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Belles Lettres, 1942

Eastern Kentucky University, The Canterbury Club

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Belles Lettres



1942

Belles Lettres

An annual anthology of student writing sponsored and published by the
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at Richmond, Kentucky

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VOLUME EIGHT

NINETEEN HUNDRED FORTY-TWO

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FOREWORD

With a feeling of gratitude for the continued interest the public is showing in *Belles Lettres*, the editors present this year's volume (1942). The editors have worked with three things in mind: to include different types of writing, to include as many authors as possible, and to maintain as high a standard of writing as possible. The editors hope that this volume justifies the continued interest of the readers.

THINGS I LOVE

Anita Beatrice Goins

I love the burst of springtime,
When trees look green and tall,
For then I chase the butterfly
And mock the bobwhite's call,
Or wander free and aimless
Through woods as wild as I,
And shed a tear for nature's sake,
For bird and rock and sky.

I fear but love the summer storm,
And its flashes flung asunder.
To feel the mad wind lash my cheek,
And hear the crash of thunder.
I love the rain that falls at night,
My peaceful sleep adorning;
And the crow of the cock
When the clouds break away,
And the songs of birds in the morning.

I love the tinkle of cowbells,
As the cows trudge down the hill,
And the familiar squeak of the old red gate,
As they're turned through the gate by the mill.
I love to see the sun set;
In a molten, crimson gleam,
And view its metallic luster,
Reflecting bronze in the old mill stream.

I love to gaze down the valley
When the village pauses in rest.
Watch the lights dot the shadows
As daylight turns to dust;
And see the silent river
Winding ghostly in the falling light,
Coiling its depths in a rocky gorge;
'Til it's lost in the ocean of night.

Ah, misty glimmer of thoughts immortal,
Inspired by things we cherish.
Such simple, haunting elusive joys
Once captured never perish.
Thus perhaps you ask (my beloved friend)
What right have I to ponder?
Ah, pity a heart that is locked to beauty,
Or barred to the world of wonder.

MIST

Jacqueline Yavecchia

Mist, so soft, so gossamer-thin,
Wraps this awkward city in,
Gives wistfulness to faded greenery,
And makes old houses theater scenery.
It pins thin flags on all the trees,
And sifts pale light with every breeze.
It hangs pearl ropes from every steeple,
And drops a few on passing people.
It strings street lights on a silver thread,
And cocks a halo on the streetsweeper's head.
It makes a fairyland of hideous places,
And softens wrinkles in shop-worn faces.

Mist, so soft, so gossamer-thin,
Wraps this awkward city in;
But at the sun's first touch it disappears,
And all the grass is wet with tears.

BEYOND THE CLOUDS IN THE WEST

Dock Chandler

Men
Like separate suns
Drift slowly across
A cloud flecked sky.

Passing behind the lighter clouds,
They idly wander.

At their zenith
They note
The darker,
Denser clouds in the west.

They spend
Their days of declining
Almost heedless of their own sky,
But seeking to see
What lies beyond
Those dark, dark clouds in the west.

THE ATHEIST

A Short, Short Story

Russell C. Weingartner

To the little group inside the cabin, the plane's motors no longer had a lulling effect. The loud, deep-throated droning, rising and falling at intervals, vibrated through the thin walls, but it was no longer heard by any of the persons who had drawn together on both sides of the aisle. Their faces were white and serious, but no one was hysterical.

"It's a great shock to all of us," said one of them, a white-haired, kindly-faced man wearing a clerical collar. "Death always is. We look forward to it all our life; we expect to face it. But when we actually *do* face it, it nevertheless fills us with as much fear as if we had never expected it."

"But isn't there something else we can try?" protested a young man, handsome, expensively-dressed. "I don't want to die!"

"If you can think of any solution, we are all willing to try it," replied the clergyman quietly. "But we are much too wrought-up to allow our minds to think clearly. There are still several minutes left to us, and I suggest we spend them quietly thinking of a way out."

He looked around him at the faces of well-to-do people, all young in years. Husbands and wives had instinctively drawn close together. Some faces were as lead, in which wide-opened eyes reflected a primitive fear. Others were as if stunned.

It was in sharp contrast to the carefree gaiety each had displayed before the take-off.

"I always invite people who can have fun," Marcia had said, when the couples, laughing at some witty remark by a tall, impressive-looking lawyer, flocked into the plane. "Even Father Reid here can enjoy himself." Marcia had retained the beauty of perfectly-formed features well into her late thirties, and her body had remained slim. "Father, I guess you know everyone here — except Pietro. He's a young man we met in Florida."

As she performed the introduction, the handsome Pietro Carozzoci swept his keen black eyes up and down the priest's body, shrewdly judging him before speaking. When he did speak, his dark face presented a grim smile — no more than a widening of his thin-lipped mouth.

"I am happy to know you," he said, with the slightest

trace of an accent. He wore a light gray suit of fashionable cut which made his skin seem even darker.

"Pietro is a representative for a European firm," Marcia explained briefly, and, like the practiced hostess she was, had gone off to see to preparations for leaving.

Pietro's eyes, glittering with the hardness of two black diamonds, turned away from those of the priest. In a moment the young man had joined the others and taken a seat farther to the front of the plane.

Not until they were well out over the Atlantic did the young foreigner move from his seat. Quietly he made his way back down the aisle to a door at the rear of the cabin which gave access to a small luggage compartment. No one paid much attention to him as he opened it and went inside. It was only when he was coming out, and Father Reid caught a glimpse of his face, that anything unusual had been even sensed.

The others, attracted by the swinging motion of the parachute Pietro was wearing, one by one turned and stared at him.

For a second, the foreigner said nothing. He closed the door and leaned against it, breathing heavily. His eyes, from under heavy black eyebrows, gleamed with a hate of a bound-up panther.

"Don't any of you move," he panted, "until after I've gone. Then I don't care what you do." He looked sharply from one to the other. "I'm locking this door. It's frail, but it's made of steel."

The foreigner's breathy syllables had only the faintest suggestion that his native tongue was any but English.

"There is no way of unhinging it," he went on. "It would take perhaps a half an hour to break it down. And the bomb goes off in five minutes."

None of the passengers made a move as the dark young man locked the door, never taking his eyes from them for an instant. He dropped the key into the pocket of his suit, took two quick steps to the plane's outer door, and flung it open. With his eyes still on the others, he stepped out into space and fell sharply away from the plane, leaving the door banging twice, slowly, from the force of the propellor's slipstream.

The tall dignified lawyer had been the first to reach the door and slam it shut, gazing down at that blossom of white being rapidly left behind, drifting toward a steamer far below. Soon after, Marcia had heard the faint ticking sound emanating from behind the steel door.

"We've tried everything we know," continued the priest.

"The door could not possibly be opened in the space of time left to us. It is no use to try. The bomb was probably meant to destroy our distinguished attorney here because of his work against the fifth column."

"But we can't just sit here watching that door and knowing it's going to blow us all up any minute!" cried the handsome young man. "Can't you tell the pilots to fly faster? Maybe if we reach the airport in time—"

"The pilots are doing all they can," came the quiet voice again. "They are as unwilling to face death as any of us. No, my boy, we have only one chance left—to pray to our Father in heaven for deliverance."

"That's no chance at all!" put in the large, dignified-looking man with graying temples. It was the lawyer. His eyes had narrowed with fear, and his voice was rapidly getting out of control. "There's no God. We'd best be spending our time in fast thinking."

"You may do as you choose," replied the priest. "I shall pray for myself and for anyone else who cares to join me."

Angrily, the man leaped up, passed down the corridor to the steel door, and began to wrestle frantically with the handle. The priest continued to pray without heeding the tall man's frequent disturbing rattlings. The others prayed fervently with him, making no move to dispute with their friend, a lifelong atheist. Fear had turned the minds of each to thoughts of his own safety.

Father Reid expected his prayer to be halted long before he had finished. But he came to its final word and looked back toward the tall man. The atheist had long ago left off his attempts at the door and stood silently with his back to the others. Without warning he wheeled around. He seemed less angry.

"Lend me your rosary," he demanded, approaching the priest. "I remember some of the prayers taught to me as a child. I've *got* to do something!"

His hand trembled as he snatched up the beads the priest extended to him and then nervously returned to the door. With a quick motion he threw the rosary around his neck and, kneeling before the steel door, began to finger each bead and mumble half-forgotten prayers.

Marcia gained everyone's attention with a quiet announcement: "Look! We're landing in the ocean."

The praying man was immediately forgotten. The door opening off the pilots' seat flew open and the sharp-featured assistant pilot, still wearing his white, peaked cap, was barking crisp excited orders at them.

"We're going to try to soak the bomb with water. When

we hit, everybody dive out the door and hang onto the plane."

The next few moments, Father Reid felt, were pure hysteria. After the jolt of the plane striking the water, he felt himself being swept by the onrush of the others out of the small door into the cold sea. Like the rest, he clung to the partly-submerged fuselage for what seemed hours. At length they realized that the attempt had been successful.

"There'll be a ship along in ten or fifteen minutes," announced the co-pilot. "We talked to it by radio before 'setting her down.'"

Hours later, after the plane and its passengers had been hauled aboard the tramp steamer *Florence*, Father Reid accompanied the ship's officers when they opened the plane's outer door. Inside, hanging by his neck from a handle of the steel luggage-room door, was a tall man. Apparently unable to leave the plane when it submerged, he had been drowned. A rosary, one end twisted around the handle and the other about his neck, had forced a quantity of blood up into a reddened face which was fixed in the unearthly contortions of fear.

LISTEN

Ruth Plaga

Listen!

The happy voices of children at play.

The busy hum of work each day.

The chapel bells that call us to pray.

Listen!

The wild wind singing o'er the hill.

The hush of twilight, soft and still.

The water laughing by the mill.

Listen!

The song of harvest, sweet and clear.

The footsteps of a loved one dear.

The flight of birds in sudden fear.

Listen!

The rumble of thunder in a summer sky.

The rustle of dead leaves whirling by.

The sadness of a whippoorwill's cry.

Listen!

The sweet spring showers softly falling.

The mother's voice, her children calling.

The song of life, renewed, enthralling.

Listen

WITHERED BOUQUET

Anita Beatrice Goins

In sadness, in sorrow, in mingled pathos,
I touch thy withered petals.
Like fading dreams, or failing schemes
Or forgotten friendships they lay.
I touch each curled petal and say
You were once graciously arrayed
 Withered bouquet.

So vivid, so haunting, so elusively wanton,
Your fragrance was fresh and pure
Now delicate and faint, mellow and taint,
Your bewitchery has faded away.
I sigh softly and say,
Your glory has past its day,
 Withered bouquet.

WHILE RULERS PRAY AND SOLDIERS DIE

Gordon Rader

While rulers pray, and soldiers die
Amid the blood and din of strife,
Peace-loving people wonder why
The monster, War, has come to life.

We thought him dead or sleeping still;
Peace was to reign forevermore:
"Democracy, freedom—this is our will!"
Was not that slogan heard before?

Amoeba-like the people roam
In search of ideals to attain,
Some few ahead, the others come
When but convinced the cause is sane.

Enveloped now we fight again,
In grips to fight for life to death;
War rages wildly, and where he's lain
We know but vaguely. With whispered breath
You speak of peace. Will it return,
That sleep of war, quietly, benign,
From battlefield where hatreds burn
And we, in mass, like a wounded lion
Lick smarting cuts and while they heal
In lieu of love are taught to kill,
Are fed on hate and taught to kill?

I

Lucille Hampton

I am a strange and potent being,
I am that which man tries to understand,
Yet cannot;
I am that which man strives to avoid,
By the puny techniques known as "progress"
And "development of civilization",
Yet at my will, he tears it down again
In a savage, destructive process called "war".

I weave the tangled web of life for the
Minute particles of scum which are men;
I weave the dark and the light strands
According to my whims;
I laugh at the useless opposing struggle
Of these contemptible creatures,
Knowing that they cannot alter the
Destiny I have decided for them.
I am Fate.

LOG FIRE

Betty Strachan

The red embers cool,
And ashes no longer burn
When they are cold.
So has our love,
Which once flamed high,
Burned down, leaving
Only red embers to warm
Our hearts with their glow.
Soon they too will cool and fade,
Leaving hearts and hands cold.
For ashes no longer burn
When they are cold.

NOSTALGIA

Susan Biesack

It seemed almost an artificial setting, so perfect was the environment and the mood. But on second thought, you'd say it was most natural, for what would follow more logically this night-before-graduation conversation than the remembrance of things past? The night wasn't mild; in

fact, it was much too warm. That's why Cathy had suggested to Ann that they sit on the porch awhile after they finished their packing. The moon was right, though—a thin, silver sliver that reeked with sentimentality! It was the moon, to be sure, that they talked on first.

Ann rocked a few minutes in silence, and then said to her companion, "Let's make tonight the sum total of all the other nights we've been here; only let's appreciate it, this time. Want to?"

"Suits me, Ann. How do you play?"

"Let's choose the ten most memorable things we've done together here for the past four years. We'll each take five. You go first, Cathy."

And then the pillars of that hall witnessed two testimonies in the hot, shiny night.

"Oh, I'll begin with the night we had our first bull session, and the collegianism we felt. Really, Ann, I thought I'd arrived at last, that night! We all did, in fact. Why else would we have sat up till 4:00 a. m., smothering and giggling in that tiny closet?"

"Next, I'd choose that Sunday morning picnic we embarked upon. Remember that foolish dripping of water we thought was a stream? If your mother hadn't sent chicken and pork and pickles and lemon pie, we never would have done it. Why, we left at nine o'clock and ate till twelve o'clock, and by then it was so hot we had to carry the Indian blankets back on our heads to keep from getting sunstrokes. You must have given Laura and me half a box of soda that afternoon, so we'd live to eat another day!"

"And will you ever forget the night you and Tom, Laura, Johnny, Phil and I went mountain climbing in the moonlight? You know, honey, it was just about this time of year it happened—three years ago. Only a bunch of slap-happy kids as we were would have attempted climbing that knob with a whole case of cokes! But with all the perspiring and puffing, it was heavenly. And on the way home we sang "Mexicali Rose". . . . How many more choices do I have, Ann?"

"Two."

"I'd give a cookie to relive that Saturday we spent rushing around in Lawson City, on a shopping tour. All we bought was a sack of taffy apples, and we got so twisted up in the molasses we had to buy toothbrushes before we could discover our teeth again. That was the day, too, the high school music festival was in town, and we went to it. Not even the bumpy bus ride home could quell our spirits, then, though.

"My last choice, now. I believe I'll take that lovely Sunday last year, when we double-dated and went to Gibson Beach. It seems as though food always dominates our experiences, Ann, but didn't we have enough that day to feed a family a week—almost? You and Billy stayed on the beach late, but Charles and I went up to that pitiful shell of a pavilion and danced. The nickelodeon was boarded up except for one hole where we could put the nickels in. Having long old arms, I was delegated to slip the lucre in the slot. I got terribly scratched by the splintery wood around the hole, but I didn't mind a bit 'cause I had so much fun. . . . Now, it's your turn," Cathy concluded.

Ann began. "One of mine is the Easter evening we went driving and picked up a stray duck on the road. You were so afraid of it, but the boys really got a kick out of making it quack. Wonder if the poor duck has forgotten his ride?"

"And shame on you, Cathy," she continued, "for not mentioning the night we both got orchids for the Junior Prom. You were taking a bath, and I was pressing my formal when Laura brought them up. The housemother said we practically caused a riot the way we screamed when we opened those boxes. We argued all during the dance over which was prettier. 'Course mine was!"

"Phooey," Cathy retorted.

But Ann went on. "Remember the nights—mostly the rainy ones—when we'd be mad at the world in general, and boys especially, and we'd put on our reversibles and walk to town just ripping out all the way? But we always settled down after a fifteen-cent Italian spaghetti at Pope's, and by the time we reached the hill on the way back, we were anxious to face the word next day.

"My very funniest memory is this one: the afternoon we came in and found those silly little signs—cut from magazines—that Laura had plastered all over our room. I'll bet she spent a good hour or two cutting and pasting those missiles around. Remember the one over the bath tub—'Half clean isn't enough'? On our mirror she'd put 'Next to mine, I like your face'. Over your bed glared, 'Was I dreaming?' and over mine, 'Missing since midnight'. The pay-off was the one on our door, 'Male quarters'. Even the janitor stopped to laugh at that one!

"I almost forgot to include this memory. Gee, I'll never forget it—the night Ellen and Ken were going to be married, and we were going along, you as pianist, and me as maid of honor. You remember how it ended, though, don't

you? Their whole secret leaked out, and the ceremony didn't even begin, and Ellen and Ken both cried! And right now, they've forgotten all about each other—he's in the army, and she's engaged to some one else."

"Well, that makes ten. That does it, baby," Cathy summarized.

"Not by half, really," Ann replied.

Only the creaking rockers suggested more, and the hot, shiny night pressed hard upon them.

NO TEARS

Betty Strachan

Blood and sweat and tears,
He said, but I dissent.
Blood—yes! Sweat—yes!
A hundred times as much.

Tears—for them there is
No time. My heart, a dull
Ache, throbs, sighs, smiles;
My work demands my time.

Hearts made for peace;
In war are luxury,
Held, flung, kicked, stamped,
Replaced by hearts of steel.

Heart of steel and mind
Of steel, be mine today,
Keen, cold, dry, hard,
Well-tempered for this hour.

Time to melt my heart
Will come; and I shall find,
Eyes dry, heart cold.
I have no tears to shed.

PERSPECTIVE

Paul Brandes

To you, my love, I will the all,
The everything that life can bring;
I hope the sun will shine on you,
That life will be a song to sing.

I wish for you the fullest days,
No sorrow, no soul-breaking tears;
I hold your heart a sacred thing
Not to be broken through the years.

But all will not be such as I,
Your lovely eyes will cease to shine;
Life will wring your soul in two,
And use your blood for bitter wine.

I see you now, so light, so fair,
So certain of a dancing life;
I wish you were not so, my dear,
Gird on an armour for the strife.

AN AMERICAN BEAUTY ———

Robert Conley

In vain I walked through flowery woods
In hope a fragrant bud to gain
To cheer me, give me hope and life—
All day I searched, I sought in vain.

The friendly flowering flags I saw,
The brightly blushing bloodroot stood,
The silly lily dropped her head,
While on the snow ball pulled her hood.

Green moss, to every stone it clung
While spider webs bathed well in dew.
The leaves, they danced an ancient dance
While honey-suckle wildly grew.

Disgusted, lonely, sick of heart,
I turned, I stood unreconciled.
No hope, no love, no life, no friends,
No warmth, just death.—And then you smiled.

HELLO, JOSE

Paul Brandes

“I called you up to say goodbye,
Oh yes, I’m going soon;
I’ve a ticket on the northern train
That leaves tomorrow noon.

I’ve really no right to bother you,
But before I go away
I want to wish you happiness—
It isn’t much to say.

Thanks, that's very kind of you,
I fear that will not be.
But, darling, I'll remember you
Until eternity.

Your smile, your voice, your winning way
I've stored up in my heart;
I'll keep them there, down deep inside
Long after we depart.

Be strong, my dear, and always know
The thrill, the joy of life;
I hope that he will be as good
A mate as you a wife.

No, do not say that. Never mind.
It really doesn't matter;
Goodbye, my dear, the time has come
To cease this noiseless chatter.

No, I won't be back here for some time—
I really can't tell where;
You know the army doesn't say
A thing until you're there.

Yes, I'll remember, thanks so much;
You know that is a lie.
God bless you, keep you evermore—
Good-bye, my love. G-o-o-d---b-y-e.

THE STREAM

Mary Elizabeth Vaught

When I was but a child
I wandered by a little brook
And paddled in its shallow flow,
Sent leafy boats to fairy ports.

When I was then sixteen,
The river was my favorite haunt,
And down its quiet stretches go
A mist of memories, on and on.

I wonder if when I am old
I'll stand beside the ocean wide,
And watch unseeing in its waves,
My life go rippling by.

OF TREES AND WAR

Madge E. Jones

Have you ever felt on a mild summer's day
That Dame Nature's a goddess who likes to play
With the plants and flowers being born from mire
And rule over trees which never desire
To live like vain men who deceive and conspire?

Have you ever noticed the green trees sway?
As they bend and bow, they seem to say,
"We were here before you, but the die is cast
For our beauties to increase as the years go past,
Admired and praised and forever to last.

"We'll hide our seeds in the warm, brown earth
And patiently wait for their humble rebirth
And think while we listen to human tears
We can never move, but we have no fears
Of wars and death and the passing of years.

"We'll still hold reign after Judgment Day,
Long after bold mortal has passed away
And destroyed himself by his selfish deeds
Which he proudly proclaims to be worthy needs,
And we'll laugh when he fails and Nature succeeds."

"FOR HER FAVORITE COLOR WAS RED"

Jeanne Marcia Ruark

The mellow glow from the tapering tallow candles mingled with the cheering warmth of the firelight to create an atmosphere of cozy comfort in the apartment of Mme. Leroux, seasonal guest at the Chateau Chenier in Paris. The Madame had chosen this particular apartment because of its color scheme which was predominately scarlet, for her favorite color was red.

The small supper table laden with tasty French delicacies, the open and abundantly fitted wine cabinet, the lilting strains of a waltz emitted by the electric victrola, and the soft magic of the mingled candle and firelight, contradicted the ferocious howl of the March wind outside the building and suggested the rejuvenation of the gay Paree of pre-war days.

Earlier in the evening, Mme. Leroux, expecting a special guest—Monsieur Clement, had given strict orders that she

was not to be disturbed, and had dressed carefully in a stunning crimson formal; crimson because it complemented the glistening ebony of her hair and because her favorite color was red.

Now, as M. Clement stood by the apartment door, he regarded the reclining figure of Mme. Leroux, a flame-colored model of perfection upon the white velvet couch—the shining ebony hair, the flawless ivory skin, the lucid, somewhat bewildered black eyes, the full red lips smiling in appreciation of the scarlet roses he had brought to her—always scarlet roses, for her favorite color was red.

The most beautiful woman in Paris, thought Clement, and actress par excellence! How sad that her undercover work for DeGaulle had been discovered! And how sad indeed that fate should have chosen Monsieur Clement as the Vichy agent to thwart this undercover work!

“An effective actress to the end!” commented Clement as he dropped the revolver into his pocket and closed the apartment door behind him. He had noticed last of all the dramatic appropriateness of the spreading crimson stain on the snowy couch. Appropriate—for her favorite color was red.

NIGHT

Anita Beatrice Goins

Night, a cloak of dark blue satin,
Sprinkled with stars of diamonds and gems,
A crescent moon of glittering sapphires,
Cast on clouds of eiderdown.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN

Constance Trusty

I cannot help remembering
That one night in the rain,
He held me very close
And said “Auf Wiedersehen.”

“Auf Wiedersehen” brings back to me
A thousand joys and dreams,
Of boy and girl who met and loved,
But knew it could not be.

CHANGES

Robert Conley

Today I trod the same footpath
We trod so many times alone—
But yet—so much I knew was gone—
Still there—but dead—as cold as stone.

The tall oak tree where we first kissed
Lay dead—another grew nearby
To take its place, to carry on for love—
A love to never change or die.

The great large stone on which we sat
Still lay among the trees we knew—
I sat alone in deepening shade,
And dreamed—and gave my love to you.

The stream we crossed in stepping stones
Still moved, as ripples sang a song—
A song of love I sang to you—
A love not dead—though you are gone.

The hill seemed steeper as I moved
Along the crooked, lengthened path,
And ere I reached the top I sat,
And memory gave my soul a bath.

I thought that you might bring my heart—
Not it—but you—I always yearn.
I deeply asked—but lightly knew
There was no hope of your return.

THE KEEN OF THE SOUTH WOMAN

Jacqueline Yavecchia

And the wild trees against the sky. And the sea smell
up from below, and the heavy heart.

Read on in the book. The book of Sheehan Kearns.
Green and golden, and his name in the beauty of the ink.
Forget the sea smell and wild trees in the wind. Remember
Sheehan.

Remember a friend for a lass. Remember Sheehan.

Night times on Nallymor with the early dew of night.
Warm as the softness of the little moon, each slow step
along the paths. Strong as a giant and his lips—the tremb-

ling of my body. Mighty love and the salt of the sea on a kiss. The poetry of his words to gather the heart of a woman from the South into his arms.

The wife of Sheehan, the fishing man, and he squeezing a kiss from my puckered lips and off to the sea. Potatoes and butter and crisp fish and yellowness of turnip; potatoes and the love of us when the catch was off and the nets towards empty.

And the plates at night back on the dresser and the flame of the turf making redness in the black of his hair. Show me himself with the books in his hands and me calling from the feathers, for the day starts early for the fishers. And his coming, and my loving the hurt of his hardness.

Fears as a night deepened and himself away. Potato cakes pink and ready to drop into the bacon. Blackened with the holding over. The turf was making strange noises that night; and the heart of the South woman already grown cold.

No lights below or above to catch on to; the houses below and above showing dark, and shakings of the bolted doors answered by the empty shakings of the eaves. 'Twas me alone in my waiting and the body of me tight as a bow-knot and the eyes of me wide in the waiting.

When the whiteness showed over the sea, the talk of the fisher men from the house up and the house down, nearer as they came up the path.

"Who is to tell the South woman? She will be crying and afraid, and the strength of the Northern women will be proudening us. Black Phil, the talk was ever round on your lips."

"White as a wave cap her face will be and her yellow hair down her back. I would say that the Sheehan Kearn, Lord have mercy on his soul, should have wed a strong woman from the North."

"Her skin is white and likely soft as the snowflakes of Sarran. And the dreams are in her eyes. But South women are weak, and it's courage and strength that men love. It's not I who'll tell."

"It is as dark as a blackthorn thicket in there. She sleeps surely. Let our women tell of himself, Lord have mercy on his soul. Let our women tell her."

The shadows wore away and the light came on with the fishing men's wives whispering at the door, and me with coldness in my bones and the blackened potato batter in the bowl.

"You'll be wanting to see him, now that the sun shines."
And her words fell away like meat from a cooked bone.

"He always turned to you, Kathleen Kearn, for your skin is not yet hard and brown from the sea and the wind on your Nallymor."

The wind beat hard against the trees and the sea smell was up on the cliffs.

"You take on well for a woman from the warmer country. 'Twere well such as you were his woman. Brown earth and white flower."

Wind around the house and turf dead. In the South the warm fresh breezes among the valley leaves. Tender trailing vine on the whitewashed wall.

Read on in the book of Sheehan's. About this land and the wild trees hitting the sky. The cold well on Nallymor and its sparkle in the night.

The voice of a fishing wife, and it hard and brittle as a cliff rock.

"You take on like a North woman now, with Sheehan Kearn to go beneath the frozen soil."

I am a North woman. And Sheehan Kearn, God have mercy on his soul, is my North lover.

I am a North woman now. The shadow of himself in my arms and the cold, cold sea in my heart.

PRUNE TREES

Arlena Turner

I hope that I shall never see
A certain kind of fruitful tree,

A tree where plums grow which we cook
And call them prunes with withered look.

To see that tree I never wish
That droppeth prunes into my dish.

Its pit, its skin—I just hate both,
And what's between I simply loathe.

Oh, tough, dry prunes, I can't abide
That tasteth like rhinoceros hide.

If prunes were made for fools like me,
Oh, woodman, please, don't spare that tree!

TRIBUTE

Paul Brandes

It's now the time to say, "Goodbye",
My four short years have drifted by,
Life here has been as the gods might ask;
I leave it all to face new task.

A strong nostalgia absorbs my brain;
It seems to call my thoughts again
To Kangaroo Kourt and freshman week—
Journeys to Berea and the views from the peak.
To the lights in the trees at the fall pep rally—
To hot dogs, snow, and the football tally;
To the cafeterias, old and new,
To cokes and dances and the peculiar hue
Of a Richmond sunset, gold in the west,
That seemed to be a god's way to bless.
The catch of the net—yells in the gym
As the basketball narrowly clears the rim!
An opening night for the L. T. C.,
Another PROGRESS for the world to see.
Spring meets the campus; the dogwoods bloom—
And commencement arrives a year too soon.

My routine brain says, "An hour to pack!"
Yet I can't take a single coat from the rack.
This was my room, through laughs and tears,
The furniture, the window that allayed my fears.
I take my pictures off the wall,
Lock the door, walk down the hall
For the very last time; I smile through my tears;
I know that these have been wonderful years.

WEEP NOT

Ruth Plaga

Weep not for love that's withered and dead,
Weep not for him who turned your head
For one small hour.

Sigh not for flowers dried to dust,
Sigh not, for fate decrees this must
End their short hour.

Think not on that which has been done,
Think only on what's yet to come
In life's brief hour.

EARTH AT SPRING

Ruth Plaga

Spring sings a song of joy and bliss
Of youth, romance, and a lover's kiss
Of fields and valleys fresh and green
Of cool recesses by a bubbling stream
Of the song of birds in early morn
Of nature's wonders all reborn
Of fluffy white clouds in the clear blue sky
Of the laughter of children ringing high
Of flowers shining with sparkling dew
Of the winging of birds against the blue
Of sudden showers that come and go
Of corn in the fields, row on row
Of life that teaches for the sun
Of peace that comes when day is done
Of soft spring breezes carrying the scent
Of lilacs, violets, and roses blent
Of the vibrant odor of fresh-turned earth
Of golden hours of each day's birth
Of forest floors with sunlight flecked
Of tiger lilies, all tawny-specked
Of purple haze of the twilight hour
Of the shimmering rainbow after the shower
Of the bringing to pass of nature's scheme
Of the great fulfillment of life's whole dream.

THE WALL

Jacqueline Yavecchia

The drums held them like sleep;
They did not hear, they only felt the pounding call.
The world grew full of drums,
Their hearts beat like wild drums,
And that was all.

The flags were in their eyes.
They did not see; they felt the symbol rise and fall.
The sky was full of flags;
Their arms reached to the flags,
And that was all.

The fire consumed their blood,
Blocked up their ears; They only saw the death-marked wall
Of smoke before them. Then
Their minds grew numb,
And that was all.

Twenty-two

MUSIC AND WAR

Emma Sams

Hitler likes music,
The music made by bombs,
The singing of bullets,
The song of destruction,
The ruining of empires,
The tearing down of human morale—
And best of all, the weird chants of Death,
Death of men, women, and children,
All to the accompaniment of bombs.
He likes marches,
Marches played with a steady beat—
A steady beat of feet,
Thousands of feet
Covering ground for him.
Don't pause for the rests!
Keep up the steady beat.
It fills his esthetic breast
With noble assurance—
Assurance of gain and glory
To the accompaniment of bombs.
He shouts, "Crescendo! Crescendo!"
And listens to the bombs echo—
A sonorous echo of woe.

WHY?

Ann Tarlton Thomas

The other day I passed by the house again. It was empty. Then I remembered. . . .

It happened two years ago at Christmas time. It was terribly cold that winter, snowing just enough to keep everything muddy and soggy. Two days before Christmas the ladies of the church were filling Christmas baskets for the needy families of the town. The baskets weren't very large that year and there were only twenty-five of them—twenty-five warriors against hunger, filled with canned fruits and vegetables, a tiny sack of flour, a bag of potatoes, a sack of coffee, and a loaf of bread. The mill had sent the flour and one of the well-to-do-men of the town, part of his bumper crop of potatoes.

In the afternoon, we—my mother and I—helped to pack them. I was in a fever to get to town to do some last minute shopping. Why in the world didn't they sling the

stuff in them and let us go? I had only so long a time to be home for Christmas and I didn't want to fool it away by carrying groceries around. Eventually we finished and I learned, much to my disgust, that I was to chauffeur the baskets to their destinations.

We proceeded down the list, honking outside each shack in Tin Cup Alley until some member of the family came out to get the basket while the others peered curiously from the windows and some haggard-looking female with a baby on her hip stood in the doorway and stared. Finally we arrived at our last stop. I honked the horn and we waited; again—we waited; again—we waited. My mother said "Take the basket up to the front porch." I opened my mouth; she looked at me.

The wet snow fell softly as I carried the basket up the muddy path to the ramshackle-hut—worse than any we had visited before. As I approached, I noticed the ragged curtains twitching at the broken windows. The door opened and there she stood. I'll never forget how she looked. . . . Oh yes, I had seen their faces. I hadn't lived in the heart of the Bluegrass tobacco country all my life without seeing the poverty-stricken, lazy, good-for-nothing town "yaps" who refused to do farm-labor and would never think of leaving their smelly hovels to become tenants in clean, fresh, country air. . . . Standing there with the latest addition to her huge family dangling astride her hip, with the next in line hiding behind her skirts and two or three others clustered around her, she seemed to me to be the very epitome of the misery and shiftlessness of her brethren.

The door opened wider so that I could see the interior of the room. Bareness—nothing but bareness could be seen besides a few cane-bottomed chairs, a pallet on the floor, and a wavering grate fire. She looked at the basket, then at me. Her glance started at my feet, rose to my chin, and fell again. She waited; no expression crossed her face. I handed her the basket. "The church sent this to you."

Half-expecting a response, I turned slowly and started back toward the car. As I did, my glance rested for a moment on the town mansion situated on a hill just on the outskirts of town. A winding roadway led to it through what was in summer a beautiful field of blue grass. I had never been inside that house, but I had heard about it—of the winding stairway, the chandeliers, the huge fireplaces, the soft carpets. Just then the lights were turned

on and a huge Christmas tree blazed forth on the lawn. Then into my mind came the thought, "Why should one of God's creatures live on a high hill in warmth, light and wealth while a fellow-being lives at the foot of that same hill in dirt, squalor, hunger, poverty, cold, and darkness? Why? Why?"

I got slowly in the car and drove away. . . .

The other day I passed by the house again. The windows were horribly bare; even the few rags which had adorned them were gone. To the right, the house on the hill was still boarded up, for the widow had been in Florida all winter. The door to the little house was shut and padlocked; as I passed I seemed to see a figure standing there—a figure with limp, colorless clothes, straggly hair, pasty complexion, work-worn hands—a figure whose posture was unbalanced through the eternal weight of a child on the hip and whose numerous other children played at her feet.

I wonder where she is now.

Every time I shall pass that house, I know that the question will come beating its way back into my brain—Why? Why? Why?

DAWN

Katherine Lingle Williams

The gorgeous glow of skies at dawn
Lasts but a moment
Then it is gone
Forever!
Oh! No!
For Memory can hold
It safe within her circle of gold.

AN ANSWER TO JOHN McCRAE

Robert Conley

WE now are quarreling with the foe.
We've caught the torch. We let you know
Our hands are strong. We'll raise it high
We've kept the faith, and though we die
"Just Peace" will reign and poppies blow
In "Flanders Fields".

(Written December 12, 1941)

Twenty-five

HUMMING BIRDS

Anonymous

Flash of rainbow color
Amid the blossoms fair,
A tiny little fellow
Hangs suspended in mid-air.

Tiny head of scarlet,
Body jewel green,
Tiny wings aflutter,
Too fast to be seen.

Drinking from the flowers
All their nectar sweet,
Dancing through the hours
Life is so complete.

THE RETURN

Natalie Murray

Rows and rows of serried ranks,
Bombers soaring high—
Rumbling, lurching, groaning tanks,
An army passes by.
Uniforms of khaki drab—
Officers and men,
Humans marching off to war—
Will they come back again?
Screaming shells and blazing fires,
Cannons blast and roar—
Flames surging up from countless pyres,
Wet with tears and gore.
Stragglng files of shattered men,
A bleeding, crippled few—
Look, illustrious leaders,
They come back to you.

MENTAL WANDERINGS

Anita Beatrice Goins

No artist can paint the picture I see from my window ;
Even a genius paints only a lifeless image.
No mere man can catch the flutter of leaves ;
The tremble of moonbeams ; or the dark sworl of a river,
Meeting a smoke shimmering distance.

These are my prized possessions,
Painted by the skilled hand of nature,
Erected on an easel of the earth,
And blended on a canvas of providental power.

FINIS

Helen Ashcraft

Blank, white,
Suffocating, I stand
Gasping for breath.
Each breath a cough,
Each cough agony.
Sight is utter space . . .
Sound is void . . .
Mist cover all.
Lies are crushed . . .
Hate is hanged . . .
A soul has lived
The depth of eternity.
Man has met his God.

IN A VERMONT WOODSHED

Jacqueline Yavecchia

Sometimes, on days like these,
When shadows dance across the walk
And new washed winds blow down
From distant mountain-tops,
Freighted with sudsy, summer clouds,
A witless tomtit wind,
Instead of playing out of doors,
Peers through the broken pane,
And with muted, fluting sounds,
Stares, wonder-eyed, at festooned spider webs,
Waving to an fro like tired, mildewed flags.

DEFERRED: A DREAM

Susan Biesack

Life had been so simple then—how many years ago had it been? Civil war in Spain hadn't affected Marcie very much, except that she had wondered whether or not there would be enough people left to sign a peace treaty. Then, too, she'd read *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, but she hadn't brooded over it for long. Of course, she'd given some of her extra change to the Chinese war relief fund in '38, and had shuddered when she saw newsreels of the suffering there. As late as last spring she had sewed and packed Bundles for Britain—she'd packed each bundle with a prayer, for that matter. Marcie had been sincere, as sincere as she could be, all the time knowing inside her that war was horrible and for other people. The shadow of its affecting her immediate realm hadn't crossed her mind.

She had had so many other things on her mind. There was her job, and a good one it was, at which she worked so hard trying to get a raise. There was her father who had been forced to quit working long enough to have his appendix removed, and that meant Marcie didn't buy clothes nor banana splits for half a year. But she hadn't minded her troubles too much because there was Phil, and whenever the mound of clouds got black and high, she could always escape with Phil, just seeing him or talking to him.

Marcie remembered last March as well as if it had been two seconds ago. It was the eighteenth day of the month, pay day just past; she had a new aqua dress to show for it. She had a date with Phil, too.

"Hello, blue angel," his casual voice had greeted her.

"You're confused, Phil. Angels don't get around except in heaven. This is Flint Street, remember?"

She hated herself for the silly reply, but she hadn't known what else to say. She couldn't really tell him she adored his foolish compliment. Phil was funny—she had to stay a little ahead, if she wanted to keep him. And she did so want to keep him!

"We'll go to the 'Green Lantern' and eat chili tonight," he had announced. Sure, different, decisive was Phil.

"I'd rather have baked chicken if you've no objection," she had protested, more to create a scene than because her appetite craved chicken. She liked to fuss with Phil. Whenever he got angry enough, she opened her eyes wide as she could, and let the devils in them dance, and then

he'd say. "I'm sorry, honey." She liked that, too.

But that night, on the way to the "Green Lantern," Phil hadn't said, "Say, what's the matter with chili—have you gone Fifth Avenue?"

"O. K., blue angel. Chicken for two if you say so," had been his reply.

Marcie's heart had skipped, she'd been so surprised, that she had forgotten to say "Thanks."

The eighteenth of March it had been. The things she remembered most about that night were few, but they stuck in her mind like jewels on black velvet. She could almost see again the green of his suit, the red and whiteness of the tablecloths, the starchiness of the waitress's apron. She could almost hear again the rain dripping down the window they sat beside. She could almost smell again the baked chicken and the ginger cake. She could almost feel again Phil's hands as they closed on hers. Like a perpetual phonograph, his words rushed back to her, and even now she could recapture the ecstasy she felt when Phil slipped the tiny, gleaming ring on her finger.

Marcie forgot about wanting her raise after that. It didn't matter after all. She and Phil were going to be married in June, as all Tillies who toil do. She no longer had to act like an animated doll, keeping a jump ahead of him. She no longer had to scheme and devise. No, all she had to do now was to enjoy her lovely engagement, and to dream long, long thoughts.

But on a bright May day, Marcie's prince charming rode away—not on a milk-white steed—but on a transport train with lots of other fellows. While Marcie had been dreaming, the world had been revolving rapidly and now Phil was going to war. Of course, she was disappointed, but she made the best of it, and didn't for one instant quell his enthusiastic outlook.

"I want to go, darling. I want to, and I must. A lot of things that mean something to people like you depend on guys like me!"

Marcie was proud of that speech because it made Phil and the spirit of America so inextricably one!

She was still proud of him—this moment, three months later. He hadn't died heroically, but thank God the telegram had said "in action"! If Phil could have described his last fight to her, he would have said, "I died with my boot straps on, sugar."

But now Marcie was worrying about that raise again, since Lois, her younger sister, needed so many things for

graduation. This time though, there was no Phil to delight her with talk of blue angels and chili. She did have this to cheer her, however—a memory, a good, American memory that made every Red Cross stitch Marcie took and every defense stamp she bought, have a meaning. She had a personal debt to collect from the enemy—it was recompense for Phil!

FANTASY

Natalie Murray

The moon is a chalice of silver,
Filled with crystal wine.
And it pours it into the darkness,
Down to this earth of thine.
Down—down through the dimness
To the dream-fraught goblet of night,
It fills the ebon goblet
With gently radiant light.

ILLUSION IN THE NIGHT

Gordon Rader

I walked in a night that was damp and late,
Toward the river I strolled to contemplate,
The why of man's fears, his love and hate,
Why birth of a man is so close to his fate.

The river seemed sleepy; the bridge high and fair
Was a monument dim in the moist, misty air.
I visioned a corpse, watersoaked, limp and bare,
Going down with the stream as I stood thinking there.