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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Wind in the Tree, Lorna Williams.....	1
The Child, Doris Raun.....	2
Riding at Night, Margaret Ralston.....	4
Sonnet to Euterpe, Carolyn Wolle.....	5
Trees, Lorna Williams.....	5
Church Steps, Helen Travis.....	6
Home, Karrel Brodsky.....	8
Mr. Jonathan, A Sonnet, and Destiny, Jack Howe.....	9
Poetry, Doris Raun.....	13
Memory . . . with Music, Jean Blessing.....	14
Communion, Grace Weaver.....	15
Explanation, Lorna Williams.....	15
London Street Scene, Robert Tracy.....	16
The Pendulum, Delores Ebert.....	19
A Poet's Lot, Lorna Williams.....	19
Rainbow, Karrel Brodsky.....	19
Telephone Call, Joan Johnson.....	20
To the Inarticulate, Jean Blessing.....	20
A Game of Bridge, Jack Howe.....	21
On Sunday, Lorna Williams.....	21
Tonight He Came Home, Vesta Feller.....	22
An Incident, Doris Raun.....	25
A Thought and I, Lorna Williams.....	26

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FOREWORD

Manuscript Club offers this issue of the Manuscript to the students of Morningside for their enjoyment and amusement.

We wish to extend our appreciation to Miss Mirah Mills for her unselfish and kind assistance in the preparation of the magazine.

The Wind in the Tree

The wind in the tree
Is talking to me,
Retelling the time
When we met, by the sea.
I listen, and hear
How it used to be:
Tons of water striking the shore,
And the thundering horses the breakers bore,
And the hovering clouds where the sea gulls soar.

Tracks in the sand
To a cove, inland,
And sun on a cheek
That is lean and tanned;
The affectionate hold
Of a slender hand;
All day long through the rocks we'd roam,
Searching the caves for the hidden home
Of the wild, white steeds that stride the foam.

And now, in the wail
Of an inland gale
I hear the flap
Of a silver sail,
And live again,
That tender tale:
The stinging touch of the salt sea spray,
The moonbeam bridge across the bay,
The look of your face as I sailed away.

—Lorna Williams, '49

The Child

The child lay on her back on the sand, squinting up at the sky and watching the exciting change of color in the rainbows made by the sun as it shone through the sea water clinging to her sand-colored lashes. Her eyes were lovely, like the sun shining through clear glacier ice. The same warmth and the same coolness were there, and tiny flecks of reflected gold gave accent to their green color and remarkable depth.

Tiring of inactivity, the child stretched her arms and legs out stiff as such supple limbs could be and began to move them back and forth across the sand, making a fan-like pattern by their slight impression. She drew her legs up under her as carefully as she could and stood up with the utmost caution, in order not to spoil the beautiful fairy picture she had made on the sand. As she stood, surveying her handicraft with satisfaction, her eye caught the glint of sun on something shining a little way down the beach. Immediately the sand picture was forgotten in the excitement of something new and unexplored.

She began to run with the buoyancy and exuberance of childhood. She came upon the source of her curiosity and stopped with such abruptness that she almost stepped on it. It was a little dead fish, newly washed up from the sea and shimmering with an ever-changing kaleidoscope of color. It was a beautiful sight, and as the child stood looking down on its blue-green scales, she laughed aloud with pleasure. Presently an idea came to her, and she picked up the fish in her two hands and ran with it to the edge of the water.

She paused apprehensively at the edge and looked over her shoulder at the big house just visible behind the curve of the dune. There was no one in sight, so she began to wade into the water. It was a delicious feeling to have the water curl up above her ankles and to feel the coolness on her thighs as she moved slowly deeper. She held the fish in her two hands high above her head, and when the water came above her bathing trunks and felt like a band of cold steel about her waist, she halted. Very carefully she lowered her hands and placed the fish in the water and then let it go. It sank slowly in spirals; she cupped her hands below it and caught it as it fell through the water. She tried once more, this time giving the fish a little push to make it swim, but it only drifted in faster spirals toward the shell-sprinkled sand of the ocean floor. This time the child had to reach far down to catch it.

She turned back toward the shore with her charge clasped before her against her bare chest. Disappointed but undaunted,

she began to plan once more. Perhaps the water was too deep; she would build a pond on the edge of the sea to teach her fish to swim once more, for it had been out of water so long it must have forgotten how. When the water was only knee-deep, she began to run, gaining momentum as it became shallower, until she was running with complete freedom on the wet sand at the water's edge.

There she knelt down and, after placing the fish carefully beside her, began to scoop the damp sand up and place it to one side. She dug quite slowly because she liked to feel the cool dampness of the sand in the palm of her hand. She was so intent on her project that she did not see the figure coming down the beach until a shadow fell across her hands, and a voice came down from a great height. She looked up, startled, as her nurse scolded, "What have you been doing, you impossible child?"

Instinctively she caught up the fish and hid it behind her back as she stood before her accuser. A lock of cropped, yellow hair fell forward across her face as she bent her head with a sudden, sullen submissiveness and stared at her feet, half-buried in the sand. She could not answer, but only held her hands farther behind her.

In an exasperated, what-will-you-think-of-next tone, the nurse said, "Show it to me." As the child held her fish out for examination, the nurse saw it, the sand-hole where the water was already seeping in, and the sand clinging to the child's still-wet knees. With a flash of intuition, she understood. Standing stiffly before the child on the other side of the water-filled depression, she said scornfully, "The fish is dead, that's why it can't swim. Now come, you've been away for a long time and your dinner is ready." She held out her hand commandingly, but the child stood as she was, looking down at the fish in her hand.

Its lovely colors were gone, for it was dry from lying in the sand, and its one visible eye stared blankly at nothing in particular. It did not move; the thought that it would never move again shot through her brain like a cry. An inexplicable loathing came over her for the thing which had once been an exciting toy. She threw it as far as she could back into the ocean from whence it had come. Her heart was beating wildly; when she turned and saw her nurse impatiently waiting, she could stand it no longer. She began to run blindly toward the house. The evening breeze was blowing whitecaps far out on the ocean, but she did not feel its coolness, nor did she look back as the curve of the dune hid her from sight.

Riding at Night

There's nothing to the earth
But the white road beckoning—
Lighted but by starlight,
North star for our reckoning.
Deep in shadows all around
Lies the placid world, asleep,
Rushing wind its only sound,
But our hearts are laughing deep.
Sleep on world, your rest is sweet
For older, stodgy people, so—
But to the young, the road still calls
And we must go—.

—Margaret Ralston, '46.

Sonnet to Euterpe

'Tis not the sonnet's "scanty plot of ground"
 Disturbs my heart or mind or faltering pen;
 'Tis inspiration lacking, for what written
 Lest a dreamer hear in earthly sound
 A hymn celestial; or a rainbow 'round
 The sky he see which draws his heart toward heaven
 Unto its treasure-store of ecstasy.
 And what, although with inspiration filled,
 Availeth it a man, in words unskilled,
 To speak in any form of poesy?
 A grieving thing indeed that soul would be
 Overflowing in its depths, but mutely stilled.
 Thou fillest Wordsworth's "scanty plot", O Muse!
 My thoughts in even a couplet interfuse.

—Carolyn Wolle, '47.

Trees

Some folk like to call them shade trees,
 Bending, coolly, o'er the walk,
 But in my heart I know them ladies,
 Leaning, gracefully, to talk.

Hear them whisper to the high road,
 From the lawn where they must stay,
 Asking after all adventurers
 Who have passed that way.

—Lorna Williams, '49.

Church Steps

A weak whistle and three short taps on the back door. I peered through the screen at Liz, sitting on the top step, scantily clad in wrinkled white shorts and a halter. "The street lights are on," she announced.

I gestured toward the kitchen with my dish towel, "She just started pots and pans."

Inspired, I tossed the dish towel in the general direction of the kitchen and we clattered down the back steps, our slave sandals slapping each step. We ignored my mother's voice, and trotted comfortably down the street toward the Presbyterian Church.

"We shouldn't look like we're in a hurry," I panted.

"Crickets, no," Liz agreed, and we slowed to a leisurely stroll.

"They're already there, I can see them, but don't look now. Liz, do these blue shorts look all right with this green halter?"

Liz surveyed. "Not bad. Sort of zoot, in a way. Somewhat."

"Okay then." I felt gratified, and gave an undignified tug in the back where they hitched up.

"Pretend like you don't see them," was Liz's last reminder. We sauntered around the corner of the bridal wreath bush, and there they were: four of them, in blue jeans and torn T-shirts and dirty faces.

Liz did a beautiful job of feigning surprise, and I let her take care of that department. I was good at slams. She stopped, hands on hips, "Crickets! You guys are always taking our best places to talk."

Two of them giggled, one laughed uproariously and then stopped foolishly. The fourth one, named Stinky Somebody, said, "Girls!" and got up abruptly and left.

There was an awkward silence. Everyone looked a bit embarrassed. Nothing seemed quite the way it had been the night before when we had talked about the new principal and stamped one-lighted cars.

"We know something you don't know," Liz announced.

I wondered what it was. I looked at Liz who winked at me, so I tried to look mysterious, as though I knew an exciting secret.

The boy on the top step, towheaded and skinny, said, "Nuts, we don't want to know your old secret."

Liz tossed her head. "Then we certainly won't waste it on you."

I was proud of her. It got no end of response. There was a visible perking up. Finally one said, "What's it about?"

"Oh, don't worry," I said, "It's something pretty good all right."

"Exciting," said Liz.

"Is it about the new principal?" asked the towhead.

"Crickets, no," Liz was scornful.

"That old pill," I said, and everybody laughed. I felt good.

"She's sure a pill," said the towhead. He seemed to be spokesman.

Liz kicked me in the ankle and I decided she must be annoyed because the conversation was drifting away from the secret, so I said quickly, "I guess you know this secret isn't about the new principal. I guess you know it's something very different."

"Exciting," said Liz, mysteriously.

"Is it about a what or a who?" asked the towhead.

"Oh it's about a person all right," I said, hoping I was right.

Apparently I was, for Liz didn't seem worried, but added, "Oh, yes. It's about Helen's big sister."

I nearly fell off the top step in surprise, and nudged Liz frantically. I knew Liz didn't know anything about my big sister, for although Liz and I were best friends, I had found it wise to obey my mother's constant reminders not to tell her any family secrets, especially after a certain Ladies' Aid meeting that Mother attended where she was much disturbed by Liz's Mother's conversational contributions. But nevertheless, this was dangerous ground.

Liz paid no attention to me, and went right on. "It's exciting all right, and it's a real secret, cuz nobody knows but us."

I decided to let Liz go on. I had great faith in her ability for handling men. I only hoped it wouldn't get me in trouble with Mother, especially after running out on pots and pans. But I tried to contribute.

"In fact it's so much of a secret that even my big sister doesn't know."

This sounded a bit silly after I had said it, but it seemed to get a response.

"Your sister'll be a senior in high school, won't she?" asked the towhead in an awed voice.

"Crickets, yes," I said nonchalantly. "She'll graduate next year."

There was a respectful silence, broken by the boy on the bottom step. He had curly hair, and he hadn't been there the

night before. "Why don't you tell us and get it over with?" he asked scornfully.

I looked quickly at Liz. I knew she was getting a bit worried, but she didn't show it, and I applauded her silently. She tossed her pigtail. "Well, after all, we don't have to tell you guys if we don't just want to."

"Aw, come on," said the towhead.

The boy on the bottom step had gotten up. "Nuts!" he said. "We don't want to hear their old secret." He turned around and shoved a hand in the pocket of his blue jeans. "I don't think they even have any old secret."

There was a horrible silence. I stared at a fuzzy caterpillar crawling across the toe of my sandal. I couldn't even look at Liz.

The boy said, "Nuts!" again, and there was the sound of their tennis shoes going down the walk and across the street.

Liz stood up abruptly. "Men!" she said. "Let's go home." I nodded and we trotted off down the street in the deep evening dusk. "Mom baked chocolate cake today," said Liz. "That's a good idea," I agreed, and we turned off down the street toward Liz's house.

—Helen Travis, '47.

Home

A tree
 Against the sky,
 A road that leads us from
 A world of strife and pain, yet hope;
 It's home.

A door—
 Within is love
 And memory of the past
 That makes us want to be
 At home.

The world,
 Where we must go
 Into our fate, away
 From all that we have known and loved—
 Our home.

—Karrel Brodsky, '49.

Mr. Jonathan, A Sonnet, and Destiny

For as long as the oldest inhabitant in the oldest house in North Bayport could remember, there had always been a Jonathan in town and he had always been living on the same site, at the corner of Oak Street and the Boston Pike and facing the Common, and, for the last two hundred and four years, in the same house. And to be a Jonathan was a rare distinction. Other men might be wealthier, but Phineas Jonathan VI, the present incumbent in the high office of Head of the House of Jonathan, had a small income which permitted him to live comfortably, if not ostentatiously. Other men might be handsome, while Phineas, at fifty-three, was slight, a trifle stooped, and given to peering over the tops of his pince-nez, which were worn well down on his nose, but he led a comfortable existence and suffered from nothing more fatal than occasional attacks of gout and wandering alopecia. Other men might have homes with all the modern conveniences, while his house had been improved only by the installation of plumbing in 1903 and a telephone in 1904, but he had the Matthews, Tod and Mary, to look after his cooking, and his house, and even to look after him—to remind him to put on his rubbers and to carry an umbrella if it were raining and to knock out his pipe before stuffing it into his pocket. Yes, as I have said before, he led a comfortable existence, and to compensate for any discrepancies that might have become apparent between his lot and that of any other man, Phineas had a genealogy record that made parvenus of the kings of England, a coat of arms carved above the mantel in his library, and the family crest on the family silver (or, that is, what remained of it after the British in 1776 and brigands in 1936 had liberally helped themselves—liberally enough so that only two teaspoons, one of which was bent, a meatfork, three knives, a salt cellar, and a tray and two cups from a punch bowl set had been preserved, but the crest was on each of them).

Indeed, life was comfortable for Phineas. The days passed with serene regularity, each the image of its predecessor and each as calm and even as the gentle lapping of surf on the shore of a secluded bay. He rose at seven, breakfasted at eight, and then, in the summer, pattered in his garden or, in the winter, read in his library until noon, at which time he lunched. The afternoon was more varied and centered around some Special Project For The Day, which might be a walk in the country, attendance at a tea, examination of something in the attic, a meeting with one of his clubs, or whatever struck his fancy. Evening began with dinner at six and terminated, after reading or

a town meeting, with bed at ten o'clock. Most delightful of all these occasions were the teas and the town meetings which afforded him opportunities for ignoring or confounding, as the situation suggested, Miss Agatha Wittlespoon, his one mortal enemy.

Miss Agatha had been, during his teens, the "girl next door," and now, thirty-five years later, she was still the girl next door, except that she was no longer a girl. Aggie of the mouse-brown pigtails was now Miss Agatha, who terrified the town with her terrible tongue, commanded servility, and was as genuinely beloved by everyone, except Phineas, as only such characters can be. At one time she had worn Phineas' ring, but that was ended when they began the discussion of whether they would live their married life in the Wittlespoon house, to which she was heiress, or the Jonathan house, which would some day belong to Phineas. The mortal enmity began when Phineas proved beyond shadow of a doubt that his ancestral home had been completed exactly three months and seven days before the Wittlespoon manse, instead of being, as was the heretofore popular conception, its junior by two weeks. After enduring thirty-three years, the feud had by this time settled into a gratifying hostility which each treasured dearly as the one eventful thing in two uneventful lives. You see, Agatha, too, rose at seven, breakfasted at eight, etc.

So this was the situation on the May afternoon when Phineas Jonathan had chosen as his Special Project For The Day the re-arranging of the bookcase of eighteenth century works which bore the plaster bust of Voltaire as its adornment. Thus far, the task had proceeded smoothly, and the books from four shelves had been dusted, scanned, and replaced, when two slips of paper slithered from a dusty volume of *The Decline and Fall*, declined and fell. Mildly interested, Phineas stooped and retrieved them from the carpet. Carefully, he unfolded the first, an age-yellowed sheet of notepaper, and observed the heading, "London, October 18, 1791." A bit more intrigued, Phineas sat down at the writing desk, propped his pince-nez more carefully on his nose, and perused the letter. Actually, it was scarcely more than a note scrawled hurriedly on foolscap. "My dear Edward," it began, "Knowing your delight in ascertaining the progress of British literai, I am enclosing for your evaluation the latest sonnet of my protege, Absalom Chaucerwell, a young man of great promise. Should you wonder at the poem's being printed on a handbill, I must advise you that A. C. hopes to place them in the stalls and create a fad. We await your comment on his efforts." It ended with the customary "obedient servant" and the signature "Darcy."

A small frown, born of perplexity, burrowing across his forehead, Phineas reached for an encyclopedia and thumbed through the volume of *Ch's*, although he really didn't expect to find any-

thing. Thus, he was somewhat surprised when the name CHAUCERWELL fairly leaped at him from the page. Hurriedly, he scanned the account. Chaucerwell, Absalom, (1760-1792) had been a minor English poet of the eighteenth century to whom reference is made, and to whom great praise is given, in the writings of Gilbert White and Ann Radcliffe, but of whose works only a quatrain of four lines and a couplet of two lines are now extant. Of these, the first is in free, blank verse, while the second manifests a confusion of meter regarded as indicative of the emotional tumult within the poet and is considered his greatest work. **The Bristol Anthology of English Verse** devotes two lines to him on page 688.

Agog at the immensity of his find, Phineas dashed back to the second sheet of paper. Why, if it were a sonnet, it would be more than twice as much as the entire previously known works of Chaucerwell. He seized the paper eagerly and unfolded it, but was a trifle disconcerted by the condition of the sheet. Obviously, it had been kept in some damp place, perhaps a gutter, before securing the safe haven of the Gibbon. Whole lines were obliterated altogether and only detached words remained of others. Nothing was legible in the first six lines and the last two were in the same state, but the other six looked something like this:

.....panacea.....
 None so frail that.....
 Blithebounding heart.....
 Comesingnight,
while you.....
 Bring the aged and infirm.....

Phineas read once, Phineas read twice; then, in a high state of excitement—his pince-nez fell from his nose to the rug and he promptly stepped on them, he jarred the bookcase and toppled Voltaire to the floor where it obligingly smashed—Phineas flew to the telephone and informed the town librarian of his discovery.

What happened after this was never too clear to Phineas Jonathan VI, or to anyone else for that matter, but it can be briefly summarized. After one telephone call from the librarian to the Town Hall, the Mayor and Town Council knew of the important literary disclosure and, after a series of calls from the Councilmen to their wives, all North Bayport knew. Of course, Phineas had to move his find down to the Town Hall, where it was put on display in the lobby, and for six days he stood beside it telling and retelling the story of its unearthing, signing autographs, and blinking when the flash bulbs went off. The curious drove from as far as Providence and North Conway to see the relic, and in a dozen city rooms, reporters were busily tracking down Absalom Chaucerwell in dictionary or encyclopedia, pre-

paratory to a pilgrimage to North Bayport. Life featured Phineas, and he had to pose beside the family plate, and digging in his garden, and putting on a nightcap (which he never actually wore). At Harvard, a group of professors began reconstructing the mangled poem and almost agreed that Chaucerwell had been using an entirely unique form of sonnet, most likely a cross between Elizabethan and Petrarchan. A student working on a Master's at Columbia commenced her thesis on the topic "The Importance of Absalom Chaucerwell In The Light Of Late Discoveries." The University of Paris debated the University of Dijon on the influence of Chaucerwell on French verse, while the Nanking government published a treatise showing Confucianist trends in Chaucerwell's writing, all of which promptly became a political issue.

On the sixth day of the display of the Chaucerwellian memento, destiny, in the form of Agatha Wittlespoon, descended on the Town Hall. For five days, Miss Agatha had nobly restrained her curiosity, but then she remembered that she was one of the weaker sex, put on her bonnet, and sallied forth. After twenty minutes in line, she reached the prize, and, ignoring the expostulating Phineas, took a look and then a couple of closer looks and scurried home.

Two hours later, dirty, disheveled, but still undeniably Miss Agatha, she reappeared triumphantly waving a bit of paper in her hand. Forcing her way through the crowd, she confronted Phineas, who was just beginning his lecture for the five hundred and sixty-first time.

"So that's a manuscript of some poetry, is it, Phineas Jonathan . . . then what do you call this?" Masterfully, she displayed a sheet the identical mate to Phineas' poem, only one that was entirely legible. "That thing," she shrilled, scornfully wagging a finger at Phineas' "sonnet," "is nothing but a handbill which advertised a medicine show back in 1850 and which sold a 'panacea' for all ills and urged everyone to 'bring the aged and infirm.' I knew I'd seen that somewhere before and I had to rummage in the attic for two hours to find it, but here it is!"

Phineas looked once, Phineas looked twice; then he picked up his "sonnet" and the aged letter and walked out of Town Hall and on home without saying a word to anyone. When he arrived, he was immediately put to bed by the Matthews and given a hot water bottle for his feet and an ice bag for his head.

All afternoon Agatha received the plaudits of the multitudes, but they do say that toward evening the neighbors saw her carrying a covered dish across the lawn to the Jonathan house, and that she didn't return until well after the moon was up.

Poetry

Poetry is fluid motion:

A ballet dancer in pirouette,
Porpoises on a silver ocean,
Grass bent by the wind but still gleaming wet.

Poetry is sudden brightness:

A flash of gold in a pirate's chest,
The gleam of blue of exquisite lightness
On a sea gull's wing as it darts from the nest.

Poetry is unceasing sorrow:

A caged panther who once was wild,
The proud man who must stoop to borrow,
The wail of a mother deprived of her child.

—Doris Raun, '49.

Memory....With Music

And as we waited,
The lamentation of the organ rose
Into the high arched spaces of the church.

In days long gone
We had often waited thus for you
Watching in tense expectancy
The brightly lighted stage and the piano.

Then you would come,
And with swift, vital fingers
Touch cold keys and weave for us
Delicate tracteries of Chopin . . .
In brilliant scintillating tones
That sprinkled down like stars among us . . .
In sonorous, singing tones, flowing
Into souls thirsting for such beauty.

Now there is only the organ singing . . .
The ebbing and swelling of tone
Like a pulse of grief
Singing that blood is cold
And hands are stilled.
All that was of you . . .
Your laughter . . . your quick, impetuous movements . . .
And your endearing eccentricities . . . all this
Is but a memory aching in the mind.

Your singing has ended;
You are lost to us forever.

—Jean Blessing, '48.

Communion

"Be still and know," the Psalmist said.
 But, Lord, this is a city
 And noise drowns out what I would hear:
 Thy voice of love and pity.

I say, "Dear God—," a car goes by
 But that's a small disturbance.
 "I come to Thee—," a screech of brakes—
 I must not hold a grievance.

I bow my head determined more
 To hold inner communion;
 A trolley car, a truck, a bus
 Still add to my confusion.

How can I pray in such a place?
 My mind rebels completely.
 But then I hear His word, "Come child—,"
 Spoken so low, so sweetly.

All outward forms are lost to sense
 For His great peace has conquered.
 We meet each other face to face,
 I know—and all is mastered.

—Grace M. Weaver, '47.

Explanation

The fire burns bluer than the spark;
 The sneer goes deeper than the face;
 The night is blacker than the dark,
 And thought is thin in any space.

—Lorna Williams, '49.

London Street Scene

No one knew where she had come from; no one knew where she was going. And if the truth were known, I don't suppose anyone really cared. But quite suddenly, like a rebellious ghost to which haunting had become nothing but a conventional necessity, she had drifted through the small London evening crowd; then, finally having made her decision, she had, with un-ghostly elbowing, at last stood beside the street-piano man.

The piano man was a small, wrinkled thing, with the tired eyes of a child worn out with too much running-play peering over fragile, old-fashioned English spectacles. His wasted, grimy hands, however, still held a suggestion of youthful gayety and sparkling charm, as they bounced and swayed across the broken ivory teeth of his four-wheeled music box; pursing his lips he made funny little sniffling sounds, so absorbed was he in the transposition of "Ah, fors' e lui" from *La Traviata*. As orchestration, of course, it was something straight from an Italian dream of heaven, but on his little five octave key-board it was just plain hell. "Start over one octave higher, dearie. Start in this key," said the rebellious ghost, and she gently but firmly guided the hesitant old hand to the right position on the yellowing keys.

The man didn't look up and he made no answer with his lips, except perhaps an almost imperceptible fretful-sound, such as a child (or a child grown old) makes when it is corrected. He started out again, and far from his previous uncertainty lessening his audience, it had rather increased it. The street-audience included mostly entertainment-hungry civilians (for it was November of 1944 and his Majesty's Island was still a blacked-out Kingdom of sacrificial waiting), but there were also a few British Tommies on leave, one or two American G. I.'s and the usual street-walkers.

After the correction had been made, the mechanical tinkle took on a new timbre, a new depth of meaning and feeling. The music lived. Shortly after the Aria had been resumed, the street woman began to sing. No one had expected that she would, but on the other hand, no one had expected that she wouldn't. The English are difficult people to surprise. She didn't sing well, but

she sang with great conviction and great feeling, as if she must or die. Her Italian was rasping to the ear and ill-remembered, but it was never hesitant, never anything but full-blown and lusty. In the blacked-out back street her appearance matched her voice. Full-blown and lusty, she appeared, with the mark of too much defiant living about her hollow, darkened eyes and in the curves of her thick, reddened lips. Her low-hanging blond hair rippled softly in the air chilled from the Thames. One might have thought that that murky, sullen river had sent her a message down the wind. In the midst of the hollows, though, her eyes danced almost with happiness; the painted lips, so stern and hard, relaxed a bit and almost curved into a smile.

After an unusually avid attempt to make the most of one of Verdi's trills, a man close to the piano suggested in a half-tone to a man next to him that the old man was the better concert artist. Despite a very sincere concentration on the song, almost to the point of disinterestedness (an unfortunate quality in a public performer, so we are told), the singer overheard the remark. She stopped in the middle of the phrase and turned on him like a thick asp. "You bloody so and so," she struck, "if you don't like it, you can get the 'ell out of 'ere." Then with a regained composure she returned to the piano, told the old piano man where to start and continued the trills almost at the point where she had stopped.

The piano man was warming to his evening's work by this time. He played more easily now, as if the cooperation between hands and mind had been greatly assured by the entry of the rebellious ghost upon the stage. To most of the small audience this street performance was entertaining, even as a second or third grade farce would be to the high gallery. They smirked gaily and one or two even half-heartedly clapped for encores. But for one American G. I. and a couple of the British Tommies the scene suggested too strongly the battles that they were on leave from. The performance was that of a supreme "Danse Macabre" to them, though doubtless they would have called it something else, for they couldn't quite define their feelings.

Carmen, with a strong-handed attempt—a *tour de force*, as it were—to capture as much of the native vitality and the joy of being in love as it was possible at that time and in that place

to capture, had just been started by these strange partners in sound. Night had fallen; the little back street had assumed its life of shadows. The blackout was silent with the brooding intensity of a nation at war; that is, all was silent save only the tinkle of the broken keys of the small piano, the pathetically-assured alto of the woman and the occasional scuffling of feet, as the shadowy form of the street audience broke ranks and reformed again with individual comings and goings.

About half way through one of Bizet's musical dreams of love, a harsher voice sang not unmusically through the darkness, "All right now. That'll be enough. Move on with you." The big bobbie was in the crowd now; soon he stood beside the piano. "Right you are, dearie, we're goin'. Aren't we, pops?" The rebellious ghost seemed suddenly to become the most tired ghost in the whole of London; she swayed a little unsteadily, as she shot the big policeman a short twisted smile. "'e says we 'ave to go, dearie," she said to the old man, as she leaned all of her weight on one end of the piano.

"We was plannin' on goin' right along, officer," said the old child, looking up from his piano seat. With that, he arose hastily, assembled his music with shaking fingers, folded up his stool and put it on top of the piano and started to reach for the cap containing his evening's earnings. The tired ghost, who was still supporting herself against the end of the piano, anticipated the move. Reaching into the depths of the cap with her long, artistic fingers, she drew forth a two shilling piece and a one shilling piece. "This is my share of our profits, popsie. Any objections?" she asked, her voice and face full of mingled contempt and anguish. Then she whirled abruptly away from the piano, flashed a smile at a lone G. I. and faded into the blackness of the street.

The piano man was moving off now, pushing his piano before him. He moved slowly and with the same half-smile that he had exhibited throughout the whole performance: that of a mischievous child caught in a misdemeanor by his parent. Perhaps, in the dark corridors of his old mind, he thought it a misdemeanor to live. As he moved off down the blacked-out back street, he repeatedly muttered something like this: "Thank heavens that I am too old for dreams." And he added almost in question from time to time, shaking his white head, "Unless this, too, is a dream. Unless, this all is a dream."

—Robert P. Tracy, '47.

The Pendulum

"My, isn't he conceited!"
 He'd used too many "I's,"
 He then used none, but he soon found
 That this was not so wise.
 "He's much too self-effacing!"
 To them the point was ceded.
 He used more "I's", till once again,
 "My, isn't he conceited!"

—Delores Ebert, '46:

A Poet's Lot

'Twas e'er a poet's lot
 To first be queer,
 And then be dear,
 And then forgot.

—Lorna Williams, '49.

Rainbow

Across the gray-blue sky above
 A bridge of beauty, blended,
 As was the way to Valhalla
 When Wotan, fair, ascended.
 And one can hear the passion of
 The Rhine maids softly crying,
 As to the sky our eyes are turned
 For beauty fading, dying.

—Karell Brodsky, '49.

The Telephone Call

Slowly, she cradled the phone, her hand trembling just a bit, stunned by the impact of the words she had just heard. Raising her head, she looked searchingly into the long mirror. Her own reflection stared back at her, its eyes dark, unseeing in a pale face. She turned and mounted the stairs, her feet dragging reluctantly from step to step. At a window on the landing she stopped, seeing again the familiar view—a smooth lawn fringed by lilac bushes bending gracefully toward the ground, weighed down by their fragrant burdens, a solitary cherry tree scattering its white blossoms over the grass. Raising her hand to her hair, she pulled out the flower she had placed there that morning in a carefree moment. Idly, she began to pull the pale blossoms one by one from their stem, while bewildering thoughts raced through her mind. She had been expecting this phone call, had known it must come. This was a problem she had known she must face. Why had she not been ready for it? With a last glance at the tree, she turned and walked up the stairs, her steps more determined now, more sure. Her problem was not new, not hopeless. Thousands of women had faced it before, would face it again. Squaring her shoulders, she marched into her bedroom and flung open the door, ready now for her problem: What was she going to wear tonight?

—Joan Johnson, '46.

To the Inarticulate

Weep not, you with the mute lips,
That your tongue cannot leap agilely
To form the phrases of your meaning . . .
That you fail to frame with words
The message of your soul's purpose.
What you do may be more eloquent
Than endless, idle, easy verbal plumage.

—Jean Blessing, '47.

A Game of Bridge

"Well, I certainly hope this hand is better than the last one. How much was it we were set, three hundred points? I'm afraid I'm playing very poorly today, Louise, but I'm rather worried about that breakfast I'm giving tomorrow for Marian's friend from Minneapolis. It's been such a trial getting suitable things to serve. I had to substitute dried beef for ham and John had to drive me out to the country last night to get enough butter. Really, it's becoming quite impossible to—oh, excuse me, dear, is it my bid? Now let me see. You passed, Louise? Oh, you bid one heart. Well, in that case I'll say two spades. Did I tell you that John didn't like my getting that new coat one bit. But then he always complains about taxes, so it was nothing new to me. My bid again? It certainly did get around fast. And you bid three clubs, Louise? Hmmm-m-m. I suppose I should say three diamonds. All I can say is that these strikes had better end before long, for we just have to have a new refrigerator. What? My turn again? And you bid four no trump, Louise? Well, I'll pass . . . Louise, why are you looking at me like that? I decided we had better not go any higher, since I only have one honor count in the first place and I'm afraid I rather stretched that diamond bid, because I really only have three of them led by the queen. I'm certainly glad you have to play it instead of me!"

—Jack Howe, '47.

On Sunday

On Sunday some folk go to church
And sit in the solemn pew and search
For the truth of God.
But I go out to the open field
And find His truth in the rich, bright yield
Of the simple clod.

—Lorna Williams, '49.

mom

Tonight He Came Home

Tonight he came home, home on the 8:35 train, and because Mom always planned that he'd have a real home coming only Dad went to meet him. That was the way it was when he left; we all said good-bye to him here at home and Dad took him to the station. I guess Mom sort of wanted it to continue just where we all left off the day that Lon left for the army.

She baked his favorite cake this afternoon and covered the frosting with nuts. We all knew it was a very special occasion. She sent me down to the basement to get his favorite cherry jam and apple pickles and Marty to the store to get a can of pineapple juice and five steaks—if she could. The “prodigal son” was returning and we indeed were killing the fatted calf.

“Of course we won't eat all of this tonight,” she told us as she placed the nuts very lavishly on the chocolate icing, “just a little cake, some coffee and milk then, but tomorrow we'll have a real banquet. Everything Lonny likes.” And she went on with her plans which I knew had been arranging themselves in her mind way before Lon had written and said he thought he'd get home in five or six months.

We didn't any of us eat much at supper time. Dad said he'd had coffee and donuts late in the afternoon and it rather spoiled his appetite, Marty said she guessed she just wasn't hungry, and Mom and I just sat there and rearranged the food on our plates as if we were designing something-or-other.

The clock crawled along and somehow we got the dishes done and then Marty and I went in by the radio and tuned in our favorite Friday night mystery thriller, but before the announcer had gotten his first commercial over with, Marty asked me if I wanted to hear it and I shook my head “no” so she turned it off.

“Do you think he's changed much? I mean in the way he'll talk and act and things like that?” I leaned my head against the radio, picked up a magazine, leafed through its pages for at least the twenty-fifth time, and in the capacity of big sister advisor I told her I imagined that he'd be more mature, but that

I didn't think the change in him would be so much but that we'd still know him.

Mom sat on the davenport, knitting on some mittens, and Dad sat in the big chair reading the evening paper. He kept looking at the clock on the mantel at least once every three minutes until finally it struck 8:00.

"Do you suppose it will be on time, Jim?" Mother asked. Dad said he didn't know but he'd call the depot and find out.

"It will be in at 9:00," he reported when he put the receiver down, and then he thought he'd better get ready to go because the car might be hard to start due to the January weather and it would take a while to get to the depot.

When he left I went over to the piano and played some of the pieces which were there. I lifted up the piano bench seat and brought out some of the songs which were popular when Mother was a girl, and Marty and I harmonized on "Over There" and "It's a Long Way to Tipperary." Then Mom came over and joined in on the chorus; and so we passed the next sixty minutes.

Marty was the first to hear the car drive up, and then Mom and I heard it and we were all at the front door at once and Mom was crying and Marty was jumping up and down with both arms around Lon's neck and saying, "Lonny's home! Lonny's home!" I just stood there with a lump in my throat and a tear running down each cheek.

When all "hello's" had been said and welcome home greetings expressed and everything else that goes with welcoming the only son and brother home from the wars, we all sat down, except Lon who paced back and forth from the big chair to the piano and back again, and listened to him try to tell everything that had happened in his one and three-fourths years over seas in the space of one hour. We all popped questions at him and he showed us his discharge papers, unit citations, etc., and a Japanese rifle he'd brought home as a souvenir.

Then Mom and I went out to the kitchen and brought in big pieces of chocolate cake and coffee and milk and sat down again and tried to eat. But afterwards, when I took the dishes

out to the kitchen, I noticed that no one, not even Lon, ate more than a third of his cake.

While we were sitting there I couldn't help remembering the first time Lon came home from college, almost five years before. We were all there in the living room, only instead of battle tactics, he was describing the novel plays the football team had used in the homecoming game.

About 11:00 Mom announced it was time to go to bed so we all made gestures in that direction. Lon said how good it was to be home and then he came over to me and said, "Sis, you haven't changed a bit," and then he kissed me on the forehead just like he always used to do, and turned around and told Marty he'd race her upstairs—and off they went.

I took the cake plates and things to the kitchen and then went over to the window where Mom and Dad were standing and kissed them good-night.

So that's the way it was when he came home. He really hasn't changed, only grown a little taller I guess. But everything else has changed—just in these few hours.

No one else will ever know what it was like in our house tonight. In the weekly paper that will be out next Thursday there'll be a write-up about how "Lon K. McLawson, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. K. McLawson, who was discharged last Wednesday, arrived home Friday night . . ." and on the next Fourth of July, Lon, and all the other fellows that went from our town, will sit up on the speaker's platform in the town park and will listen to the mayor while he tells how much they've done and how happy we are to have them back.

But it will all be a part of the past then—everything but tonight. Tonight he came home and I just wanted to put it down so I wouldn't forget.

—Vesta Feller, '48.

An Incident

I was draped comfortably over the arm of the best chair, wallowing with pleasure in the usual after-Sunday mess of old funny papers, the society page and the Saturday Evening Post strewn nonchalantly on the slightly dusty floor, when my mother came breathlessly in the front door, dressed in her best. She paused, briefly but dramatically, as is her custom, and then began a wildly hysterical speech, unpunctuated and practically incoherent. "Oh my goodness what a mess and the club president is coming in ten minutes to give me my constitution and I can't possibly get this mess cleared up in that time—come on and help me." With that she began frantically to snatch up old papers and stuff them into the already over-crowded music cabinet. I untangled myself from the chair with remarkable speed to pull our copy of **War and Peace** out of the top of the book shelf, and my sister ran upstairs to get the leather bound copy of Shelley's **Poems** that my cultured and stuffy Uncle John gave me for graduation. We put the Shelley on the mantel and Tolstoi's **War and Peace** on the top of the grand piano.

Mother stopped and paused to survey our work, but only for a minute. She moved the copy of "Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar" on the music rack and put "clair de Lune" in front, and then put **War and Peace** in a little more prominent place on the piano. My sister was sent for wood to light a fire, as the weather was damp and chilly, and in the meantime I cleaned out the old ashes in the fireplace and straightened the andirons. As a finishing touch my mother floated the remains of the corsage daddy had given her for her anniversary the Saturday before in a low dish and put it on the dining table. The flowers were slightly wilted, but still fragrant.

As Mother and I and my sister stood surveying proudly the work of ten minutes, a beautifully neat living room with the brightly burning fire throwing glancing beams on the red leather of the volume of Shelley and making the dark wood of the piano gleam with hidden light, the strident ring of the phone shattered the peace. Mother answered.

"Oh, yes, how are you? Oh, I'm so sorry, but that will be

perfectly all right. Yes, surely. Goodbye." She turned to us with a half-teasing smile and explained, "That was Mrs. Smithland, who was coming to call. She can't make it because her husband will be late and she has no car. However, it is nice that we got the living room cleaned up. It just happens that I'm having a few people over for bridge, and I was dreading all that work." With that statement, she left us to go into the kitchen and prepare her tea sandwiches.

—Doris Raun, '49.

A Thought and I

A thought and I at play
In my inner mind one day,
Were racing 'round the wisdom wells,
Jingling silver knowledge bells.
'Til growing bored with roads explored
We chose an unknown way.
How easily I lost the thought!
How hard my playmate then I sought
Among the unknown frantically.
But he would not come back to me.

—Lorna Williams, '49.



