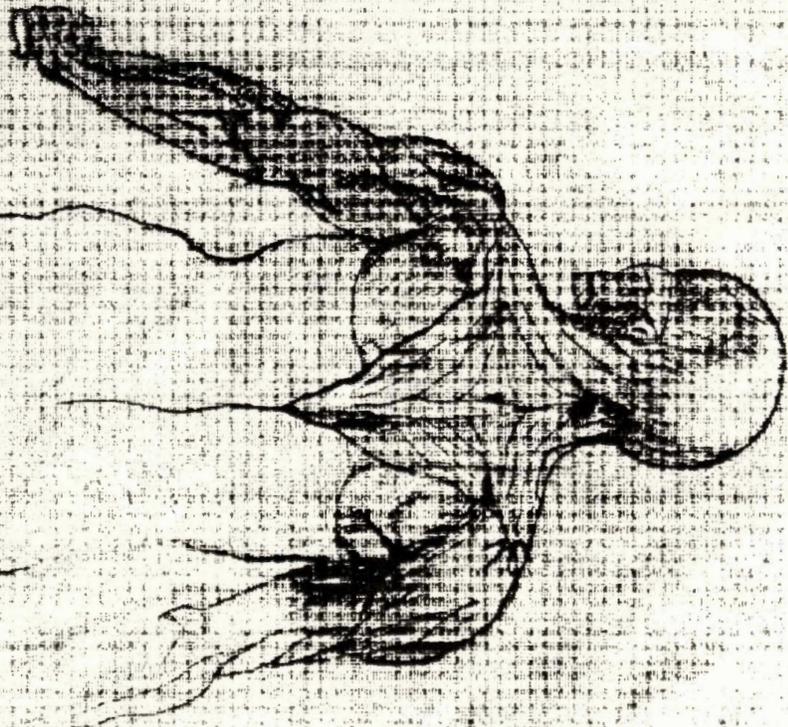


HELIXION
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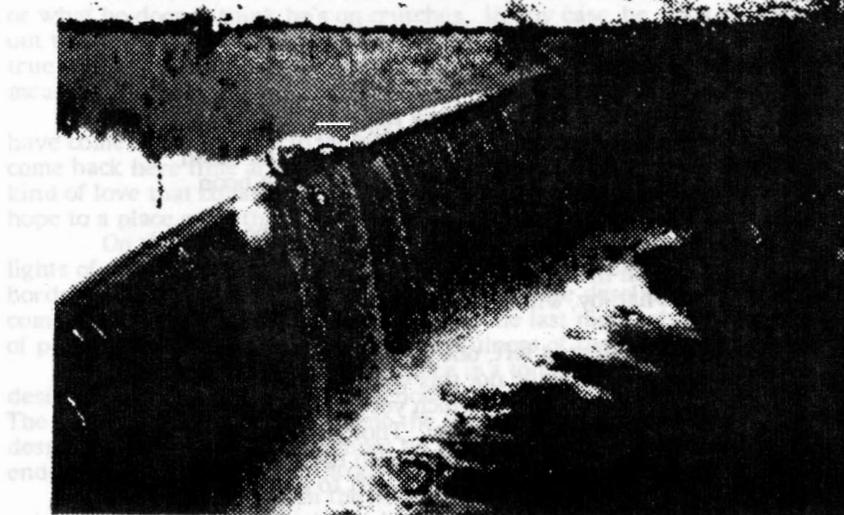
In Greek mythology, Mt. Helicon was the home of the seven Muses, the patrons of the arts. Let us now return to Mt. Helicon to discover what the muses of this generation have to show us.

Cover illustration by Shirley Nathan
Cover lettering by Laura Brumley

The following is a journal entry from a missions trip to the Villa Nueva Chilonga's Home in Piedras Negras, Mexico.

8:00 a.m.

Across the road lives an older man. That's how he has a life



children, the parents, the old man—have no need of his face. You might want to say that they need his presence, but the poverty is bearable. That may be true, but the way these people see God and bearly, minute-by-minute, worship God, seems to say the life is more than bearable. When any of us opens our eyes and with His peace, His joy, His patience, shine inwardly to our own heart and outwardly through our life, it is always, constantly, more than bearable. It is joyous and wonderful, peaceful and beautiful. It is God with us, Emmanuel. It is why we are here, and it is life.

Brian West
Prize Winner

Aimee Faries
Art Winner

SONNET

Yet if the leaves should fall from every tree,
And leave bare branches lifting to the moon
Stark hands in ghastly asking for the boon
Of snow to cover their deformity;
And if the birdsongs fail thee, and the free
Wild caroling of nature's joyful noon
Hush into sadness and despairing soon;
What joy, what cheer, what hope is left to thee?

One thing is left, one only; 'tis the trust
That God made not this world of ours in vain;
That in some way which yet we cannot see
He'll make all good yet. Though earth turn to dust
And sad hearts wail beneath their bitter pain,
Do not despair, for God is left to thee.

Edwin Robert Tait
Poetry Winner

*The following is a journal entry from a missions trip to the
Vida Nueva Children's Home in Piedras Negras, Mexico.*

8:00 p.m.

Across the road lives an older man. I don't know if he has a job or what he does—I think he's on crutches. In any case, he sings throughout the day, and even now, after it's dark, his voice rings out clear and true in the night. It's a beautiful voice. It conveys so much emotion and meaning even though the language of the words is so alien.

There's a common bond we all share, and I think the people who have come here on this trip know that. People like Rob and Sandy, who come back here time after time—they know this in their bones. It's that kind of love that comes from God, and it's that kind of love that brings hope to a place even this impoverished.

On the horizon, through the darkness of rural Mexico, shine the lights of a distant town. They could be shining from just over the border, just over the river. They shimmer over the desolate land we've come to. I just saw a shooting star. I saw one last night, also. They kind of put an exclamation point on the peacefulness of the area.

The old man sings again. There is a tone of longing, of pain and desire, in his voice. But also, somehow at the same time, there is joy. The despair of the past has become the joy of today. The memory of despair still remains, but it cannot be separated from the joy, the joy of enduring, the joy of lasting through and past the woe—the joy of life.

God is here. He's in the States, to be sure, but somehow here the pain is darker, so His face shines brighter. Those who see Him—the children, the parents, the old man—have no need of hiding His face. You might want to say that they need His presence just to make the poverty bearable. That may be true, but the way these people see God, and hourly, minute-by-minute, worship God, seems to say that life is more than bearable. When any of us opens our eyes and lets His peace, His joy, His patience, shine inwardly to our own heart and outwardly through our life, it is always, constantly, more than bearable. It is joyous and wonderful, peaceful and beautiful. It is God with us, Emmanuel. It is why we are here, and it is life.

Brian West
Prose Winner

THE WIND

The wind blows soft and fair,
From whence I do not know.
I ask not why or where
But let it blow.

I ask not whence it comes;
It is beyond my ken.
No doubt it blows from some fair bourne
Beyond the reach of men.

I ask not where it goes;
It keeps its secrets sure.
I only know the wind shall blow
While earth and heaven endure.

Edwin R. Tait



Aimee Faries

WRESTLING MATES

Despair and I, we are old wrestling mates;
Depression, too, has tossed me to the floor.
These two together bruise my spirit sore,
Loading my back with heavy chains and weights.

I've had to fight them all, not just these two:
Grinning Lust in rowdy, bawdy bouts;
Anger and Hate, like two big clumsy louts,
Yet strong enough, and sometimes subtle too.

Over and over, Pride's held me for the count,
A cursed, fanged and clawed, unyielding beast.
I've tripped him up, though, once or twice at least;
Slowly but surely, I know my strength will mount.

Many and fierce have been my fighting foes.
A motley, varied legion I have known,
And oft been beaten; but I've always grown,
Preparing for a greater one than those:

For one day Death himself will rear his head.
His claws will strip my flesh from off the bone.
My soul from out my flesh, and all alone
I'll, beaten, take my place among the dead.

I'll hear his mocking cry: "The fight is done!"
But up from out the grave my soul will wing
With strength from many battles; and I'll sing
To all the world: "My God and I have won."

Jonathan Huddleston

A LITTLE CHILD

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven"
(Matt. 18:4).

The nature of a little child,
I simply could not see
How such a nature ever could
Become a part of me.

The pride of years would never let
My Savior on the Throne,
But crowned me King and kept me where
I reigned, just I alone.

This pride, oh, what a horrid thing!
Kept me from bending low,
So, through the Kingdom's door, you see,
I simply could not go.

So, large with what I thought I was,
I stood outside for years;
I cried, I groaned, I prayed, and yet
Would glory in my tears.

Thus all the beauty of His realm
Was on the other side;
Oh, what I missed, oh, what I lacked,
Because of my old pride!

Then, oh the wonder of that day,
I saw what I should do;
I said, "Lord Jesus, I step down
And give the throne to You."

And so when I by faith obeyed,
A miracle of grace,
Within this haughty heart of mine,
That moment did take place.

For all at once I knew, I felt
Humble and meek and mild,
And saw that God had given me
The nature of a child.

Now would I, dare I, could I try
Once more the Kingdom's door?
I longed to, yet it looked so low,
So near unto the floor.

But, beckoned by the pierced Hand
Which had removed my sin,
Upon my knees, now weak and small,
A child, I entered in.

I entered in, oh bless the day,
I entered through that door,
And all His Kingdom lay ahead
For children to explore.

And so, diminished as I am,
Stripped of all else but grace,
I live, a trusting little child,
And look upon His face.

And now there is but One supreme
Who rules and wears the crown,
And that great miracle began
The moment I stepped down.

Gertrude Beatrice Tait

A PARABLE

Once upon a time there lived a man named Good Works. He was not, I hasten to add, theologically unsound; he knew as well as you do that we are saved by grace. But he could not conceive, even as Paul could not conceive, of any man accepting Jesus as Savior without also accepting Christ as Lord. He took very seriously the parable of the talents, and the scriptures about heavenly rewards for earthly deeds.

Good Works was usually quiet, though indeed as he grew in the Lord he became convicted of the need to express his joy, even to evangelize more. Most often, though, he was unostentatious. But he did more good in his life than most people ever dream of, and if he often thought of heavenly rewards as a sort of incentive, he was no Pharisee. He really had an urgent desire to do what was right in a life that was a mere brief, mistlike prelude to real life in heaven. In fact, some of his friends described him as driven. Always before his eyes was the thought of a list kept in heaven of all he did for God.

When Good Works died he was surprised to find himself placed in a room with another recently dead, and presumably (like him) saved. A loud voice proclaimed, quoting 1 Cor. 3, "the fire will test the quality of each man's work." One at a time they saw, as on a film, the works they had done; the other man was first. He saw all the things he had done for God (and like Good Works', they were many) as temples; but they were temples, not to the Lord, but to himself. The man gave a cry of distress. But then came over the screen the fire of the Lord's grace, and it was revealed that the temples were built of hay and straw, and were consumed by grace; and he entered heaven singing.

Then Good Works was filled with both doubt and wonder; but he watched silently. And his own works appeared, and they were not to his glory, for he was as humble a man as mortals in this world can be. But he perceived that, despite the quantity and quality of his work, costly gems and gold, each one was the link of a giant chain whose other end was fastened to his back, and the heavy gold weighed him down. Again the fire came, and burned brighter and longer, until finally the gold itself melted and he was free.

But when he looked among the ashes and the ruin of his work, one mighty cedar sprang forth, and then another, until there was a great and beautiful harvest. And then a voice said, "Not because of your works but because you loved Me and My purpose, these lives you touched are your reward, a crop that I have caused to grow.

"Your new name will be Blessed, for even in its destruction (which was your freedom) your labor was blessed by me."

So Blessed went into heaven; but at the gate there was an angel with a stack of scrolls, and beside him burned the same fire of grace. And as Blessed passed, the angel withdrew a scroll and said, "These are your sins," and threw them into the flames. And he handed Blessed another scroll, saying, "And this is what you have done for the Lord"; but Blessed, shuddering to touch what is earthly in that holy land, fed it also to the fire.

After he entered he cared for none of this, worshiping God in holiness. But presently there was a great cry. So he turned: approaching the glossy pearl gates were two men fleeing, and behind them was a great fire of destruction. Blessed knew, as all those watching knew, that the two who ran were sealed with the Blood, but had built nothing, lived nothing, cared only for themselves. And the flames of heaven rushed forth, even as the flames of destruction pursued, and the two were caught in that battle, so that even their clothes were consumed; and they entered heaven naked, without reward, heads bowed in shame.

But heaven received them otherwise: from two blessed saints came white robes, purchased with martyrs' deaths, which they placed on the two newcomers. From others came crowns whose every jewel betokened sacrifice and love far beyond the two who now wore them. And then, behold! the voice of the Lamb spoke, calling the two newcomers up before the very throne, and with His hand He placed them on the seats His Father had kept ready until that day: those to Jesus' right and left.

At this there was murmuring in heaven. To still it, one of the elders said, "This is to show that we do not earn his love." And another agreed, "It is because none needs this honor and special gift more than the two who came here most ashamed." And a third said, laughing (for laughter is common in heaven), "It is a joke the Almighty plays on us and for us; blessed is His name."

But Blessed interrupted, and though he was still new and they were the elders before the throne, all listened; for they always listen in heaven. He said: "My name is Blessed, but I was Good Works. And I say that He who is forever praised has done this not for their sake, nor yet as a jest, but out of his kindness to all who might once have desired such a position; that here at last we—not the lazy ones, but the laborers—might be forever freed from the burden of reward."

The elders nodded their silent agreement as the cherubim praised.



Aimce Faries

IN MEMORY OF THE NOBLE CHARGER MERRYLEGS

Rusted is Durandal's keen blade,
Which gallant Roland erst did wield,
And Rosinante's bones are laid
Long since in some forgotten field.

And humbler mounts as yet unsung,
Whom only fancy gilds with glory,
And blades a hero's arm ne'er swung,
Nor won therewith a place in story

Share the inevitable fate
Of swords and horses, men and spears,
Pass the irrevocable gate,
Nor stay for our impuissant tears.

Into oblivion they pass,
And, God forgive us, we forget
Proud Rosinante's bones in grass
And Durandal with dewdrops wet.

O ancient charger, rust-eaten and alone,
Forlorn, forsaken among the silent trees,
Do you remember how, in happier days,
I rode you into battle, when around
Your plunging hoofs the noise of combat rose
Like deafening billows on a steadfast shore?
Do you remember all our fights of old,
The dear imagined battles yet unsung,
Which only you and I in all the earth
Remember. Rust devours your saddle now;
Your face, almost unrecognizable,
Gazes at me with sad remembrance yet,
Under the coating of the silent rust.

Why can these memories not endure forever?
Why must their voice be silenced as by death?
I, who have vowed that they should perish never,
Forget them, and no man else remembereth.

Only the children gaze with innocent faces
Upon these relics of the happy past,
Bring back their former life with their embraces,
And think, as I once did, that they will last.

Edwin R. Tait

THINGS IN A BOTTOM DRAWER

A radio with transistor parts
which tossed aside its tuning knob
that ears may not command of fingers
its clang-pot voice be stifled;

It once had brutalized the arts
when I'd armed myself with a fishing rod
and a box of bobbers, flies, and sinkers
where bass and sunfish rifled

Shadowed flows in a rooty cove.
But now the speaker's plastic net
and childish memories bear a veil
of dust and disrepute.

A tawny basket I once wove
but somehow haven't finished yet
(like ensuing projects long gone stale)
and the dog-bitten heel of a discarded boot;

An envelope of faded pictures
of a young man playing a sailor's role
which auditioned for an album page
but for dignity's sake were stowed;

A burnt-brown plastic night-light fixture
which calmed a tiny, trembling soul
from ogres of the dark which raged
in fever-nights of flu and cold.

A manila envelope's splitting corners
expose the letters too heavy for its years
or my fortified heart to bear
to read their feminine scrawl again.

Many years ago, when I was warmer
her sugar-pen brought laughs and tears
until I found when she disappeared somewhere
what lies our lives had been.

It's these things I'm no longer looking for
I've tried to stash and hide away
as if they were someone else's hopes
I'm keeping until they return for them,

Which make a casket of a bottom drawer
where death has begun to stalk its prey,
Chess pieces and the bars of motel soap
which breath their scents even now as then.

Scents are powerful, and hard on old wounds,
the perverted lilac and sneeze-factory dust,
a mothball scarf from a distant branch,
when issued forth from a bottom drawer.

Handless clocks clutter the tomb,
the step we hate to march to but must;
a scraped knee's bloody, discarded patch
and model airplanes which crashed to the floor.

The hopes we held, the dreams we tried
and everything you'll ever do,
along with loves you wish you could have,
the painful script on faded pages;

A bag of smooth stones from a lost high tide,
some foreign coins which were never new,
a relic for a tear, and one for a laugh,
the wisdom of all the forgotten ages,

The material lead which hinders faith
and belief in a world beyond such things,
the broken promises and dead-end roads
we let our hearts be broken for,

Sure to outlive us, which draw dust and wait
amongst the marbles and old loose strings,
will all become bricks on a mourner's load
when they find these things in a bottom drawer.

R. J. Larson

LOVE IS PATIENT.
 LOVE IS KIND.
 LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS.
 LOVE DOES NOT BRAG.
 LOVE IS NOT RUDE.
 LOVE IS NOT ARROGANT.
 LOVE DOES NOT INSIST ON ITS OWN WAY.
 LOVE IS NOT IRRITABLE.

LOVE IS NOT RESENTFUL.
 LOVE DOES NOT REJOICE IN EVIL.
 LOVE REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH.
 LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS.
 LOVE BELIEVES ALL THINGS.
 LOVE HOPES ALL THINGS.
 LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS.
 LOVE NEVER FAILS.

(A THIRD PSALM)

El-Shaddai. My God.
 I am a covenant-breaker,
 I have forsaken your holy path.
 I have sinned against you, Lord Most High,
 and have desecrated your holy temple.
 I have made you unwelcome in
 your own tabernacle
 and have made my heart a dwelling-place for evil.

Hosha'na'! Adonai.
 If I am truly Yehoshua,
 then have mercy upon me.
 Teach me to repent, Adonai El-Shaddai,
 and to walk steadfastly in your Way.
 I will turn from my wickedness
 and me and my house
 will serve Yahweh, our Lord and God.

Hallelujah! Forever.
 Yahweh Adonai my God is One,
 I shall serve Elohim for eternity.
 Forgive my falling, O God,
 and remember not my sin.
 Just as the nails have turned to rust,
 so have my sins disappeared from memory;
 I will be a beacon on the mountain.

José

I.

Let who will praise the joyfulness of Spring,
The flowers in bloom, the fields in bright array,
The skies untainted blue, the woods all gay
With crocuses, and laurel blossoming.
Let them wear out their lungs with carolling
The tears of April or the smiles of May,
The gentle breezes and the cloudless day.
Far other joys and other days I sing—
The trees bare-boughed, bleak skies of sombre hue,
The birds all flown, the leaves withered and dry,
The woods in sombre winter livery,
The flowers all dead, all old that once was new.
I will maintain, though all men say me nay,
Beauty shines brightest under skies of gray.

II.

In darkness only is true brightness shown,
Flowers and verdure mock true beauty's beams,
For all that is hid by that which seems,
And no high truth is ever fully known.
Ere long the birds that sing now will be flown,
In chains of ice bound all our murmuring streams,
Fled like swift shadows all our pleasant dreams,
Withered the grass that now so high has grown.
Yet though this be, Spring's beauty still is bright,
And nothing's fairer than the flowers of May.
Most fair they are, though fading their delight,
Surpassing fair, though soon they must decay.
Yet does each sunrise of a winter's dawn
Show forth new beauty, though the old is gone.

Edwin R. Tait

I AM

I am the dream seller, spell-weaver, truth sayer,
Teller of stories and singer of songs.
I am the gypsy, the bare-footed pipe player,
Disciple of beauty and righter of wrongs.

What will you give for my nebulous wares—
Blood on the altar and coins in my cap?
What price to be free for a time of your cares,
And have my gifts dumped in return on your lap?

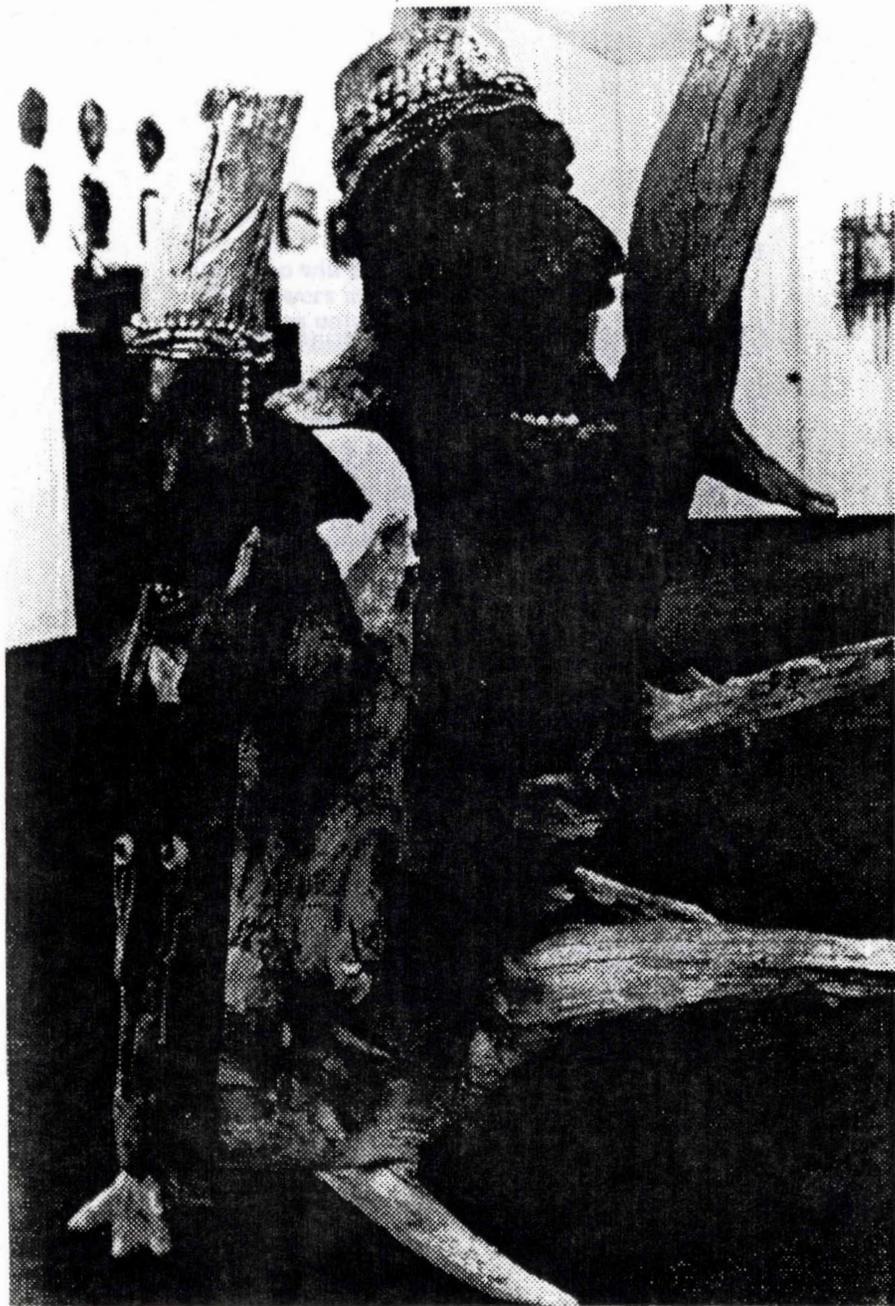
Fools! Why do you chase me about, so insistent?
Who warned you to flee from the wrath that's to come,
Like sheep with no shepherd, no will, unresistant?
About to be sheared, will you still remain dumb?

But still I pipe on where the mass cannot follow,
I skip over mountains and onto the sea,
Skip out of the graveclothes and leave the tomb hollow,
To sing of a world that the world cannot see.

And still I go out through the masses of people,
Where I am a whispering out of the dark.
Within every cottage, beneath every steeple,
Where fires burn brightly my voice was their spark.

I am the dream seller, spell-weaver, truth sayer,
Teller of stories and singer of songs.
I am the gypsy, the bare-footed pipe player,
Disciple of beauty and righter of wrongs.

Jonathan Huddleston



Aimee Faries

There's a mystery of living
that I cannot just ignore
It's a fire of forgiving
that is fueled forevermore
By the glory and the power
of the one and only door
It's the final fateful hour
At eternity's dark core

Well, I don't know how to say it,
but it's begging to be said
Like a game I try to play it,
but its joy runs bloody red
From the rivers in high places
coming down to those once dead
Ever brightening the faces
who will let themselves be led

Though the paradoxes haunt me
there's a truth that laughs with life
There's a joy that mocks our sorrow,
there's a peacefulness in strife
Watch the wicked's self-destruction
with a sharpened will-bred knife
as their blood becomes an ocean
covering up the trails of Life

There's a mystery of living
still in search of perfect words
Though it's tried through many chapters
Many men find it absurd
In a desperate act of kindness
It became what it began
Taking form in its own likeness,
And the Truth became a man

Brian West

THE OTHER SIDE

In jungle nights the nightingale sings not,
Where wind the winds all slow and sultry hot—
No bird calls, but bats shriek of bloody prey,
And screams the sloth to steal man's sleep away.
The stars shine bright, and well might one believe
That billowing balls of fire these patterns weave,
That so delight the eye, and light the way
Along the paths of night so long, to day.

No airy mists the airs surreal cast,
For daybreak here breaks out in day too fast.
The sun leaps in a hurry to its heat
And fiercely fights to fuel the fog's defeat,
As though the new-born day would play no part
In the old mystic night's mysterious art.
Then heat and sweat and work for beast and man;
The trees' vast shelter does what nature can
To cool the land, but nothing dims the heat
Of danger, listening for hunters' feet.

And nature is a killer and a cheat,
Where flowers are few in petalled blossoms sweet
And vines abound, twisting in treacherous pile,
To catch the bounding deer in traps of guile.
The strong will live and hunt, the dreamers die;
And only those who play the game can vie
With Nature: killing creatures as she kills,
Carving her up and leveling her hills.

The clouds that roll and cloud the sky from sight
May float in peace, but often seem to fight,
All dark and angry, swollen in the sky.
Piled up like vast armadas far on high.
They dim the sun, which shines on all the more
And would reverse its course to win this war,
But finally dies, twice beaten: covered, set;
From clouds and its own weight, its fate is met.
The wind picks up, and is no sprightly breeze,
But mighty gale that tosses down the trees
And blows, first here, then there, all winds in one.

The rain that reigns across the forest then
Falls not in soothing showers so loved by men,
But showers downward with destructive force;
A river running through a vertical course.
The land holds water plenty, needs no more;
This rain can serve no purpose but to score
Some personal revenge all of its own;
So ends the jungle day, fair Nature's throne.
The lightning bolts electrocute night's sky,
And man must fight to live, or learn to die.

In jungle nights the nightingale sings not,
For death is on the wing, and blood flows hot.

Jonathan Huddleston

BARE TREES AND BLEAK HEARTS

The leaves fall from the barren trees,
And softly flutter to the ground;
But just as bleak as a leafless bough,
With death in the future and misery now,
Is a heart where wafts no heavenly breeze,
Where no spring of hope in God is found.

For whom came Christ? For barren trees,
Bleak and helpless in the breeze;
Not for those who in summer radiance fair
Think proudly that they can stand alone;
But for those who in their deep despair
Despise the vain glory they once have known.

These are the sick for whom Christ died,
These are the souls for whom He rose,
These are the saved for whom He pleads,
These are the saints His Father knows.

Edwin R. Tait

MIND GAMES & THE BIG PICTURE

A lifetime of this power play—
uneducated; intellectually in poverty
Society enforces the creed
that ignorance is acceptable
and apathy is a qualitative emotion
The standards of life—
precepts of today and the ominous tomorrow—
It's hard to conceive
it has eroded to this:
A sandbox struggle over rights and freedoms—
Who really knows?
A world is dying
as it quibbles about the value of gold
and steps over starving children
in these "equal opportunity" streets.
Dense realities of war
surround a generation of materialistic babes
fed on satin and lace—
full of candied dreams with no grasp
on the *obvious*—

The snake has bitten us.

Heather N. Holbrook

ENTERTAINMENT

The crack of the bat
The thud of bodies hitting the turf
Up, up goes another shot
Up, up goes another paycheck

Dancing around in her bra and panties
Have to take off a shirt to sing a song
Why don't we just give our shirts
As much as they charge for a ticket

Common sense thrown out the window
To hear a new song
Or to see a new dunk
All to escape reality for a time

The entertainment of the masses
Is worth millions to some
But the people that live on the corner
Of the arena every night might disagree

Kevin Brown

FISHING IN THE SUN

"We have fished all night and taken nothing
nevertheless." (Luke 5:5)

I can't go fishing in the sun!
It's such a foolish thought
I've fished the long and weary night
And merely fished for naught.

So how can I, with common sense,
Fish—in the glare of day?

"It's not the right and wrong of it
We're talking about."

Not I'll be
It couldn't

What
An

I long
I was one
Point or light
Your mind, point

I may never make
endured to an
looking, slamm
and yet, portu
the way for you

years of the story
I'll never

can't reckon by the day
for the Master's voice,
And what he says—obey!

He knows the fish, he knows the sea,
He knows the wind by rote,
So if you hear him say, "Launch out,"
You'd better get your boat!

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uneducated, intellectually in poverty
Society enforces the creed
that ignorance is acceptable
and apathy is a qualitative emotion.
The standards of life—
products of today and the ominous tomorrow—

THE CHESLIGHT

Its first laser gaze came from a star—
a single needle point against the coal
of night. Landfall's paint-thin layer
lay far west, and yet, out there,
the light—heaving at its chain,
homesick for a pier to mark,
nodded back and forth to say
'Thataway, thataway, thataway.'
An umbilical snake of anchored chain
led up from the depths,
imprisoning a nun buoy—
a nun, ministering past the bounds
of third-world slums, past any world,
on the empty gateway's realm
shining paths of light for weary hulls.

I longed not to pass, seeing
it was one of us;
Points of light, seeking, hoping,
yearning, pointing.

I may never make my journey home,
anchored to an ocean's dreams, its breakers
tossing, slamming, staggering with lies
and yet, perhaps at least I'll light
the way for you.

R. J. Larson

FISHING IN THE SUN!

"We have toiled all night and taken nothing,
nevertheless...." (Luke 5:5).

I can't go fishing in the sun!
It's such a foolish thought;
I've toiled the long and weary night
And merely fished for naught.

So how can I, with common sense,
Fish—in the glare of day?
"It's not the right and proper thing."
We fisher men would say.

No! I'll not fish today. What's that?
I heard the Master speak.
It couldn't be, but yes, He says,
"To launch into the deep."

What? How? Here? Now? I can't believe—
The words stick in my throat.
That's what He wants; that's what He says:
"Go now and get your boat."

I must obey. And yet, oh dear—
My reason tells me no;
Yet if the Master speaks, why then,
I'll really have to go.

Well, here's the boat, and here's the net,
And here's the waiting sea;
A school of fish, a bulging net—
It really cannot be!

Yet here it is—a record catch
Of fish, and yet, last night
I toiled and toiled; try as I would
They still refused to bite.

So here's the secret of the thing:
Don't reckon on the day;
Just listen for the Master's voice,
And what He says—obey!

He knows the fish; He knows the sea;
He knows the wind by rote;
So if you hear Him say, "Launch out,"
You'd better get your boat!

Gertrude Beatrice Tait

ANOTHER WALKING WOUNDED

Fatally wounded to die a slow death
alone, because no one can see
That the wounds that were quickly patched up long ago
are infected, and, now, killing me.

Some of the wounds fester deep in my soul,
while others can't even be found.
Still, they're some that bleed constantly into my mind,
and haunt me when no one's around.

I'm not sure where the wounds came from.
They just seemed to appear one day.
So, even if someone would notice or ask
I wouldn't know quite what to say.

All that I know is I'm hurting inside,
and I'm not sure of how long I'll last
It would be easier to fight some foe I could see
than my enemy that hides in the past.

So, each day I die just a little bit more,
because none of the wounds seem to mend.
And though part of me knows that I have to go on
there's a part that just longs for the end.

VaNESSA

A simple stage
Shall be my home
For that is where I long to be
Living the rich, full life of a sundry characters
To say in song what lies within
To portray another's life to fulfill my own

A barren stage
Is my refuge
I go to sit and cry alone
When the show is over. . . .

Kyrie

"Samantha!" I heard screamed. Then my world deadened. I was floating through space on the wings of an eagle. I floated for what seemed like hours that could have only been minutes. Then I felt something drawing me back, pulling harder, calling me. As I began to come out from my dark, misty world, I lay quietly and I heard what I thought was water dripping on my bed. My mind reacted and told me to get up and turn off the water faucet. But my body wouldn't obey. I rolled my head to one side to see what was dripping on me. Suddenly, I felt all my troubles leave as a gentle kiss was placed upon my lips. Whoever he was pulled back up to his standing position. This time when my brain told my eyes to open, my body obeyed. My eyes slowly focused on the handsome man standing over me with tears on his cheeks. One dripped on my bed reminding me to turn off the faucet. He leaned down close and whispered, "I Love You!" I gently reached up to brush the tears from his cheeks. The nurse walked in, a little black lady, when she saw I was now awake and conscious of my surroundings, she exclaimed in her deep southern accent, "Praise the Lord!"

But I still did not know where I was, who this man was or why I was here.

Samantha Morgan

MEMORIAL GARDENS

This is the place where the grass
you once walked on takes its revenge.
Undercutting the competition, taking the subway,
if you could see, you would be a toddler,
watching above you and hearing conversations
you have been left out of.

You have probably wondered
why Hollywood wives
have their faces stretched every five years or so,
or wondered what all those half-dressed people
in the park are running from.
Now you know.

You are also much the wiser
(for whatever it matters now)
in knowing they were running toward it.

Welcome to Memorial Gardens.
It is peaceful here, and quiet.
Even the sparrows lower their chirps
in reverence.
You will be happy here (many believe).
Even so, they will weep for you.

You once believed you would never come here.
You once believed in the tooth fairy,
once believed Mr. Tannenbloom
(who now stands upright across the road
from where Jesus is praying)
was having an affair with your history teacher.
You once believed nothing. Remember that?
Your mother said it was a 'phase.'
You once believed her.
You now believe what they told you,
when you made size nine impressions on that grass,
that you will come here
only once.

This is the place where the door is closed,
where breezes whisper forgotten names
and stone will advertise like highway billboards
that you are no longer for sale.

An airplane flies overhead, its contrail
shadowed like a memory on our grass,
its belly filled with shooting stars
aimed at us.
Can you see it?
They want to know.

Abide with me/fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens, dimming stainglass,
casketwood, and the place where reality collides
with what your fundamentalist father
argued must be true. (God does not lie).
Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee,
they breathed over you,
but that number is no longer a hit.

Okay. You're in. We'll take you.
You wish you had heard
those welcoming words
more often upstairs, don't you?
But we are not exclusive here
except that this is a place
everyone comes, but no one wants to.
Welcome.

Since you're here now, we're going to tell you
a secret or two.

We're going to tell you what happens
when no one is in a room and the lights are off,
tell you what sound is made when a tree falls
in the woods, and no one is there to hear it,
tell you who shot JFK.

We're going to tell you what happened
to 'that grand old flag.'

necking at the drive-in theater,
and affordable housing.

From now until World War III or the Second Coming,
whichever comes first (even we can't tell you that)
you will return to grass roots politics.
You've been wondering what happened to that too,
haven't you?

Here is the place where you will wear
a million tons of light as a feather
and pay it no mind.
This is Memorial Gardens.
Welcome.

R. J. Larson

ODE TO REALITY

Along the way one asks what is a way?
Amid the walking, what it is to walk,
And where?
In deep of night we can forget the day,
Left alone we lose the skill to talk,
Or care.
And as the mind gropes out for certainty,
The heart no longer has the strength to know,
To feel.
So philosophe or fool we strain to see,
And wandering, we ask each place we go,
"What's real?"
The truth we search for follows at our back,
And hovers over, far too close to speak
Or hear.
Like blind men, searching for the narrow track
We stumble over that for which we seek
With fear.

The one true test for dreams is to be pinched
For pain cannot touch unreality
That sleeps.
In nightmare scenes, while being stabbed or lynched,
Man neither feels the knife, the rope, the tree,
Nor weeps.
So truth (when it comes knocking) makes a mark,
Will not leave those who find its path alone,
Unscathed—
And when we step upon it in the dark,
Cuts up our feet; the road with sharp, hard stone
Is paved.
"How do you know?" is left to standers-by
Who walk on ground that they think may be there
Or not.
For all whose feet are bruised, who bleed and cry
And thus are changed, can neither doubt nor bear
That spot.

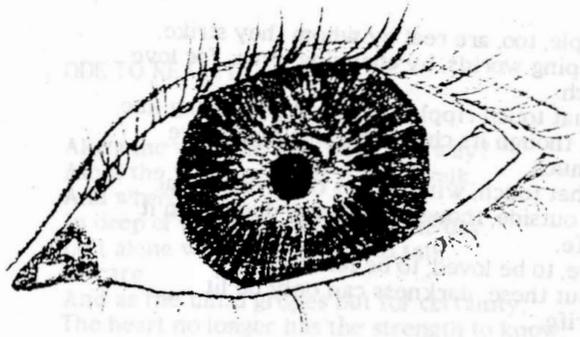
So people, too, are real by whom they strike,
By shaping worlds, by changing lives: for love
Is touch.
And that touch ripples outward, spreading like
A fire, though its chains of push and shove
Hurt much.
And that touch, with its net of lives, is real.
Those outside, though they hate, depend on it
For life.
To love, to be loved; to be felt, to feel—
Without these, darkness can only be lit
By strife.

THE PHILOSOPHER

THE MONSTER

Choking for life it rises from its earthly tomb
Its horned limbs spread in every direction
The dehydrated creature longs for food and water
Grotesque growths appear on its horned limbs,
And suddenly explode in a fiery red spectacle
The exposed layers spread outward,
And fill the air with a sweet fragrance
The rose is a beautiful monster.

Jason Easter



to people too
is touch
And the
A line
hur and
And the
those out
For life
To love to
Without
The heart
To feel
to philosoph
And wand
What's
The truth
And hovers
To hear
Like blind
We stumble
With fear
The one
For pain
That sleeps
In night
Man neither
Nor weeps
So truth
Will make
Unsatisfac
An insatiable
And sudden
The crowd
And falls
Or not
For all
And thus
That root

Aimee Faries

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