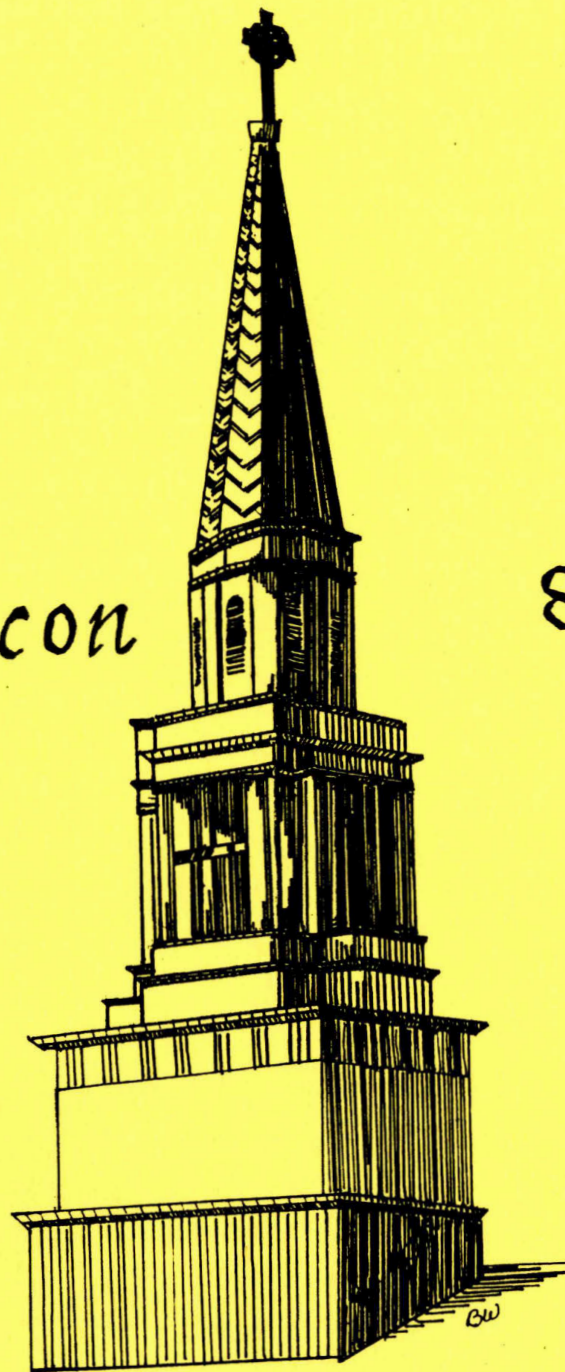


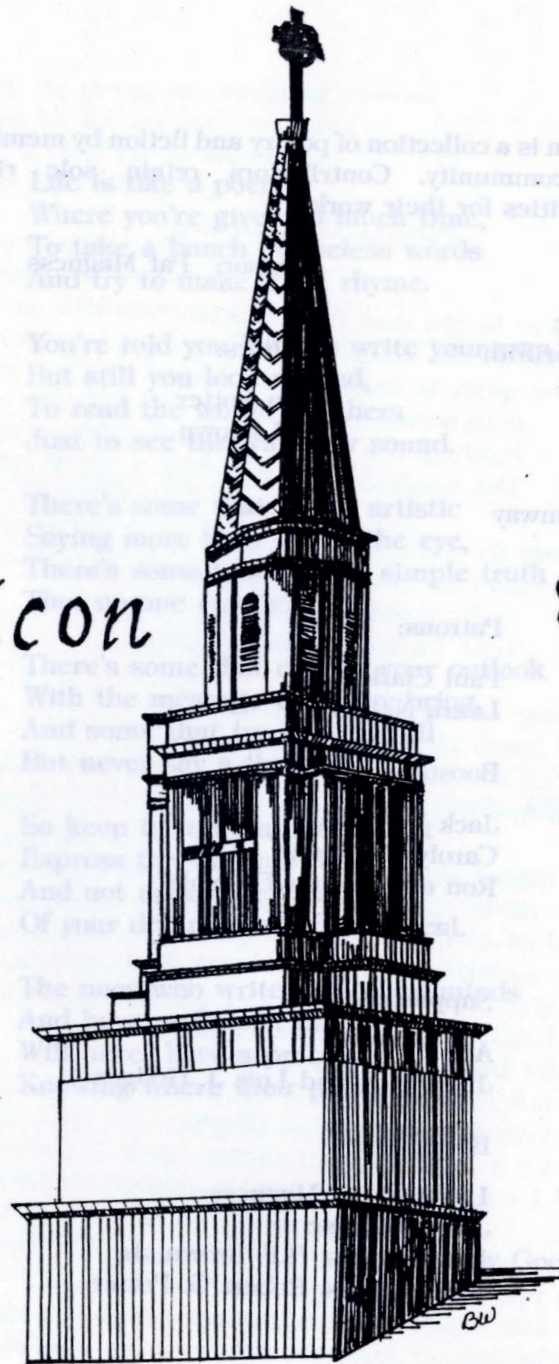
Helicon

87



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Life is like a poem

Where you're given so much time,  
To take a bunch of useless words  
And try to make them rhyme.

You're told you have to write your own  
But still you look around,  
To read the works of others  
Just to see the way they sound.

There's some that sound artistic  
Saying more than meets the eye,  
There's some that state a simple truth  
That no one can deny.

There's some that change your outlook  
With the message that they bring,  
And some that try to say it all  
But never say a thing.

So keep in mind a poem must  
Express the way you feel,  
And not upset the balance  
Of your dreams and what is real.

The ones who write with open minds  
And have an honest heart.  
Will never have a problem  
Knowing where their poem starts.

—Jimmy Goodykoontz

## Right of Spring

Here in the muted darkness  
It's easy to see memories and smile. . .  
The quiet is not silent—  
underneath the stillness  
Rabbles the din of youth unbridled,  
The laughter and music of hope.

It's easy to see you and smile. . .  
I watch as you dance around the floor,  
make a face at me,  
Lose us both in the laughter.

It's easy to hear you and smile. . .  
I laugh at your uninhibited yell—  
You can shout while I dared only listen;  
Somehow, you got me to sing.

The memories quiver  
under the synthetic stillness. . .  
Just as our laughter ruptured  
the ordinariness of our days.

I've traded in my dancing shoes  
for hiking boots now  
I've left the loud for the moderately me.  
I deserted the desperate giggles  
for a deep internal smile. . .  
And I am happy, contented in my  
grown-up love.

But you are always springing out of music  
and sunny skies and quiet memory rooms,  
Disturbing my maturity with cackles of adolescence.

Thank you for giving me laughing lessons.  
Thank you for freeing me from pain  
and teaching me to dance.  
Thank you for making my spring.

God bless you, for showing me  
That it takes life to love life  
That the exuberance of youth  
Is too precious to mute with grown-up grief.  
Because of you, I carry in me  
the knowledge that life is good,  
laughter is life's self-expression,  
love is more than letting go—  
it is hanging on:  
hanging on with energy and eternal youth  
to the hope of a living love.

—Tabbi

## Romance

GENTLEMEN. . .  
suit coats and bowties,  
polished shoes that sound the beat of business.  
eyebrows raised and courteous ogle,  
pleasant How-de-doo.  
Denim and pine trees, hi-tops and swim trunks.  
Arms rippling and laughter galloping down smile lines.

LADIES. . .  
sweet perfume.  
Swaying down the sidewalk to the rhythm  
of the music in their eyes.  
skirts swirling and hair curling, Just so.  
Mystic smile and gentle nod,  
Hats delicately planted perfectly.  
Pearls and roses, wisps of dreaming.

—Jamie Smith

Free, Free, Free  
Bind me  
Loose me, disentagle me  
Fold me  
Free, Free, Free

—Donna Freeman



It's mine  
It's special  
I don't always like it, but it's mine  
You can't have it. I don't want to share it.  
I don't want it, but  
It's mine.

—Donna Freeman

## Reality

Men . . .

pajamas and undershirts,  
worn slippers and dirty socks that smell of weariness.  
eyes half-closed and stubbled jaw,  
terse grunt of greeting.  
Flannel and motor oil, sweat and grass stains.  
Dentures and beer bellies,  
T.V. dinners over the Oakland Raiders.

Women . . .

detergent hands.  
Shuffling through grocery lines.  
Bathrobes and curlers, cold cream and hair color.  
Vericose veins and stretch marks, dry permanents.  
Vacuum cleaners and furniture polish,  
double-knit polyester and forgotten dreams over cold coffee.

—Jamie Smith

## Sharing

When wondering about the broken lands,  
I saw people sinking with empty hands.  
Their starving faces weeps so dry;  
A tiny tear drop formed in my eye.  
When the tear escaped down my cheek,  
They saw a mirage of a flowing creek.  
How can I be so lucky to cry with real tears  
Over something not as sad as a dying man's fears?  
I wish there was a way to feed them all,  
But as we ponder, another one will fall.  
His body will no longer lie in pain but peace;  
Will you really care as you prepare another feast?  
These are such separate worlds that lie so far apart;  
We should share with all our heart.

## The Least of These

Hear them crying in the night  
because they cannot see

or hear  
or feel

without Sorrow

Pain

and Death

sticking their mocking grins into the scene?

They are small

not knowing that

the fat bellies of some

come from eating too much

for theirs come only

from not enough.

They are afraid

of men,

who claim to be of God

or Allah

or some other name

but are all of one which is Evil,

not knowing

whether they will see another day

not understanding

why these men

want to hurt them

never losing hope for peace

because they never had any.

We do not hear their crying

because we cannot see

or hear

or feel

any Sorrow

or Pain

but our own,

and Death sits

in our hearts

with a mocking grin.

—Betty J. Harding

## Variations On Sands

Don't look to me for answers to big world questions

(or to the problems that you have)

My head's firmly stuck in the sand of the book that I'm reading

(I have no time for love)

Don't look to me for answers to questions this world's facing

(or to the problems that you have)

My head's firmly stuck in the sand of the book that I'm reading

(I have no time for love)

Don't look to me for answers to this world's questions

(or to the ones that you might have)

My head's firmly stuck in the sands of my studies

(I have no time for love)

—Schizo Gestalt

## The Vet

The guns rattle,

And he wakes up in a bed

covered with sweat.

The dream continues,

but it's really a nightmare.

He was one of the few, the proud.

Now he can't even keep a job.

He gets pains in his head,

but they say it's not

from Agent Orange.

He was robbed of his youth

by a war which dragged on

when there was no reason left.

Life is an empty shell,

like the one he found

lying beside his dead

brother.

But it goes on and on,

And like the war, it has

no meaning.

—C.M. Brown

## The Battles No One Wins

Johnny Reb an' Billy Yank  
sittin' quiet on a hill  
Knowin' what they gotta do tomorrow,  
but not sure if they will.

See, Billy, he knows Johnny  
an' Johnny's wife an' kid,  
An' Johnny's friend was always Billy  
when they'd do what all boys did.

Billy'd even named his son for John  
an' Johnny his for Bill;  
Now they sit in different uniforms,  
thinkin' quiet on a hill.

John, he looked at Billy,  
an' Billy returned the look;  
Each o' them was wond'rin'  
if it'd be the last he took.

They stood an' shook each other's hands  
then headed down the hill,  
Each to his own camp an' fire  
to prepare to get killed an' to kill.

They didn't kill each other,  
but the vow that they had made  
To watch each other's boys was pointless  
as side-by-side they were laid.

Billy Reb an' Johnny Yank  
standin' o'er their daddies' graves,  
Not really understandin'  
as the hurtin' hits in waves.

They stare straight on at the preacher  
but don't hear a word he said  
Not carin' who won the battle  
now that both their pa's was dead.

—Betty J. Harding

## Nature's Praise

Sing, O trees, of your Creator.  
Laugh, O fields, with never ending joy.  
Shout, O thunder, of mighty power.  
Dance, O rain, in patterns of glory.  
Run, O wind, with the freeness of the Spirit.

—Sarah Beth Simmons



Cathy Buffeth

## Cheers!

As the rain softly falls;  
The raindrops hit the window;  
And slowly glide like teardrops.  
The light is captured and sparkles  
Like the stars in the Heavens.

—Andrea L. Hodges

## The Music of Night

The wind blows melancholy strains  
through the trees  
While the pattering rain keeps  
time.

The crickets scrape their raspy  
bows across their violins,  
And the lonely, far-off wail  
of the train whistle  
deepens the night.

The bed creaks, and the  
sheets rustle.

But when you lie still,  
There is silence,

And the silence vibrates with  
an electric feeling unexplainable.

Yet, when you wake at dawn,  
It all seems a dream.

—C.M. Brown

## A Dream

Come walk with me in the early morn  
In the dew of the just-after-dawn,  
And see the Earth a new Eden born  
As if all of the old life were gone.

Come sit with me 'neath the maple trees  
As the leaves are beginning to turn,  
And, while gently blows a cleansing breeze,  
We can much needless knowledge unlearn.

Come gaze with me from the mountain's side,  
And leaning against a strong old tree,  
Put aside our foolish cares and pride,  
In awe to behold the sky turned sea.

A quiet rain begins to fall;  
I, wakened by the gentle stream,  
Wonder as I such thoughts recall  
Then leave them, and you, behind—a Dream.

—Betty Jayne Harding

Stop, Look, and Relax  
Your Anxiety has controlled you  
long enough!

Take time to be still  
And let silence ease its way  
In your mind  
and your being. . .  
It is called peacefulness.

All things around you that are  
Truly natural,  
The hush of the flowing river,  
The warmth of the evening sun,  
Will join in the silent song  
Your soul  
will softly begin to sing. . .  
That is called harmony.

Then you will be aware  
Of the flawless plan  
That allows you to even be alive,  
To experience  
the beauty of the elements. . .  
that is called God's presence.

And finally, there will be a day  
When you can experience tranquility  
Without practicing anymore. . .  
That is called Heaven.

—Jimmy Goodykoontz



## The Music of Night

The wind blows melancholy strains  
through the trees  
While the patter of rain keeps  
time.

The crickets scrape their raspy

## The Sound of Beauty

From all things wild and beautiful,  
There is a call.

The Serangeti Plain of Africa  
Sings a song  
unto me.

The Outback of Australia  
Hums a tune  
Calling, calling.

The great Rocky Mountains  
Present a symphony  
Beckoning, beckoning.

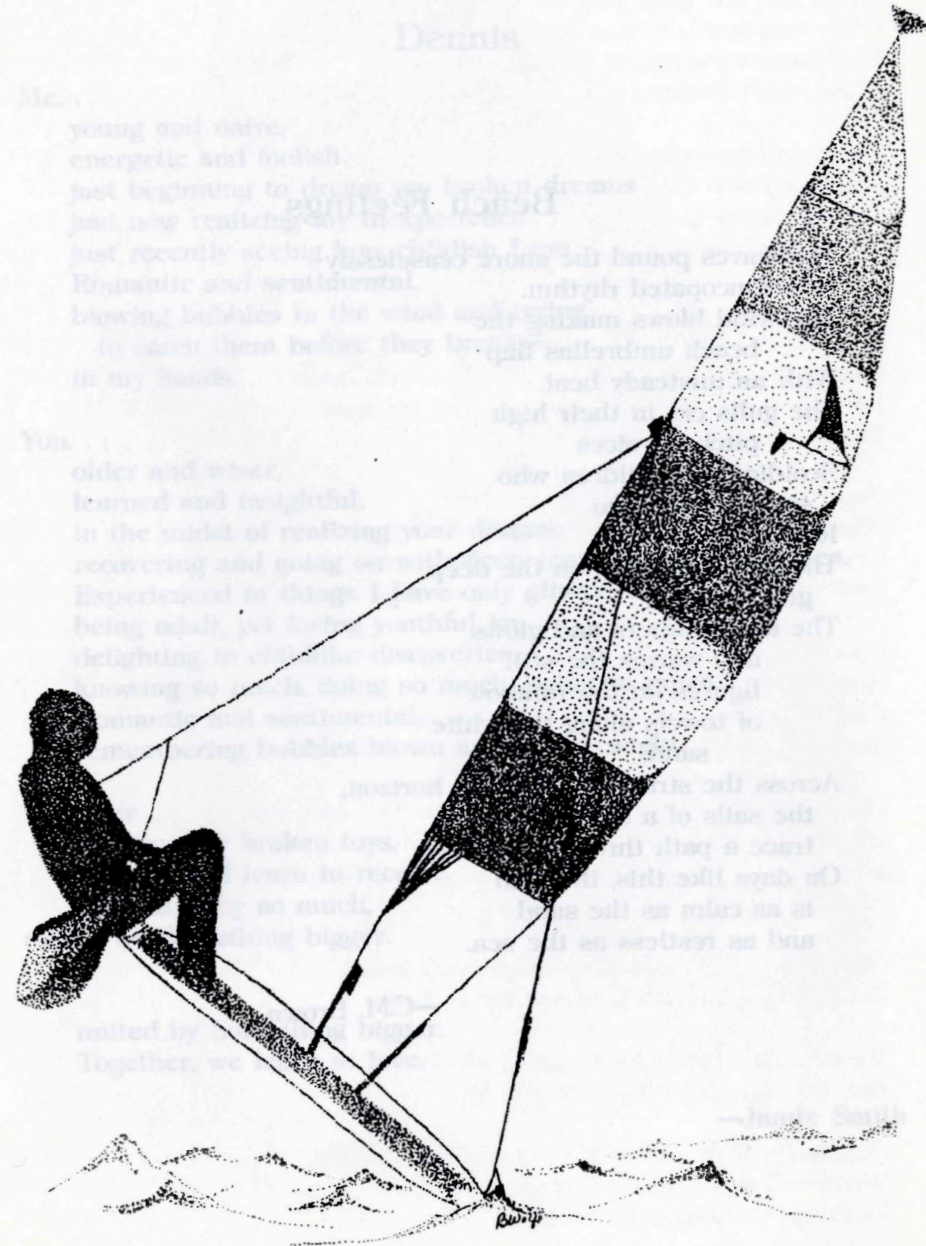
The French Riviera, the Alps  
All call to me.

This music calls me on  
To a better, higher home.  
All these things call unto life.  
I hear the roll of a drum,  
and the tinkle of a fife  
In a mountain stream.

And so,  
and so,  
I dream.

—C.M. Brown

## Dennis



## The Sound of Beauty

### Beach Feelings

The waves pound the shore ceaselessly  
In a syncopated rhythm.  
The wind blows making the  
    beach umbrellas flap  
With an unsteady beat.  
The gulls cry in their high  
    pitched voices  
Scolding the children who  
    scurry to and fro  
Racing the waves.  
The sun shimmers on the deep  
    green water.  
The air glimmers and glows  
    and warms the still  
    figures on the rainbow  
    of towels along the white  
    sand.  
Across the straight, unbroken horizon,  
    the sails of a ship  
    trace a path through the sea.  
On days like this, the soul  
    is as calm as the sand  
    and as restless as the sea.

—C.M. Brown

### Dennis

Me. . .

young and naive,  
energetic and foolish.  
just beginning to dream my broken dreams  
just now realizing my inexperience  
just recently seeing how childish I am.  
Romantic and sentimental,  
blowing bubbles in the wind and trying  
    to catch them before they break—  
in my hands.

You. . .

older and wiser,  
learned and insightful.  
in the midst of realizing your dreams  
recovering and going on with deep scars on tattered hopes.  
Experienced in things I have only glimpsed,  
being adult, yet loving youthful joy  
delighting in childlike discoveries,  
knowing so much, doing so much, being so much.  
Romantic and sentimental,  
remembering bubbles blown and never caught.

Together. . .

We cry over broken toys,  
we give and learn to receive.  
Separated by so much,  
united by Something bigger.

united by Something bigger.  
Together, we learn to love.

—Jamie Smith

## Daddy, Can't You See?

Can't you see what you do to me?  
Can't you see how you hurt?  
Sometimes you made me feel like dirt.  
I just don't understand why this had to be.

Can't you see what you do to her?  
Can't you see the pain in her face?  
Do you know you are the base  
Of all the madness that's taking place?

Can't you see what you do to him?  
He has to hide in all the dark grim.  
Can't you see he won't even let himself bend?  
Can't you see he's being destroyed because  
Everything is held within?

Can't you see what you do to her?  
She tries so hard to please you the most.  
Can't you see you degrade her with boast,  
And you cut her with the smallest dose?

Can't you see what you do to her?  
She's so young and uninformed.  
Can't you see she's going to conform  
Just to escape from where she was born?

Oh Daddy, Daddy, can't you see what you've done to us?  
Oh Yes, it looks like we've survived  
Or are we riding on the bus  
Just waiting to arrive?

Oh Daddy, can't you see deep down inside  
We hurt so bad because we try to hide.

We often feel like we're going to die,  
But it seems like we just get by.

Oh Daddy, I'm so sorry we must all confide,  
But if we don't, you'll just go on  
Hurting, without even a sigh.

—Cathy S. Griffith



### "Oh Brother!"

I was born on December 21, 1963, a Christmas present that wasn't supposed to arrive until March. After my parents brought me home from the hospital, they found that I was blind. I lived with my parents for two and a half quiet, undisturbed years, until my peaceful existence was shattered by the arrival of my brother, Ron. He was born on April 27, 1966. He should have been born 26 days earlier - on April Fool's Day!

I didn't know that my cuddly, soft, baby brother would eventually grow up to become the plague of my life. It didn't take him long either! At eight months of age, he ran over me with his walker to get a stuffed animal that I was playing with. From that time on, he always managed to get things from me. At Halloween and Easter when we got candy, he'd eat his share right up so that he could weasel me out of part of mine as well. I always ended up with decapitated Easter bunnies and half eaten candy bars because of him.

He always found some way to disrupt my play. He ate the cookies my mother had given me for my baby's tea parties. And his idea of playing with Barbie dolls was to make them go skinny dipping or to do splits until their legs fell off. On days when it was too rainy for him to go outside and play, and there was nothing that he wanted to watch on T.V.; he would say, "Joy, come and play a game with me." He let me pick the game, but it didn't matter which one I chose... I always lost anyway. If we were playing War, he'd have at least three aces. In Fish, he always seemed to "figure out" what I drew.

My favorite game to play was Monopoly, but it certainly wasn't because I ever won. Ron always wanted to be banker. He said it was because I never could find the change fast enough. But he ended up with mysteriously acquired large sums of money for houses and property. He never ran out of money for anything he wanted to do. He let me hand out the land... probably because he knew he could never buy a piece of land without my knowing it anyway.

I don't remember one Monopoly game in all those years of playing when he didn't end up with both Boardwalk and Park Place. When it was his turn to move he would hold the dice and blow on them. He'd say, "Come on. I need double sixes to get Boardwalk. Come on, double sixes." He'd look at the dice, shake them, and breathe on them for a while, and then drop them. "Double sixes! I got them! I can't believe it, Joy!" he'd shout.

-Cathy S. Griffin

The door between stands stark and wrong  
A young girl cries because her life has been all wrong

His first trick of blowing on the dice had gotten him Boardwalk, so now he moved on to his second trick. When he had gone around the board and was heading for Park Place, he would shake the dice, without blowing on them this time, and even show them to me so that I could see what he got. Then he would tap every space loudly as he moved, trying to disguise the barely audible tap which brought him to Park Place. Then he would act surprised that he had made it. When I protested, "That's not fair; where were you?", he'd show me where he was. But somehow, where he said he was never agreed with where I thought he was.

When he wasn't creaming me in Monopoly, or some other game, he subjected me to all kinds of physical torture. He'd say, "Does this hurt?" and abuse my body in one way or another. I always said it hurt right away, and submitted to being called a sissy. I found that if I didn't say it hurt, he'd do it harder until it did. If I called Mom to come and rescue me, he'd say, "But I didn't think it would hurt. She's a baby." When I got tired of being picked on and yelled at him; he would say, "What?" like he didn't hear me, to see how many times I would repeat what I said.

I soon realized that I had to escape from the little tyrant before he drove me crazy. I thought of raising money to send him on a one-way trip to Siberia for twenty-five years or so until he grew up a little. But I knew my parents would miss him. They couldn't have coped with the silence.

Since I couldn't get rid of Ron, my only other option was to flee to the peaceful sanctuary of Bee's house. Bee and I had been friends since we met in kindergarten at the school for the blind. She had a brother, Nels, who was a year older than we were. I thought he was very mature.

Nels asked if we wanted to play Fish. When we said, "Yes," he picked the cards up, threw them, and said, "Go fish!" Then we wanted to watch T.V.; but he ran in front of us, turned on the T.V., and said that he was watching it. We had to watch baseball instead of "Little House on the Prairie".

Later in the evening, we decided to call Lori, another friend from school. I really enjoyed this because Bee's family had three extensions to their phone, so Bee and I could both talk to Lori at the same time. We were deep in conversation about the boys we liked best when we heard a stealthy click. "Nels Raynor, you nosy brat! Get off the other extension!" Bee shrieked. "Yeah," I chimed in. "You're just like..."

-Joy A. Baade

## Who Knocks First?

The door between stands sturdy and strong.  
A young girl cries because her life has been all wrong.  
She desperately searches for the strength to knock,  
Only she know in her heart it will be locked.  
"How can anyone help me now?  
Slowly her spirit begins to die.  
Her final chance at peace has gone by.

The door between stands sturdy and strong.  
God stands behind, waiting for so long.  
"If only she would knock on the door,  
I could give her a life of peace and so much more."  
He waits patiently for her knock  
That would instantly break the mystical lock.  
Sadly, he turns away.  
There is no longer a reason to stay.

Why didn't he knock first?  
Why did her spirit have to burst?  
A soul was lost, waiting for God to reach her;  
She was desperate for his magical cure.

Why didn't she knock?  
She could have easily broken the lock.  
The soul is gone from beside the door,  
Which is left untouched once more.

—Andrea L. Hodges

## Philippians 3:14

The seas water engulfs me as I think further and further.  
Can I find the energy within myself to climb upwards?  
It is so much easier to let it pull me down,  
Yet I know I must push for the top—  
—Strive to live  
—Struggle to survive  
—Support those around me who are also sinking.  
If I can only kick harder,  
and hold on to the life preserver 'til the end;  
I know there will be much better things  
waiting for me on the shore.

—Sarah Beth Simmons

## Please Remember Me!

### Triumph

I am loved!

The sunrise sang I am loved. . .  
The mountains shouted Yes, loved!  
The wind whispered I am loved.  
The sun broke out with So loved!

Smiles sparkled— I am loved!  
Silence countered Oh, how I'm loved.  
Spirit surrounded I am loved. . .  
Shadows surrendered Yes, I'm loved.

How can I doubt it?  
Never alone!  
No fear about it—  
On His lap in the throne!  
Oh Abba, O Father—  
Finally free!  
Let go of all others  
And finally see  
That Your love courses through me,  
Around me and over  
Surrendered—oh glory!  
I'm finally Yours!

—Jamie Smith

## Division

Church bells ring, but who are they for?  
The church begins to divide, but is it strong  
enough to stand?  
A decision is made, but does it help?  
A minister is gone, but does anyone really care?  
An unbeliever looks for guidance, but finds a  
divided church.  
The unbeliever searches for peace and love, but  
finds heartache and struggles.  
The Unbeliever dies alone and discouraged.  
God cries.

—Andrea L. Hodges

Bear for me the wooden cross  
And wear the crown of thorns,  
Walk through crowds who spit at you  
And listen to their scorn.

It should be me, but take my place  
Endure my pain and strife,  
And when you've finished all of that  
Then give for me your life.

You say I must be crazy  
To require such a task,  
But Jesus did it for me. . .

And I didn't even ask

—Jimmy Goodykoontz

## The Music of Us

Every neuron in our brain is a musical note;  
Each masterfully written by God for a specific  
sound and purpose.  
Played together, they create chords and melodies;  
They create 'us'.  
And when the composition is finished here on earth,  
Our souls are taken away and a new composition  
is written in Heaven.

—Andrea L. Hodges

## Please Remember Me!

I bled and died for you,  
on that cross I cried for you,  
I cried, please remember Me - I love you!

You sit around makin' excuses  
never really paying attention  
you watch your boob tube  
and read your books and yet  
you never read My book  
to see what I have to say.  
Please remember Me!

I bled and died for you,  
on that cross I cried for you,  
Please Remember Me  
I Love You!

You're so worried about never having time  
and yet you find time to sit and do nothing  
you cry to Me saying, "Please help" and then go  
your way without listening - Please understand!

I bled and died for you,  
on that cross I cried for you,  
Please Remember Me,  
I Love You!

Why do you always wait till  
you're down and out to come running home?  
I'm always here waiting for you to call  
I want to hear about the happy times too!  
Please Remember Me!

I bled and died for you,  
on that cross I cried for you,  
Please Remember Me!  
I LOVE YOU!

PLEASE REMEMBER ME!  
PLEASE!

—Lynn Pottenger

## The Faithful Evolutionists

The scientists say there is no God,  
From outer space came sky and sod.  
It's funny how these men believe,  
For they have greater faith than me.

For I believe there is a God,  
He made the earth on which I trod,  
But science always tries to back  
Their monkey bones and artifacts.

The explanations they pursue  
Are something more than I can do,  
For lies are not a good defense.  
I choose to stick with common sense.

For in the world I still can see  
The remnants of some harmony,  
The majesty of mountains high,  
The mighty way the eagle flies,  
The blooming flowers in the grass,  
The running cheetah, sleek and fast,  
The rolling waves upon the sea,  
The stars that twinkle endlessly,  
The rising pines that grow so tall,  
The rumbling of a waterfall,  
The snake that crawls upon the ground,  
The cat that stalks without a sound.

The list goes on, it never ends  
So let's be real and not pretend.  
For God has shown His blessed face,  
At least His love, in any case,  
To those who know it took some more  
Than chance to give us Earth's decor.  
The force that made it all begin,  
They call it luck, I call Him friend.

—Jimmy Goodykoontz

## The Modern Churchman Orders His Tomb at Tri-City

All is vanity and pride!  
Family of mine. . . gather closely.  
What! My favorite son is at football practice?  
And the wife of my youth has gone to aerobics class?  
Surely, a man should be given the deathbed respect due him.  
Siblings, oh, my siblings, hear my cry!  
Make my sarcophagus plain, but good.  
Following the footsteps of my forefathers, make it wood.  
Some choose metals and some pastels.  
I chose oak, my life in the pulpit has given me  
A taste for good wood.  
Now children of my seed, take great care,  
As you choose the vault.  
It's important, it protects and keeps that  
Precious cargo, my remains.  
The lining material has changed from concrete and steel  
To copper and strentex.  
I have earned the right to be put away in style.  
Heaven knows, I have buried the saints and comforted  
The bereaved, till I am blue in the face, doesn't anybody  
Care about me?  
I pray with fervency that those underground springs,  
Will be absent when you lower my frame.  
Old lady Smith was washed up twice last year.  
The undertaker had to use a sump-pump to get her down.  
Oh, yes, and make the lining of that oak coffin soft,  
And velvet and blue, like the blue of the sky.  
I am sick of muslin sheets and drop ceilings and  
Asbestos, as is a preacher's lot.  
Some friend, old Clyde who preached a doctrine of humble repose,  
He said, "Let me go back to the earth from whence I came,  
And make it fast." Why he even told me in private  
That he would prefer to be buried in a burlap bag, so  
Mother Earth could recall him without hindrance.  
But not I, this preacher has had it tough, and  
I mean to go out in a blaze of glory.  
As you go through that undertaker's clothing shop  
For the dead, be sure to pick me out a stylish suit,  
Not one of those loud plaids, or one of those black  
Business suits, but one of those heavenly blues,  
Sorta like a modern-day Gabriel all dressed up.  
Oh, yes, and place that little olive wood New Testament  
In my hand, you see I am a man of the Cloth as well  
As a man of the Book and I think it would be  
Appropriate, indeed!  
So what if the insurance is inadequate for such finery.

Give the Chairman of the Board a bill for the difference.  
 At least these old ears of mine won't hear his complaint.  
 Besides, it's just not American to say unkind things  
 About the dearly departed.  
 Make my inner chamber fanciful,  
 Drape the coffin with yellow roses.  
 Most appropriate for a preacher, don't you think?  
 I would rather not have my black patent leather shoes exposed,  
 I know it is fashionable to display them in certain  
 Funeral parlours in the Northeast, but you see  
 My feet are too big, and I might look like "Thumper".  
 As I lay here on my death bed,  
 Contemplating my final performance, I am so  
 Grateful that it won't be a Masonic funeral.  
 I remember as a child observing the Masons in their little  
 White sheep skin aprons,  
 Chanting and scaring the "boogie man" away from the grave.  
 I can't help but chuckle, it hasn't changed  
 in fifty years and I still feel ridiculous  
 When I am forced to participate in this charade.  
 Oh! Life, you are so brief.  
 A stroll down the beach.  
 A walk across the stage.  
 Once I was young and now I am old.  
 After all the preparation is complete and my  
 Hair has been properly styled, my eyebrows tweezed  
 And the blush of youth has been blended  
 Into my faded cheeks,  
 Leave me at the Funeral Home.  
 Go home at 9:00 o'clock — no need to wait up with me.  
 My body won't be going anywhere.  
 My brilliance and my wit I have already taken with me.  
 No more will my congregation gather with bated breath  
 On Sunday to hear my pearls of wisdom.  
 Oh! Well, people are born and they die.  
 I guess it's my turn!

Amen.

—Will Lawrence

## An Acrostic

In the day, I want to sleep.  
 Not because I'm tired, really. It's just that  
 Early morning comes too soon. It's  
 Easy for some people to get up, but not me.  
 Day and night have no affect on my  
 Sleep. It comes at the strangest moments,  
 Like when I'm taking a bath or  
 Enhancing my skin or  
 Eating a snack like  
 Pizza; late at night.

—Sarah Beth Simmons





## Passivity

I've been here such a long time,  
But I see so little but the same  
Things, over and over and over again.  
I learned a lot once, but now it's all old,  
Old. Nothing has changed in such a long, long time.  
Except the people. They're perpetually young,  
Always new with different ideas and  
Reactions, yet the same. But they move on while  
I remain here watching a younger generation.  
I wonder, is the world they speak of really there?  
Or is it the myth again so often spoken of?  
I myself remember nothing but the  
Perpetual youth who stream through,  
Different, yet the same.

I had a dream once—I've  
Only had one—of a place quite  
Different from this place of plastic youth.  
A place of green and yellow rolling hills  
And a chance to lift my head and  
Gaze on some of these things  
These young ones have only heard of.  
Freedom. I dreamed it in its  
Pure and gracious form and roaming  
Hillsides and wandering as the  
Spirit wanders, exciting beyond the  
White walls and seeing the sun,  
Moon, stars first hand.  
But a Dream it was. I think.

I've only had one. Perhaps. Perhaps. . .  
The dream is not a dream but a  
Happening, an occurrence. Was I once  
Free to roam the hills and wander  
As the spirit wanders? No. It can  
Not be. I've always been here on the wall  
Watching silently and dreaming of a dreamless  
End.

—Jim Potter

Tomorrow's Land looks bright and gay;  
Unlike the dank dungeons of today.  
What turned out the light  
When in the night  
Tomorrow became today?

—Carole Railey

## Time

There is a lady  
I consider my friend

Sitting at the Cafe of Life  
We talk

exchanging meaningful

conversation

We laugh

and

We drink

We smoke

and

We cry

Unfortunately one of these days  
we will die.

—John Wentzel

—Janie Smith





Cathy Huffch

## Tears

Huddled against cold stone  
 Watching the sky turn from amber to rose  
 With tear-shrouded eyes  
 The clouds begin to dance.

Empty arms stretch out  
 To catch the drowning sun  
 But it slips through my fingers  
 And the purple clouds embalm it.

DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE!  
 The tears scorch my cheeks  
 Burning, searing, cauterizing old wounds  
 of loneliness.

DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE.  
 The tower on the hill winks again  
 Mocking foolish hopes, empty expectations  
 a dreamer's folly.

don't leave me alone. . .  
 Dying ember, doused and dripping  
 Weeps silently "Please, someone  
 love me?"

—Jamie Smith

Separation. . .  
 When the one you love  
 is only a warm memory  
 and a sterile face in  
 a photograph.

Separation. . .  
 When you walk around  
 with a half empty  
 feeling that won't  
 go away.

Separation. . .  
 When you hold on to  
 the things associated  
 with that special  
 someone—a gift, a  
 card, a memory.

Separation. . .  
 They say it makes the  
 heart grow fonder; I  
 say it makes the heart  
 grow melancholy.

—C.M. Brown

## Marginal Matters

She sat  
 And the cards and the frame and the pictures,  
 the flower, the notes, and poems  
 Sat staring back at her.  
 The stereo rasped an aging album,  
 And the wind was blowing outside again.

She gazed at the names, scribbled  
 Thoughtfully in the margins. Initials and days  
 To remember.  
 Outside, the two lovers chased the blowing leaves,  
 Laughing at the world.

Stubbornly, she sat.  
 Staring at the empty pages of abandoned friendships,  
 Sullenly grasping the dreams that threatened goodbye.  
 Straightening the pen, she traced the names in her address books.  
 The heart drawn in the margin blurred with a tear.

She held on in small ways.

—Jamie Smith

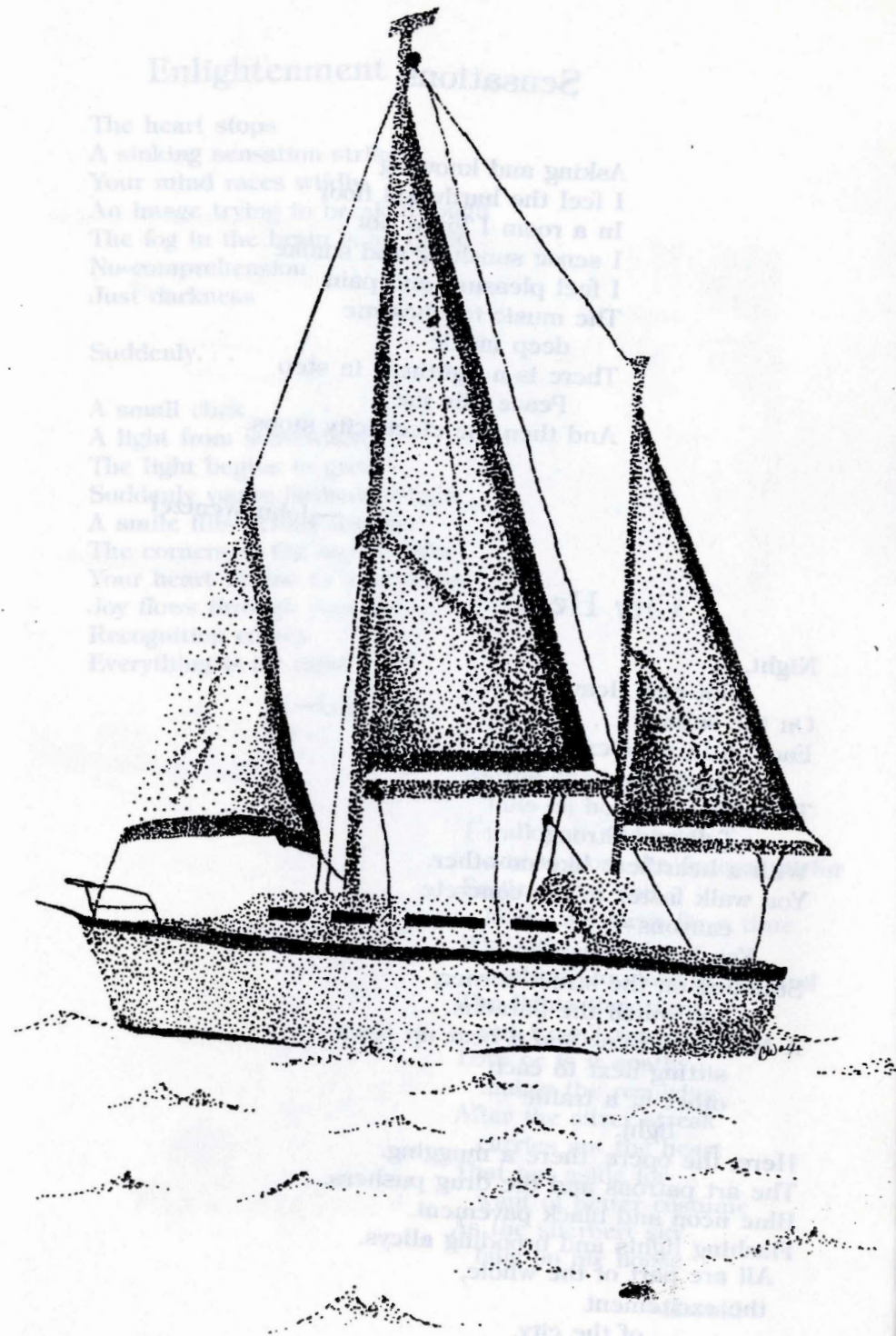
February 7, 1987

She turned away from the blond boy with the mother's face who slept soundly beside her. These mornings were never good and she wanted to leave before he woke; but the same feelings kept her from moving. Looking around the upstairs room she thought of the person who lived there. His walls bare and bright in the early sun reflected the transience of the situation. Slowly, as not to disturb him, she dropped her legs over the edge of the bed and pushed back the blankets. He shifted his position becoming quiet quickly not wanting her to think he had awakened. Smiling to herself, she dressed without any sound, realizing these mornings pleased him no better. She reached down to pick up her shoes feeling more alone than ever.

Downstairs, the almost empty rum bottle gave her enough energy to step outside into the cool winter air. For awhile she walked not intending any particular destination. A block further ahead, a child appeared carrying a lunch box colored red. The tears came before she could make an effort to hold them back. She let them slide down her cheeks, feeling where the wind and wetness met. Glancing at her watch, she caught the light playing on her slender hand. Familiar pain rose starting from far down and working up to the blinking eyes. Wondering why the sun must shine on such a day, she picked up her pace heading for the cafe on the corner.

Breakfast, she often thought, proved to be the only good thing of a morning. Today, the coffee and pastry felt comforting like the sight of a fire did for some. A heavy-set man with an English overcoat nodded at her when he walked in and soon came over to the table. Sitting down, he asked about her, but she saw the distant look in his eyes. She replied that all was as usual and how was he. For the next few minutes he spoke of the business she had learned much about in the past months. He talked into his cup while she stared beyond him out of the window. It was always like this. His voice, deep and smooth, came from the world she had left to settle into the one of daydreams. Suddenly she stood up continuing her fixed gaze beyond his balding head. Yes, she had forgotten an appointment. Sorry to leave so soon, but... of course she would be back next week.

Noon travelers crowded the airport hurrying past her to meet their flights. She walked slowly unsure of where the gate would be. Then he was there before her. Flowers in one hand and his briefcase occupying the other. He set the case down gathering her in his arms. Relief showed in her eyes; she had made it in time. Mornings like this were hell.



## Sensations

Asking and knowing  
I feel the hardwood floor  
In a room I know not  
I sense sunshine and smoke  
I feel pleasure and pain  
The music touches me  
    deep inside  
There is a lightness in step  
    Peace fills me  
And then the electricity stops.

—John Wentzel

## City Heat

Night. . .

Hot and Heavy.

On the subway. . .

Each mile, your excitement  
increases.

The city. . .

Tall and Strong

With a heartbeat like no other.

You walk faster in the concrete  
canyons—

You breathe harder.

Standing on the street corner,  
you watch the paradox. . .

A Mercedes Benz and a beat up Nova  
sitting next to each

other at a traffic  
light.

Here, the opera, there a mugging.

The art patrons and the drug pushers.

Blue neon and black pavement.

Flashing lights and brooding alleys.

All are part of the whole,  
the excitement

of the city.

—C.M. Brown

## Enlightenment

The heart stops  
A sinking sensation strikes  
Your mind races wildly  
An image trying to break through  
The fog in the brain is so thick  
No comprehension  
Just darkness

Suddenly. . .

A small click  
A light from somewhere  
The light begins to grow  
Suddenly you're bathed in light  
A smile flits across the face  
The corners of the mouth raise  
Your heart begins to beat faster  
Joy flows through your being  
Recognition comes  
Everything is all right

—Lora Hays

As the sherbert sky  
falls on hollywood houses  
I walk into the brick  
across from the funeral parlor  
Smile and a nod  
keeps me away for a time  
While the curtains  
continue to close at the end  
The lights they went  
out I can't remember  
Love or is it apathy  
makes the revolving  
After the silver streak  
carries not the heart  
That put aside for  
want of better costume  
As the sherbert sky  
falls on my house

—Harold

Enlightenment

The heart stops  
A sinking sensation strikes  
Your mind races with  
The fog in the

Sublimity

A small boat  
A light beam  
The light begins  
Subtle yet  
A subtle line

Joy flows through  
Recognition can  
Everything is all

Light

of the

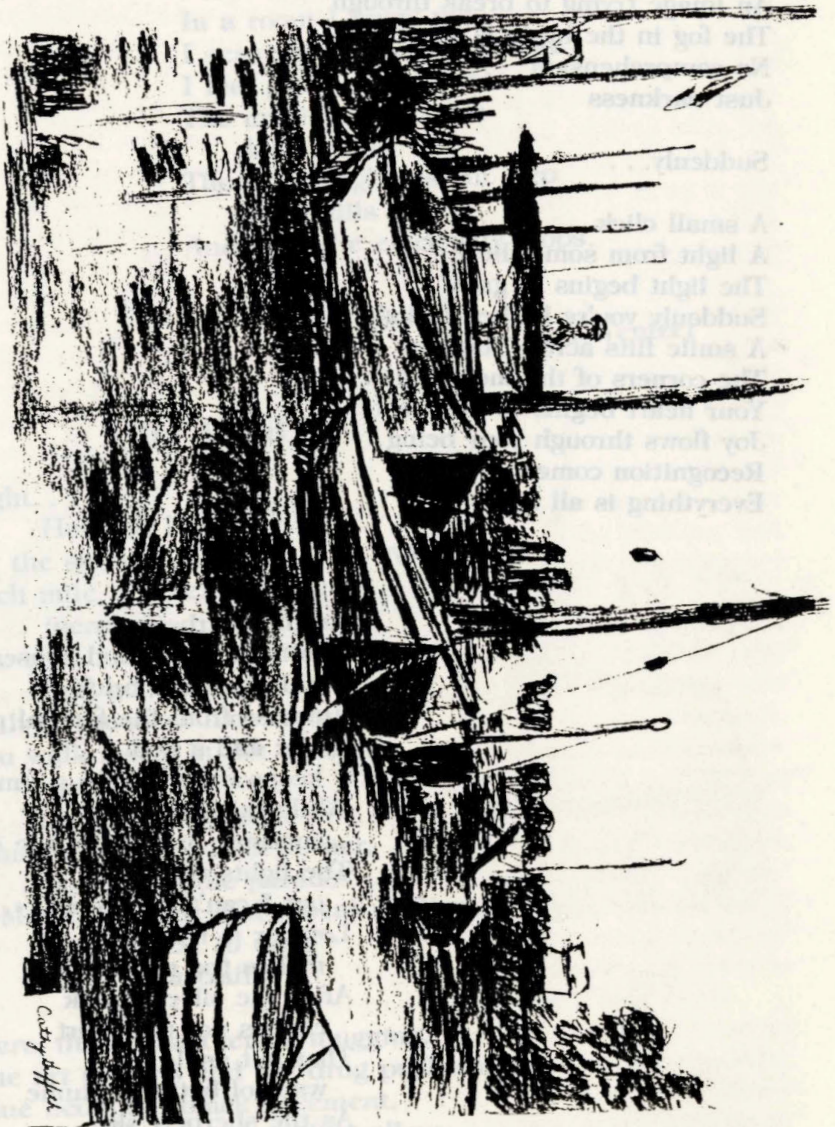
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Cathy Miller

