From whose house do the invisible notes of a jade flute come flying? — Li T’ai Po.
FOR THE FALL SEMESTER

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Editor  -  -  -  -  -  -  Jack Waller
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(Two)
Kathy and Mother and Little Ella were walking down the street in the time before twilight.

There were other people on the street... too many of them. Kathy did not know what to think of people in the world. Some of them were far down the street, and some of them passed Kathy and Mother and Little Ella. All these people did not matter to Kathy because she did not know them, but she sometimes wondered what they thought of her. When she passed shop windows, Kathy looked at herself in them, to catch a glimpse of herself as other people would see her.

It was sad walking in the dusk of November, because it was almost Christmas, and the beautiful legend of Christmas made Kathy experience the poignant feeling of immortality. She thought of Christ and wondered if He were divine. She closed her eyes and could know nothing of Christ except His large, beautiful feet, sandal-bound, walking across the wilderness of her mind. His pacing through her thoughts was majestic and slow, just as though she knew for sure His divinity, and was humbled by His glory. She watched the footprints of Jesus marked by the springing-up of flowers. There was a whole pathway of flowers across Kathy's mind.

When she and Mother and Little Ella came to the corner, Kathy looked up the street to where the acacia trees were, because once she had seen a boy walking there. She knew that he must walk on other streets too, but she always looked for him on this street because she had once seen him there.

Kathy wanted to believe in everything good, but there were spital marks on the sidewalks, and that meant disease. It was hard to understand hatred and selfishness.

They were walking fast because they were hurrying to Brother's house. Kathy remembered how it had been: Brother had been in at the kitchen sink, mixing himself a drink of soda. Then Brother fell down suddenly on the floor, in the narrow space between the drainboard and the cupboard, and it had been hard for Brother's wife to get him out. She and Kathy had run in to him, when they heard the sound of his falling, and Kathy had cried, "What's the matter Wade?" And Brother said, "I don't know, I think I'm going crazy." Kathy had almost laughed when he said that, because all her life she had heard people say, "If this thing, or that thing, happens, I'll go stark raving mad." She had always laughed. But Brother's Wife cried and said, "You've had such an awful time, Papa... don't let it get you down... don't let it get you down, Honey. We'll do something. You come on in and lay down." And she must be a strong woman, Brother's Wife, because she picked him up and held his body against the wall until she could put her arms around him and help him into the bedroom. She must be a good woman, too, because she took off his shoes and covered him up with a blanket. And she said,
"Don't you worry anymore, Papa. We'll get along somehow... people can't just starve to death in this world." "Yes they can," said Brother. He lay on the bed, looking up at the ceiling. Brother looked at the pale blue ceiling and said, "I never wanted you to live in a house like this." But Brother's Wife said, "I don't mind." And while they talked, she began cleaning the combs and brushes. Brother watched her dig the heavy dirt from between the teeth of the comb, and suddenly he said, "Don't do that anymore. That makes me sick to watch you."

Mother talked and talked while they were walking. She talked about Brother and Brother's Wife. "They've had terrible luck," she said. "Just one thing after another... Ella not being able to get that baby from the Home, and then their car being stolen... It's enough to drive anyone crazy. And that company Wade's working for, cheating and thieving him like that..."

Kathy remembered Boss Nealy coming up to talk to her and Brother. Boss had put his foot on the running-board of a parked car and said to Brother, "I tell you son, we've got a car sitting in the garage, not doing anybody any good. Whyn't you take it over, huh? You'll never be able to fix up that car of yours after those thugs wrecked it. I tell you what I'll do. I'll let you have that car of mine real cheap, and give you plenty of time to pay on it."

"How much?" said Brother.

"Two hundred and eighty."

"Old model... that's not very good," said Brother looking at Boss. Boss shrugged and said, "Better'n you can do anywhere else... in fact it's all you can do. You got to have a car for work, and I'm giving you plenty of time to pay on it."

"OK," said Brother.

Mother was saying, "Look at the time and grief he had, paying for that car. And that good chance he had at the State job, if Nealy had released him. Nealy just wanted to keep Wade, because he's the best worker in the company."

They passed a radio shop, and some band was playing, "My Country 'Tis of Thee." It certainly sounded grand, and Kathy felt her heart swell. She hoped Brother would get better and not worry too much about money and the workers' union. Kathy remembered what Brother had told about the union, at the supper table: Boss had said, "You men got to get into the Union if you want to keep any kind of a job nowadays. And remember, men, in a case like this, I'm just like you... I'm a worker, too, you see? And we're both working for someone higher up than us. We're working for better working conditions among us workers. We're not trouble-makers, men... just workers trying to make a decent living. And everyone working for this company has got to belong to the Union."

"How much?" said Brother.

"Twenty-five initiation fee, three bucks a month. But men, you sure get it all back..."

"I been hearing a lot about special levies," interrupted Brother.

"Oh well, sure, that's only if we're called on to help out in a strike by the other unions."

(Four)
"There's been a lot of them, strikes, I mean," said Brother. "You sure get it all back . . . if you get laid off, or if you get sick, the Union'll keep you and your family . . ."

"I don't get sick," said Brother, snickered. "The Union'll stick by you 'til you're on your feet again . . . that's if you keep up your dues regular. Boy, you sure better get in on this. First thing you know, you'll be out on your ear if you're not wearing a Union tag. 'Tell you, we're working for something big, men.'"

"Who was elected Union head, Wade?" Brother's Wife had asked when Brother sat down on the sofa and took off his shoes.

"Nealy, . . . who'd you think?" asked Brother. "That slicker . . . ! Honey, I bet you men don't get a thing out of the Union . . . I mean any of the advantages. You watch, Nealy's only going to make trouble . . . Twenty-five dollars . . . that's too much. And how much of that's going into Nealy's pocket huh?"

"Hell, I don't know . . . here's my old Union tag that gives me the right to live in this great free land of our'n. Ain't it pretty?" Brother mimicked. Brother's Wife fingered the tag. "You oughtn't talk like that, Wade. People — good decent people, like you and me, been working a long time to get the unions . . . working people need to unite and work together."

"Sure, that's right, Ella." Brother turned around and looked at her.

"Sure, but you think Nealy and his bunch are real workers? Just like you said, how much money'll ever get past his pockets? He's making a racket out of this thing . . . racketeers are getting in, see!"

Mother was saying, "The idea of having to pay for a strike that's been called in San Francisco, or clear back in St. Louis. A city's money ought to stay right in that city . . . God knows Ella and Wade need that money just as much as any strikers, hundreds of miles away do. Ella's got to have glasses, or she's going blind. And it's worrying Wade to death."

Mother and Ella and Kathy came to a corner and stopped for the signals to change. Kathy took Mother's arm and guided her across the street. Little Ella dragged behind on Mother's other arm. Kathy knew that Mother was frightened and tired, and when she looked at Little Ella, she knew children should be indoors, eating supper quietly, and getting rested and settled for sleep. Mother hurried and hurried. She kept repeating, "I don't know what we'll do if Wade doesn't get well. They've had such an awful time."

"Wait," said Kathy, tugging at Mother. "I want to see that locket in the jeweler's window."

"We can't stop," said Mother. "Don't you know I'm worried sick about Wade?"

"I always wanted a locket, with somebody's picture in it," said Kathy. She hurried along beside Mother. Down the street, they heard a fire engine clanging and belling. Mother said, "We can get across if we hurry."

"Don't Mama. It's coming awful fast," said Kathy, and she pulled
on Mother's arm. But Mother pursed her lips in tired anger and jerked out of Kathy's arm and hurried into the street with Little Ella. The fire engine whirled around the corner in a grand clanging swerve. She saw everything while she was seeing the engine run over Mother and Little Ella, and she felt like a brittle twig waiting to be snapped in a big hand. She saw the fire engine go on, and she knew it was going to put out a fire. Everyone was supposed to stop and stand still when they heard an ambulance or a fire engine coming, but she couldn't really understand why it was that the fire engine had had to hit Mother and Little Ella. She looked up at the big sky. She felt so nervous she wanted to hop up and down for a long time on her toes. She looked at all the people rushing up, and she thought, "That's my very own Mother out there, and that's my Brother's baby out there. I never knew very many people in this world, I only knew these people. And it isn't possible to have another mother, because we come out of our mother's body only once before we die."

When Kathy stood over Mother, Mother said weakly, "Katherine, get my teeth out of my purse and give them to me. I don't want to look bad with all these people around."

Kathy found the purse where it had been flung away, and while Mother put her teeth in, Kathy and several kind ladies stood around her, so that people could not see. Little Ella was dead, everyone said, so Kathy just looked at her once. Mother wanted to talk to Kathy and Kathy could tell Mother was trying to find something to say to her that Kathy would remember forever. "I won't be able to forget anything," she thought. She patted Mother's arm because she didn't want to watch Mother trying to say things that no one knew for sure anyway.

Finally Mother told Kathy to keep track of her purse.

"Why?" said Kathy. "There's nothing in it."

"Well, there's a token in it you can use next time you have to go down town," said Mother, and after awhile she died.

Kathy walked away. People wanted to talk to her, but she did not let anyone touch her, and she did not answer people except to be polite. She had never seen these people. "They don't know," she thought. She started back to the curb. She wondered why the curbing was a high step. It looked like a sea wall that waves were meant to wash up to and be restrained. She listened to the waves pound and subside, and when she looked in the distance, she felt the fog coming to mix with her throat. Wind blew and blew, and in the gutter a pool of water and oil made a smeared rainbow in the filth. Memories came to Kathy of things forgotten. She remembered the beautiful words and sentences she had read all her life in school books . . .

"In wanton Arathuza's azured arms . . .

. . . And none, but thou, shall be my paramour . . ."

the vast sedges drear, and naked shingles of the world."

When she came to the jewelry window, she put her face against the glass and looked at the small gold locket. Anything that she had ever wanted did not matter now. She thought, "Now I can do anything I want to. Now I can go anywhere I want to, because there's no

(Six)
one I have to remember not to worry." She thought about what she
would do first. She wondered where she would go.

Behind her in the street she heard people still murmuring; then she
heard the ambulance shriek away, and she thought, "There they go away
now." She thought of Brother and Brother's Wife in the blue-ceilinged
room, and gradually everything inside her was broken and running to­
gether, and everything of her mind was fluid and molten.

She looked up and down the street but everyone was going home.
She thought, "What's this all about?" She wanted to run around and
around in a little circle and say, "What's this all about?" She looked
back at the place where Mother and Little Ella had been in the street
and she put her fist against her cheek and asked, "Why did you matter
so much to me? Why did you take so much of me?"

The man in the drugstore came and hung a sign on the door that
said, "We close at 10 P.M." and Kathy said, "Is it ten already?" But
the man said, "No lady, I always hang it out early." Then Kathy went
into the drugstore and looked at everything carefully, and the clerk at
the counter opened all the perfume bottles and let Kathy smell them.
Kathy wondered if the clerk thought she meant to buy, and so when she
was finished, she said, "Thank you." As she came out of the drugstore,
she thought, "I smelled all eleven different kinds and I can't remember
any difference." She stood outside the drugstore and waited until ten
o'clock, and watched the man come out and lock the door. Then a lit­
tle after ten, someone got off the street car and came up to her and
said, "Hello Kathy." He brought three chocolate-covered cherries
from his coat pocket and said, "These aren't very good, but would you
like one?" And they each ate one, and there was one left, which he laid
on the silvered fireplug. They did not talk because their mouths were
full of candy, but Kathy kept looking at her friend.

After awhile a girl came up the street and stopped in front of
them, and Kathy saw that it was Jeanne. Kathy's friend said, "Jeanne
and I are being married tomorrow." Kathy looked at the cherry on the
fireplug and nodded. She had watched them being in love, and had
been seared with loneliness. "We've got to go now." He pressed
Kathy's hand.

She watched them get on the car, while she chewed the last of the
cherry, and it was hard to eat because her face felt small and drawn.
She could see them after they had found a seat, and she saw how their
shoulders touched. She thought, "You live in a different kind of world
than I do, because you won't be alone."

She began walking back home, watching the markings on the side­
walk, remembering, long ago how she had played, "Step on a line, break
your mother's spine, step on a crack, break your father's back."

She crossed the bridge and saw the bay lights. She thought, "I won­
der if I'll know someone else who will matter to me." She began
watching everyone she met. "He must have a beautiful face," she
thought. "I don't want anyone except a beautiful face."

"I may not ever find anyone," she suddenly knew, and she thought
about this as she went on walking.

(Seven)
IMPRESSIONS

I

trees—

trim young ladies in shimmering gowns
straggling urchins with unkempt crowns
stately matrons in tailored green
languid maidens with silken sheen . . .

II

moonlight—

fairy searchlight piercing shadow
floods the leaves with silver-white;
light and dark skip o'er the hollow
weaving patterns in the night . . .

III

iris—

shining gold, ethereal flow'rs
stately rise, so trim and tall,
upward reach with brilliant fingers
casting shadows on the wall . . .

IV

California poppies—

little Gypsies, flaunting color,
dot the native, sunny hills;
cheer the meadows, thrill the by-ways,
urge the tinkle of the rills . . .

BY JANE KARL
Mr. Mulford sat down in the chair. There was no cactus. There was only the little chair to sit in and Mr. Mulford sat down. The chair did not break or make any funny noises and Mr. Mulford was not surprised. He used to buy surprise boxes for a penny at the corner store. That was when he was going to school in the country. Mr. Mulford graduated from the university some time ago.

Mr. Mulford’s friend was sitting across from him in the square room this afternoon. Soon the sun would go down and they would leave the room and the room would be dark and empty.

"You know, Bertram," Mr. Mulford was saying, "I never noticed the way that plant takes up all the good air in the room. It’s terrible in here. Why don’t you auction that plant next season? Lilies ought to bring a good price by then."

Bertram crushed a cigarette. "Ah," said Bertram, "That’s where you are wrong. The last time I went to an auction I sprained my ankle trying to get her attention for a moment."

Mr. Mulford remembered her very well. She was not worth thinking about. He had not seen her since last Easter, a month ago, a whole month, last Easter. Christmas would be coming. If he lived on a farm he would most certainly have to milk the cow before lighting the candles on the Christmas tree. Too much tinsel ruined the last tree, last year.

"Bertram, if you would just say to her one day, ‘Go to hell, Elaine . . . I’m through . . . you can have the brat,’ she would leave you, and then you’d be free." Bertram blew a smoke ring.

Mr. Mulford moved one of his feet about an inch. Then he spoke, like a dark horse, "Bertram, nothing worse, nothing ever did I hear of that is worse, Bertram, than for you to go on living with that . . . shall I say it, Betram? . . . with that pretty strumpet."

A bird flew past the window. Mr. Mulford did not see the bird and the bird did not notice Mr. Mulford. Mr. Mulford decided to get up out of the little chair and walk around the room. He finally went to the window and looked out. He did not see very much. The three fire trucks across the street and the woman who was getting ready to leap from the high window of the burning building did not bother him. He spoke to his good, loyal, fine friend again, "Bertram do you know anything about obstetrics?"

"No, I don’t know anything about obstetrics, and I don’t give a damn, either," answered Bertram curtly. Bertram was thinking about Elaine.

"But you shouldn’t take that attitude, Bertram," Mr. Mulford spoke vehemently, "obstetrics is the most wonderful science in existence! And you wouldn’t feel the way you do about it if you had ever seen a delivery. Why I remember every detail, and I think it is absolutely wonderful." Then Mr. Mulford sat down again in the little chair, all exhausted from his speech. He breathed laboringly.

(Nine)
Bertram opened his mouth to speak, but decided to remain silent for about thirty seconds. At the end of thirty seconds he spoke, "If I can get Elaine to go away, what will I do?"

Mr. Mulford thought deeply before answering. At last he said, "Well, you would at least be free. You would be unfettered. I know of nothing more wonderful than being unfettered."

Bertram belched and then said, "It must have been something I eat." The laughter in the room was as real as a ghost. Mr. Mulford grew impatient waiting for the great moment of his life. While he was waiting Bertram destroyed the great moment by saying, "Is there anything new?"

Then Mr. Mulford said, "Bertram, pal, I went to a show the other day. It was wonderful. It was the best picture I have ever seen. It was a deep psychological study about a man who tried to make his wife fall in love with a eunuch, and it showed wonderfully the failures of the husband as well as the failures of the wife. I understood a great deal more than most of the audience. In fact, I understood everything in the whole picture. Some of the people in the theatre even laughed when they were not supposed to. Do you know, Bertram, the scene between the husband and the wife, when she realizes that she is unable to bear children, is the greatest scene I have ever imagined."

Bertram took off one of his shoes. Mr. Mulford waited to hear what his friend, who was loyal as a dog, would say. This is what Bertram answered, "I can't understand exactly why you like that kind of stuff. All that morbidity is not good for anyone. I think there must be something wrong with you for liking that kind of stuff so much. Of course, I know you so well that I know you are all right in every detail, but maybe down deep in you there are some abnormal things that might flare up at any minute. Has there ever been any incest in your family? . . . Oh, I mean a way back."

Mr. Mulford rose haughtily, "Bertram, after all these years." He wiped a tear from his cheek. Then he said hesitantly to his old friend, "I guess you better not say anything to Elaine." He went to the window and scratched at a flyspeck. He spoke again, "Bertram, I will remember this afternoon as the most wonderful afternoon in my whole life. Maybe we'll never meet again. I hope you will be happy with your Elaine. I didn't know an afternoon could be so wonderful, so beautiful." Bertram did not say anything for a while for fear of killing the sanctity in the room as Mr. Mulford's last words reverberated.

After a while he said to Mr. Mulford, "Have you been reading any good book lately?"

"Oh, yes, Bertram, I have, and it is, I believe, the best thing I have ever read. You must read it, if you can get it. I don't know whether it is published in this country or not. It is the most wonderful book in the world. I might lend you my copy, if you'll promise not to touch it."

Bertram put his shoe back on. Neither Bertram nor Mr. Mulford could think of anything more to say.

Mr. Mulford opened the door and walked out. He walked right out into the open air. Bertram walked after him, at his heels.

The lily in the vacant room laughed, yawned, and wilted.

(Ten)
Modern Poetry: An Appreciation

Our modern poetry is the ashes of the flame ignited by the friction of life against the universe, reflecting the pensive moment spent in thought, the yielding moment in emotion. As of the ancients, modern poets must express the myriad affairs of men in this world; what their minds think, what their eyes see, what their ears hear, what all their senses sing they must find words to express. Listening to the poverty-stricken crowds singing amid the beautiful white of winter, or to the murmur of our soul among the marshes of truth, or to the groanings of our bellies in the land of plenty, or to the tramp of dictators in 'the waste land,' or to the sweet, high, steady call within for woman, we know that all living things have their part in the discordant harmony of Nature.

And so the modern poet finds, as W. H. Auden, the young English poet put it, that he must treat of,

"Hunger and love in their variations"

for it is in those two, hunger and love, that the urges and compulsions of the universe meet. The world of Marx and the world of Freud tinge our every act, our every thought, casting from us abnormal shadows, only too real.

We can only begin to appreciate modern poetry when we understand that it is not the product of effeminate artists endeavoring to produce art, but the painful attempts of man to express his conscious and unconscious being, his soul. A poet is infuriated by the capitalist class, a poet is wounded by love, a poet goes hungry—contemplates suicide, a poet is disillusioned in women, a poet fears for his liberty in the face of dictators, the poet seeks for a god to love: all these feelings he must express; he must rid himself of these ideas, he must create. But it is not only the poet who feels these things. All men feel them in varying degrees at various times, and are saddened by them. Thus only can we come to appreciate modern poetry, by realizing that it expresses our beings, man and woman, for ourselves. We can feel in modern poetry our own emotions, our hungers, our despairs, our joys, and our indignations.

First the poetry of Love flames in its variations: physical, mental, spiritual: hate, platonic love, true love, homosexual love, wounded love, jealousy, abnormal love, the Oedipus complex. The poet or poetess pens this love upon paper striving to capture the required depth and emotion. The poetess may complain:

(Eleven)
Edna St. Vincent Millay: Love is not all; it is not meat nor drink
Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain,
Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink
And rise and sink and rise and sink again;
Love cannot fill the thickened lung with breath,
Nor clean the blood, nor set the fractured bone;
Yet many a man is making friends with death
Even as I speak, for lack of love alone." etc.

* * *

Elinor Wylie: One Person, VIII

"O love, how utterly am I bereaved
By Time, who sucks the honey of our days,
Sets sickle to our Aprils, and betrays
To killing winter all the sun achieved!" etc.

* * *

or the poet:

Ezra Pound: A Virginal

"No, no! Go from me. I have left her lately.
I will not spoil my sheath with lesser brightness." etc.

* * *

Rupert Brooke: Thoughts on the Shape of the Human Body

"Could we but fill to harmony, and dwell
Simple as our thought and as perfectible,
Rise disentangled from humanity
Strange whole and new into simplicity,
Grow to a radiant round love, and bear
Unfluctuant passion for some perfect sphere," etc.

* * *

The poetess remembers:

Edna St. Vincent Millay: What Lips my Lips have kissed
"What lips my lips have kissed, and where and why
I have forgotten, and what arms have lain
Under my head till morning," etc

* * *

The poet remembers:

"Just as my fingers on these keys
Make music, so the self-same sounds
On my spirit make a music too.

Wallace Stevens: Peter Quince at the Clavier

Music is feeling then, not sound;
And thus it is that what I feel,
Here in this room, desiring you,

Thinking of your blue-shadowed silk,
Is music. It is like the strain
Waked in the elders by Susanna:" etc.

* * *

"Where we talked for a while of life and love, of logic and the senses, of you and I, character and fate, pain, revolution, victory and death
Kenneth Fearing: Is there any shadow now, at all
Memo other than the shadows that stop for a moment and
then hurry past the windows blurred by the
same warm, slow, still rain.”

* * *

The poet describes his lady fair:

Kenneth Fearing: How she sleeps, lips round, see how at rest
Pantomime how dark the hair, unstrung with all the world
see the desirable eyes, how still, how white, sealed
to all faces, locked against ruin, favor and every
risk” etc.

* * *

“Stand on the highest pavement of the stair—
Lean on a garden urn—
T. S. Eliot: La Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair—
Figlia Che Piange Clasp your flowers to you with a pained surprise—
Clasp your flowers to you with a pained surprise—
Fling them to the ground and turn
With a fugitive resentment in your eyes’ etc.

* * *

William Carlos “Your thighs are appletrees
Williams: Portrait Whose blossoms touch the sky.” etc.
of a Lady __________________________

Wallace Stevens: Upon the bank she stood
Peter Quince at the In the cool
Clavier Of spent emotions.
She felt, among the leaves,
The dew
Of old devotions.” etc.

* * *

The poet sees death and love:

Witter Bynner: “In an old chamber softly lit
To Celia: We heard the Chorale played,
During a Chorale And where you sat, an exquisite
by Cesar Franck Image of life and lover of it,
Death sang a serenade.” etc.

* * *

“Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening star is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
T. S. Eliot: The Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
Love Song of J. The muttering retreats
Alfred Prufrock Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels”

* * *

“No notice in the papers,
Horace Gregory: only a voice over the telephone
Tombstone with Saying she was dead, casually,
Cherubim remarkably definite.

Somebody whispered syphilis—” etc.

(Thirteen)
"O Thou to whom the musical white spring offers her lily inextinguishable,
taught by thy tremulous grace bravely to fling Implacable death’s mysteriously sable robe from her redolent shoulders,” etc.

The poetess prays:

Edna St. Vincent Millay: Into the Golden Vessel of Great Song
"Into the golden vessel of great song Let us pour all our passion. Breast to breast Let other lovers lie, in love and rest;
Not we, ——” etc.

And the poet prays:

W. H. Auden: (To Christopher Isherwood)
Surely one fearless kiss would cure The million fevers, a stroking brush The insensitive refuse from the burning core.” etc.

"Divinity must live within herself:
Passions of rain, or moods in falling snow;
Grievings in loneliness, or unsubdued

Wallace Stevens: Sunday Morning II
Emotions when the forest blooms: gusty Emotions on wet roads on autumn nights;
All pleasures and all pains, remembering The bough of summer and the winter branch. These are the measures destined for her soul.”

Thru this excess, this world of love, moves the slow ponderous social theme, hunger, in its variations: individual, national, universal: poverty, supply and demand, government, duty, rights, war, wealth, class, friction. Modern poets exalt the masses, fight for the common man, use their pens towards achieving a new and better world.

The poet shouts his dirge and complaint:

William Carlos Williams: The Waitress
The benefits of poverty are a roughened skin of the hands, the broken knuckles, the stained wrists.” etc.

"The creepered wall stands up to hide

W. H. Auden: (To Geoffrey Hoyland)
The gathering multitudes outside Whose glances hunger worsens;
Concealing from their wretchedness Our metaphysical distress,
Our kindness to ten persons.” etc.

(Fourteen)
"End will come swiftly in an early autumn,
Forewarned by blooded rising of the moon,
Its great arc swollen like a hill of fire,
And long continuous lightning in the north,
Portent of that unearthly rain whose knives
Shall slash the hard integument of earth
Down to its unknown core."

* * *

"For all those beaten, for the broken heads,
The fosterless, the simple, the oppressed,
The ghosts in the burning city of our time . . ."

* * *

The poet incants his condemnation:

C. Day Lewis: Consider these, for we have condemned them;
Consider these, for Leaders to no sure land, guides their bearings lost
We have Con­demned Them Or in league with robbers have reversed the signposts,
Disrespectful to ancestors, irresponsible to heirs.”

* * *

"After such knowledge, what forgiveness? Think now
History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,
Guides us by vanities. Think now
She gives when our attention is distracted
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late
What’s not believed in, or if still believed,
In memory only, reconsidered passion.”

* * *

"The decay of cathedrals
is efflorescent
through the phenomenal
growth of movie houses
whose catholicity is
progress since
destruction and creation
are simultaneous”

* * *

W. H. Auden: Coward; for all your goodness game
Brothers, who Your dream of Heaven is the same
when the Sirens As any bounder’s;
Roar Your hope to corner as reward
All that the rich can here afford:
Love and music and bed and board
While the world flounders.”
Louis MacNeice:  
(with W. H. Auden)  
Their Last Will And Testament  
To all the dictators who look so bold and fresh  
The midnight hours, the soft wind from the sweeping wing  
Of madness, and the intolerable tightening of the mesh  
Of history.” etc.  

* * *  

“The South is green with coming spring; revival flourishes in the fields of Alabama. Spongy with rain, plantations breathe April: carwheels suck mud in the roads, the town expands warm in the afternoons. At night the black boy teters no-handed on a bicycle, whistling the St. Louis Blues, blood beating, and hot South. A red brick courthouse is vicious with men inviting death. Array your judges; call your jurors; come, here is your justice, come out of the crazy jail.” etc.  

* * *  

Muriel Rukeyser:  
The Trial  
The poet sings of hope and destiny:  

“Oh young men oh young comrades it is too late now to stay in those houses your fathers built where they built you to build to breed money on money it is too late to make or even to count what has been made Count rather those fabulous possessions which begin with your body and your fiery soul:—” etc.  

* * *  

“The poet sings of hope and destiny:  

“Get there if you can and see the land you once were proud to own Though the roads have almost vanished and the expresses never runs Smokeless chimneys, damaged bridges, rotting wharves and choked canals, Tramlines buckled, smashed trucks lying on their side across the rails;” etc.  

* * *  

Stephen Spender:  
I Think Continually of Those Who Were Truly Great  
“I think continually of those who were truly great. Who, from the womb, remembered the soul’s history Through corridors of light where the hours are suns Endless and singing.” etc.  

(Sixteen)
Interwoven with these two fires to produce the general whole,

Archibald MacLeish: “A poem should be palpable and mute
As a globed fruit’’ etc.

is the poetry of repose, of description, of nature and the seasons.

Conrad Aiken: “Winter for a moment takes the mind; the snow
Falls past the arclight; icicles guard a wall,’’ etc.

* * *

“When the moon lights up
Its dull red camp-fire through the trees;
And floats out, like a white balloon,
Into the blue cup of night, borne by a casual breeze;” etc.

* * *

John Gould Fletcher: The Moon’s Orchestra
Elinor Wylie: Wild Peaches 2
William Carlos Williams: Birds and Flowers 3

“Nothing is lost! the white shellwhite
glassy, linenuhite, crystalwhite
crocuses with orange centers
the purple crocus with an orange center, the yellow
crocus with a yellow center—” etc.

* * *

“Imponderable the dinosaur
sinks slow,
the mammoth saurian
ghoul, the eastern Cape . . .
While rises in the west the coastwise range,
slowly the hushed land—
Combustion at the astral core—the dorsal change
Of energy—convulsive shift of sand . . .’’ etc.

* * *

Our modern poetry is like the myriad sounds in the night: some croaking, some screeching, some singing, some whistling, and some crick­eting. All, at times are pleasant sounds; some are fearful, some are horrible, some cause superstition, many are non-understandable. We, with modern poetry, are in the position of a man trying to bring semb­lance to those sounds in the night. We can but respond to them as ful­ly as our senses are stimulated.

Modern poetry reflects our lives in our emotions. One may, there­fore, gain a truer understanding of one’s self if he reads modern poetry, throws himself into it as life, and attempts to understand it. In modern poetry there is also an understanding of the Twentieth Century. This is my humble appreciation of the god that I humbly worship. May you find assuagement, of a kind, in the ashes of life.

(Seventeen)
Tears, like raindrops
From the cloud-strewn skies,
Fall, or downpour,
From my grief-encircled eyes.

Thunder rumbles,
Echoing my heart's wild roar
Lightning's crash
Recalls my wound is sore

And the storm
In which we parted
On that night
I from you darted

Then turned
To see if you would come.
Winds howl
As I cry. I am lonesome.

BY L. A.
The Silence came in the midst of afternoon over the city of Ondrong.

It was strange beyond our knowing. There had been the dim sound of a droning there, always and everywhere. It was as tho a forgotten wind had come one day to Ondrong, and could find no way to back beyond the hills, and would wander whining forever, searching, among the high still stone shapes that rose so far above the city, and in the streets below, and around every corner and hole and crevice there. The hearing of it was as breathing, for it was in all places, and it hummed along the catacombs and corridors deep within, where men lived, and the walls that hid them all vibrated to its throbbing. Generations since, those who dwelt in Ondrong had ceased even to know that the sound was there among them.

And then in the sunlight it had faded, without warning, and was gone, as the wind had died. Echoes of it lingered a moment around street corners, and rang softly from tower top to tower top, and grew still. And a gigantic Silence that had gathered and waited long centuries came down from among the hills and took its place.

For an hour nothing stirred in Ondrong, except one figure, tiny where it sat in a niche in the side of a tower, that stood up once and raised its arms and looked around in sudden wonder, and crouched down again.

Then one stole softly from the darkness under an archway, to pause with his shadow across the heavy sunlight on the empty street. Fearfully he looked about him; but there were only the old giants looming there—domes and blocks and soaring angled masses; stone and granite giants, black and grey and orange in the afternoon, and the silent sky.

The one peered fearfully, and listened, as tho for a sound to come, and then shrank cowering back into the shadow below the archway, with his grey robe gathered tight about him, shivering. In a little while another came, and another, and watched, listening, as he had done.

Soon, all over the city, the pallid, grey-robed people of Ondrong stole from deep within the buildings they had raised over them, and up from all the places and passages they had burrowed beneath them. They came slowly, timidly, into the streets, out upon the ramparts and staircases about their towers, shrinking in clusters together, saying nothing, only looking at the great still sky and listening, in the Silence.

"What has happened?" one finally whispered.

The sound seemed strange, and no one answered. He who had spoken hid his face against the cold wall beside the archway, away from his fellows.

Presently another, who gazed long at the hills (from where Silence came) spoke:

"It is the Hills. See, the Hills are larger."

(Nineteen)
At his side a third said:
"No, the Hills are not larger. But they have come closer."
An old man of Ondrong said fretfully:
"It is all so quiet."

High above the grey-robed throngs in the streets of the city, the figure that crouched in a niche in a tower-side, bestirred itself. Turning its transfixed gaze a moment from the hills that watched brooding over Ondrong, it chanced to see the crowd below it, before the archway, and hearing voices, stood up and began a swift descent, picking its way lightly from niche to narrow shelf to winding ramp. And soon it stood upon the wall that overhung the archway, and listened to what the people said. An old man, one whose face was pale with strange pallor of a worker in the Energy Plant, far underground, was saying, and his words were hushed:
"All the machines in the Energy Plant have ceased."

He on the wall overhead knelted down unnoticed to hear the better, his face aglow with delight and wonder.
"It is not so," said another, "The Energy Plant animates all of our machines, and it cannot cease. It has run forever — since our system was perfected, and set in motion by the ancient men. It is the Hills—they have come closer."
"But the Clothing Maker no longer functions, where I work."
"And the Nourishment Mills—all the machines in the Nourishment Mills have stopped."

"And the Heat and Light Plant—my Lever I attend there. It no longer functions, does anything."

One older than all the rest, whose years had twisted his thin body, and bowed his bared head, faltered forward and spread his arms, saying:
"All the machines in all of Ondrong have stopped, and it is quiet."

By now, all who worked in the city had wandered up the corridors inside and below, toward the light of day. Slowly they flowed from the arched entrances, out upon the ramps and stairways, into the streets below. And a whisper grew in the Silence, among all the pale bewildered people of Ondrong who groped, half-seeing under the unfamiliar sun:
"The machines have stopped."

The figure kneeling over the archway stood up on his narrow ledge of wall and called, clearly and fearlessly and with a voice of awe and joy:
"Hear me now, O people of all Ondrong. The machines have stopped, and you can rest now. You can rest, and play, and wander, as I do. There is no work now. The machines have stopped. Rejoice then, O liberated people!"

They heard him, those below at the archway and others far away, for his words were loud in the hush. They ceased to whisper and looked to him, alarmed. But when they saw who had spoken, they turned away.
"It is only the Different One," they said, "who does not work, but stays outside and climbs about our towers like an animal, in the sun."

And they forgot him, and he who said the hills had come closer said:

(Twenty)
"The Heat and Light Plant must start again. I work there. I must get back to my gauge—it is where I work."

Another whined:
"The Wheel I tend in the Center of Distribution—it does not turn. My father tended it, and his fathers before him, since the machines were started, and Ondrong began. The machines must be started again, so that I can watch my Wheel go around."

Their voices rose to a babble, and spread away around the archway; it grew to a confused clamon, and went like a fire, roaring along the crowded streets, defying the Silence.

"Start the machines. We must go back and work."

Then soon they heard their voices against the Silence that had come there when the droning ceased, and gradually they grew hushed, fearing.

Then the Different One spoke again, above them:
"Do not fear, O people, but be glad. Food you have for generations, and clothing, all stored away. The machines go no more, but you no longer need them. Forget them, and do as I do now. Come away from Ondrong, and you will forget your work, and live."

No one listened, and the Different One grew still, and the pallid people stood in the Silence. Yet still they lingered in the sunlight, not knowing what to do.

In the end, the one older than all the rest said simply:
"The machines will never run again. They have stopped, and none knows how to start them. They will never run again."
"But I must go back and watch my wheel, as my father did."
"Let one go to the Control Center, as of old, where the Records are. There are books there, that tell how to repair the machines, and all about them."

But the oldest man said:
"Who can read? For centuries there has been no time for reading, for we have all worked, tending our machines."

He said no more, for the Silence had lain long in the hills, waiting; it was heavy now upon them, and to lift it ever so little had become a great thing to do, by merely speaking. The falling sun lay low and glowing, westward, and a rising tide of shadows came from under the grey and black and orange masses that were Ondrong, over all the pale people.

And they felt the Cold of night coming near them, in the Silence.
"What do we do, when Night comes? My gauge is still and we have no heat, nor light, for when the dark is here."

No one answered, for none could say. So the Different One called:
"It is summer and Night is warm. I know. I have walked in Night, in the Hills. And it will not be dark long. In the morning the sun returns, and it is light again."

But none heeded, for it was only the Different One. They waited, and the sun was gone, and cool Twilight came. Before it, they shrank shivering into the dark archways of entrances, fearing, soundlessly in the Silence.

And as the dark deepened, a whimpering rose at last from the pallid people:

(Twenty-one)
"The Heat and Light Plant should be going. See, the Dark has gotten inside, where we stay, because the lights do not burn."
"What are we to do?"
The oldest man said, faintly:
"We must go back to where we sleep, beside our Posts of Duty, and lie down in the Dark, and die. The machines have stopped, so we must die now."

The dark had grown deep, and a wind came down from the hills to wander the streets of Ondrong; and so at last the pale people crept into their passages and groped their ways to their Posts of Duty, as the oldest man had said they must.

Only the Different One stayed where he was upon his high ledge, outside with Night and the Silence. He was alone; he dropped to the paving stones, and went along the empty street, with his face to the wind, toward the hills. The great shapes of towering darkesses that were the buildings of Ondrong grew smaller and fewer around him, until he was where none were at all, but only a great crumbling wall among the weeds of the wasteland, and a broken gateway thru it. He went singing in the Silence, out of Ondrong, out upon the empty plains; and came while yet the night was young, to the hills, and passed into a shadow that lay among them, and was gone.

And in a little while the hills, watching, saw how already the Silence that had come from them, had gone in and under the buildings of the city, and was wasting away their very foundations. Before the night was over, Ondrong was old; and the stone and granite crumbled softly down over the pallid people who slept within, and covered them all. And it was well, for the machines had stopped, and the Silence had come, and the Dark, and there was no thing more for them.

§

MAKER OF MASKS

The maker of masks has finished his work for the day;
He is closing his shop and laying his masks away.
There's a leering mimic of humanity's self,
Laid 'neath a clown on the bottom shelf;
Tears are here, and laughter too;
Paper children, with faces askew;
Twistedly fashioned to mock ourselves,
Shrunken, misshapen dwellers on shelves . .
The world's pathos in papier-machee,
Turned suddenly drab in the evening gray.
The maker of masks has finished his day;
He closes his shop and shuffles away.

By Janet Allen

(Twenty-two)
The End of the World

By Betty Jane Benton

On the 31st of December, xxxx, two figures were slowly approaching the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates—a man and a woman, last of the human race—Mr. and Mrs. Fin. Mrs. Fin was becomingly gowned in a moire antique bell-skirt, with sun-plaits festooned with Venetian point-lace caught in with a girdle of cat’s-eyes, a loose blouse waist elaborately trimmed with applique, bouffant sleeves, V-shaped corsage, Elizabethan collar, and a broad-brimmed Gainsboro’ hat with black ostrich plumes. Mr. Fin appeared in a frockcoat, double-breasted corduroy waistcoat, diagonal trousers, and patent leather shoes, with a beaver hat.

It was midnight. As the couple approached the confluence, a gigantic vessel steamed slowly up the stream and cast anchor at the mouth of the Y. A small gangplank was lowered, and in less time than it takes to typewrite, a procession of assorted animals made their way down to the shore, two by two, and, much to Mr. and Mrs. Fin’s surprise, grief and mortification, proceeded, with many apologies and with singular naiveté, to divest them of their respective wardrobes.

An elephant helped himself first to Mr. Fin’s ivory-headed cane. An ostrich calmly but firmly appropriated Mrs. Fin’s feathers. A beaver reluctantly deprived the unfortunate gentleman of his hat, while a nimble tortoise deftly picked the haircombs and pins from his wife’s head. Mr. Fin, stunned with amazement, made no resistance while a few sheep robbed him of his outer garments; but Mrs. Fin began to be a little shocked when two industrious silkworms began to ravel and wind up her bell-shirt, and a large Mo removed his mohair from the lining. The situation now became somewhat tense, and when a huge but conscientious whale appeared and carefully abstracted the bones from the lady’s stays her embarrassment was almost painful. We must now hurry a little in our narrative. Two businesslike camels approached and absentmindedly devoured the Jaeger suits in which Mr. and Mrs. Fin had both always been firm believers. Things had now gone so far that the couple cheerfully resigned themselves to the inevitable, as an absently enthusiastic alligator escorted a pair of patent kids to the scene of the divestivities and gaily claimed possession of the shoes. It now only remained for a dozen excited oysters, shouting their college yell, to rush down the gangplank and dexterously abstract the pearl earrings from Mrs. Fin’s ears, and the necklace which was her only remaining ornament.

There was an awkward pause. When at length the pair recovered sufficiently to speak of the weather, which, as Mr. Fin remarked, had not moderated, the animals had disappeared. The couple, resuming their stroll, at length seemed to be in a large park, or garden. They entered, and almost fainting with mortification and hunger, made their

(Twenty-three)
way hurriedly toward an orchard which was visible in the distance. All the fruit they could find, however, was a windfall russet apple, which they eagerly took up. Much to their disgust, it was found to have been bitten, and, making a tiny move, the fastidious Mrs. Fin presented it to her spouse (husband), who, with a shrug, refused the fruit and replaced it upon the tree.

§

SONNET

I slay remembrance with my titan powers,
But timeless Time declares the mighty sham
Of sweet idealism's clash with me.
My greatness, toppling down like earthquaked towers,
Has left me mute, all wondering where I am.
And antipodes refute identity.
I will not ponder Life or question Truth
Because my mind is now an instrument
Too full for solitude, too blunt for pain.
And so, thus waiting for a while, aloof,
I take proud-humbled hope—the answer sent
By loss—and throw the seeds for richer grain.
My toppled greatness cannot still the tide
In me that tells that Fate has always lied.

By J. P.

(Twenty-four)
"AND THE SONS OF GOD
SAW THE DAUGHTERS OF MEN"

The poet's third son, his father unheeding,
Sought no escape, averse to receding—

Only annoyed by precepts empirical,
Tho in a pattern admittedly lyrical.

Said to his parent, "It scans very well
But fails to convince me we're going to hell."

"I sicken of ominous clouds that hover,
Preferring I've Been So Great A Lover."

By Grizzly Transfer from Continent's End
(At rates reduced) to the social trend.

The poet smiled bravely, "His mother was shallow,
I'll scatter my seed on a bed more fallow."

(Finding in dactyl retreat from his hurt)
The poet's third son was an extrovert.

BY J. W.

(Twenty-five)
SIXTH AVENUE AND EAST VERMILIONEER
Sixth Avenue and East Vermilioneer
The lamps burn dimly down the windy street
Conspiring darknesses are gathered here
It is a good place for conspiring darknesses to meet

"I'm waiting for a street car," I explain
"I'm no eavesdropper—go on with your talk
It's cold tonight; by morning it will rain
I've seven blocks to go—I'm damned if I will walk."

"Are you alive still, still alive?" they jeer
"Four of us crowd infinity; you make five
You're still alive, you have no business here
Come back tomorrow night, comrade, when you're not alive."

BY JOHN B. MEGREW

§

FOR KITTY

My friends, when they have met her, say "Beware . . .
Have you not seen?
Tho she is sweet as orchid, and as rare
Her eyes are green."

And she, tho she would break my heart, and worse
Says, "Are you wise?
Remember I have warned you, when you curse
My great green eyes."

I am so happy. Surely, I have seen
The evil of her
And how her wicked witch's eyes glow green—
They're why I love her.

BY JON VAN HORNE

(Twenty-six)
"Assuredly, my dear friend, France and England are great nations; Russia, too, even if she is communistic. And here we have the greatest nation, it is well known, in the world—that has ever existed. It even surpasses the pristine—yes, the pristine glory of Golden Greece. But, my dear fellow, you of course understand that I view it all objectively; they are totally wrong. Yes, England and France, Russia and the United States are wrong. There is no getting around it. There is only one way to govern a nation, as great as ours, only one way, as they did in ancient China. My fellow people, "Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish."

Thus always when it was time for an argument to end it would end. My eager young brain would await this stentorian advice spoken as a climax and as an ending. My eyes followed his scragglily, hopscotching moustache as he dramatized this sage finality for the group of ranchers gathered and inwardly I would feel delighted. What possibilities! Vast vistas of imagination were opened for me. Excited, I would lie awake the night thru dawn, my mind plunging off into space, building variations and possibilities on this exotic theme. I would repeat to myself, "Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish." By the time I had finished saying it I would thrill inside. Shivers would dance joyfully up and down my spine. My brain would spin thru the universe.

He was called "The Professor." He kept to his books and had other eccentric habits, so he was called "The Professor." During the mist of my kindergarten years he had vaguely appeared, unaccompanied by wife or 'confessional ardor', and had taken a cabin half a mile from town and settled into an existence of academic hibernation. I later understood that he had T.B.

"The Professor" was lanky, wore baggy trousers, and, always, a very neat coat—though threadbare—even in the warm days of August. He tried to keep his hair combed, just as he tried to order his cabin. Dirty dishes, rubbish, tin cans, notes, etc. decorated his one room. Anachronistically, as a jewel from a tarnished setting, his twelve or fifteen neatly kept books remained high and dry above the tide of his life's daily rubbish. They stood on a shelf high over his bed, like a snowy cumulus cloud, into which he might retreat, and did, from the unreality of physical existence. They seemed to me a fourth dimension, a world apart. In fact, I sometimes speculated on those books as a symbol of heaven.

Behind the wild growth of his moustache was a plain, suntanned face. That was all, just a moustache, a face, and two absent-minded eyes—eyes which, no matter how occupied "The Professor" became with our community, the affairs of the world, or of his physical wants, never followed his body and mind into the nature of the physical world. They were permanently lost on a plane of non-existence.

(Twenty-seven)
But "The Professor" read, and he knew, for as I say, he spoke with such dramatic finality. He would read, unaware of us, for a month; and suddenly he would rid himself of it. An hour's chat with a few people climaxed by his sweeping condemnation would drown his desires for social contact. They would ever end, these chats, with, "Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish." It was the signal. Immediately he would strut off towards his decaying cabin, his mind and body again back with his eyes.

The ranchers would opine, "The Professor" was 'pretty wise', and then split up to carry out their own living, some aware that "The Professor" wasn't all there, others, that "The Professor" was 'aw right'. Back in his cabin "The Professor", without thought of food or life, would advance to his bookshelf, take down his most precious copy, the works of the great Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzo, and retreat to the reality of metaphysical existence. He would read his favorite philosopher on how to govern nations. "Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish.

I went away to school. Two years of it set me to wondering. Yes, I began to wonder. Not to think, understand, just to wonder. I didn't start to think until I got out of college.

When I returned it was to a superficial fame. My father had let it be known that I would attend college next year. "The Professor" was glad to see me. We had quite a chat. I was interested in asking questions of everyone at that time. I was then too naive to understand the minuteness of knowledge. I still thought my father could tell me anything I wanted to know about the usual or unusual facts of life. "The Professor" asked me about the school and about college and about how I lived at school. And I asked him questions about the world of 'fact without fiction'. I wanted to know what he thought about the situation between Austria and Serbia. Disgressing on his favorite theme he expounded his theories with conversational warmness.

The desert twilight fell.

Suddenly, as if the waning light were a precipitant, he brought the conversation to a close with his masterpiece, "My boy, govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish."

The mystic words restruck the ancient thrill within me. My nerves tingled. I began to repeat the incantation to myself. "Govern a great nation—as you would cook a small fish." The spell grew—reiterate, reiterate. I began to take the magical incantation apart, determined to enjoy and to understand and to contemplate the ecstasy of each word, each phrase.

"Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish."

"But Professor," I asked, "how does one cook a small fish?"

Startled, he looked up at me, his eyes this time almost penetrating the material world.

"I mean—what particular way is there to cook a small fish—is it different than cooking a large fish?"

Comprehend he could not. He seemed paralyzed. He truly looked

(Twenty-eight)
insane. Later I realized that his mind had hit a blank wall at full speed. He was mentally out, squirming and spinning, trying to reach solid ground for logic. Frightened, I immediately rushed for help. Coming back with the doctor we found "The Professor" in bed, physically and mentally weak. The doctor said "The Professor" needed rest.

During the week of waiting for "The Professor" to recover, I was quite worried, about cooking a small fish. I went fishing, though I don’t care much for it, and with the small fish I caught, I attempted to cook them to elucidate the expression. I asked my mother and also the better known cooks of the town—if there were any special way to cook small fish. But neither could I find a special way, nor could I understand what the saying meant according to the way either my mother or I cooked the small fish.

All my life I have thought of this. The magic spell is still there. I love the sound of the words, "Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish." The reiteration of this incantation plunges me off into ecstasy of solitude and contemplation.

But, I’ve never yet been able to find out how, properly, to cook a small fish.

§

KANSAS

I remember a day . . .
The sun all scattered in spun-warm wisps
And the winds all weaving it in frost-chilled spices
And the sky so high and the hills so high, and no valleys—
I could cry with the sharp thrill of it—
And the wild, lush-rushing colors
Pouring down banks to the river
To drown in its swirling rich brownness . . .
I ran for a long time, I know
And was breathless only with wonder
That the surging of infinite joy
Could lift me from summit to summit.

BY VIRGINIA LEWIS

(Twenty-nine)
... TO A. Y.

He shot himself at twenty—

Time could not hold him
Nor space confine his passions.
From youth to his old age
He plunged thru every phase
Of life's immutable and glorious destiny.

He tossed God into the gutter.
He hugged Communism to his bosom.
He laughed at the U. S. Constitution.

He loved humanity in general
And started with two women in particular.

By nineteen he was cursing,
And swearing.
(Playing the madman)

He shot himself at twenty.

Some turn of unhappy events produced that scurvy
and seared frame of heart.

From his parents
From their faith
From their chromosomes?

(or the lack)

(Thirty)
From his schooling
From his loving
From his drinking

(or the lack)

From the friends
From the enemies
From his finances?

(or the lack)

From the war
From the slump
From the boom.

Oh, machines are not made to appreciate:
A Poet meets hunger and love,
And verse cannot satisfy.

"Principally this young man met death thru a
dangerous neurotic condition of his mind."

Yes, he met death.
He lacked the means, that was his crime.
He lacked love, that was his incentive,

He shot himself at twenty.

BY C. T. C.

(Twenty-one)
TO ---

You are a dark, steely, shiny cutlass.
I draw you slowly across the whiteness,
Seeing rich rubies spring at your touch;
I feel no pain. You are the hypnotist,
The anaesthesia; ruthless but I shrink not.

You are the light of the dawn—mellow
Sun through a cloud. You are the dark light
Of night, tho in the dark I see you not.
Elemental force of neolithic time
Draws me to you, simply as to the earth.

You are the cool of deep green pools in shade
Where golden shafts support the leafy sky.
I seek you in the heat of the high noon.
I come to you for relief, for silence,
For darkness; nor do you turn me away.

You are the burning heat of desert sands
At sundown as the caravan stands out
Blackly against the riotous sky.
The sun has warmed the earth as you have warmed
My heart. I shall never need another.

BY VIRGINIA CLARE JONES

(Thirty-two)
"—thou ill son of an ill wench." (A. Lang: Aucassin and Nicolette)

white: clouds, floating, gliding blue, above and between, a sky reddens the summer earth, bright and warm, the sun, with radiant glory the world below waits, blistering, rolling to maturity "destiny" is America the red, white, and blueness of her cities virile American, indi-an myriad cement streets infinity of uniforms

the young growing growing growing (maybe thinking) the old: old, lost, waiting, waiting yet time never waits this one, young, not waiting, not knowing about waiting a bastard, by a slip maybe by man's in-humanity to man poor, but hungry, his mother scrubbing he rummaging in trash barrels, stealing candy

red on blue it announced "The Neighborhood Store—cash and carry" the rugged pinched face within glowering at the school boys screen slamming gangs of chattering entering penny candy, row and box, red white and blue wrapped two for a penny three for a penny he, there at the case, tear-eyed, no penny a world of candy

"hey, damn you kid, get out." (slamming screen door, running.) how dirty why don't some people how patched, ragged, torn that ill son of an ill wench he should be put in a home no father his moth-er, the ill wench, met eight years ago, a (buzz buzz buz-) he'll come to no good, that ill son of an ill wench.

school district no. x, crowded playground, small with swings bat hitting ball, "crack" yelling sliding home, in red dust white sandpile blue composition books, scattered the sun, the soil, the declaration of independence, the white buildings the bell, buzzing, shouting, running

the room, cool, refreshing the teacher our ragamuffin the ruler silence the, "We pledge allegiance to the United States of America" the blue veins, throbbing, the red heart the white flesh, saluting, un-knowing

§

"a land flowing with milk and honey." (Jeremiah 11:5)

white: outside the snow, cold the blue flesh, benches in the park inside: the log fire reddening the ruddy faces and the throats carols singing joy season of greetings american red, white, and bluechristmas turkey, dressing, cranberries, California wine warmed peas, baked potatoes, coffee, pumpkin pie hard candy, chocolates, fruit cake, brandy, popcorn

(Thirty-three)
outside, the world waiting the workers working, not working waiting for New Year's the new world our 'ill son' not waiting, grown, fighting, organizing, striking radical, red, unamerican; still a bastard big business declaring him to be a racketeer, preying upon their workers a red, in league, paid by Moscow

the high white wall 7:25 A.M. the white snow, carpeting america, covering completely the red, white, and blue the blue denim overalls workers marching the gate work 7:31 A.M. a strike speeches: fiery, red, the snow, the blue overalls, mingling, pushing anxious clapping of hands, shouts, yells, stones crashing thru windows the massedmaulingcircling mob

sirens shouting, running, screaming clubs beating, "thump" bodies slowly wilting to the snow mumbling silence bodies being dragged to the van over the cold snow long sad faces, bewildered lockout trudging homeward thru the snow, the white

the wall, dirty white, by a bush, a body, sickly blue, dropped by a policeman's cudgel blood, red, from the skull, flowing, dark red, across the white snow, the puddle, red, in the snow, white, above, the sky, dark blue

§

"the attachment which I speak of is the mere sensuous sympathy of dust for dust." (N. Hawthorne: "The Custom-house.")

white: the redcross nurse blood the blue steel the red, white, and blue war duty, american the world, beserk, shall be saved our hero, conscientious objector, waiting the world, not waiting traitor, spy, red 'hang him,' 'shoot him', 'skin him alive' but america is democratic he must have a fair trial

the ungentle cell, gentler than the world waiting, for the shot, the rope, the chair the red the white the blue waiting, a minute life the destiny of dust

blue bars white wall red faces glimpses: the sky, red, white, and blue dust: redwhite&blue

martial the court, what of the war "Thou shalt not bear false witness." uniforms, white faces, rise and face

the wall, white, and by it a bush a body erect, straight, against the wall the sky, blue above, the sun, red our 'ill son' smoking, smiling sadly, fearful, erect the double line leveling their guns on shoulders the "crack" of many rifles the jerked body, slumping, wilting to the earth, like a flower, life gone on the wall, white, blood, spattered, red; on the ground, brown, the body, above the sky, blue

(Thirty-four)
Oh thou

For whom a pen-ish axe hacks huge hunks of myth-y metaphor

For whom in emo-associational experiment, webster-fied and unwebster-fied words are distended and distilled

You to whom "wrink's" and "racks" are all, and liquid lyrics are the scaled off skin of a past siatic age

You to whom paragraphs are proper nouns; and dots and commas are dangerous catastrophies

You who play the minstrel metaphysics in a meaningless world of meaning

I worship thee whale-ish reality uncut and undried ambidexterous Feenamint-ive trivial-ousy sweet cheat

GOD

BY O

(Thirty-five)
MOONLIGHT ON THE TAJ MAHAL

Mumtaz-i-Mahal twines the Indian moonlight
Thru her onyx hair.

(Jaspar from Punjab . . .
Marble from Jaipur)
Camel caravans from Asia!

Shah Jahan from the Jasamine Tower
Spans the waters of Jumna.

(Sapphires from Ceylon . . .
Turquoise from Thibet)
Bullock-carts from Samarakand.

Mumtaz-i-Mahal dances on a Kashmire veil
Top a mineret of alabaster.

(Carnelian from Arabia . . .
Amethyst from Persia!)
Elephant trains from Multan!

Light of the Palace . . . Beloved, where art thou?
Where, O Pearl of the Dark.

(Mosaic from Baghdad . . .
Rugs from Shiraz)
Barges of the Bhramaputra!

Dreams from the Jasamine Tower!
Dreams of Mumtaz-i-Mahal!

(Diamonds from Bundlekund . . .
Jade from Cathay!)
Slaves of the Maharajah!

BY JANET ALLEN

(Thirty-six)
I saw yesterday today.

Out of the middle of a proletarian essay, out of a wasteland poem on faith, leaping out of last week's newspaper—he came to say hello, an anemic cynical yesterday, all in readiness to say, "so what?" again.

I beat him to it.

"So what?" said I.

This was too much for yesterday, and the pain he exposed made me wince.

"You have given me critics" I pursued, "They have instructed me to interpret experience—to gather up the skeins (they all prate of skeins) and weave them into a pattern. Now I'm gathering up the skeins. And no puny yesterday can say "so what" to me."

Yesterday was proud. He did not apologize and I knew he never would.

I went on with my skeins while yesterday peered me uncomfortable, and the landlady's brassy clock wheezed away the hours three at a time.

"It ain't gonna rain no mo no mo
It ain't gonna rain no mo.
How'n the world can the white folks tell—"

The radio had three large dials. You could take your choice which one to turn. The music rattled impartially out of the great hunchbacked loudspeaker atop the cabinet.

"Right's right and it don't wrong nobody," said my dad.

That was what my dad said and that was that. Then right's right and it don't wrong nobody.

It aint gonna rain and it don't wrong nobody. Arland said the radio was afraid. His big brother knew the real words and they weren't "how'n the world."

Arland tried to tell me about breeding, too. His father ran a dairy. I wouldn't listen. And it don't wrong nobody.

There were sixty-six smaller books starting with Genesis. Put them together and they make one big book. My copy was called juvenile. Between two chapters was a picture of Ishmael, expatriate, his mother holding a water jug to his lips. Somehow I knew the jug was empty.

"It don't wrong nobody," said my dad.

Huge bulging hills, cross scarred with canyons, E-l-o-q-u-e-n-c-e spells eloquence with bursting pumpkins on long dead vines the inevitable symbol of November. It has to be true, on account of the book.

... Expressionless yesterday...

"These plants will bear us gold" said my dad in the spring (Fondle each life with your stain-caked hands) "Great clusters of tomatoes for the hungry Eastern markets."

"These are the beefsteak," he said, "And this special kind is called The Marvel."

(Thirty-seven)
Brown impersonal soil. Undiscriminating soil.
"We're ruined," said my dad in the fall, rich acres turned black overnight by The Blight. Lost to the Eastern markets, blighted dreams of my dad.
"There's bound to be a purpose somewhere," said my dad, "if we could only see it."
Bound to be a purpose, yesterday. A noble frowning purpose, a kindly blighting purpose. Purpose in this blight. Purpose in yesterday. There's bound to be a purpose and it don't wrong nobody.
Obedient days of equations. The judges have awarded you second prize. You read all the books and followed directions well. You said nothing original, so we gave you the second prize. If you'd said nothing at all, we'd give you the first.
"Happy days are here again," the radio was all-electric. "Happy days are here ..."
Eleven million unemployed, yesterday.
The books contain no answer.
"I never had a chance," said my dad.
"Nobody says depression in here!" shrieked the geometry teacher, "that's what the trouble is. You talk about depression, so of course you have depression. I won't listen to the word."
"It's the end of the road and I never had a chance," said my dad.
Mr. Hoover said, "The future of America rests with the housewives. Go out and buy and end the depression."
Get out and buy, you housewives. Pay the cashier as you go out. And it don't wrong nobody.
"Oh God," prayed my dad, "give me strength to bear the pain."
Give him the strength, for he never had a chance. (1883-1934) Give us all strength. There's bound to be a purpose.
... Nothing evaded, yesterday ... Years with the skylines. Horizons, the symbol of dreams. Those whom I hated spoke knowingly of puppy love.
"Twas on the Isle of Capri that I found her—"
You pushed a button and the dial flicked around. There was a magic eye for tuning.
"Can I forget you or will my heart remind me?"
Frozen eyed wraith who sang birth of love, fingers that drew a heart break from the strings. Can I forget you or will my heart remind me? (I wouldn't listen to Arland. It don't wrong nobody.)
Impersonal streets and pleasant personnel men. Memorized assurances with icy cordiality. Two shadows retreating beside me. Right's right. Can I forget you?
Where are the books the great ones have written? The books are all lost. And will my heart remind me?
There's bound to be a purpose.
Promises of tomorrow, yesterday. Tomorrow perhaps the calendar will smile. There's a sweet dignity in living.
The critics say gather the skeins.
Meanwhile no underfed yesterday

(Thirty-eight)
EVE CAME FIRST

I woke this morning to expectancy
So strange, for I had never yet known it.
My life has been all memory before.
I remember, as though it were a dream,
Others like me, others stronger than I,
With charm. I remember, too, confusion
And calm. I remember, too, confusion
I remember soft fabrics on my body.
Many things I remember but they were
Of the dream before I fell asleep.

I think I slept eons, a millennium,
And vaster ages, for I woke to stillness,
A stillness I could not hear, and feel and touch.
I knew from the beginning I was alone.
There was no need to clothe my browned body.
No rain, no snow, no cloud has marred my days
For many years. My food grows lushly here
Where I need only reach a hand to feast.
My desires are calm. I know no other.
Even the animals are gone. I know not
What destruction visited the land.

I saw an ancient city one day.
By accident I found its naked bones
Lying to dry beside a waterway.
I could not go back. Lonely, beauty near,
My own beauty in the water mirror
A constant taunt, I wondered why I was left.
This morning I could feel my blood racing,
My senses were awake, alert for you.

BY VIRGINIA CLARE JONES

(Thirty-nine)
WAY OF THE HOURS

For this is the way of the hours,
Brief and sudden, and a little sad!

Seconds poise on the edge of Time,
And minutes wind a tireless hand,
Telling the hours that shadow the disk;
Like tears on a white clock-face.
Centuries are stored in a sun-dial,
And a silver-aged man goes a-dancing
Through a garden of Yesterdays.
This is the way of the hours:
Swift and a little sad!

By Janet Allen

§

WHY DO YOU COME?

I am an island,
Love is the sea,
You are the small boat
Coming to me.

The sea is stormy,
Your craft is frail,
Why do you come
In this howling gale?

Now, the boat on the beach,
All battered and gone—
You died for an island
But the sea lives on.

By Signa Nelson Joyner

(Forty)
The surfboard, balanced on his head, was heavy and hurt him as he walked but pride kept him from stopping until he had reached the Swede. Tall and lean—awkward with youth—his hands and feet were enormous and showed how big he would be fullgrown. In front of him breakers pounded heavily on the beach and wind clouds streaked a yellow haze on the horizon—sign of an unpleasant beach day. A gull screamed and habit made him turn in that direction. It was the fifth day of September and young John Henry's last day of lifeguarding.

Leaning the board gently against the tower he watched the Swede climb down and waited for him to speak. The Swede was as big as John Henry was going to be. Many years in the sun had burnt his skin the color of mahogany. He slapped the boy across the shoulders, pulling him close . . . though not a man to display affection . . . and said, with a heartiness that fooled neither of them:

"Kid you're lucky. Four years of education and it's not costing you a cent. That's mighty swell of your dad, I'd say. How is the old man?"

Wind carried a fine mist of spray across John Henry. Turning he watched it snap the flags and shake the tower. As always the sight and feel of the ocean filled him with a recklessness, gave him a sense of freedom that he loved. Now they were driving him away from it. The Swede was right and his father was right, and knowing this he tried to explain how he felt without seeming ungrateful.

"Listen Swede, my dad is swell and all that but I'm not like him. I want my life to be different, more like yours, with danger and excitement. I don't want to be a preacher, not when I can lifeguard. I can't stay in a Methodist seminary bounded by barricades."

"Sure," said the Swede and sighed. "Sure, but get your education first and then come back."

The Swede was lying and he was lying. They both knew it. This was the last time he would ever work on the beach. His father had made that plain enough while explaining what was expected of him in the future.

The sun touched the horizon on the west and wind began to howl over the top of the tower, blowing hard against his face. Looking up the beach he saw a rip tide running. It reminded him of his first rescue, a fat man with a beet colored face, and how weak he had felt after it was over. He had been ashamed of his fear but now he realized that it was a necessary part of this job. It had sharpened his mind to the risks, keeping him alert, showing him danger and a new kind of life he liked.

(Forty-one)
The Swede climbed into the tower and wiping the sand from his eyes, spat in disgust.

"Wind and more wind," he snarled. "I'll be glad when this day is over."

John Henry nodded, not really hearing. He was thinking of the timidity of his father's life knowing that it would soon be his life as well. The thought pulled a hard lump into his throat making him almost hate his father. He wondered what would happen if he ran away, and . . .

"Hey!" yelled the Swede. "Snap out of it! Get on your horse and get going. Something blew up out there. I'm too heavy for the surfboard. Why in hell . . ."

All John Henry could see was a patch of white smoke. He pointed the board in that direction and paddled hard; excitement cutting at his wind, making it hard to breathe.

The surprise at finding them like this paralyzed his mind and kept him from thinking. They were hanging on a long slab of wood, all that was left of the yacht, and the faces turned to him were pinched and dull with cold. There wasn't much said. They were tired and it took all their strength to keep above the water. He laid the children and their mother lengthwise on the board and with the old man across the back, started at once for shore.

Darkness closed down shutting off sight of land leaving only the nauseating pitch of swells to guide them. Feeling the heavy drag of the old man's body and watching the helplessness of the woman John Henry lost all hope of ever reaching shore, but there was a hard, obstinate streak in him and now it kept him struggling. Fear and excitement left him and cold crept through his body until he could feel nothing else. Salt water sloshed in his mouth and ran into his stomach, but it had no taste and he was too tired to care.

When the children stopped crying the old man looked up, his glance holding John Henry's. Then without a trace of fear or regret, he winked and with a shrug of his shoulders said:

"Too bad. Carry on for me. I trust you. Take them safely ashore." He smiled and a feeling at once strong and compelling passed between them giving John Henry new strength. For a long moment the old man lay passive, his head bowed, and then on the wash of a huge swell . . . gone.

After that John Henry found he could paddle, but an eternity of time passed before a breaker pushed them up on land. Dragging the others ashore, he collapsed beside them and said, in his mind, all the things he wanted to say . . . out there . . . praying that he would understand. Remembering the old man's words, he straightened, facing the ocean, and waved one hand in salute. Then aspiration mingled with the grief in his heart bringing tears that blinded him to the black watery waste where he had left his father.

(Forty-two)
Old Charlie Babbik sat on the stool in his corner and waited for the champion to enter the ring.

Yeah, it was always the same in this wrestling game. Wait for the champion, wait for the bell, wait for the match to finish, wait for the dirty little shower room to clear, wait for your money and wait for the train to go to some other town to—wait. But tonight was different for Charlie. Yeah, he was retiring after his so-called bid for the title. Retiring to a farm, he had told everyone. The little dough he had together with the money he expected to get from the Big Boss as a retirement present would go into some quiet little farm away from wrestling and all that went with it.

And why shouldn't he expect a substantial present? For thirty years now Charlie Babbik had wrestled for the Big Boss. Hell, the Big Boss had been a carnival barker when Charlie started wrestling for him. As Charlie won match after match, year after year, the Big Boss had prospered and now he ran wrestling in half the States. And Charlie Babbik had made all this possible, and he knew it. That's why he expected to have enough for that farm after tonight's match.

And this match was a funny thing! According to the wise-boys Charlie was going to win this title as a going away present, so they thought. Yeah, he was going to retire on his laurels. What a laugh! He couldn't win in another thirty years, not that he couldn't beat this young punk that the Big Boss had set up as champ. No sir. It was just that the Big Boss knew Old Charlie could pack the fans in without being champion, so he had drawing cards both in the champ and in the old idol of the mat game.

Aw, here that punk comes at last. Look at him hold his stomach in to make his thick chest seem thicker! Comon le's get goin'.

There's the bell at last! Gotta make this look good anyhow!

That's all right kid, I won't break it off. Gee, would old Hackensmith show these young punks a trick or two if he was here now! The game ain't what it used to be. Too many collegians with their fancy holds that look good even if they don't hurt. That's it, give up to me for the first fall! Just like the plans said. The Big Boss said I get a farm.

The bell again! Here he comes with his fancy flying-tackle. OOF! Didn't hurt but I'll give him the fall. Yeah, just for a little rest! If the Big Boss gives me enough maybe I'll get a cow for the farm.

Dammit, whyinell do I hafta lose to this bum? Whyn't I double-cross him and beat him an' be champ? I'm better he is! The bell,
well here goes! Hey, what's this? Another tackle? Hey don't! I'm not set! Hey—dammit he missed. Come back in the ring you fool! You'll be counted out and I'll be cham----. Y-e-a-h, I'll be champ. An' it's not my fault. Hell, I can wrestle a year and make enough for a farm ten times the size of the one I'll get with the Bosses present. I'll be champ. What'll the Big Boss say? It's not my fault—it's not! It's his for tryin'---. Gee, lookit the Big Boss lookin' at me. What should I do—aw, hell.

"—and this reporter felt sure if old Charlie Babbik had not gone out of the ring to pummel the champion with blows he would wear the title belt today. Apparently he lost his temper that night two years ago when he last wrestled before retiring from the game.

"No inquest will be held at the Donnel County Farm where he has been living by the graciousness of George Browley, erstwhile Big Boss of wrestling."

§

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by j w

(Forty-four)
From sixteen thousand feet the village of Katow appeared only as a shapeless black and white blur in the midst of the vast checker pattern of wheat fields. Sharply outlined against the red and green of the fields, the dark belt of the railway twisted painfully across the landscape directly through the center of the village.

Young Karol glowered at the sight from a cabin window of the bomber. "How can I pick out factories and a railroad crossing from this height?" he complained.

Mark turned from his swivel machine gun to stare coldly at the younger man. "You can't," he snapped tartly. "Just drop your bombs on the village and you're bound to hit something."

Mark's livid features were puffy and his floppy black hair was greying. He was a veteran of the First World War. Now his keen, flight-trained eyes peered out questingly beyond the plane's tail. "There's a flight of enemy chasers coming up fast," he announced dryly. "If we drop any lower they'll be on our necks."

Karol glued his eyes to the bomb sights as the squadron of bombers swung into single file to pass over Katow. He gripped the bomb release, tensely awaiting the moment when the formless cluster of buildings would swim across his vision. He felt as if every man in the plane were watching him intently . . .

The drab routine of life in Katow stopped abruptly just before annihilation descended as if a giant's grasp had seized the hands of the clock and arrested the flow of time. The eyes and ears of the village abandoned their concentration on workday tasks to focus on the muffled thunder of airplane motors and the faint outlines of menacing shapes high in the sky.

The pastor paused with mouth half open in the middle of his sermon to stare in sudden terror over the heads of his congregation out the open doors at the rear. The housewife dropped her basket of washing as the black shadows of huge wings fell across the yard. The workers in the shoe factory deserted their machines to scramble for the nearest windows. The farmer boy lying in the hay wagon shaded his eyes against the sun glare to stare upwards. He saw the first bomb slant down . . .

Karol released his bombs in three bunches. Then he turned to the window to watch them strike, his eyes glittering with excitement. In training school he had won a citation for his skill in hitting white circles with chalk bombs. Katow was just another white circle. Within that circle a screaming mob surged through the toppling ruins of a church; hysterical people stumbled aimlessly between flaming walls down debris litter-
ed streets; a wounded, frantic horse dashed his head against a wall . . . These were microscopic details to the impersonal eyes of an airman at sixteen thousand feet.

Inside the beer hall no one had heard the motors. The doors and windows were tightly closed while the cheap radio on the bar blared forth a forbidden enemy political broadcast. Frederick, the proprietor, nodded in agreement with the announcer's voice and banged one plump fist down on the card table before him. "What that fellow says is true!" he bellowed. "This isn't our war. We are just used as cannon fodder by our government."

The soldier, who had slouched unseen in a corner, stepped out suddenly and seized his shoulder. "You rotten dog!" he snarled. "Slackers like you are shot"—The beer hall exploded with an ear-splitting roar . . .

Frederick sprawled in a litter of poker chips and broken beer mugs, staring blankly at the crimson shred that must have been his arm. Miraculously the radio remained undamaged on a corner of the bar, the impeccably modulated voice of the enemy broadcaster still sounding amid bursts of static . . .

. . . "I repeat, our efforts are directed not against you—workers and peasants—but only against the members of your government whose insatiable lust for power has brought on this blood bath . . . Humanity is the keynote of the struggle we conduct. Our air force will attack only military objectives . . . Were you today to break the chains of your tyranny, we should be the first to extend to you the warm clasp of fraternal friendship"—Frederick groaned and turned away from the voice.

Karol glowed with pride as a member of the crew slapped him on the back. "Nice shooting, comrade." . . . He watched Mark's nerveless hands spin the sputtering swivel-gun with delicate precision. Far out beyond the bomber's tail a burning enemy chaser described a flaring corkscrew against a backdrop of sheer blue . . .

Easily outstripping the laboring motors of returning bombers flew the news of the raid over the ether. Fifty miles from Katow a panting messenger ran into the Information Bureau of Station DXP with a terse note, "Katow bombed." Just two words—not the barest detail. But this was no obstacle to broadcasters of imagination and experience. Station DXP broadcast a full account of the raid five minutes later.

"Enemy bombers rained bombs on the peaceful village of Katow early this morning. It is clear that their objectives were the district school house and the maternity hospital, their purpose brutal terrorism of the unsuspecting civilians. At less than five hundred feet they dropped thermite bombs on the maternity hospital and machine-gunned fleeing people in the streets . . . The mask is off. The monstrous ruthlessness of the enemy is revealed. How much longer will the world stand by and watch this new wave of barbarism engulf our country?"

Across the frontier alert ears picked up the message. An announcer went on the air at Station RMS, his voice shaking with emotion . . . "The truth about the destruction of Katow . . . The frenzy of the enemy knows no limit. Katow was dynamited by their retreating troops while they invented a tissue of lying atrocity stories. We have experi-

(Forty-six)
enced the effects of these stories before in their appeal to neutral sympathies . . . Certainly history does not record another example of such cold-blooded slaughter of innocents by their own leaders for some devious diplomatic triumph . . . By this act of incredible savagery the enemy government has damned itself in the eyes of the world" . . .

Station DXP counter-punched less than fifteen minutes later. "All doubt about the bombing of Katow is dispelled!" gloated the announcer. "A foreign newspaperman on the scene has written an uncensored dispatch describing the outrage. The bungling efforts of the enemy to cover up with a canard are revealed . . ."

Station RMS was temporarily hamstrung. The announcers hastily rang up the Information Bureau. But all that department could do at the moment was to curse the carelessness of their airmen, who painstakingly destroyed churches and hospitals but would miss a single damn newspaperman. Finally RMS managed a lame retort. "Contrary to earlier reports it appears that a flight of our airplanes bombed the railroad near Katow . . . One of the bombers was shot down and fell into the village . . . This is the basis for the fantastic bombing story which has demonstrated only the criminal mentality of its inventors . . ."

Much later in a distant neutral land a news broadcaster announced apologetically, "It appears that something has happened today at the railway junction of Katow . . ."

The crew of the bomber were headed away from their ship towards the headquarters shack when the crackle of rifle fire sounded just ahead. They turned the corner of the camouflaged supply depot where the firing squad had just finished their work.

With shocking suddenness the picture of the dead men sprang into view. Three of them lay in a crimson spattered cluster, huddled together as if to keep warm. The fourth sprawled sideways across the others, arms and legs akimbo, sightless eyes covered with a film of blood from the black hole in his forehead . . .

Karol’s face turned a startling white and his knees shook visibly. His attention appeared magnetically drawn to the grotesquely twisted corpses.

The lieutenant in charge of the firing squad noticed his disturbance and hurried to explain, flashing a toothy smile. "I wouldn’t waste any sympathy on those . . . ." He indicated the dead men with a disdainful gesture. "The vilest dregs that a war brings to the surface. They were caught trying to poison our water supply with typhus germs . . ."

"Excuse me, gentlemen." Karol mustered a pretense of dignity and turned with unsteady steps toward the barracks.

Mark stared after him with a cynical grin. "He’ll have to be hardened up. That’s the trouble with the kids in this war. They’ve been fed too much sloppy sentiment in the last twenty years . . ."

(Forty-seven)