



Winter 1980

The Canon, [Winter 1980]

Dordt College

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CINNON



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Spring is here! A Cannon blossoms! Thank you for contributing and making our fine arts magazine a reality once again. Keep the creative "juices" flowing and look for our next contribution deadline (it will be right after spring break, in case you are curious!)

The Editor

En Route 3
Brian Jaarsma

Mrs. Vanderveen 12
Clarence Deelstra

Poetry

Lynn Pennings 2

Margariete Timmermans 2

Dianne Vander Hoek 7

J.A. Van Dyke 13-14

Marco Poehner 16

Dorothy Grevers 17

Ron Otten 17

Art

Priscilla Clark 2, 15

Laurie Zinkand 5, 16

Margariete Timmermans 10-11, 20

Patricia De Vries 13

Keith Eiten 19

Music

Cover

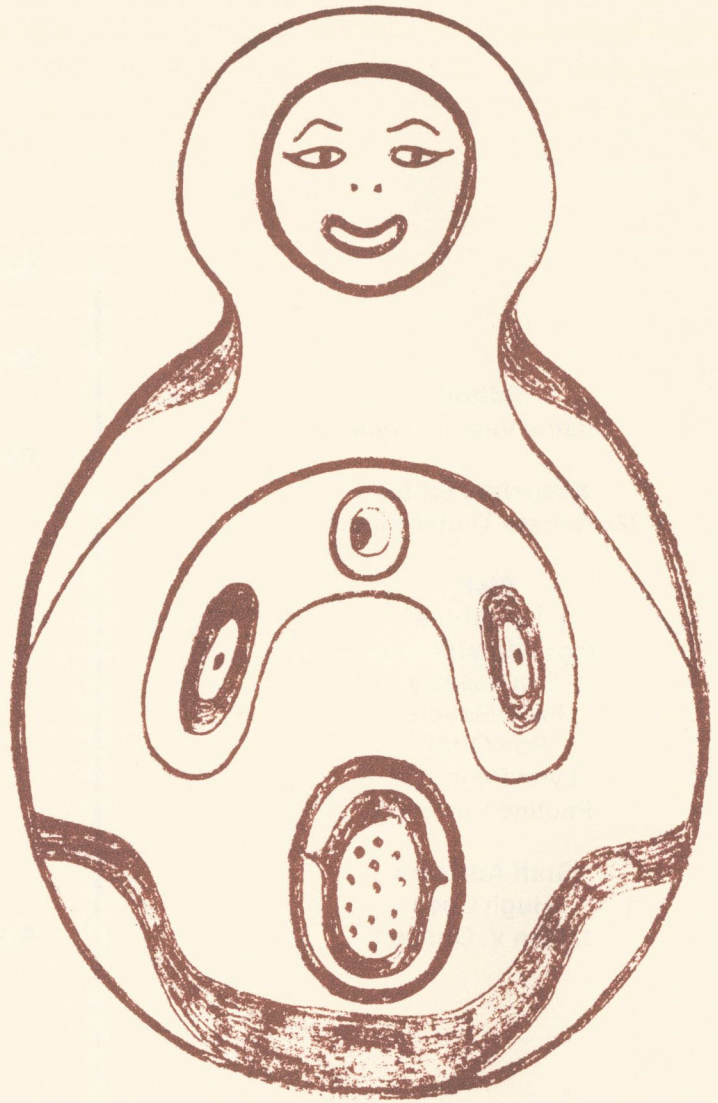
Margariete Timmermans

Bastard

Child of my winter
how long?
how long will I harbor you
 feed you
how long must I be consumed
 giving life to you before
you burst forth in all your
 bastard glory

chinks in the wall add
 winter wind to the fever
 of my labor
chinks become ratholes
by pressure from without and within
 fingernail furrows
mark my bed of stone
 so you won't forget
 so they won't forget
the steril soul whose lot it was
 to love

Lynn Pennings



(P)

New Life

Priscilla Clark

Crystal Feather

On a cold February morning
i hurried down the street to a bus stop
i'm an experienced hurrier . . .
 but Ali isn't
she isn't convinced that another time or
place can improve upon now . . .
i hear the bus coming and i run
 Ali stops . . .
she noticed a puddle with a feathery ice crystal

we catch the bus and leave the
crystal to the sun

Margariete Timmermans

EN ROUTE

Brian Jaarsma

"Free-dom . . . Talkin' 'bout free-dom . . .
Hey, to-mor - row . . . Just about a year
from home . . ."

The auto tape deck blared its defiance at the world, but its cacophony was soon smothered by the blanket of silence that covered the vast northern wilderness. John leaned over the front seat of his car and jabbed at the eject button. Silence enveloped the aging green Galaxie half-hidden among a stand of towering jackpines. The howl of a loaded semi-trailer winding its way between the close-set mountains that bordered the main highway accentuated the oppressive solitude of the Northern Rockies. He shoved the tape back in the deck, turning the volume up just a little higher than before. Relaxing, he propped his head against the arm rest and stared out the window at the mountains half-covered by a leaden layer of cloud.

"It's been a long time," he acknowledged to himself. Soft spring had given way to a hot, dry summer, only to be shouldered out by a sullen fall that already held a hint of the winter to come. And yet he remembered vividly the day he had left, on an early morning in late May, just as the red-hued sun was pulling itself out of the ocean, transforming the dew-drenched lawn into a shimmering wonderland of silver and gold, and bringing out the rich texture of the freshly-disced fields. His father had been slightly aloof, his mother overly protective. They had made no pretense of their feelings. His father had been annoyed, viewing John's departure as a shirking of his responsibilities on the family farm, while his mother had been a little kinder, characterizing the trip as 'a voyage of self-discovery'. The rest of the family had been conspicuous by their absence; his older brother George was already busy greasing and oiling the potato planter in preparation for the days work, while Suzie and Daniel were still fast asleep.

Even now John could imagine his family, sitting around the supper table, discussing the quality of this year's potato crop, and the possibility of rain. After the

meal was eaten and a passage of scripture read, his father would lead the family in prayer, his deep voice rising and falling evenly. And always he would end with the same petition, which had become so familiar to John when George had left the house to attend agricultural school in Charlottetown: "Father, in the great goodness of thy unfailing mercy, wilt thou keep John safe, wherever he may go, and whatever he might do, and wilt thou guide him always in thy pathway of light."

Smiling thinly, John thought, "With all their prayers, I shouldn't have a thing to worry about." He shifted his position a little, reached down and groped around the cigarette-butt strewn carpet until he found the bottle of Moody Blue. Grasping the wine bottle by the neck, he hoisted it onto his lap, then traced the fluid level part-way around the bottle with a forefinger. "Almost half gone already. Guess I should'a got a bigger bottle at Jasper." Tilting back the wine bottle, he drank steadily, eyes closed, Adam's apple bobbing rhythmically as he swallowed. He sighed audibly, wiped a few drops of wine from the corners of his mouth with the back of his left hand, and set the bottle back on the debris-littered floor.

The lyrics of the song blaring from the loudspeakers forced themselves back into his consciousness again, and he jerked the tape from the player. "Freedom!" he snorted. "Tell me about it!" His words echoed strangely in the sudden silence, until they were swallowed up by the night, and replaced by a gentle rhythmic rapping that seemed to grow in intensity as he listened.

John peered outside, using his shirt-sleeve to wipe away the layer of fog on the inside of the window. It had begun to rain, a steady insistent drizzle that drained the color from the autumn foliage. Through the rain-streaked window, John could catch the occasional distorted glimpse of a car driving past along the main highway, its headlights stabbing ineffectively at the growing darkness. Once a vehicle nosed its way into the

small clearing. A splash of light raced around the clearing as the car completed a slow circle before receding again into the night. John considered finding a more remote place to spend the night, then shrugged and gave up the notion. Instead he braved the cold and wet to get his sleeping bag from the car trunk. The pine-scented air provided a sharp contrast to the rancid smell of mouldy bread and cheap wine that emanated from the car interior. Before crawling into the sleeping bag and settling himself for the night, John opened the window a few inches, but closed it again when the rainwater began to trickle off the roof and drip onto the car seat.

The steady drumming of the rain on the metal roof had a hypnotic effect, and John was nearly asleep, the wine bottle lying empty at his side, when the pickup found its way into the clearing. Once again a bright beam played around the edge of the clearing, and probed into the darkness beyond. The old car was caught in its path, rusty metal and glinting glass reflected in the splash of light.

John woke with a start, squinting into the unwavering glare. Swearing softly, he thrust the wine bottle under the front seat, pulled the top flap of the sleeping bag over his head and played possum, thinking desperately for some plan of action. The smooth latching of the door and the measure tread of shoes on gravel sounded loud in the stillness of the night. Metal rapped sharply on glass, then silence. The tapping resumed again, louder this time. Resigning himself to the inevitable, John stirred slowly, as if waking from a deep sleep, and lifted his gaping face into the full glare of the flashlight.

"Who's in there? Open up!" The crisp, clear voice was brusque with authority and a hint of rising annoyance.

"Yeah, yeah, just a minute," John muttered as he sat up and began to crank down the window. He caught a vague impression of a dark green uniform topped by a short-visored hat, but the man's face was lost in the heavy shadow thrown up by the headlights.

"Drivers license? Registration?" It was more a demand than a question. "Get them together and bring them over to the truck." Then he turned and retreated to his vehicle.

John took his time locating the papers, even though he knew they were in the bottom

of his glove compartment. "Intimidation tactics" he muttered as he slammed the car door and sauntered over to the park rangers truck. The ranger received the papers in tight-lipped silence, and began to scrutinize them. Hunched up against the chill of the falling rain, John stood outside and looked on until the ranger glanced up and told him to climb into the cab. Picking up the drivers license and pulling a writing pad off the dashboard, the warden began to fill out the form, simultaneously firing questions at John. "Date of birth?" "Occupation?" "Is Route 3, Summer-side your correct address?" John answered in monosyllables, staring unseeingly into the night.

Static filled the air as the 2-way radio came to life. "Unit 312, requesting information of a Mr. John S. Turner, Drivers License 2649362, P.E.I. Motor Vehicle License VJL 523." The warden switched the speaker off and waited for a reply.

Turning again to the dejected youth sitting on the other end of the seat, he continued to interrogate him. "How long have you been here?" he demanded.

"Couple days."

"Don't you realize it's illegal to camp anywhere in the park outside of designated camping areas? Or to take any motor vehicle off the posted roads and trails? Why do you think all but the main side roads have been blocked off? How did you get in here anyway? And what . . . ?"

The crackle of the two-way radio cut him short. The ranger grapped the receiver. "Go ahead." A hoarse, dis-embodied voice spoke rapidly in semi-code language that John couldn't follow. After jotting down a few notes, the ranger signed off and hung up the receiver. He turned to John again. "Well? . . ." John simply shrugged.

The park warden looked intently at him, waiting for a reaction that never came. "What day do you want to appear in court?" The question dropped like a bombshell in a neutral country.

Shocked out of his apathy, John swivelled around and faced the ranger for the first time since entering the cab. "Hey come on," he blurted, "Gimme a break, would you?"

This time it was the officer's turn to shrug. "You haven't been giving me any breaks. Court holds sessions on Tuesdays.



You have your choice. September 18 or 25."

"Neither. You see . . ."

The warden shrugged again. "O.K. I'll make it the 25th then." He completed the citation and tore it from the pad with a gesture of finality.

John tried again. "Look. I can't make it to court. I have to find a job somewhere. I'm flat broke."

The officer turned to face the youth again. "No. You look. There's always more than one way to do something. If you didn't have such a lousy attitude, you might have got away with a warning. You're already on our books. You got a warning up at Blind Man's River last week already, but that doesn't seem to have helped. I can't overlook such a flagrant disregard for park regulations. Just be thankful all you're getting is a court summons." He paused for breath, his anger finally vented, then continued more slowly. "If I don't think you'll appear in court, I can take you in and hold you until you come up with \$50 bail. But I advise you to show up. If you're not there, I'll push to have you fined to the fullest extent of the law." He paused for emphasis. "That's \$500 for every violation. You've committed several."

John received the citation in numb silence. The ranger glanced again at the drivers license, trying to reconcile the picture of the boy with the profile of the youth in front of him. It was more than just the gauntness of the maturing face, or the length of the dirty blonde hair. There was something different about the eyes that was felt rather than sensed. The young ranger sighed as he handed back the license and registration. There was a hint of kindness in his voice as he asked, "Why don't you go back home? You're a long way from P.E.I."

The youth glanced up hopefully, but averted his face when he saw the searching blue eyes looking at him from under the badge-laden cap resting on short-cropped hair. "Don't have a home," he offered.

The warden gave up the attempt with a sign. "All right then. There's a campground at the bottom of the hill, two miles west along Highway 16. You can spend the night there. What you do after that is your problem." He started the truck, putting an end to the one-sided conversation. John escaped from the cab and plodded through the falling rain to his own car. The engine caught on the second try, and John shakily lit a cigarette as he waited for it to warm up. He backed out of the stand of pines, circled around the log

barrier that enclosed most of the clearing, and began to work his way down the mountainside, the truck following behind at a safe distance. When he reached the main highway, he turned left, and drove slowly along the shoulder, keeping an eye in his rear view mirror to see what the ranger would do. When the truck turned right and headed towards Jasper, he heaved a sigh of relief and sped up a trifle.

He saw the campground before he came to the turnoff, and pulled over to the side of the road for a closer look.

Military rows of electric pole lamps shed an even light over the site, illuminating the grove of cottonwoods that bordered the white-frothed mountain stream. Clumps of tents and trailers squatting starkly under the naked lights reminded John of a cluster of mindless moths fatally attracted to a burning lightbulb. He stayed there a long time, watching for signs of life in the static landscape. Lighting another cigarette, he pulled the court notice from his hip pocket and pored over the inscription stamped in large black capitals: Illegal Camp Contrary to Sec. 3(1) Camping Regs. N.P.A.

John glanced down again at the campground lying lifeless in the valley, then touched the glowing end of the cigarette to a corner of the citation. The paper curled up, turned brown and began to char. He puffed on the cigarette, and the paper burst into flame. Holding the sheet upright like a torch, watching the thin line of fire burn its way down to his fingers, John waited until the heat became too intense before he dropped the citation, grinding its charred remains into the carpet.

He didn't look back as he pulled onto the highway and headed west, tires sizzling over the wet pavement, wiper blades scraping over the cracked windshield, headlights reflecting off the fluorescent lines of paint tracing the curving path of the highway. About fifteen miles up the road, the car turned left on a little-used side road and flashed past the white sign that identified it as an access road for authorized personnel only. The car forged deeper and deeper into the mountains until it finally executed a sharp turn, and the angry red taillights were lost in the blackness of night.

Mrs. Boszuk

"How tall are you?" the kids would ask.
"I'm 4 feet and 6 inches short,
like I'm 57 years young,"
she would say.
And always
a peeking dimple
and pat on
the nearest head
would end
the matter.

Big people
were embarrassed by
Mrs. Boszuk.
She did not fit into
their mold.
Little people
were fascinated by her.
She did not fit their parent's mold.

She could be seen
at the same time
every day
(a little before 8:37,
the time the bus picked up
the grade-schoolers)
on the corner of 4th and Main
carrying her bag
with the stiff-string handles.
She was on her way to town
but everyone knew
that she would come back
(a little before 3:32,
the time the bus let off
the grade-schoolers)
with her bag
as empty
as when she left.

At 3:29 she would
sit herself down
on the corner bench.
"Compliments of Agassiz City Council"
it said.
"Oh, just to see the world
from a different view,"
she explained as to her
reason for sitting.
She liked to add
"Variety is the spice of life,
you know."

The bus creaked
to a memorized stop
(the driver nodding a

tabula rasa look)
The children
pushed each other out
and raced to be the first to reach
Mrs. Boszuk
and sit beside her on the bench.

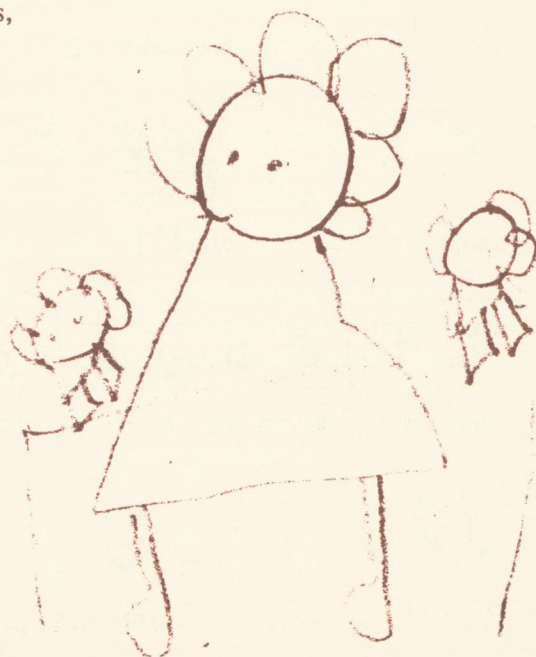
Their jumbled stories of
fights at school,
teacher's pets,
chicks just hatched,
mittens lost,
lunches swapped—
all mixed and mingled
and jumbled together
until Mrs. Boszuk
with a gentle
's-s-s-s-sh"
hushed them all
and they sat
so still
the fall leaves fell
Just to break the
crystal quiet.

Each day she would smile
at a chosen child.
"Do you want to sing?"
Mrs. Boszuk would ask,
knowing already that
a request was
ready.

She kept singing until
one by one
they left—
for beckoning mothers,
baseball games,
and suppers.

Mrs. Boszuk
picked up her bag
now full
of satisfaction
and headed home
again.

Dianne Vander Hoek



MUSIC & LYRICS BY
Am PAT BOONSTRA.

Teach Me

Teach me to laugh — To laugh free-ly with-out a fear — To be
hap-py with no hid-den thoughts hol-ding me down and out. Teach me to
sing — To sing a free and hap-py song — To show my world just how I
feel ha-ving you in my life —.

— Teach me to care — To care for those I feel hap-py with — I
want to show you that I too can feel, and laugh, and sing —. Teach me to
love — To love the one I need so much — I want to need you, I
want to show you that I am ab-le to love. Teach me, Teach me to laugh,
Teach me, Teach me to — care. Teach me, Teach me to sing — Teach me,
Teach me Teach me to love.

RIT...

Photographs

She wraps her heart well for the trip;
these fragments, these frozen moments
of a life she has recorded in
stark and subtle shades of light and night
she lays gently
one on another
face in
She folds them over and over in
old newspaper (bits of other lives)
and tapes the bundle together securely
or ties it into unity with leftover string
Knowing it must endure a hard travelling
in order to be transplanted
in another world
in order to be undone
again
in another place she must call
home.

There

she will pick at the stubborn knot she has tied;
she will tear loose the stinging tape that bound others close
and expose herself layer by layer
string her soul on a wall

for she knows that
a seer blinded by a hidden soul
is a prophet with neither voice nor vision.

Lynn Pennings

Wrinkles

The other day, it was really sunbright.
And by my window
In proper and specific sort of light
A raisin lived between my fingers
And for just a second
I could see
(with only slight stretch of the imagination)
That it had once been a grape.
I had never noticed that before.

Ron Otten

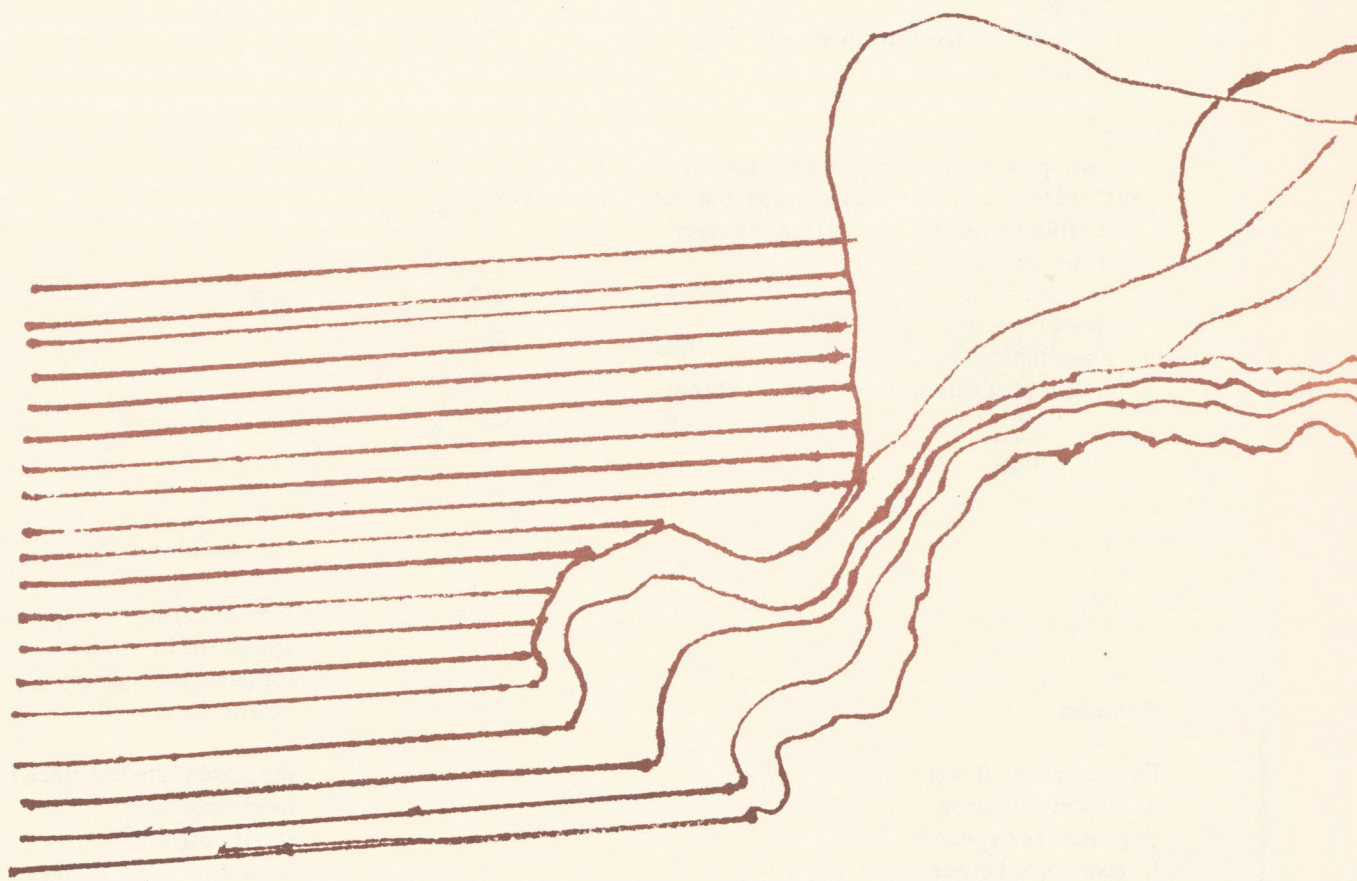
Tiny Luminaries

Remember how we smiled
and gazed in wonderment
forgetting everything
except the sky

We stared into the black infinity
faces upturned
sacrificing aching necks
for a vision of mystery

And childish though it seems
isn't it still comforting to pretend
that the stars are tiny peepholes
to heaven

Ingrid Bestebroer





Margariete Timmermans

MRS. VANDERVEEN

Clarence Deelstra

It wasn't like Henry and I to waste time doing an assignment in the time period given us by Mrs. Vanderveen to do one. It was like a bad habit. Every time she tried to get us to answer questions in the geometry book, we'd talk about cars, or the latest Hardy Boy book either of us had read.

Of course, this sort of thing usually got us into *big* trouble. Many times Henry and I could be seen walking to the bus stop with stacks of blank paper stuck under our arms, generously given to us by Mrs. Vanderveen to write lines on. If she'd been in a good mood that day, we'd have to write something like "I must not talk to my neighbor when I have an assignment to do." But Mrs. Vanderveen, being as human as the rest of us, would sometimes make us write something like "I will not tell the teacher I was talking to my neighbor about the assignment when I was really talking to him about the new Hardy Boy book my mom bought me yesterday because it was on sale." Whatever it was we were supposed to write, it had to be done one hundred times, and handed in the next morning. It got to the point where Henry and I could tell almost exactly what we were going to have to write by the size of the stacks of paper noisily flopped down on our desks by Mrs. Vanderveen.

I guess my life wouldn't have been so bad if Mrs. Vanderveen was my only source of trouble. But she wasn't. My dad didn't get a kick out of seeing his son continually coming home with a stack of paper under his arm. He tried everything he could think of to keep my big mouth shut in geometry class. He'd send me to bed early or keep me from watching T.V. but nothing seemed to help. He finally decided to get me where it hurt—my right hand. It was the most overworked part of my body, constantly forced to write the same sentences over and over again, until it was numb with pain and fatigue. Inspiration struck Dad one morning just as I was leaving for school.

"Son, if you come back with lines today, you'll have to do them once for me, besides the ones you have to do for Mrs. Whats-her-name."

I really tried my best to shut up that day. Two hundred lines certainly didn't sound very inviting, especially since my favourite T.V. show was on that evening. Of course, I just had to tell Henry about my uncle's new Thunderbird, so I started writing notes to him. I figured writing twenty or thirty little notes during class would be a heck of a lot easier on my hand than two hundred lines. Henry didn't seem too thrilled about the notes, though. He felt extremely talkative, and he soon got bored of writing on the back of the little strips of paper I was continually sticking into his shirt collar. His arm also got tired, because in order to get the notes, he had to keep pretending his back was itchy.

Henry seemed to be blessed with an extra measure of courage that day. He decided that if I wouldn't talk to him, maybe Mrs. Vanderveen would. After all, she never did much while we were doing our assignments. Much to her astonishment, Henry started a conversation with her, talking as if he were an old friend who had just met her on the street. Poor Mrs. Vanderveen was so shocked, she didn't know whether to punish him or keep talking. Henry was asking her stuff like how her husband was, and how her grandchildren were. He was doing fine until he suddenly blurted out,

"Hey, you're chewin' gum, ain't ya? We're not supposed to chew it, so neither can you!"

"I am not chewing gum, Henry Botma! You better hold your tongue, or I'll send you to the principal's office!"

For some reason, Henry didn't seem to hear Mrs. Vanderveen's threat, even though the whole class was dead silent, waiting to see what would happen next. I figured Henry must have been sticking crayons in his ears, like he used to do in grade two, because he ignored the teacher's warning and demanded,

"Well, what is it then?"

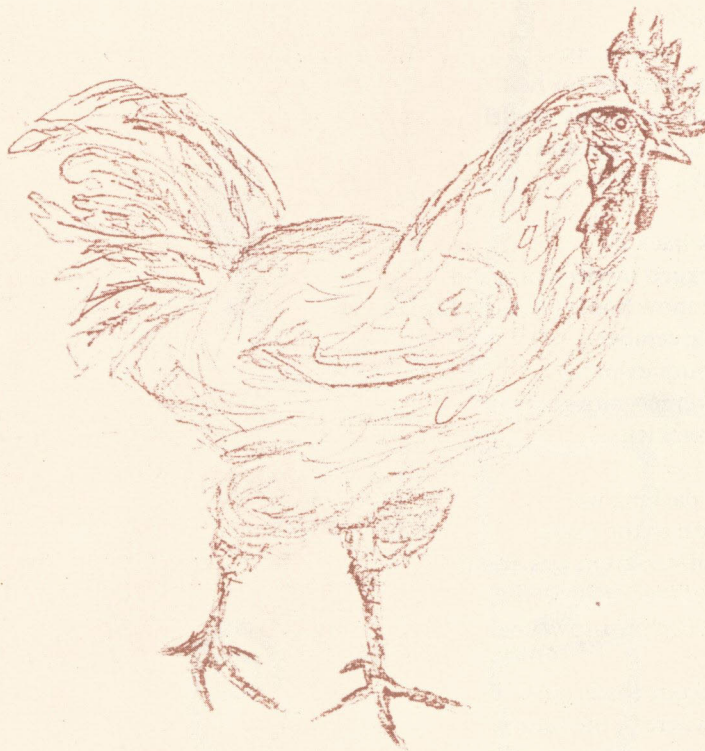
I still don't believe I had the nerve to speak at that moment. It was just one of those times I let something slip out of my mouth before I really thought about what it was. Yet, no matter how much I regretted

it afterwards, I let it go, and it was impossible to take it back.

"It's probably chewin' tobacco, Henry."

"Yeah! It's chewin' tobacco, ain't it Mrs. Vanderveen?"

My father was dead sure that his threat had worked when he saw me walk through the door without a stack of paper stuck under my arm. He was doubly certain when he found out at the end of the fall term that I had quieted down "tremendously" in geometry class. The trouble was, Henry, whose father hadn't threatened him, had quieted down also! Had anyone walked into geometry class any time after that one day, they would have found Henry and I either faithfully doing our assignment, or staring up in horror at the red and white can of chewing tobacco, waiting to be finished by any of us who dared offend Mrs. Vanderveen again.

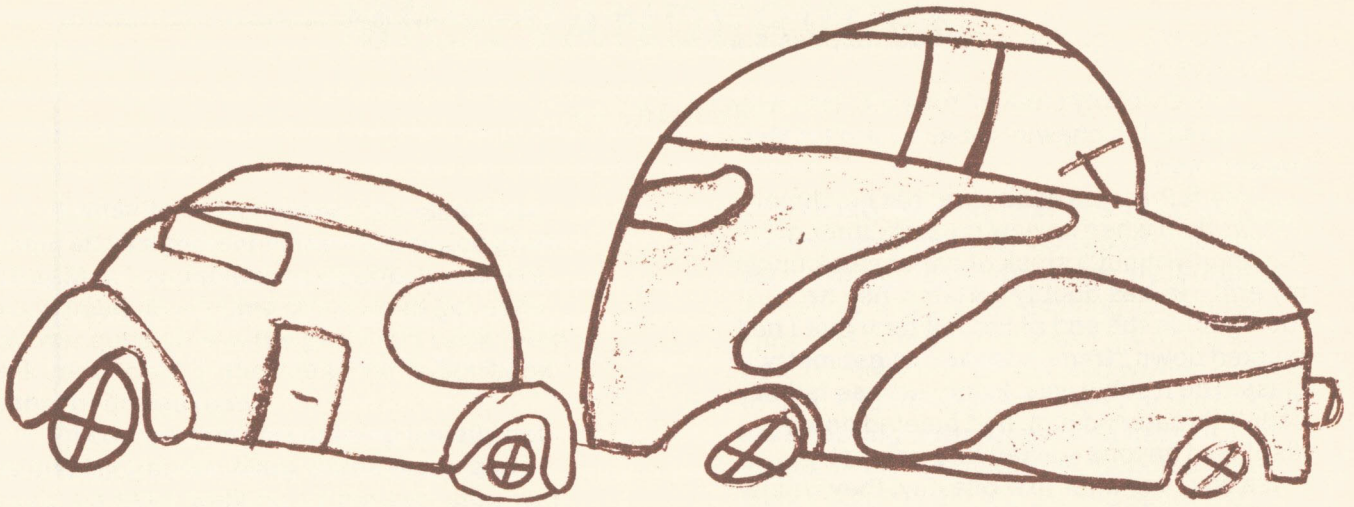


Stepping Out

When I was there you
were not,
And when you were you
did not
Converse. It seemed you
Could not
Be open with me . . . yet.

And so although I
Should not,
And though you thought I
Would not,
I'm leaving you for
Good not
Just till Friday night.

J.A. Van Dyk



I Left Her

I left her
Out in the parking lot.
She was my
440 '65
Dodge Polara.
But she's not mine any
more.

Explain?
There is just no use.
College was not for her,
She was the family model
Four door sedan and a
Roomy interior.

I think back on
Her ragged fender skirts and
Those snow boots I bought for her
Last November.
Her complexion; a
Faded green with
Rust freckles.

While parking we
Listened to the radio.
The conversation was about
The weather or
The sales down-town.

Should our roads cross
Somewhere in the future,
Will she be jealous of my
'69 VW?
Or I of the man at her
Wheel?

J.A. Van Dyk



Man With Fish

Priscilla Clark



Laurie Zinkand

Lover's Memories in a Villanelle of Bitterness

A lover robbed me of virginity;
Though, I, in trust, exposed my private core—
Abuse! He trampled on my privacy . . .

“‘Til law has bound you, preserve chastity”
Tradition warned, and I ignored, before
A lover robbed me of virginity.

Remembering beauty robed in infancy,
Now I’m a broken hemorrhaging sore;
A friend has trampled on my privacy.

Soft-spoken words, gentle intimacy
And care, since the swindler, I now deplore:
A lover robbed me of virginity.

If whorish games of mine had defiled me,
Repentance and forgiveness could restore;
But rape has trampled on my privacy!

In order to regain integrity,
Whom once I loved, alas; I now abhor:
A lover robbed me of virginity—
A heel has trampled on my privacy.

Marco (W.M. Poehner)

Sunday Morning Offering

Midway through the sermon my
swinging reaching feet
stopped.
The stranger sitting next to me
rustled through her baggage.
I knew she was getting
peppermints.
Maybe she would offer me one.
I dared not move or look.
If she offered one, would I take it?
I would love one. I loved
peppermints.
But if I took one I would look
greedy like a little kid.
I never said "no" to a candy before but
I should if I wanted
to grow up.
Suddenly
below my nose I saw a roll.
I turned my head stiffly and
tried to look straight up at her. I smiled my most
adult smile then shook my head
"no."
Not convinced she offered again and
I shook again—
no ma'am I don't want a
peppermint.
Just because my feet still swing
doesn't mean I'm not old enough to say
"no."

As she put the roll back into her
bag I noticed
they were chewy peppermints—
my favorite.
I wish my Mom would buy chewy peppermints.

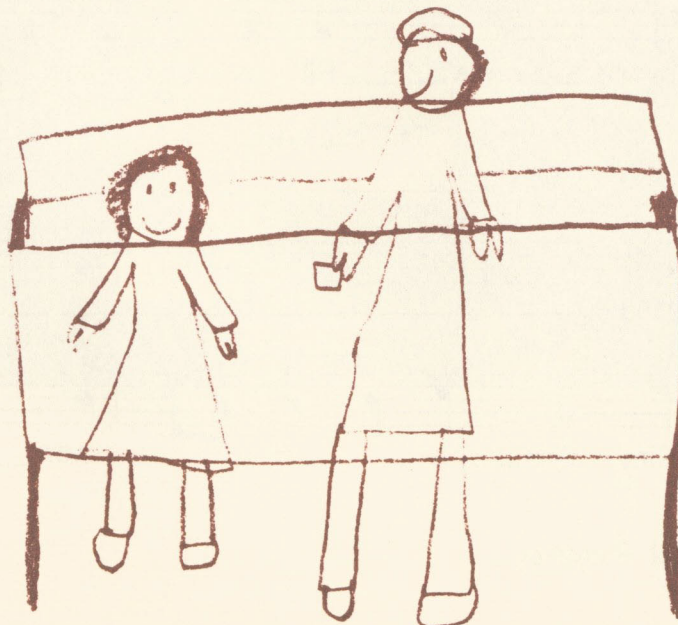
Dorothy Grevers



Across Open Space Park Late

Somewhere a train mourns.
Far away the stars stare icily.
The wind blows, fingers my body with detached coolness.
The blackness touches me too
And my thoughts echo to the beat
Of footsteps crackling frozen grass; reminding me of being,
Only, very, little,
In all this infinity and somewhere
A car door slams.

Ron Otten



Two Simple Songs for Informal Gatherings of Worship

1. Invocation

Flowing, Reverently
Andante

Mike Van Dyke

Voices

(whole group in unison 1st time)

2nd time, group splits

(to be sung with above only
on 2nd time through)

God _____ is

Lord _____, as we

Piano

(to be used
without guitar)

(repeat till
end of song)

Guitar

(to be used
only as an
alternate
to piano)

(repeat till
end of song)

* a m i a m i a m i a m i a m i a m i p i m p i m

here a - mong us _____, come to Him _____, bow to Him _____, wor - ship in the

o - pen up our hearts _____, come _____ fill us with Your Truth _____, pre -

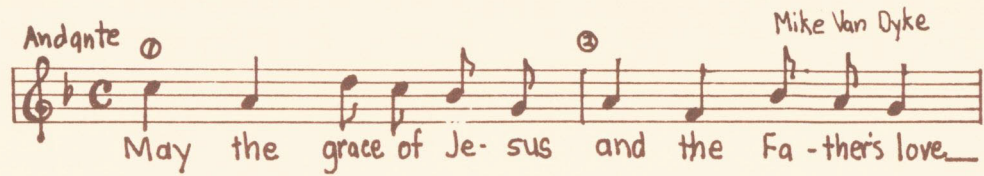
ho - li - ness of prayer _____

pare us for Your King - dom _____, A - men _____.

* a - ring finger
p - thumb
m - middle finger
i - index finger

right hand fingering

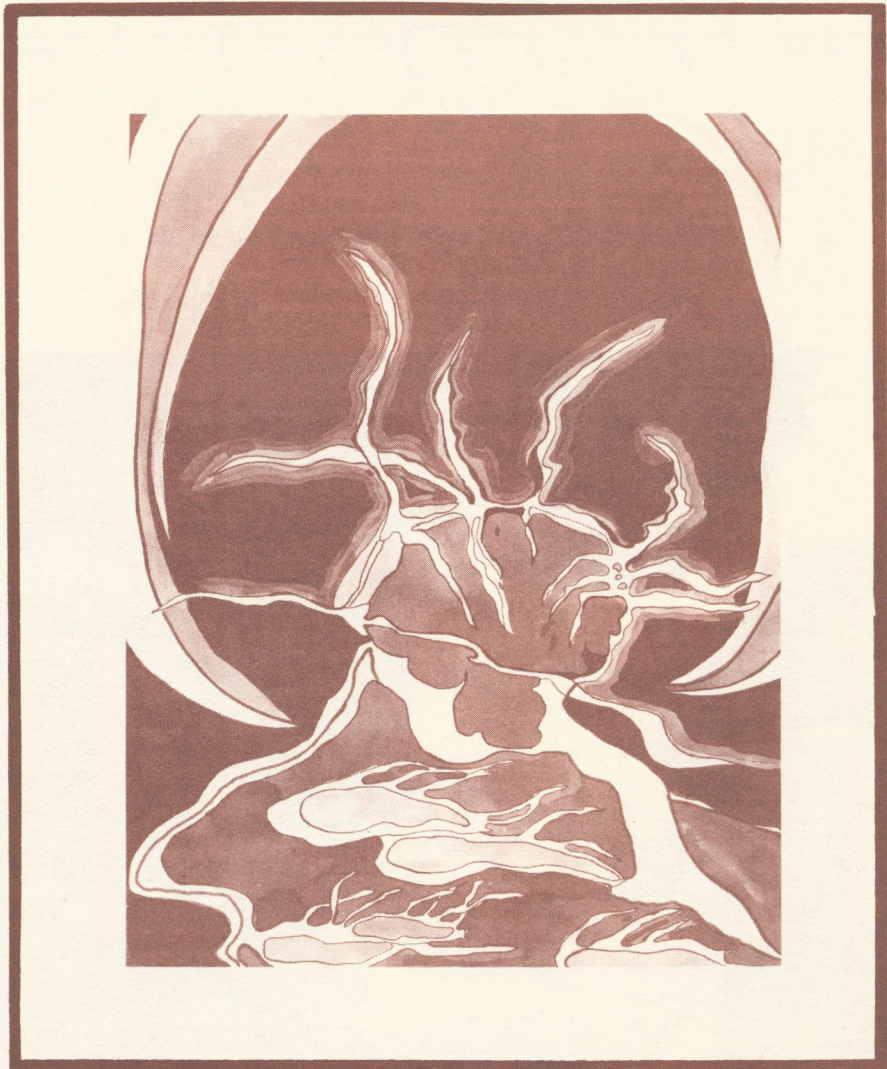
2. Benediction (4-part round)



The composer gives permission for these two songs to be copied at will.



Keith Eiten



Margariete Timmermans