The Cannon is Dordt's fine arts magazine. We welcome all submissions, and urge everyone to bring us their work.

We thank God for the talents displayed in this issue and hope that it is encouragement to the artists to continue in the development of their gifts.

Criticism is welcomed and we urge you to let us know what you like (and dislike) about each issue.

The Editor
His Shell

Stooping on the sand
He picked up a shell
The inside was smooth
And marbelized like an opal
The outside was rough
Like an old corduroy road
I watched
As he gently fingered the shell
Sitting down, he tightened his grip
Contented, he sat staring out
Into the ocean.

Pam Evink

Passage

Prow pounds in midnight blue,
Shovel-nose shudders, churns salt waste;
   Sea lies furrowed and flayed.
Diesel spins flashing screw,
Throbbing engine coupled to shaft;
   Track left in sky and sea.
Dull booming, wave-slapped steel,
Hull creaks, wheel kicks, sea-teased helm grasped;
   Wind-washed scars quickly heal.

David Dill

This One For Tradition

Take
Drink
Remember and believe
that this ritual
will be repeated next week
   —if not here, elsewhere.

Take
Drink
Remember to believe
that tomorrow's sermon
is for sinners
   —if not these, others.

Take
Drink
Remember our belief
that life is short
and we're young only once
   —if not really, pretend.

Take
Drink
Remember the belief
that all of life
is for celebration
   —and if not easily found . . .

Take.
Drink!

Thriesa Kolk

Je reviens

Carnation sweetness hung
left over
like old wedding pictures and High School sweethearts

The woolen baby clothes
are too unpractical for
modern machinery

The moonlight steps in around the edges of the curtains
and plays Beethoven's 9th
on the Turkish carpet

The post marked stamps
are 15 cents
airmail

The silver knife blades are loose from their handles
because someone left them too long
in the hot water

There's a white-water stain on the floor
where I dropped the flowers
and the wax is gone

My grandchild
lies on his stomach
peacefully asleep.

Anya Seerveld
The girl crouched frog-like on a large, flat rock and stared down into the water as she waited impatiently for the crayfish to again come millimetering out from between two slimy rocks. She had already grabbed for it four times and by now her thin brows were angled to her nose and her lips were wrinkled into a tight circle. If I were a crayfish, she thought, I wouldn't suspect that there was someone waiting to catch me. I'd walk right on out into the open. Then the girl thought of Mr. Joe and what he would think if he saw her grab and fling the crayfish with all her might as far as she could out on the lake. He would look long and hard at her and in his eyes she knew she would see admonition that she had treated part of God's Creation like that and hurt for the crayfish who would sink to the bottom, totally disoriented and bruised, and disappointment that she had done something he had once told her not to do. But also, behind his eyes, she would maybe see understanding and even a bit of approval for her vigor and spunkiness. She knew Mr. Joe liked her spunkiness because he always laughed when she rolled in the grass with Sonny, he barking furiously and she scraping her elbows and grass-staining her knees. Or when she swam with Sonny across the bay and jumped off high rocks while he swam after the sticks she threw as she jumped. Mr. Joe liked to sit in the wicker armchair on the porch, reading a book or watching them play while he drank his hot chocolate and smoked his pipe. The girl liked summer camps well enough, but was glad her parents had sent her to Mr. Joe's again like last summer. They had never visited her at camp anyhow.

"Crap!" The girl felt the crayfish's partitioned leg slip through her fingers. "That's it bud," she said, "you can just sit there and rot for all I care." She jumped a couple rocks, treaded between isolated daisies up the bank and called for Sonny. He came leaping over the tall weeds like a springing antelope, greeted her with a bark and ran panting up the path ahead of her to the house. She could see the dirty rooftop through the pine trees and wondered if Mr. Joe was getting lunch ready yet. The girl could feel her stomach churning like an egg beater rotating on the sides of an empty bowl. She walked a bit faster and was soon up the steps of the peeling house and through the screen door on the porch. Her nose picked up, first fish and then fried tomatoes as she tramped to the kitchen. She wasn’t wild over fish, but tomatoes she’d eat anytime and anyhow.

"Good thing you showed up," said Mr. Joe as the girl came in and went over to inspect the frying pan. "I was just debating whether I should eat it all myself or sit Sonny up on the seat across from me." The girl plopped down on the bedspread-covered armchair in the kitchen’s waterfront corner (the four sides of the house to her were the waterfront side, the path side, the bathroom side and her side). It tickled her imagination to think of a Great Dane seated at the table with his long paws on either side of a plastic plate and a bib tied around his neck. "Let’s eat!" she said as Sonny came over to get his ears scratched. "Just wash your hands and bring over the salt and pepper."

They sat down, clasped hands and slowly prayed the Lord’s Prayer together. There wasn’t much fish because Mr. Joe had caught only one pike that morning, so the girl ate ravenously of the bread and fried tomatoes. As they ate, Mr. Joe described to her how he’d caught the fish. She always found it fascinating to watch him talk and eat at the same time. It was as though he’d be eating merrily along and suddenly a word would pop out of his mouth, totally unexpected and sometimes a bit of food came along with it as though the word had come before he could clean his mouth. Or, the words would be coming out fine, and all of a sudden his hand would put food into his mouth and Mr. Joe’s surprised eyes would look at the fork as though it had been rude to interrupt him. The girl thought perhaps it had something to do with his dentures or maybe his beard getting in the way. Being 10 years old, she knew that old people’s teeth often
could come out, but she couldn't figure out how the teeth then stayed in. When she'd first met Mr. Joe three years ago, his beard had been a lot shorter. They had moved into the house next to his in North York and the girl often went over to Mr. Joe's after school till Mom or the babysitter came to pick her up. Then he retired and moved up here. Now, the girl thought, I have to go to that horrid neighbour lady every day until . . . .

"Let's check the mail." said Mr. Joe after they'd stacked the dirty dishes on the counter.

"Think there'll be a letter from Mom and Dad today?" the girl asked with her hand in Sonny's mouth and her arm around his neck.

"Couldn't tell you." Shake of the head. "You ready?"

"Just gotta 'hand a wang'." Disentangling herself from Sonny, the girl skipped to the bathroom. When she got outside, Mr. Joe had lit his pipe and was wandering between the vegetable rows, searching out tomorrow's picking. They took the path through the woods, rather than along the water, because it was shorter. The girl didn't like to walk in back of Mr. Joe because he stopped so often to look at a flower or a bird or a snail or a fungus on a tree, or something of the sort. As it was, she usually came back to see what he was looking at anyhow. She looked around her, and then, as though an inside organ had been crushed, she felt the pain and ran bewildered and crying down the path.

"Jackie! Jackie! What is it, my girl?"

The girl stood quite still as she read the letter. Silently she brought it over to Mr. Joe, who was standing a few paces further on, watching her, like an owl watches its young learning to fly. She couldn't look at him and then, as though an inside organ had been crushed, she felt the pain and ran bewildered and crying down the path.

"Dear Jackie,

We don't want you to get upset when you hear this news, because we've thought very carefully of all the possibilities and alternatives and think that our solution is definitely the best for Mommy and Daddy and that you will be able to adjust quite well to it. We've decided . . . ."
with each pull and kick. Swimming through warm spots in the water thrilled her. She would think, if only the whole lake was this warm; it'd be like swimming in a huge bathtub; m, m, m, . . .

By the time the girl finally got back to the house, it was almost dark. Exhausted, shivering and naked, she dripped up the front stairs and was greeted with Sonny's watchdog bark. Mr. Joe came out of the shadows on the porch and engulfed her with his strong arms. "My girl, my girl." As he held her, she could feel deep love generating through his sweater, his cheek, his hands and his pipe smell. He loved her. He cared for her, and he'd been worried.

"M-my clothes are on the other side of the lake."

"Sure, sure. That's o.k. We'll get them tomorrow."

He carried her into the house and got a towel from the bathroom while she stood shivering in the middle of the kitchen. He rubbed her dry, took her to her bedroom, helped her on with her p.j.'s and tucked her into bed. "You stay there now, girl." he said as he went back to the kitchen. After awhile he came back with a cucumber sandwich and a cup of hot chocolate. She was hungry. Mr. Joe sat on the bed and watched her till she finished. Then, without saying anything, he stood up and got his Bible from the drawer table in his room just like he did every night before the girl went to sleep. Tonight he read a part in Matthew 14 about Jesus walking on the water. The girl started crying again when she saw that his bookmark was her Mom and Dad's letter. Mr. Joe wiped her tears with his coarse fingers and put his hand on her hair.

"Jackie, Peter walked on water. He walked on water. If we hang on like Peter did, we too will be kept from sinking into all kinds of sorrow."

The girl just looked at him, trying to understand. Then she remembered something.

"Like grass on still water?"

"That's right, like grass on still water."
El Producto

It's a boy!
He slipped the product from its wrapper.
A match
— spittin' image of his mum —
redden's the butt.
The warmth pervades,
swells the chest,
wafts;
dream-images conjured.

Times the ember may cool,
a bad taste gathers in the mouth;
a little heat applied,
rekindling the butt,
can cure that
though.

David Dill

Ceramic Dancer

You dance on a stage,
spinning.
A wheel turning,
your whirling world
offers a humble beginning.

My hand touches your side,
molding,
caressing earthen flesh.
You respond with moves
that move me to respond.

One throw completes the dance,
enhancing,
gracing your form.
You stand alone
on a revolving pedestal.

Sprigging beauty surpasses the artistic
scoring
and saturated slips.
You dry yourself,
a fragile, anxious greenware.

You outshine the fiery critique,
glazing.
Viewer approval praising
our performance, I am
glad you were my companion.

Stan Sturing

Under The Influence

I struggle with the cap of creativity.
The sweating bottle slips within my grasp
As I apply pressure.

The limpid yellow liquid of imagination,
Trapped inside the unyielding glass
Beyond my reach.

Seal breaks, and sudden foam of inspiration
Climbs up the neck spills over lip.
I catch what I can.

Drinking deep the heady brew of genius
Until there is no more.
Exhilarated.

Next morning,
headache
and a furry tongue.

Jim De Young

Pearly Mae

She turns in a swirl of laced petticoats
and swings
the curve of her neck invites
pursuance.

The tightness of black strings squeezing
the whiteness of her bodice
pronounces
defies
the gully separating them.

Light freckles are minor blemishes
covered by make-up
and clothes.
Revealed when the money is Down.
Thick knuckles and shiny palms
from touching men
gleam in fantasies
and close in a grip of a miner.

The soft roundness of her belly,
asks to be touched
and answers
the wail of a ship without a light.

Anya Seerveld
I didn't want to go along at all. My grandfather has always been an old man to me, not the fishing buddy, or the experience-wise counselor of some of the stories I'd read. But it was my duty, and I didn't want to upset anybody, so . . . . Chances were he wouldn't recognize us anyway.

Of course, I felt guilty about not wanting to go to see him. Typical youthful response to age and infirmity, right? this revulsion and distaste. Would I be like him in sixty years?

But we were in the nursing home now. The corridors had that sickly-clean smell of disinfected death. The walls were the cool green that scientific studies said was supposed to be the most soothing. All designed to see people out of the world with a minimum of mess and a maximum of fuss. I preferred the opposite. Like the old days—let a man die with some dignity even if it didn't look as pretty. I planned to die fast when my time came, and fast deaths are generally messy.

I hadn't let my father know how I felt about visiting Grandfather. At least, I hadn't said anything. I didn't think I had acted reluctant either, but I knew Dad knew. Not that he said anything. We had communicated in our usual way, in silence, with sidelong glances to assess each other's mood or the expression on the other's face.

I threw him a sidelong glance now as we walked in silence down the corridor. His face was closed up completely. He could do that. Many times I had found myself totally baffled when I tried to read him, or found that I was way off what he was really feeling or thinking. People tell me I do the same thing; I guess I got it from him.

He broke the silence. "That's Grandpa's room on the end."

I nodded.

"Maybe he'll be asleep."

I didn't say anything to that.

He wasn't asleep. I wouldn't have said he was exactly awake though, either. He was propped up in bed, leaning precariously to one side, a pillow behind his neck, forcing his head back so that his eyes were directed, unseeing, at the ceiling.

Aunt Ruth was sitting in the chair beside Grandfather's bed. She got up when she saw Dad and I in the doorway.

"How is he?"

She drew her eyebrows together and gave a half-shake of her head. "No better."

"Does he know what's going on?"

"Sometimes. He recognized me when I came in, and he has been making sense off and on."

She bent down so that her face was about a foot above Grandfather's. She picked up one of the large, shrivelled hands that had been lying heavily beside him, forcing the neatly folded bedclothes tight over the mound of his body.

"He sometimes responds when you touch him." She bent lower so that her mouth was inches from his ear. "Dad."

His eyes closed and opened again, slowly. His jaw came up and stayed there.

"Dad, Ted is here to see you."

"Ted is here, Dad," she repeated a little louder.

Grandfather's mouth opened and a sound that might have been Dad's name came out. My father was on the other side of Grandfather's bed by this time, and had taken a seat in a folding chair. He leaned forward, awkwardly putting his hand on Grandfather's shoulder.

"How are you feeling, Dad?"

Grandfather turned his head toward Dad and a look of recognition came into his eyes. "Theodore?" His voice was little more than a whisper.

I hadn't moved much inside the doorway yet. I hoped that maybe I would be forgotten. I was kind of in a state of shock. Last time I saw Grandfather he had been ailing but still at home. Since then all this had happened. The family had been talking
as if he were going to die. I was sure of it now that I had seen him. The sooner the better for him.

Dad was carrying on a one-sided conversation with Grandfather. "Barbara will be coming with the girls later this afternoon. They are all doing just fine . . . ." He continued in that vain for about a minute. I knew that it was going to be time for me to do my thing soon. I figured a "hello, Grandpa" would about do it on my part. If he recognized me and was true to form, he would tell me how tall I was, and ask me how college was going.

"Jonathan is here with me, Dad." Here it comes.

"Hello Grandpa."

"Who is this?" Grandfather whispered.

"Jonathan; my son, Jonathan," Dad repeated slowly and distinctly.

"This is Jonathan? Why, he's bigger than you." Somehow the ghost of a voice managed to indicate surprise. As usual. Funny, since I'd been taller than my father for a few years now.

I waited for the question about school, but Grandfather's eyes had gone vacant again. His face went completely slack and lost the little bit of expression it had had while he was talking.

Suddenly Grandfather say upright in bed. The body I had thought incapable of supporting itself seemed to have instantly regained the power and vigor that Grandfather always had had. His face looked alive, not as if it were a mask of which only the eyes and the mouth were worked by the hand of an unseen puppeteer. I felt as if Grandfather had moved back inside himself.

He turned his head toward my father. "Theodore," he asked sternly, "have you finished the milking?"

Well; Dad looked at me, Aunt Ruth looked at Dad, we all looked at Grandfather. Dad hadn't milked a cow in about twenty-five years; since he'd left the farm to go to college. And Grandfather had retired from the farm himself more than fifteen years ago.

I guess Dad didn't know quite what to do. His mouth opened twice with no sound before he spoke. "Dad, there aren't any—"

"Theodore, no excuses. You know you can't go until you've milked them cows."

Dad looked toward Aunt Ruth and me. His eyes were wide and questioning. I looked away, toward Aunt Ruth, who broke the silence. "Humor him."

Dad nodded hesitantly. "Yes, Dad, I've milked the cows." I thought I heard a slight quaver in his voice, and his body seemed to shrink up inside itself.

"Theodore, you sure?"

"Yessir." Dad's head was turned down, his eyes fixed on his hands clasped between his knees.

"Okay boy, you go wash up now; I'm almost done here, tell your Momma I'll be in in ten minutes."

"Yessir."

Grandfather sank back onto the pillow. We all sat in silence for a few seconds, none of us meeting the others' eyes, Aunt Ruth made the first move. "He's been more and more like this in the last weeks."

"About the farm?" Dad asked.

"Yes. He's always talking about the chores, or the new tractor, and with all the rain we've been having he worries about getting the corn in before the freeze. Sometimes he realizes where he is, and he . . . well, he cries to go home, but now he thinks home is the old farm." Her voice broke; and she brought her hand up to her mouth, pressing her fingers over her lips.

Dad moved around the bed, as if to comfort her, but before he reached her side Grandfather's voice turned us all toward him again. He was leaning forward from the waist, gazing at a spot just to the right of the foot of his bed, as if he wanted to impart some very important information to someone there whom no one else saw.

"Mother, I seen that new stove you been wanting in town today."

Mother. That was my grandmother. I'd never heard him call her by anything but that—Mother. I don't think I knew she had another name until I was about twelve years old. The minister at her funeral had said it, "our Christian sister, Henrietta Louise DeGraaf, beloved wife of Albert Harman DeGraaf." Both those people were strangers to me, I thought, although the last name was my own. I spent a few puzzled moments figuring out that that was Grandmother and Grandfather.

Grandfather spoke again. "The boys are talking about bicycles for Christmas. I wish we'd be able to get 'em for 'um."

That rang a bell with me. Desperately wanting a bicycle is one of my father's favorite deprivation stories. Right up there with having to walk three miles to school in the snow. I looked at Dad. His face was im-
"We'll have to take a loss on the stock. Rain is hurting the haying too. Your stove and the boys' bicycles will have to wait until things get better. If Roosevelt can't straighten out the country, I wish God would at least straighten out the weather. Sorry, Mother."

He fell silent. Neither Dad, Aunt Ruth, nor I moved. We sat as if waiting for the curtain to rise on the second act.

"Rev. Beimers wasn't very good this morning, was he? He hasn't been lately. Hasn't been himself. Have to go soon; can't sit here visiting all afternoon. Got chores to do. Have to go home. Want to go home. Mother, where are the children, we've got to go now."

All was quiet. Grandfather looked around the room, looking right through us, but apparently seeing people he knew. He nodded and smiled, murmuring polite greetings to old friends. After a time his head stopped moving and a look of bewilderment came over his face. Slowly the smile died.

"Not going; Where are the children? Go home. I want to go home." With each word his voice lost some of its power, and his body sagged. He fell back against the inclined bed, but only for a moment, before he sat bolt upright and leaned toward my father. He fixed Dad with an intent stare.

"Theodore, you heard me, it's time to go."

Dad put a hand on Grandfather's shoulder and attempted to gently push him back onto the bed. Grandfather was like a rock. Dad pushed a little harder, and abruptly Grandfather collapsed back against the mattress.

"I'm going to see if Barbara and the girls are here yet. They might not be able to find the room."

He turned and walked out of the room.

"I'll go with him, Aunt Ruth, okay?"

She nodded in answer, and I hurried out. Dad was already far down the corridor, and I slowed my pace to keep the distance between us.

When he got out of the building Dad didn't even glance toward the parking lot. He headed instead for the street, which he crossed, and headed toward the park a block away. I sped up to catch him and then slowed down again. What should I do? What could I do? I couldn't imagine myself comforting my father. I wouldn't know what to say, even if I knew how he felt.

He crossed the playground without slowing down, nimbly side-stepping running children, and nodding to two women on a bench who were watching their kids. He headed across an open area, ignoring the boys whose football game he walked through the middle of.

When he reached an isolated stand of oak trees on the far side of the park, he stopped. I was uncomfortable about following him like that, so I started walking toward him, slowly. I was still far away, but I could see when he buried his face in his hands. I stopped dead still for a minute, and then, even though I didn't really want to, I started walking toward him again. As I got closer I could hear no sound coming from him, but I could see his shoulders shaking up and down.

I walked up behind him and touched him on the shoulder. "Dad?"

In a few seconds his shoulders stopped shaking. He lowered his hands and turned toward me. I had never seen my father look like he did then. His face was white and twisted, and his eyes were red and puffy, but dry.

"Are you alright, Dad?" I asked.

Dad slowly lowered his eyes until they met Grandfather's. They held the gaze for a few long seconds before Grandfather closed his eyes and lay back in his bed. Dad hesitantly extended his right hand toward Grandfather's face, fingers apart and palm down. The hand stopped an inch from the creased cheek. It began to tremble slightly. Abruptly the hand was withdrawn. Dad turned toward Aunt Ruth.

"I'm going to see if Barbara and the girls are here yet. They might not be able to find the room."

He turned and walked out of the room.

"I'll go with him, Aunt Ruth, okay?"

She nodded in answer, and I hurried out. Dad was already far down the corridor, and I slowed my pace to keep the distance between us.
“Yes, I’ll be alright.”
I could see he would be. His face was almost back to normal already, and his voice was strong and steady. I could hardly believe that I had seen him as he had looked when he first turned toward me.

“Your Grandfather’s going to die, Jon. My father is going to die.”
I hadn’t expected him to say anything, and certainly not this. I didn’t know how to respond.

“He is my father and I love him.”
He was so matter-of-fact. Yet intense; as if he was drilling each sentence into my head.

“Do you know, I never really knew my father?”
He seemed to expect an answer, so I said, “no, sir.”

“It is terribly hard to love someone you don’t know.”
I was looking at the ground when I felt his hand on my forearm. I felt my eyes drawn irresistibly up to meet his. He held my gaze while with his other hand he reached up and touched my cheek.

He turned and walked back toward the nursing home, and I watched him until he, and the grass, and the children blurred into one indistinguishable mass of color.
Herman

Praise God, the Lord, Ye Sons of Men

Praise God the Lord, ye sons of men; Before His

highest throne To-day He opens heav'n again.

And gives us His own Son, And gives us His own Son

Psalm 134

O Bless Our God With One Accord

O bless our God with one accord Ye faithful servants of the

Lord, who in His house do stand by night; And praise Him there with all your might.
Psalm 148

Praise the Lord!  
Ye heavens, adore Him;  
Praise Him all ye stars, and light!

angels in the height;  
Sun and moon, rejoice before Him;
Praise Him all ye stars, and light!

A Walk in Late Autumn

Beside the river,  
Ducks under the almost-naked oaks,  
Clatter off at my approach,  
Cackling their amusement  
At my earthbound state.

The fallen leaves  
I came out to kick and crackle,  
Stick to my boots,  
Shine dull of decomposing,  
And ooze their earthy oil  
As I step on them.

The metal sheet  
Of gray above my head,  
Takes shape along the horizon,  
In mountains, waves, marching armies  
Of wicked-blue, and gray, and yellow-white,  
Which boil and war  
From north to south,  
Pushed by the bitter wind.

I turn my back  
On the wind and river.  
Walk back up the hill  
Toward the car.  
The stinging wet in the air  
Finds the crack  
Between the coat collar  
And hair.

Jim De Young
“Ype was always such a good boy,” Grandma said as she caressed the fragile dust off the picture she held in her hands. The skin on her fingers was baggy, like an over-worn, stretched-out pair of polyester pants.

I loved to watch Grandma. It was fascinating to watch her cheeks jiggle as she tried her best to pronounce “doz funny, Engels words.” She was always afraid that I would laugh at her for saying something wrong. But it wasn’t the sounds that made me chuckle, it was the image that came to mind as I watched her cheeks shake. It reminded me of the squirrel that visited out back porch every so often to fill his pouches with the left over peanuts from by-gone Christmases. I always wondered if Grandma could put as many peanuts in her pouch as the squirrel could put in his!

We used to kid Grandma about her hair. The greyish mass of wavy locks really did have a rat’s nest look to it, but Grandma wasn’t about to change anything about it. “Dem perms,” she complained, “they’re enough to burn your scalp all. God game me dis hair the way it is, and I’m not going to change it.” Mind you, pin curls weren’t quite so evil in Grandma’s eyes. Every Saturday night her daughter would come and set her hair because “it ain’t right not to look nice on de Lord’s day.”

Kryn and Jack, Grandma’s sons, would tease her that she was becoming worldly and that “Grace is deceitful and beauty is vain.” But one disdainful look from Grandma would quiet them long enough for her to justify it by saying that she wasn’t graceful, and she wasn’t beautiful, so how could she be deceitful? But behind that glance were eyes twinkling in amusement at her own wit.

Today she was in a “remembering way” so we were looking at her “picture box”, a faded yellow cigar box with Prince Albert printed in red script across the top of the lid. They were Grandpa’s favorite cigar, “but the tobacco in de can smelled better” Grandma said. The name Prince Albert reminded her of a trick the schoolchildren loved to play.

Grandpa owned a store and many times the phone would ring and someone would ask if they had “Prince Albert in a can.”

“Sure do,” Grandpa would say, and the giggling voice on the other end would burst out with “Well, you’d better let him out!” The Prince Albert box that Grandma had was the last one they had ever put on their shelf. Cigarettes became popular and cigars just weren’t in demand anymore. It became a picture box, an opportunity for Grandma to talk about the old times and a chance for me, an inquisitive grand-daughter, to learn about her life.

The faded picture Grandma held in her hands had a pungent, musty smell. It was a group of school children frozen into the posture and pose of church fathers at a delegate meeting. Faces empty of any childish mischiefiousness, they stood with the same seriousness required at an excommunication. “Must’a been about grade one,” Grandma figured. They stood, three rows deep, in front of a white-plank building with a pillared porch. Across the top of the porch hung a sign. “Sumas Christian School.” The girls wore black jumpers with white blouses, the boys wore black pants with dark-colored pullovers. They were a sombre lot.

One little boy looked especially sad, eyebrows pulled down low at the ends and with mouth to match. Even though his face was darkened by the shadow of the photographer, I could see that his eyes, one covered with a loose strand of hair, were wide with fright. It was an expression of both hopelessness and distress.

Grandma’s finger covered the boy’s legs as she pointed him out. “Dat’s Ype, she explained. “He was always such a good boy, and all de time so happy.”

I was surprised that Grandma was talking about Uncle Ype. I must have shown my surprise because Grandma looked at me and then continued.

“Yah, he was always smiling. Sometimes a mischief-maker too. I remember one day, it was a Sunday, that Grandpa
and I decided to go to church by ourselves and leave the boys home with Audrey." Audrey was my mother, the only daughter after four boys. "When we turned into the driveway it scared the wits out of me for der was Ype pushing Audrey so fast in the buggy down the steep hill in front of the barn that he couldn’t hold on and de buggy was let loose and flying all by itself down de driveway, straight for de auto and Ype running and laughing behind it. Laughing at that! I just screamed but Grandpa had wits enough to stop de car, run out in front and try to stop de buggy. He managed to save Audrey, but Ype sure didn’t expect de klap op de head dat he got. Ype just thought it was good he had done—he was giving Audrey a ride to make her happy! Yah, Ype was a happy boy and so helpful."

Grandma stopped, considered, and went on. "Well, no, not dat day. Poor Ype, dat day he was not happy. Strange it was. He liked school always so much. Every morning he would hurry to bring in de potatoes from de root cellar. That was his chore, see, dat had to be done before the boys would leave for school. But not dat morning. Ype just wouldn’t do anything. I asked his brother Kryn what was the matter with Ype but he said he didn’t know. I asked Ype what de matter was but he just looked at his hot porridge dat was getting cold and mumbled ‘nothing’. It was a strangeness to me. Ype was never so down-hearted in the morning. It just wasn’t right. But I didn’t know what to do, so I just hurried him up and sent him to school."

I knew that couldn’t be the end of Grandma’s story. No, she was just taking a deep breath before she went on with the rest of the tale.

"I knew something was wrong when de teacher even phoned dat she was having problems with Ype. Trouble from Kryn—yah, dat happened once in a while. Trouble from Jack—yah, all de time! But Ype, no that was a strangeness. Figure it out, I couldn’t. Teacher said they were having class pictures done and Ype wouldn’t be in it. So I told her to tell Ype to come to the phone.

"Poor Ype, he was so scared, I could hear him taking deep breaths and trying not to cry. I said, “Ype, what’s de matter, boy?” He finally quit choking long enough to say ‘I d-d-don’t wanna be on the picture, Ma.’ I didn’t know why not. I told him about the pictures we had of all his uncles and aunts in de old country and how it so nice was dat we could look at them when we missed them. And how it would be nice if we had a picture of him to look at. Well, I guess I hit it right on the nail-head. Ype burst out “No, Ma, I don’t wanna be on the picture. I wanna be with you. I don’t wanna die.’ Poor Ype, he figured dat all his family in de old country that was on pictures were dead. So that meant dat if he went on the picture, he’d be dead and he couldn’t come off de picture no more!"

I knew the rest of the story. After school that same day, Ype had come out of the school, walked down the steps of the porch, and crossed the driveway where the few cars drove up to pick up the students. The photographer was leaving just then, and instead of going around the school like most of the drivers did, he decided to back up onto the road. Ype was crossing the driveway just behind the photographer’s car. Beside Ype’s body they found a crumpled up piece of paper—a letter from the teacher about the cost of the photographs they had taken that day.

Grandma went on. "Poor Ype, what a hard day for him dat was. Y’know, Ype still don’t like to be on pictures. But now?" Grandma’s eyes became glazed with a wetness that had not been there before. "Now he says it’s cuz he don’t like to dress up!"

She looked at me and I felt the agonizing honesty in her eyes. She looked back at the picture. Each of her hands moved from their side of the picture to the top, where two fingers of each hand grasped the white border and slowly, with the rip of an uncovered lie, tore a line down the middle of the picture and across Ype’s face.

I left her sitting there by the window, her silhouette as distinct as the black and white of a negative.
These be
Three cosmic things:
The powdery sky . . . the round
Silver-faced moon . . . the sparkling of
The stars

Pam Evink
NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN

Greg L. Uttinger

_The Twilight Zone_ was a popular science-fiction show of the Fifties. Recently it has undergone a major revival across the country. This is my contribution to that revival.

It is written, "There is no new thing under the sun." A case in point: a small commuter bus leaving the grey fringes of a sprawling metropolis at the dusk of a dreary day. Its passengers believe they are returning to their quiet, country homes after a hard day's work. Unfortunately for them, they are mistaken. Watch closely the journey of this ill-fated vehicle, and you may see history repeating itself. For the year is Twenty-Five Hundred, and the place is the Twilight Zone.

The passenger bus was somewhere on that thin line between antique and antiquated. It was still powered by an internal combustion engine; which meant, of course, that fuel was becoming difficult to obtain and replacement parts were all but nonexistent. But the vehicle had been well maintained, and both engine and body were in excellent condition.

The bus was part of a small, private operation—something that was swiftly becoming as rare as the bus itself. The driver was a quiet, non-descript fellow known to his passengers simply as Enos.

There were only four passengers that night: three were regulars, businessmen from the City; the fourth was an old man, apparently a traveller. Like normal commuters from a large city, they had had little to say to one another when they boarded and even less afterwards. Once seated, each had quickly barricaded himself behind his own newspaper or magazine. Even now as the dimming light made reading impossible each passenger scrupulously avoided meeting the gaze of any of the others.

Thus, silently, the lonely bus pulled away from the concrete maze of the City and its suburbs and plunged into the evening mists that hovered over the country roads. The route was a familiar one to Enos. The roads, narrow and winding, were bordered on both sides by thick forests. The pavement was poor, littered with potholes. And the trip was long: the final destination was better than two hours away.

Somewhere early in the first hour an intense flash of light glimmered on the edge of the eastern horizon directly ahead of the bus. As it died out, one of the passengers, the one nearest the front, muttered belligerently, "The fools!" Nothing more was said. The bus drove on.

Halfway into the hour a strange grinding sound rose up from the earth, and the bus began to sway and rock. After a minute this too subsided.

"Earthquake?" the second man back inquired.

"In a way," the first answered gruffly. The driver glanced nervously over his shoulder at the two. The idea of driving through an earthquake did not appeal to him in the least. But obviously he had no choice in the matter.

The second hour of the journey was just beginning when a second tremor came. A third followed shortly.

"What is this?" the second man gasped. The first man turned and answered in a passionless tone, "Only the beginning."

"What do you know about this?" the third businessman asked.

"Well, Mister?" the second chimed in.

"It's ‘Doctor’ . . . my name is Dr. Calneh of the City Mining Bureau and the University. And what you are experiencing, my dear fellow travellers, are the opening tremors in a series of seismic dislocations that may very well reduce our civilization to rubble."

For a moment there was a stunned silence. Finally, the third man demanded, "What kind of insane nonsense is that? Are
"you another doomsday prophet?"

"You mean like that old shipbuilder in the valley? Hardly. What I’ve told you is the prediction of tensor calculus operations carried out by the University’s high speed computer system.

"The conclusions were clear," he continued. "The State simply refused to listen."

"What do you mean?" the second man asked.

"The flash we saw earlier... that was a test explosion on the desert missile range."

"That’s five hundred miles away!" the second man protested.

"The device being tested was a matter/anti-matter warhead. A nuclear bomb is like a candle flame in comparison."

The third man interrupted, "But what has this to do with the tremors?"

"The desert testing ground lies in the dead center of a global system of seismic faults. That anti-matter detonation was of sufficient proportions to set off a chain reaction of earthquakes and tremors that will engulf the world. By the time the shaking stops, there may be very little left standing."

Again there was silence. It was a mile later when the third man sighed, "Well, at least I like your doomsday better than the shipbuilder’s. This way I have a chance."

"Speaking of that old man, I think he’s the one who stole my prize mare," the second man said.

"I’m missing a couple of dogs," the third man put in. "you don’t suppose there’s a connection do you?"

Even as the third passenger spoke, the old man, who had been silent all this time, hobbled up the center aisle toward the others. He was dressed strangely. His clothing was old and tattered, yet it possessed an almost regal appearance. It was clearly centuries out of style. The man’s beard and hair were white, and his complexion was equally devoid of color. His voice crackled, but it was still strong.

"You are deceived if you believe you have escaped the shipbuilder’s doomsday. These earth tremors will bring with them volcanic action on a massive scale. When the volcanic dust reaches the upper atmosphere, it will cause the water vapor that surround our planet to condense and..."

"Old man," Dr. Calneh asked, "who are you?"

"Before you were born I was the director of the Physical Science department at the University. Now I’m just a tired, old man who wants to visit his grandson one last time."

The man turned back to his seat.

Just then the bus driver called out, "hey, there’s some kind of moisture forming on the windshield. Doctor, what do you make of this?"

The passengers all looked forward. "Water drops," Dr. Calneh mused. "Where could they be coming from?"

A muffled thud interrupted his meditation. The old man had fallen to the floor.

"He’s had a heart attack!" the third passenger exclaimed.

"Is he...?" the bus driver called back. The second man bent over the collapsed figure. "He’s dead. Did anyone know him?"

"I finally recognized him," Dr. Calneh said. "He’s the old Patriarch, the last of the Sethite dynasty."

"Methuselah?" the second passenger gasped in surprise. "Then his grandson..."

"His grandson is that fool shipbuilder. I believe his name is Noah."

The rain was just beginning.

The place: a lonely country road. The time: Twenty-Five Hundred... B.C.

Perhaps you’re one of those who can’t believe in ancient atom bombs, antediluvian automobiles, or prehistoric computers. But if you should ever get the feeling that we are not the first, that all this has happened before, you may wish to consult “G” for Genesis... in the Twilight Zone.
Melody in D

Bev Van Gelder

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