family members and close friends, to the elderly the store delivered to, and the past and present high school students who had worked for him, we all came to say goodbye with laughter and tears.

A day doesn't go by that I don't think of him, and the love brings a twinkle to my eyes. Then I remember his perfect aim squirting watermelon seeds. I can feel the seed sting my face and almost say out loud, "Grandpa!" and a smile lights up my face.

I don't talk to God any more. I talk to Grandpa. If that's sacrilegious, so be it. He is my adult mentor now. His body may be buried, but his soul will live in my heart forever.

Vickie Kayati

## Childhood Fantasy

### *First Place, Quiz and Quill Poetry Contest*

I see a Flamingo on a lawn  
and I think of Luis Tiant—  
how he'd stand on the mound,  
a short squat shaman.  
He'd stare intensely at the catcher  
and get the sign.  
Suddenly, the magic dance would begin.  
Raring up on one leg, a dumpy crane,  
spinning halfway to face second base  
and whoosh—  
the ball came out of nowhere  
right to the corner of the plate.  
Stee-ri-ke.  
It didn't matter that he pitched for the "other" team.  
I sat in front of the television bewitched.

I imagined myself the batter,  
hitting .400 and leading the league in RBIs.  
(Anyone can hit home runs, but only clutch hitters  
bring home the runs.)  
I would adjust my helmet,  
hike up my pants,  
fix my glove,  
check my grip,  
and finally step into the batter's box,  
ready for anything.  
Luis Tiant would stare intensely,  
and I'd know I was in for trouble.  
Suddenly, he's facing second base,  
and I can read the numbers on his back  
and then it would be too late.  
Smack—  
the catcher has the ball.  
Fooled, like everyone else,  
I trudge to the bench,  
hoping I'll get him next time.

I used to stand in front of the mirror  
and imitate Luis Tiant  
when nobody else was around.

I had it down.

I had what it took.

Front porches became home plate

and I would stop my bicycle,

rubberband the newspaper

and stare intensely at the doormat.

The doormat knew it was in trouble.

The windup—

The pitch—

Swoosh—thud—thud—swish.

Darn.

Mr. and Mrs. Rengert will never find their paper in the hedge.

I tossed the paper on the porch,

got on my bicycle and moved on,

knowing that next time

I would achieve temporary greatness.

Crowds of fans would cheer me on

as I struck out baseball's greatest

1—2—3.

Then, running out of papers,

the game would be over, a shutout,

and I would ride the team bus

back to the hotel,

knowing that I would have to save the day again  
tomorrow.

*Greg Grant*

## CONTRIBUTORS

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