



Kiosk



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KIOSK

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Cover photo by R. W. Hummel

THE WINDOW

Terry A. Wright

like a door ajar the
window waits for
one passing motion to
counter react

before the window it
was all too easy that
sleeping in time
dreams being situations
mentioned earlier like
meeting a mirror and taking
a breather until your
image catches up
your image or the
mistaken identity of
yourself
yes, praise the words
the way you hang your arms
the dry movement of your lips
you see a
sightless mime
dying harlequin

the window holds
holds its breath
and tries again

without so much as
a how do you do it fate
licks its nose
chalks the cue and
slaps you into the pocket
on impact you shatter the
minute slivers of what you used to be
you are in play you

are always in play to be slapped
and slapped and
your slivers never find
the floor
and the bulky heap of
what is still more or
less you rolls back to
repeat
repeat
repeat the laughing circle

the window
heaves a sigh
buries a laugh

and the thresholds of
your aspirations and the
doors that are your
life close as you
fumble for the key
the slam like a
thousand or two choirs
clearing their throats
spraying the congregation
with bombing precision
i sing

alto and i
might mention badly
the window in the
backside pew simply
hums mouthing the
words for chaplin movies
the bombs
are mere pretension

the window
turns the page
clears its throat

i am a glasscleaner
i polish myself as
if twisting my meaning was
a fault or
amnesty for my emotion was
a felony
but
the
window forgives
i lean for a
need
need a
friend a
lover only
to grasp the glass of
arrested false hope

the shadows desert when
you turn your back

i care
i care
i care

visions like apoplexy
nights of inspiration
twice told jokes and
no thank yous when you ask
are truly the mirrors of
evenings lived before

the window
looks in
snickers
draws the shade

GRANITE

M. Kim Calcille

Last night I dreamed of Penn Central Station
 loud crowds
 trains
 automobiles tied in rush hour traffic
 I had spent the day shopping
Loaded with brown bags and boxes I was hurrying to catch the 5:15 home
 Everywhere confusion
 Everywhere noise
I was afraid my bus had left
No - It was there still
 waiting at the curb
Running I stumbled up three steps inside
 and fed my silver to the hungry meter
as the driver pulled out into the avenue
 There was one empty seat
 back behind a leggy lady in furs
beside a man and the New York Times
 I sat smiling
 at Benson&Hedges
I realized suddenly that this bus was traveling in a strange direction
 Looking out the window I saw street signs
 But couldn't read them
 I searched the passing shop displays
 but I had never seen them before
 I was on the wrong bus
I asked the New York Times Isn't this the 143rd and Park?
 No reply
 I tried to find the door
 But it had vanished
I was being carried farther and farther away from all things familiar
Just as I was beginning to think that I would never get back home again
 I awoke in tears to find you warm and near
 gratefully I kissed your granite arms
 and in your sleep you pressed me closer
 welcoming your lost traveler home

SIoux CITY'S PROGRESS
FROM THE NINTH FLOOR OF THE BADGEROW

Sue Osborne

THREE
STORIES ARE
STACKED ABOVE

me

AND
EIGHT
LAYERS
ARE
NEATLY
FILED
BELOW
THIS FLOOR

from the window, i see at the base
a gaping grave

two curious crawlers pick and probe at the talcumned earth

i lift my eyes from the burial grounds

i see

gleaming beams piercing
the flake-filled air and promising
support for shiny stores to pamper and please

i see

the silver-domed haven
to grant mercy and forgiveness

i see

new chalky-white walls
to heal old afflictions

i see

rigid, red-faced brick, newly set
to meet financial lashes

i see

one block north	on the same street
the troubled sign	L
	I
	B
	R
	A
	R
	Y

IN RETROSPECT

Susan Magel

The woman sat on her front porch seeing all that took place on her busy street. She missed very little and pondered everything. Presently her attention was on some small children doing the things that small children do. Her face smiled at their activities but her mind remained unmoved. She was remembering.

Her attention was averted to a roaring, amateurly remodeled car that thundreed to a submissive grumble at the red light. A young couple sat closely inside. As they waited for the light to change, they gently but firmly kissed. The woman's face smirked at their youngness, but her mind was sober. She was remembering.

Again her attention wandered. This time she was drawn to a young married couple walking with a child between them. The couple playfully picked the child up from the sidewalk by his hands as he walked. Their laughter shivered around them. The woman's face creased in a laugh too. But her mind remained solemn as she looked backward still again.

Now she watched a middle-aged couple as they walked hand-in-hand. Though there was no child between them, the couple obviously enjoyed their walk as they enjoyed each other. Again the woman was reflecting.

At the same time an elderly couple passed on the opposite sidewalk. To the other woman, they seemingly leaned on each other for support and held hands only for the same reason. They moved with painful slowness in her eyes. She knew they squinted to see and strained to hear. The woman's face squeezed into tears as her mind cried. She was afraid.

WITH A WINDOW ON THE BOULEVARD

Linda Yoder

Roberta stared at her soft, camel-colored bag. Wehrman and Sons—she had forgotten to remove the small tag. Bending down, she did that right now; thank goodness it didn't leave a mark. With a squeak, one of those pinkish, sort of transparent lizards ran out from under the bag and up the wall, and now, upside down, eyed her from one of the rectangular ventilation holes in the wall.

"I won't stand it another minute. If Hank doesn't walk in the door in sixty seconds I'll—" she began to herself and broke off. Even the game she had played since childhood was too much effort in the heat. She turned the ceiling fan on high again, though it responded with a roar and a periodic thump; and went to the window, shielding her undressed body behind the print curtains. She had been in the East long enough to observe that the afternoon siesta was over. The broad boulevard below her was dizzy with traffic—olive-green jeeps with an insignia that looked somehow Russian, middle-aged American automobiles chauffeuring elegantly coiffeured beauties, pedicab drivers swaying with the exertion of peddling two or three saronged ladies behind them, and the hundreds on foot!

What was that scent that overwhelmed the smell of dust, of musky fruit, of clove-flavored tobacco smoke? It must be coming from those waxy-looking white flowers on that gnarled gray tree. The leaves a little like small magnolia leaves, shiny and succulent. The magnolia tree outside my bedroom window in Virginia. I, Roberta, a thirteen year old, always dreaming . . .

"You scared me, Hank! I thought it was that creepy bell-boy again. What did you find out from the agent?" Hank was already peeling off his dripping shirt, his double-knit slacks that had looked so trim in air-conditioned New Jersey, and so hot, clingy and bunchy here. Between dippers of water he sluiced over himself in the white-tiled bath, Hank tried to explain.

"First I have to wait for the agent to wake up from his nap. When he finally arrives we have to drink this sickening sweet coffee and eat cold fried bananas. Then he breaks the news to me that the flight to Bali tomorrow has been pre-empted by a presidential party. We'll be lucky if we get out of here by Friday.

Suddenly steamy heat and smells were wrapping themselves around Roberta. "Four more days in this godforsaken hole and I'll go out of my mind. Can't the American consul do something? And what about our schedule?"

"I already tried the consul. He's out of town— lucky devil. We can either cut out those three days in Bali or spend less time in Tahiti."

"We'll never live it down if we miss Bali— everyone will want to hear about it. And Tahiti. . ." Her voice trailed off. Something magical was supposed to happen to them in Tahiti. Something beautiful that would justify the whole dreary trip. That something magical that was going to happen, and didn't, in Kerala and in Kashmir and in Kuala Lumpur.

"The agent keeps telling me how lucky we are— tomorrow's their independence day, the seventeenth of August. We'll be right in the heart of the celebration on this boulevard. There'll be dances, shadow puppets, a parade."

"And noise all night long, I suppose." Roberta had already seen as much "native culture" as she thought she could stand, and had tried to look interested and appreciative long enough. Tahiti would be different, of course. They would lie on palm-screened beaches and no one would introduce them to "interesting characters", or practice very bad English on them or take them to see classical Hindu dancing. Surely there would be French restaurants; no one would urge them to try any innocent-looking rice dishes that would turn out to be cruelly hot. No, the only thing to do was to live, somehow, through these four days of heat and noise and bad food, to skip Bali (that, too, was Indonesia) and then Tahiti would make up for everything.

"All that clumsy-looking Czechoslovakian military equipment— I don't know how they even get it to run at all. Those goose-stepping children— it makes you think of the Hitlerjugend. Some old ladies were actually sobbing when they sang, I think it must have been the national anthem."

That afternoon when Roberta had had enough of her window perch, she slipped into a halter dress and sandals, and went out. Leaving the lobby, she remembered the reason she hated going out— it was the tangled, filthy mob of bare limbs on mats just outside the hotel. As she slipped past them, the mass differentiated itself into waving hands and murmuring voices. If she could only tell the hotel manager what she thought of his allowing those beggars to clutter the hotel steps!

The beggars never bothered Hank at all. "Those skinny babies— they borrow them from their neighbors. I'll bet those guys with the

twisted legs don't have any trouble running home at night with their loot. It's like a circus trick— they know how to put their legs out of joint. And you can see right away that blind man is a fake. Well, it's this Moslem religion that encourages begging— you have to give to beggars to get to heaven."

Long ago Roberta had idly pictured herself in cocktail party conversation. "That most reminds me of a little hole-in-the-wall restaurant in Athens where I had the most delicious hors d'oeuvres. . . ." and so on. Confronted now with street food, she couldn't imagine eating it. Here a man knelt with a bucket of yellowish soup over a few embers, wiping his two china bowls and spoons. Next to him sat a bare-foot, splay-toed woman with a tray of magenta-colored, gelatinous cubes swarming with flies. Every now and then she made a weary swipe at them with a banana leaf.

The boulevard was beginning to fill up after the siesta lull. Roberta found herself passing a market place, stumbling over hairy red fruits heaped on burlap sacks, gagging at the sight of red meat slabs alive with black flies, being jostled on both sides by basket-carrying women. Farther on she could see that the boulevard traffic thinned out; the jerry-built shops gave way to bungalows overgrown with hibiscus and frangipani. It looked inviting; but then, she would be more conspicuous than ever away from the crowd.

"Good afternoon, madam." A dark face full of very white teeth was beaming at her. "Madam is going where?"

"I am on my way back to my hotel." Roberta suited her actions to her words, expecting the listener to take his cue from her frosty tone.

"Madam is staying at the Lotus Hotel, of course? It is very far. May I walk with you? I am a high school student and we all must practice our English. My name is Rahman. Madam is a missionary?" A *missionary!* Roberta flinched and glanced at herself in her mental mirror for reassurance: hair newly coiffeured in Singapore, expensive handbag, dress of Thai silk.

"No, I am not a missionary. I am an American tourist, and I was just going to look for a pedicab to take me back to my hotel. It was very nice to meet you." Heavy with finality. No— now I am trapped. I can't bargain with the pedicab driver and I'll make a fool of myself.

But the boy was already bargaining for her, waving and shouting at three different drivers in turn. A little group gathered, enjoying the diversion. At last Rahman turned, triumphant. "Seven-fifty rupiah for

this one." Roberta climbed in, and before she thought to thank Rahman, the driver was wheeling between the bystanders, scattering them like trash. Turning, she caught a glimpse of Rahman's stiff black hair and protruding elbows as he thrust his hands into the pockets of his white duck pants and sauntered off.

"It's going to be a long night, I can tell you that." Hank leaned out of the window and surveyed a street flowing with barefoot crowds, dotted with kerosene lamps, punctuated with firecrackers and turgid with smoke and food smells. "Why don't we try a shadow puppet show somewhere? I think I could get some terrific black-and-white silhouettes." Roberta acquiesced. Full of the afternoon's sights and smells, she felt no will of her own.

"I'll meet you outside; the manager can tell us where to find the best show." Hank left, gathering up equipment as he went. The dimly lit mass of arms at the entrance to the hotel moved vaguely toward Roberta and then stopped. The voices murmured among themselves as if to say, "Don't bother with her again." Two pairs of the arms were sharing an enamel bowl of cold rice by handfuls, and Roberta thought incongruously of the cutlet she had sent back to the hotel kitchen untouched.

As her eyes adjusted to the darkness she realized that one of the two persons was nursing a baby. A ring of light from the thread-like wick of a smoky kerosene burner gave the scene the impact of a Daumier print. The rice bowl was empty now, and the mother began to croon to the baby. Roberta had been forgotten. Was it just to remind them of her presence, or was it something deeper that caused Roberta to fumble through her purse and empty it of every last rupiah—funny paper stuff that looked like play money—into the rice bowl? Little screams and gasps spread through the crowd; clingy, sticky hands grasped at her hands and even her shoes.

Roberta snapped shut her purse furtively as Hank strode out of the hotel lobby. "They're all worked up tonight, aren't they? Must be the holiday spirit."

"They're always after me," Roberta managed. "Tahiti won't have beggars, surely?"

"Doubt it. Let's walk a couple of blocks. If we get a pedicab in front of the hotel we'll have to pay a fortune." Grasping her elbow, Hank propelled Roberta through the crowd which was denser, if

possible, than it had been that afternoon. They felt themselves jostled, trod upon, stifled.

"Can't we ride, Hank?" Roberta gasped. As at their command a betjak veered toward them and Hank took on the painful job of bargaining in finger language.

"Djalan Dharma Wangsa. How much?" Since Hank Americanized all the a's, the driver was puzzled. But Hank, operating on his theory that if you say anything loudly enough and often enough, you will communicate, repeated the order, and eventually they agreed upon a figure.

Once on the leather seat behind the driver, the two had little to say to each other. Hank seemed worn out by the shouting match, and Roberta still felt the sticky clutches of the beggars. They were travelling over quieter streets now. The night air felt cooler and frangipani at last drowned out the human smells.

Crossing a stone bridge over a canal, they entered again into an area of noise, lights and food smells, all accompanied by a percussion orchestra. There was the shadow puppet screen, and several thousand heads between them and the puppets. Suddenly Hank slapped his hip. "My wallet's gone!" They stared at each other.

"The passports?"

"At the hotel, thank God. That awful crowd back there, of course. What a fool I was to carry it there. You pay the driver, Roberta."

"I . . . don't have any money with me, Hank."

"Smart of you to leave your money there."

"What now?" The expressionless pedicab driver was waiting, so Hank tried the shouting technique again.

"Back to Hotel Lotus! No money! Money stolen," but he succeeded only in drawing a small crowd away from the shadow puppets.

"May I be of service, sir?" One of those ubiquitous white-trousered English students stepped out of the crowd and spoke a few words to the pedicab driver. There was a quick interchange, then, "He asks you will you pay him double?"

"Of course, of course." Irritably.

"Very well. Good-bye, sir."

The pedicab eased back through the crowd and over the bridge. "Hell, they were only rupiahs. It's not as if they were real money." As they passed under a street lamp, the light shone into their laps and onto her empty purse. Roberta gave a little shriek, for the glove-soft leather had been neatly slit and the bag gaped up at her, a leather face grinning

from ear to ear. She clutched at her own throat as though feeling the razor there.

But Hank began to roar with laughter. It was too much. His missing wallet and now the silly slit purse, ripped for nothing at all. The driver turned around, shrugged, and turned away again. But Roberta still shuddered.

The quiet streets beguiled them into silence. Then, "Hank?" Roberta's voice was shaky, yet resolved.

"Yes?"

"If we fly to Darwin could we get home pretty directly from there?"

"Probably could be there in twenty-four hours. Why?"

"Let's do."

"And miss Tahiti?"

"Tahiti will be there next year. . . Won't it?"

"But you. . ." Hank broke off. As they creaked along an unlit street, suddenly the crickets seemed loud and the odor of frangipani oppressive.

"I'll check with the agent first thing in the morning."

CHOPIN'S PRELUDE IN EM, OP. 28, NO. 4

Mark Peters

Your letter
left me as empty
as this razor-blade
injector
left here
in my top drawer when
it faithfully punched out
its final shaves
way back
last semester

UNTITLED

Elaine Specht

I wonder why geese fly south
In the fall;
Why you come home each night
To sandwiches and putty faces,
Haggard words from me.

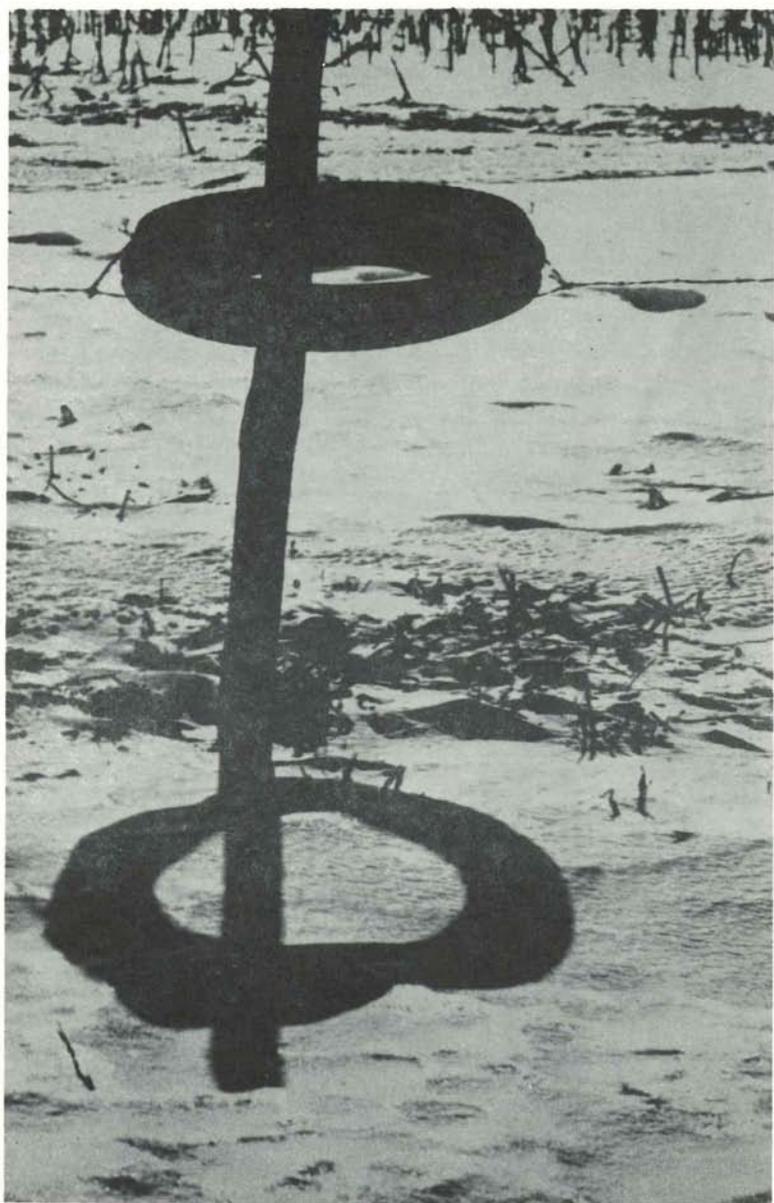
I wonder where the wind goes
When it has roared all night,
Where the stork went
That sat on a fence post long ago
High in the brown hills above town.

I wonder why I find
Your face so dear
After all these years
A mountain of piled-up days
Leaving footprints on us both.

I wonder why the sun comes up
When I'm so tired;
Sometimes I don't want
Another chance—
Let me close my eyes.

I wonder if this is it . . .
If yesterday and tomorrow do matter,
If it's not too late
The main event already played
To a shallow house with no applause.

R. W. Hummel



JOE

Sue Osborne

After the wads of papers had been picked up from the bare wood floors and the chalky slates had been erased, then the yellowed flag with its rusty stains was set in the corner next to the pot-bellied stove the last ritual of the school day. Miss Rosemina, almost begrudgingly, in her stern voice, announced that the ten students could take their wraps from the hooks at the back of the room. Rusty lunchpails rattled as the children spilled through the door, thundered across the porch of the one-room schoolhouse, down the four wooden steps, and cattlelike, started down the country road.

Joe had already pushed past the others and in his spasmodic, ape-like lope was some distance down the road before Shirley could catch up with him. Breathlessly she grabbed his arm, "Wait, Joe, I have to walk with you."

Joe smiled his empty smile and stooped over his bloated stomach to pick up a persimmon, early ripened and fallen to the ground. Shirley saw that his bib overalls, always stained by the end of the school-day, were unbuttoned on both sides. His sweater was upside down and one sleeve was turned wrong side out.

Joe popped the persimmon in his mouth and the brown juice ran the corners and made a ring around his thick lips. Shirley tried to avoid looking directly into his dull eyes. Joe usually kept his round head bent slightly as if to prevent his blurry pupils from falling from his fat eyes and onto his puffy cheeks. With his stubby fingers clenched, he swiped at his nose and mouth, then wiped the back of his hand on his overalls.

By this time the other noisy boys and girls had raced past the pair and were far ahead, ready to round the corner and climb the steep hill behind the cemetery and church. The McClain boys had already turned into their own lane and were by now starting their evening chores.

Shirley felt irritated to think she had to wait for this clumsy, dumb boy, who wasn't even related to her. Just because she lived closer to Joe than the other children did, she was expected to take care of him. After all, she was just the same age and only half his size.

Giving Joe a poke in the back with her forefinger, Shirley said, "Come on, Joe, let's get you home before your mamma comes looking

for you." Joe mumbled agreeably— he always sounded like he had a mouthful of large marbles.

Shirley remembered what her mother said the first week of school. "Now, you know Joe's not quite right in his head. His folks have been mighty good neighbors for a long time. I'm sure you'll break your neck to watch after Joe and see that he has someone to play with at recess. Watch that he doesn't get hurt or wander into any fields on the way home. But don't ever drink out of his cup at the pump or don't ever touch his hankie, Shirley."

The sun was still bright but the cool breeze and the lazy locusts' hum gave away autumn's gentle presence; while the other children stopped to pick out the shiniest, brightest colored maple leaves, Shirley stayed in the road to walk with Joe. As she said goodbye to him at the top of his hill and watched him lumber up the driveway to his house and wave blankly as he fumbled to turn the doorknob, she felt only slight relief.

Shirley walked on past the whispering cornfield between the neighboring houses and remembered one day last week when Joe had handed her a round, brown-speckled rock which he had slowly taken from the deepness of his front pocket. She had unconsciously glanced up at his face; she was still uncertain if she had really seen a fleeting light in his eyes.

As she crossed the lawn and felt the crackling leaves under her shoes she remembered her carefree summer days before school started. Her only responsibilities were bicycling up to the mailbox, gathering the eggs from the reluctant hens, and bringing home Crip, the brown jersey cow. Crip had a twisted hoof, which was always bleeding by the time they crossed the creekbed running through the west pasture. Shirley would watch the hoof where it broke open each evening, and waited for the inevitable red ooze.

The only other blemish on the smooth face of Shirley's summer was the Sunday service at the Baptist church where her family worshipped every week. Shirley's parents and Joe's parents always sat in the same brown church bench. This meant Joe would be there no matter how hard Shirley would try to ignore him. Maybe, she would think, the change from bib overalls to Sunday slacks and T-shirt would bring some change in the empty face. But each Sunday the face was as open as the cave-hole in the side of the hill on Mr. Potter's bottomland.

Shirley finally lost interest in counting the times the yellow-jacket circled the black wrought-iron at the base of the hanging lamp. During

Mr. Grimes forever-and-ever offering prayer, she took care of the weekly task of counting the strips of greyish wallpaper around the room and even had time to find that each side of the walnut pulpit still was supported by four Wrigley Spearmint Gum designs. She was finally compelled to look over at Joe on the other side of the great mounds of his mother's stomach.

There it was, always the same, the never changing thick, green stream from Joe's nostrils. Trying to forget the ugly sight, Shirley started through the hymnbook, adding "between the sheets" after each songs title. By the time Brother Watts had blessed, individually, by name, the entire congregation, Shirley had kept from looking at Joe all but three times.

Fall passed, winter came. Shirley could almost avoid Joe during the school days— lessons took more and more of her time. Joe was left more often alone at the back of the school. His stares became longer, he coughed and sneezed often, and seldom joined the games at recess and noon. During the ride to and from the school in the back seat of the car, Shirley had to eventually look into his face and study the stream from his nose— thicker and greener— just like Crip's red stream from her hoof had become redder and wider.

The funeral service was short, even Brother Watts' blessings were grouped to save time. The cold of the day seemed to pierce through the flesh to the very bones in Shirley's body. She was glad the sermon was short, but she wished she had had time to see if there were still fifteen strips of wallpaper on each side wall and ten across the front wall of the church. Joe would have wanted her to count them.

AWAY

Sally Nordstrom

My mind
 is stalled
on drainholes
smoke and
existence
 so i
retrieve to
the wilderness
the preservation
of life
 and sit
before a
frozen lake
or stare
at wood
beam ceilings
above a
cold fireplace
and know

what is in
 the quiet
of a lake
 the muffled
world of snow
 the intrusion
of children's laughter
 the joy
of country
 the freedom
of play
 the report
of harvest

all this after
the drainhole effect
the cackle
of eight million
roommates
the imitation
of chemical friends

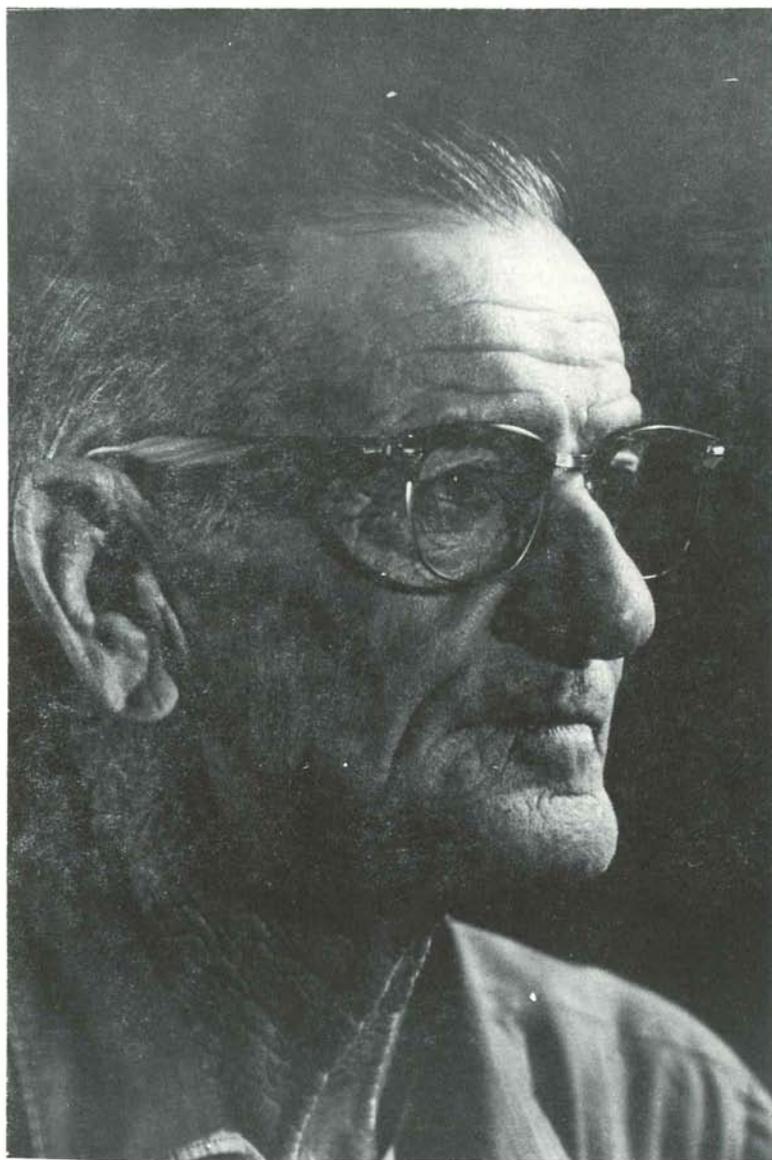
now
the waves
now
the waves
of the lake
lap against
the mind
and
it's all right.

SHELLTURED LIFE

Donnis Sickler

For days before
His shell had been soft
And I cringed each time
That I touched his gushy form
Then one day he died
And I realized
That he couldn't take it.

I've seen people of stone
And often pondered
What happens when
The rock cracks;
But now I see
That it's a common cause of death,
Turtles, Men, and Me.

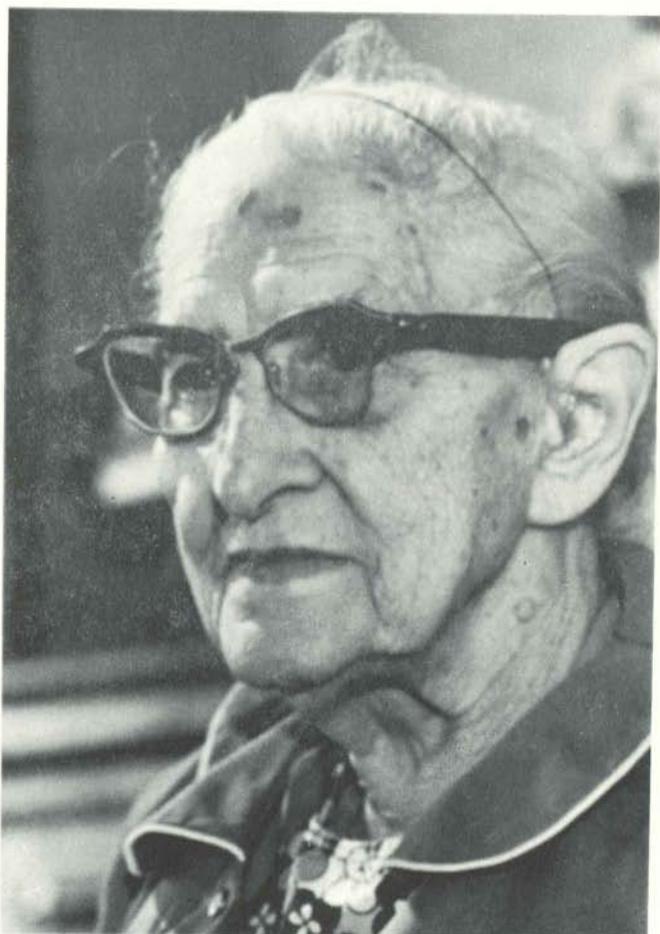


HOMER ADOLPH HAGAN is a retired farmer. Mr. Hagan was born December 21, 1899. "Be honest; work hard."

CHARACTER STUDY OF EXPERIENCED CITIZENS

R. W. Hummel

Too often we overlook learning possibilities; some, perhaps, because they are too close for us to perceive. Others escape our experience because we do not have easy access to them. We must become aware, open ourselves to these learning possibilities, and search them out. One case in point is old people. Some of the elderly we ignore completely; others we put away in homes with other "old people" to get them out of our way. We will all have our turn. Through the years these people have, in most cases, grown in wisdom and character. This character has been etched in the faces of these people who have lived, loved, known joy and heartache, spring and darkness, fullness and nothingness. That is what I have tried to capture on film. Though slowed physically, these people perhaps possess a wisdom we can gain only by assimilating and experiencing for many years. There is, I am sure, much that can be learned if one would only take the time to listen and to share. I took some time to listen.



EMMA BLANCHE RONFELDT was born December 7, 1878. She is a retired home-maker. “. . .to study hard and work hard at whatever you're doing and then if God is willing opportunity will come.”



VERA A. WILLMOTT was born April 17, 1902, and is a home-maker in Oto, Iowa. "Never be too young when you decide to find a mate for the rest of your life. Always set down and talk over your differences without becoming angry."



CLARA SAWIN is a life-long resident of Oto, Iowa. She was born January 5, 1877. In 1880, Clara was abducted by Indians and her father and other townsmen gave chase to rescue her. Clara takes a teaspoon of good Canadian whiskey in her coffee. "Get busy and keep busy!" Clara keeps busy making quilts.



JESSE ZERTING has always been a resident of the Oto, Iowa, area. Mr. Zerting was born June 9, 1886. “. . .time goes by so fast, but ain't no use worrying about it; take things as they come and keep your mind off your troubles.”

FRONY'S LULLABY

Linda Yoder

Grey dawn outlines the windows and spirit fingers move the jars
 on the Grautschank
And creep along the mirror.
Why am I awake? It is so still.
For a moment I thought I heard the pines-- but that was on the farm,
 and long ago.
So still...
I leap from bed.
No light; I cannot bear the light yet.
Hands, reach out for him.
He is so still.

WEISKOPF, AH DU BIST SO KLEIN,
HALD DU BIST UND SCHOEN UND REIN,
SLEEP NOW, LIEBCHEN, MAMMA'S HERE.
SOFTLY SANDLED SLEEP COMES NEAR.

ANGEL, DO NOT WAKE TO FIND
HARD COLD DAYLIGHT CRACKS THE BLIND.
DO NOT WAKE TO SEE HOW SOON
DOVE-GREY DAWN WILL TURN TO NOON.

PINES AND BLUEBIRDS BE YOUR DREAMS,
IMAGES OF COUNTRY SCENES.
TIME AND ALL THINGS PASS AWAY,
ONLY LOVE AND DREAMS CAN STAY.

ALL TOO SOON THE SUN WILL RISE
SO LET MY WARM HANDS CLOSE YOUR EYES.
SLEEP NOW, LIEBCHEN, SOFTLY SLEEP;
REST IS GOOD FOR WEARY FEET.
SO SOFT...
SO STILL...

A singing bird spills his music across the brightening clouds.
I rise and straighten my back against the day.
His face is changed already, set and cold.
I must go now; there are phone calls I must make.

COZY CUP

John Yarosevich

I was born again
In the cyclical whirling truth
Of her serrated cozy cup
Borne to Tommy's truth
Pleasure in illusion
Danger in beauty's truth
Comfort in parting
But I cannot leave
So I do, again and again

FOOTNOTE TO JONATHON LIVINGSTON SEAGULL

J. Hamilton Beazeley

—Birds, Icarus.

—I see them, Father.

—Sea birds over the ocean.

Gulls.

Screaming sea birds over the ocean.

Not wax-winged, my Son.

—No, Father.

But here, this sodden lump in the sand, Father,

Isn't this a bird?

Its wings are spread, but it has no eyes.

Its feathers slip from their slimy sockets

A mess of wet sticky fibres in a heap.

It lies half-buried, Father.

Why won't it fly?

See, Father. Look.

Its tufted crown is balding.

Its pinions rot in the sand.

See the smelly, floating foam wash around it.

Why won't it fly, Father?

Its scaly tongue protrudes its open beak

And there is no cry.

The scaly webs of feet are dragged behind

The wings are spread

The neck is stretched

The bill is split

The eyes are gone

In a last ornithic spasm.

It tried mightily, Father.

Why won't it fly?

FLY

Dan Oakland

Can't you be yourself
(whoever that may be)
for once in your life
and soar— like the hawk in the sky.
You kill yourself and others
by hanging on to birds' wings
pretending you can fly.
And if you find courage to let go
You haven't enough left
to flap your own wings.
So you fall on your face in the mud
feeling sorry and upset
and wondering why the world is so unjust
is so unjust.
But it is only you who is afraid
to look at yourself and what you will see
and it is you who is afraid
to fly.

CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Mark Peters

The sun sent its
light down today
like an out-of-tune cello
riding a shaking,
time-worn bicycle.

“How far to Woodbury County?”
the cello asked the clouds as it
wheeled past.

UNTITLED

Donnis Sickler

If we could read each other like a book
Wouldn't life be simple?
Wouldn't our lives fall together easily?
There would be no questions,
nothing to fear.
But love and life are both
long and complicated.
And we often find pieces that
won't fall in place.
But if we don't care, don't try,
then our entire purpose is defeated.
So reach slowly towards me,
You must read yourself to me,
and I to you.
Give of yourself, but
be cautious.
Pieces can break or crumble,
Reach tenderly for me—
love and life both also have
time to give.
So do I, don't you?
I care, I believe, and I trust.
Can you share with me.
Will you listen as I share my life
with you, not only in words but
in shades and form too?

UNTITLED

Donnis Sickler

There was a time
when i passed
silently by a
single petal of a rose
lying on
the ground
with just one
drop of rain
remaining
in form upon
it

But now that
princes and
velvet are
gone;
and bright lights
replace the
candles,

I find a silent
sadness and
reflection of
my life
within the
single drop of
rain upon
the petal,
and a
great silence
of myself
kneeling on the
ground.

R. W. Hummel



MEMORY

Dan Oakland

The windmill in the meadow stands lonely
As the breezes try to give it life.
The farmhouse— once a home— is now a memory.
Only to be thought of by the wheatfield
Growing in its place.

There was a grove of trees
Where the children used to play their games,
And where they'd sing their songs,
And where they'd shed their tears.
Once there stood an orchard
Which would blossom every spring,
And a garden
That would grow 'til fall.

The grove of trees is gone now—
And with it all the children.
Each spring and fall are sadder
With no blossoms to smell
And no garden to tend.
All these are but memories,
Only to be thought of by the wheatfield
Growing there instead.

And all that is left is the lonely windmill
Standing in the meadow
As the breezes vainly try to bring it life again.

R. W. Hummel



WHICH WAY?

Rochelle Holt

From the window
 on *The City of New Orleans*,
I see the vanishing.
 Scrapers shrink
 as sky expands touch,
 its thumb
 smudged rose pastel
 streaking toward the south.

The train lumbers on
hurling gravel confetti
on parallels who unite,
or are they only escaping—
 the rails
 the train
 the people.

And I pretend to hear the sumac
whispering, starting rumors
about the naked trees
tangled in love, until . . .

I see an aisle
 of telephone poles
 sloping their shoulders
 like old men on canes;

And I hear someone mocking,
 “You’re watching where you’ve been,
 Instead

And I hear someone mocking,
 “You’re watching where you’ve been
 instead of where you’re going.”

