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## 1976 FINE ARTS ISSUE

## Saturday Evening Out

—Diane Heeringa

The letter came in the mail on Tuesday with a big red smiley-face and HAVE A HAPPY DAY THE R.V. DIBSONS stamped on the back of the envelope. I made an involuntary noise in my throat and opened it. It said:

"Dear Ali,"

(a contraction from Alice, my real name, which Mrs. Dibson feels is too formal),

"Hi! The five of us were just saying tonight at dinner, why, David and Ali haven't been over for just 'eons!' We'd love to have you over sometime soon! How about this Saturday six-thirty-ish?? Maybe Davey could 'finalize' it by phone?? We'll be waiting!

Love and kisses,

Davey's Auntie Do."

Saturday evening, "six-ish" I sat waiting for David to pick me up. Not eagerly, just ready. The idea of going didn't thrill me, but these social functions were funny in their own way. David's relatives especially, killed me. We had been school buddies, David and I, for a long time, and lately we'd been seeing more of each other, mainly because school was finished and no one else seemed to be around anymore. But David's aunts and uncles and cousins and second cousins were quite pleased that he had found a mate in his old age, and they were, shall I say, pushing.

They had us married off with babies, living in a handsome suburban bungalow near them so they could drop in often, informally of course, and we would all be one big happy family. In a way I could really appreciate them. They were involved with each other, which my own relatives, who stuck to a strict policy of "minding one's own business," were not. But generally, like I said, I thought the whole situation was rather hilarious.

David thought so too. We knew where we stood with each other and agreed on some basic issues like marriage, namely, that it wasn't for us (not together at least). But we went along with the whole bit, the oh-you-two-make-a-lovely-couple's, and the Any-young-man-would-envy-you-Dave's, and even the blatant When-you-gonna-marry-her's. We just had fun watching them fool themselves.

David picked me up shortly and was struggling with his tie in the rear view mirror when I got in the car. His straight brown hair was still wet and looked as if he had just shaken himself dry after his shower like a dog does after a swim. He was wearing beige corduroys half tucked into his boots, and a tweed jacket that must have belonged to his grandfather. He gave up on the tie and tossed it up on the dashboard. "We'll make a lovely couple tonight," he said. I forgot to mention,

David is a favorite in The Family because he is "so casual."

We sped to Auntie Do's place (we were late) with the windows open so he could dry his hair, which was dry by the time we got there. Auntie Do greeted us at the door. She was a picture of cheerfulness in a bright printed dress with a pleated skirt, and a large daisy brooch just below her chin. Her arm was stretched out in a welcoming gesture as she said, "Why, come in!" almost as if this were a total surprise.

There were smiles and kisses and how-are-you's and I said "Hello, Mrs. Dibson," to which she replied, "Oh, do call me Aunt Dorothy, after all you're practically part of the family." She led us into the living room where the rest of the family sat watching Candid Camera. There were more greetings, handshakes and kisses.

Soon, however, we gathered around Auntie Do's table decorated with candles and silver, Holly Hobbie salt and pepper shakers and happy-face napkins, and Prince Albert dinnerware. Quite a conglomeration. There were even name cards next to the plates so that we wouldn't waste a lot of time deciding where to sit.

Uncle Roger, a husky man with a broad, waxy, smiling face, sat the head of the table since he was the head of the family. Auntie Do sat the opposite end which was nearest to the kitchen. Joanne, their daughter and David's cousin, sat next to Auntie Do, also near the kitchen so she could help her mother. To Joanne's right sat Robert, who reminded me of one of the seven dwarves with his red face and flappy ears. He was married to Joanne. I had to constantly remind myself of that, and the fact that someday they might have their own family, because they were always **here**, even a few times when David and I dropped in unexpectedly. Not only that, they struck me as being too childish or naive to be married, or at least Joanne did. She still called her father "Snoopy" (or more like "shnoopy") and talked baby talk to her brother John who was eighteen. Robert just took it all in and acted grown up.

Well, anyway, I found my seat next to Robert (and consequently around the corner from Uncle Roger), David sat across from me (so that we could gaze into each other's eyes I suppose), and John, whom everyone always referred to as "the baby of the family," sat next to David.

Dinner was much like the other dinners we had had here. Uncle Roger teased, and Auntie Do would say, "Oh, now Roger..."; Joanne rambled in a squeaky voice about her wedding, and Robert agreed with her at the appropriate times; David acted silly

and everyone laughed; John more or less kept his mouth shut throughout the meal; and I was fairly quiet myself but added to the general conversation now and then.

It was after dinner that the real fun started. Auntie Do, Joanne, and I were doing dishes and the men were watching television, as is the proper order of things. We were almost done when out of the blue Joanne said in an excited little voice that I was getting tired of by now, "Shall we do it now?"

"Yes!" Auntie Do said.

"Do what?" I asked.

"You'll see," they both said. Auntie Do winked.

"Come with us," she said after the last pot had been returned to its proper corner and every spot whisked away from her Antique Gold stove.

I followed them to a bedroom at the end of the hall and they looked around the room for some clues and saw nothing but a bed with a flowery satin spread, a dresser and four ghastly mauve walls. "It sounds suspicious," I said.

"Well," said Joanne, looking as though she had a speech prepared, "we know you and Dave don't have much, well, money, and...well...Mother and I decided that if you wanted to you could wear **my** dress.

"Your dress for what?" But they didn't need to answer. Out of the closet came a shiny white wedding gown, and two beaming faces stood on either side to accompany it. I bit the inside of my mouth. "David and I haven't made any plans to..."

"I think it will look just **lovely** on you Ali!" Auntie Do wasn't listening, of course. She could see me wearing it already in her mind, complete with a bouquet of sprayed carnations I'm sure. I tried again,

"We're not even thinking of..."

(con't, p. 6)

## FOOTNOTE

This year's Fine Arts material was chosen by Dr. Stan Wiersma who was on campus a few weeks ago. Both first place items, Rebecca Peter's story "The Encounter" and Bonnie Kuipers' poem "The Last Birth" appeared in our last issue. This issue contains the runners-up: "Saturday Evening Out" placed second; "A Walk down the Block" third from the stories. Among the poems "Trilogy" was second and "The Garden" third. The other material deserves Honorable Mention.-ed.



# A Walk Down The Block

As the bus pulled into Baronn View, Mary Anther had the oddest and most distinct sensation that she had never left this town of her childhood days. Back in New York she had read of the terrible, burning drought and the stunted crops but the drought had somehow seemed too far away.

"The land is a sterile waste," the newspapers said. But to Mary, the year she was 15 was the worst the drought had ever been. The people in New York did not know that, however, nor did they care. Most of them had never seen an Iowa cornfield, they did not understand the stark and awful tragedy of a field full of dying, half ripened stalks of corn, or what it did to the pride of the farmer. They could not see how the sun was sometimes a merciless god and the land a willing sacrifice, because they themselves had never gotten away from the city long enough to find out. But Mary remembered—even the pleas and prayers for rain that had gone unanswered in the old brick church.

The people's attitude had been one of extreme sadness and despair, Mary reflected. It was not as if they had been reduced to a diet of soybean soup and potatoes, but the loss of thousands of dollars in terms of bushels per acre of corn dealt a damaging blow to the spirit of competition between the farmers. In truth, they were all equal now and the people complained bitterly when the drought did not touch the entire state. It seemed that the Almighty had decided to shut up his crystal water fountains and move to a more favorable community.

"The land is a sterile waste," Mary said to herself as she looked out the window at the men leaning idly against the country store. It was as if, in the saying of it, the words took on a deeper significance for her.

When Mary stepped off the bus on the edge of town, the first thing she saw was not the Fructus O'Ferre Cemetery sign but the sun, glaring with an intense red, almost bronze-white light, in an otherwise perfectly calm and medium blue sky. She closed her eyes and saw little red suns chasing each other up and down in a crazy, dizzy "W" shaped pattern across the strange blackness. But the red flashing sensation was soon gone and Mary's eyes adjusted rapidly to the noon day glare.

Mary looked at the sign again and the letters of Fructus O'Ferre came sharply into focus. It was the name of the man who had donated the land for the cemetery—a rich, fat, balding little man who sat on his riches the way a hen sat on her eggs. He fit her image of him the way a draw string fits a pouch and he was, it was rumored, just as tight.

Nothing was allowed to "go to seed" in this cemetery. The caretaker had an impeccable taste when it came to choosing flower and shrub arrangements and the lawn was the greenest it could possibly be for nine months of the year. There may not have been one drop of water in the whole town but there was always water for the cemetery. Fructus had the money and Fructus bought the water. It simply would

not do to have a poorly kept cemetery. That would not even be respect for the dead but would reflect on the townspeople. It was the custom.

Mary sighed. No, Baronn View had not changed very much. Not even its observance of Memorial Day. Even now she could see from the sidewalk that many tourists were strolling casually among the gravestones as if they were guests at a picnic.

When tourists passed through Baronn View they were usually on their way to the famous Grotto of Redemption, a Catholic shrine made entirely out of rocks and stones of many different colors and sizes. Fourth of July picnics formed in her mind at the thought and she remembered the artificial red, white and blue crepe paper flowers that were thrown into the crowd by Miss Independence, before the mayor gave his annual opening address dealing with the town's gratitude for America's religious freedom, political freedom, and civic responsibility that the townspeople were all to exhibit. The people responded well with cheers and claps and then the Rev. A. J. Anther was called up to the platform from the crowd to deliver the closing prayer.

It was a good prayer and Mary reflected that her father had always had a way with words. He was short and to the point and he was, she just realized now, the pinnacle of the townspeople's beliefs, the beacon light from which they took their own faith. It struck her then that the one church, which had been standing for nearly a century, was in the center of the town. That was the way it had always been. Her father, the church, the town. It was hard to separate the one from the other.

Through the fence, Mary noticed the tourists' Memorial Day ritual of placing artificial flowers on the graves. It was a typically tourist thing to do simply because the flowers were cheaper than real ones and lasted longer.

She remembered her father explaining it to her the year she was 10. It was the first time that she had ever gone inside the cemetery by herself. As her father had explained to her they were paying their respects to all the veterans who had died in

## CREATION

*Born on the potter's wheel  
it dances to His tune—  
summer skies and sun  
were on His mind  
and He could find  
no other way to express it.  
It should bring you joy  
to know you were created  
from the swiftness of His hands,  
and you are the smile  
on a child's face,  
having the strength  
of a mountain stream  
falling over itself  
in an imaginary race—  
you are a separate sun.*

—Bonnie Kuipers

—Sandy Van Den Berg

the wars and to the people who had died in Baronn View.

"Father, why didn't we bring any flowers like the other people?"

Mary gazed curiously about and noticed all the Memorial Day strangers. They were tourists on their way to the Grotto, her father had said.

"Bringing flowers is a sentimental waste of your time and money," her father added, nodding towards a tourist. "They don't understand the true value of love. It's not in the deed but in the seed. If you don't understand the sacrifice they made," and he pointed to the grave of a soldier, "then you won't have the right kind of love to bring."

"Oh," she said, not understanding. They looked at a few stones and she guessed she was bored because that was when the silly, childish game began.

"Father, how did he die?" she wanted to know, pointing at a large and rather prominent gravestone. "How did she die, Father? Was it poison, or was it suicide?" A pause for a breath, and then the game went on. "Or was it—liverwurst!"

The very idea of the hated liverwurst killing off someone plunged Mary into helpless giggles and shouts of laughter. Mary remembered the laughter, and the hand that with one sharp, swift slap, had cut it off.

"Father!"

"No one, and I repeat no one, laughs at death." It was said sternly and coldly so that Mary would understand that people do not laugh in cemeteries.

"But Father, the people are dead. They can't hear me." The unfairness of the slap made Mary cringe inside.

And now that she thought about it, it was the laugh and the slap that she remembered more than the thrill of being with her father. Why had they both not understood?

The whole thing was one of those small tragedies in life that you never think much about when you are actually living through it. But later, when you had the time, and the years to think on it, the understanding came, and with it, the pain. You listened to the pain because it had happened and you had felt it, but that was all. Life simply went on as the well worn cliché so aptly put it.

Lost in her thoughts, Mary opened the wire gate mechanically. She went in, forgetting the other people until she heard a deep voice intone irritably behind her, "Where shall I put these flowers, Margaret?"

"I don't know, Steve, anywhere I guess," sighed the woman called Margaret. "Does it really matter? I mean, it's not like we have to know the person, do we?"

There was a slight pause.

"I should think the most important thing would be that we remembered, and stopped."

"Well, if you don't make up your mind pretty soon, then I'm going," he said. The impatience he felt for Margaret's slowness was all too apparent.

"Ha," said Margaret scornfully, "That's

(con't p.3)



A Walk Down the  
Block, cont. . .

## "Surely God's Grace is big enough to cover Mrs. O'Toole. . ."

alright for you to say. You didn't lose a dear cousin in the war."

"Blast the bloody damned war," swore the man angrily. "Why must you always drag **that** up?"

The woman began to cry and make little sobbing noises into her handkerchief.

"For God's sake, will you get a hold of yourself, Margaret?"

"Oh, Steve, please. What will the people think? You don't...not in a cemetery..."

The voices died away behind a gigantic slab of expensively cut marble and bronze. But the phrases, "what will the people think," echoed in Mary's mind. Yes, that was what everyone else had said, including her father.

Thinking all the while, she walked slowly toward the corner of the cemetery where she knew she would find her father's grave.

She had been standing in the kitchen at the time making an angel food cake for Mrs. O'Toole's birthday. The warmth of the sun coming in through the window felt pleasant on Mary's back as she listened to the whirring of the electric mixer, and measured ingredients. When she stopped the mixer and pulled the beaters up to test the texture, the slimy stuff ran off the metal spokes, dripping down into the bowl in curious shapes, making dribbles of half formed words on the surface of the mixture. It made Mary long to experience the same feeling of being poured out in little globs and pieces to form a complete whole, to fit into something, yet remain separate, if she could. The feeling made her want to capture it on paper, to build an image from nothing and make other people see it, too. She realized suddenly that the truth she had been trying so hard to forget could no longer be avoided. With her whole heart and soul she wanted to write, passionately, more than anything else that she had ever said she wanted to do in the world. The feeling gripped her then that she could be a writer if only she had the chance. For she had, always haunting her ear, the rhythm of a new word, the echo of a vivid image, the longing to make others see that the darkness covering the land was only a self-imposed and unfulfilled legacy. She was committed to the image of light because it made the whole world bright and one could see, with a clear-eyed, steady gaze, everything.

She didn't understand all her thoughts fully then, but she had come to understand them later on. It was between the image of light and darkness that the sadness came in. Her father did not understand.

"Mary, why must you write all the time?" he would say sharply, finding her always in some odd place with a notebook and a handful of chewed up pencils, or pens. Sarcastically he would say, "You'll burn your brains out with those story book romances," and then in disgust he would walk away.

She would look up then and pull her thoughts back from where she had been making complete poetic thoughts out of abstract objects. The hole in the worn carpet was becoming the church's steeple song, but it was incomplete. How could she make both of these things come together to form a complete whole, she wondered. Her

eyes would travel from the hole to the solid line of the church and she knew that she wanted to experience all of life, the good with the bad. And then she wanted to write about it.

She wanted to be as close to life as she possibly could in order to fit the images she saw from the objects around her to the right symbol she felt in her heart. But there was a more important reason. She wanted to be an image of light herself, a living poem creating other living poems. But she didn't understand fully, even then.

It had all seemed so new and strange, yet wonderful. She had not known then that she had the gift, or even how, or when it would be fully used. She only knew that her father did not like the gift. It was a sin to say one day to him with religious fervor that you wanted to be a nun, and the next day, with equal passion, to assert your dream of wanting to be a prostitute.

Why did I say things like that, Mary wondered. It wasn't that she really hadn't known what she was saying at the time. It was just that she had to say those words. She wanted so badly to experience all of life. At the same time she also sensed it was her responsibility to make people think about life. The words would not go away. She had tried but when she did not get the words down on paper she was like a prisoner caught in her own jail.

Mary felt the tears even before she knew that she was really crying. So many years...why, father, why, she begged to the gravestone plot. Why wouldn't you let me go the first time? Why did you make me leave you when I really wanted to stay?

The image of her father in his angry righteousness rose sharply to her mind. His voice echoed in the kitchen like a bolt of lightning splitting a tree in half.

"So, now you're hanging around with prostitutes, is the story I've been hearing from all my parishioners."

He was referring to Mrs. O'toole, a recent widow, and by the town's definition, one of "loose morals." But that was not the only thing wrong with her. When it came to church her performance left much to be desired, not having attended a single service since the first time she had attended 5 years ago.

"And where have you left the nuns in your story? At the Grotto of Redemption?" His voice couldn't have been more sour if he had swallowed an entire bottle of vinegar.

Mary looked at the picture of the angel food cake on the page of the recipe book. "I'm sorry, Father."

"You're sorry, you say. Is that all? You should be spanked! Honestly, Mary, the townspeople are laughing. They're hinting that I know how to preach a good sermon but I don't know how to control my own daughter."

Mary said nothing.

"Well, what do you have to say for yourself?" He took a step forward.

She had made sure that the eggs were all beaten together and now they stood in stiff little peaks when she lifted the beater out of the bowl.

"Father, does God love me?"

Her father was purpling with rage at the idiotic question of his fifteen year old daughter who ought to have known better.

"Of course He does," he snapped impatiently.

"Then Father, I don't see your point." She put the mixer on low for one last minute to make sure that the peaks were stiff enough. "Surely God's grace is big enough to cover Mrs. O'Toole if it is big enough to cover me."

The eggs were whipped now and Mary glanced outside at the brick of the old church. It was almost suppertime. The clock on the wall ticked loudly in the silence. She was thinking about love, the kind you gave when you understood the sacrifice, knowing you would get nothing back in return. Her father interrupted her and it seemed to her in the silence that his words came out like a worm inching its slow way over an upright razor blade, into her heart.

"I'm older and wiser than you are, my dear, and I've seen a great deal more of the world than you have. Stop and think before you talk, Mary. Only a very naive person would say what you have just said."

She turned then from her cake, pouring out through her eyes the full intensity of her bitterness.

"And whose fault is it, may I ask, that I happen to live here in this town, and that you will not let me associate with the one heathen here who is 'the world.' I'd rather be Mrs. O'Toole's friend and go to hell with her if I must, then burn in your sterile hell here."

Mary ran from the room crying. She had said the words that had come from her heart and now there was nothing left to say. She had only wanted to be free, to love the way God loved her. But something had gone wrong in the saying of it. It was one thing to love those who didn't know the truth. It was quite another to love those who did. The difficulty lay in doing both.

Lost in her thoughts, Mary did not hear the woman until she spoke directly at her elbow.

"Excuse me, but is it alright if I put my flowers here?"

Mary looked up. It was the woman called Margaret.

She looked curiously at Mary and then spoke, pointing at the gravestone. "How did he die?" And then noticing the tears, "I presume you are a relative?"

"He was taking a walk down the block," Mary replied mechanically, "when a drunken teenager hit him from behind. He might have lived, you know, but he had a heart condition, and the shock killed him."

"What a tragedy!" murmured the woman. "What a waste," she said, her eyes taking in the freshly watered grass and the exquisite flower arrangements around the gravestones. She held her handkerchief to her eyes and dabbed lightly.

"Well, here," the woman offered. She laid on the grave of the Rev. A.J. Anther a bouquet of perfectly formed, luscious, pale pink, plastic flowers, and then walked away.

But, Mary thought, she had not told the woman the greatest tragedy of all. Her father had died with a copy of her now famous short story, "The Heart of a Living Flower," in his hands. He had been on the way, her mother said, to Mrs O'Toole's house on Beacon Street.



# The Seasons Still Change

—Rachel TeGrootenhuis

I stopped our battered pickup at the field where my husband Dave and son Rog were working. It was a fresh May afternoon, the sun lightly toasting me but the air still crisp enough to give goose bumps. The fields being planted with corn and soybeans were still dark brown, but the oats and hay fields were a fuzzy green.

When the men were working in the fields I always brought them a lunch about three in the afternoon. It was like a picnic for me, I'd bring a blanket and we'd sit in the ditch along the gravel road. Being outdoors always made me feel clean and I like to feel a part of the work.

They were planting corn that day. Rog would go over the ground with the disk first, the circular blades chopping the ground into fine little pieces. Dave would follow with the planter on which four V-shaped pieces of metal pushed four straight, even grooves in the ground. Small seeds would drop from tubes into the grooves, and wheels on the back of the planter covered the seeds again. The men stopped at the end of the rows and walked toward me.

Dave had on his baggy blue jeans, Co-op feed cap and an old, white, short-sleeved Sunday shirt. No matter how often the kids would tease him about how awful he looked he still wouldn't give up his uniform. His face is so familiar to me it is hard to describe, a furrowed forehead, rough, weather-worn skin, square face and two white, new looking pieces of skin where his hair is receding. Rog looks a lot like his dad, square face, deepset blue eyes, but he's taller, about six feet two and not quite filled out yet.

"Hi Mom!" Rog said, "I hope you have lots to eat."

"How does ham sandwiches, fresh baked cookies, kool-aid and coffee for dad sound?"

"Pretty good," Rog answered as he dug into the grey metal lunch bucket.

Usually Dave was full of talk about the weather, how good the ground looked and how many rabbits he had seen, but he only greeted me with a "Hi Jen" and sat down to eat. He looked out over the fields as he ate, chewing his bites slowly instead of gulping them down with coffee, which was his normal way of eating. Finally, when he was almost finished he spoke, "Say Rog, how about making the farm into a partnership after you graduate this spring?"

I felt scared and empty inside, waiting with him for the answer. When Rog was born, the first son after four daughters, Dave had come bounding into my room. "That's quite a boy, Jen. He'll be pitching manure in no time, I can tell already. He's a born farmer with those big hands and broad shoulders."

Smiling, I teased, "But what if he wants to play piano with those long fingers?"

"Piano! Not a chance, he won't have time for anything that silly. No, he'll be a farmer some day."

Staring at the sandwich he was holding, Rog hesitantly replied, "I've been thinking about it a lot, dad. It's hard trying to decide what to do when I know it might be

for the rest of my life, but I have decided. I'm going to college in the fall to become a vet."

Rog had barely been walking when he went along with Dave to do the chores. He'd stick his little fingers in the calves' mouths for them to suck on, and would sit on the ground by the barn, letting the kittens run over his stubby little legs while he talked to them in his own language. By the time he was four he wanted his own chores, so Dave let him feed the few chickens we had with a little bucket.

When he was in second grade, he watched the miracle of birth for the first time. The next day they had an excited Rog at show and tell, "You should've seen it! The sow was just laying there on her side, grunting, and all of a sudden out popped a little pig and—plop—it fell onto the ground. There was all slimy stuff on him but he just wiggled right out of it and while he was doing that, out plopped another and then a whole bunch more until there were nine of them and they all got cleaned off on the straw and started sucking on the sow, just like they'd been there all the time."

It took Dave a second to realize what Roger had said. When he did, he shook his head with a look of disbelief on his face. "But I've always figured on you taking over when I retire. All the girls are married and none of their husbands are farmers, they can't take over. What happened? When did you change your mind? I thought you wanted to follow me."

Sometimes Dave gets carried away by his love for the earth and plants. That was one of those times, "Do you realize what you'll be missing? Working outdoors all the time, planting the seeds and watching them change from a dead little kernel into a tall green cornstalk. And harvesting in the fall, watching that bright yellow corn come pouring out of the picker into the wagon, seeing so many miracles in just a few short seasons. How can you pass it up?"

There was a look of amazement on Rog's face as he watched his dad talk. "I didn't realize how much it all means to you dad. But that can't change my mind. Even if you do love it so deeply, that doesn't automatically mean I can feel the same way. That's almost the same way I feel about animals. And farming is so much work with machinery, and that's something I don't like at all."

He hadn't always felt that way about machinery. When he was six, it was "I'm big enough Dad, let me drive please." Dave would let Rog sit on his lap and steer while he shirled, but stuck to his rule of not letting Rog drive alone until the summer he turned nine.

Late in that summer the men were chopping corn into silage for cattle feed that winter. Neighbors had come to help haul the loads of silage from the field. They would dump the silage onto a pile behind the corncrib. It took about two days for them to finish by our place. The second day one of the men couldn't come because his cattle had broken down a fence and were all over his fields, so he had

to spend the day looking for them. Dave wanted to get done that day so he let Rog drive the tractor that packed the silage down. Rog would go over and over the rectangular pile, packing all the chopped up corn close together so it wouldn't blow away or spoil easily.

When I went to tell Rog to come to the house for lunch that afternoon, I was shocked by how high the pile had become. It was dangerous work because the tractor's outside wheel had to come within a foot of the edge. If the wheel slipped over the side, the tractor would roll and could easily pin Rog.

At the lunchtable I asked Dave, "Don't you think Rog should quit? The pile is getting so high!"

Glancing across the table at Rog, Dave answered, "You worry too much Jen, he's big enough. Aren't you Rog?" Rog nodded his head violently in agreement.

I was still worried after they went back outdoors and kept looking out of the window toward the corncrib, even though I couldn't see the pile behind it. I noticed one of the men come on the yard with a load and watched it go out of sight behind the crib. Suddenly he came running back into view, his heavy work boots moving as fast as he could make them. I wanted to run and hide because I didn't want to hear what he was going to say, but I forced my legs to carry me outdoors to meet him. He came puffing up and gasped, "The tractor rolled and Rog's leg is pinned!" Frantically, I tried to remember what I had learned in a first aid course I had taken. The only thing that came to my mind was "Keep the victim warm to prevent shock." Hurrying to the house I grabbed the afghan off the couch and ran to Rog, shouting over my shoulder to call an ambulance.

When I reached Rog, I felt completely helpless. One of the big back wheels had his entire right leg pinned and he was lying face down on the ground. He had his head turned to one side. I knelt down by him and covered the small part of him that I could.

"I'm going to be okay, ain't I mom? Dad's going to be so mad at me, I got too close to the edge," Rog whispered to me.

I smiled at him, "Sure, you'll be all right, just don't worry. And dad won't be mad. Lie there quiet, and everything will be okay."

He made it through that experience with just one break on the top part of his leg and it healed quickly. But it was a long time before he would go near a tractor after that.

Dave was glaring at Rog, now he spoke again. "You'll have machinery every place you work. And how will you pay for college? I can't help. You haven't been getting very good grades. College is hard, and you don't even know how to study, you never have. You won't be able to make it."

"Dad, I've been saving money from the calves I've raised and sold. Maybe I can find work at college, and otherwise I'll just have to borrow it. I know it'll be hard but it's what I want and you can't change my mind." That finished the subject for Rog

(cont., p. 5)



TRIOLOGY

Words

*Words, like any other paint job  
drop, round in ceremony, down*

*tense and shiverfull of promise  
amoebas on the waiting book*

*then in stupid dribbles slither off  
across a barren page, a human soul.*

*Words, like any other art form  
can never tell it all at all.*

Words Again

*Without our toehold on  
the floating rumor that*

*He'd sanctify a syllable*

*we might as well  
drop dead  
(stillborn, past walls of silent air).*

The Last Word

*lies hidden  
and still open  
floating deep, deep  
and deeply sure  
among the souls  
of men.*

—Ag Vander Wal

Seasons, cont. . .

and he stared right back at Dave with his mouth set in a hard, straight line.

Rising, Dave walked angrily back to the tractor. Rog shrugged his shoulders and followed.

It was about a month ago that Rog left for school. He went the morning before school started because he had about a hundred and fifty miles to travel and he wanted to meet his roommate and look around before classes started. Dave and I stood close together by the fender of Rog's old Chevy. We've never known how to say good-bye. It was kind of chilly standing there without coats on in the cool, fall weather.

Rog opened the car door. "Well, 'bye mom. See you at Thanksgiving."

"Be good, Rog. And write sometime."

Dave was looking down at the ground. Rog glanced at him, then looked at me with those deep blue eyes and a quivering smile, got in the car and drove off the yard.

"I have to go finish the chores," Dave said to me quietly and turned, walking towards the barn. His shoulders were sagging a little more than usual and his steps were slow. The leaves on the tree by the barn were already starting to fall, leaving only the bare, dark branches. Looking up at the grey sky, threatening rain, I called after Dave, "Next thing you know it'll be snowing again."

THE GARDEN

*At eight  
the whole world  
is a playground,*

*and in the big elm trees  
there lurks (look hard)  
a mission control*

*for our trip to mars  
(the vegetable garden)  
So jump on the swing set—*

*I mean super duper  
two seat  
shiney red spaceship—*

*and take off.  
Fill-er-up on the moon,  
sandbox fuel ain't too dear.*

*Moon creature! Here!  
Dumb kid'nexdoor,  
give me a hand.*

*Too bad vader seen,  
live,  
the first landing on mars,*

*and our rock and plant  
collecting expedition  
in his garden*

*because . . .*

*two brave spacemen  
have this strange new disease,  
"klap op de achterwerk."*

—John Suk

UNTITLED!

*Bird on the free wind—*

*I will not be caught*

*is the sound*

*burnt into*

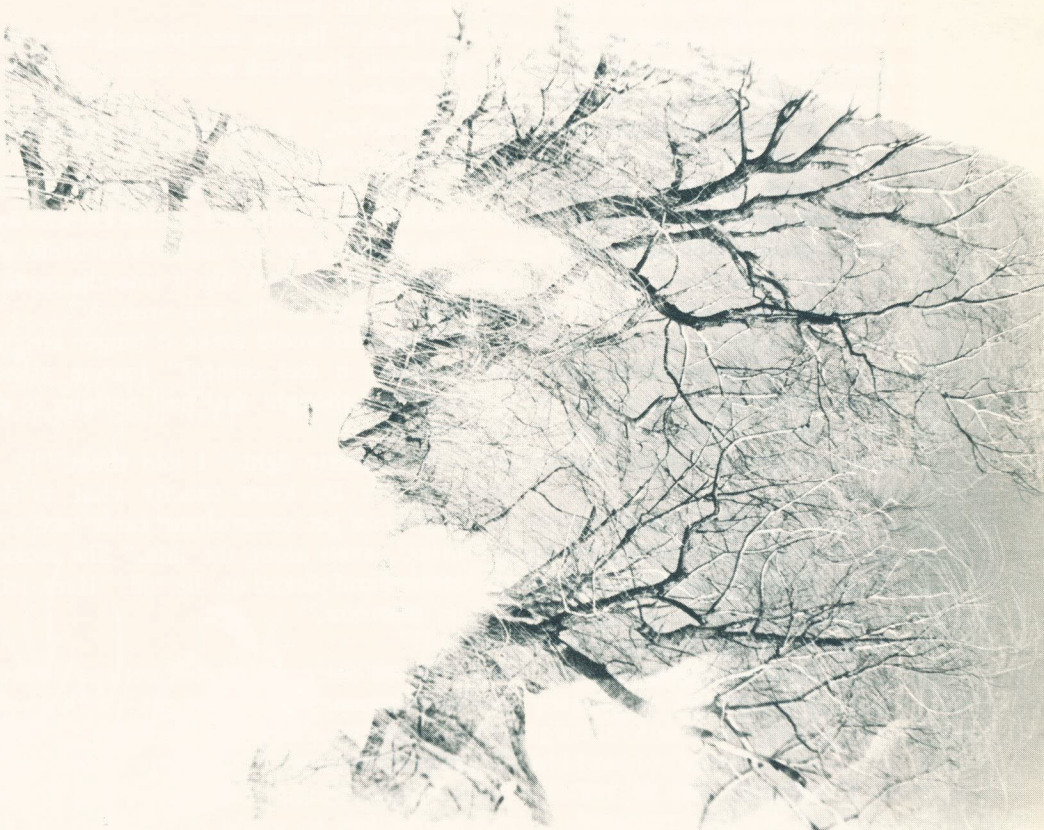
*every grass moving,*

*every tree branch twitch*

*that scrapes hard*

*across the morning sky.*

—Bonnie Kuipers



The Vision

—Bill Huiskens



march 2

*Encased in liquid glass*

*dripped*

*from the sky,*

*Frail fern, bent bough*

*imprisoned*

*to prism the sun's captured beam.*

*To step would shatter that*

*crystal quality.*

*Yet*

*to free that fettered flash*

*let it fly*

*clean, collected*

*would be an act that children*

*dare not;*

*magi*

*would not.*

*—Kim Logterman*

## CLOWN ALLEY

*I stood inside a circus tent  
and smelled the roaring crowd.  
Balloons were flat and money spent.  
The lonely cried aloud.*

*The trapeze artists spent their time  
in washing out their tights.  
The two-faced man made two-faced rhymes  
while tourists snapped the sights.*

*The clowns stood sad and water-soaked  
The lions paced and fussed.  
The sweep, who never lost his hope,  
wiped bleachers free of dust.*

*And high above a snowy dove  
carved spirals in the air  
and cooed the Big Top full of love  
but no one seemed to care.*

*—Mimi Ernest*

## Saturday, cont. . .

But Auntie Do and Joanne were happily chatting together for the moment, removing the hanger with the utmost care and shaping the veil which meanwhile had also come out of the closet. Down came the zipper of the white dress, down came the zipper of my green dress. I didn't feel like arguing so I submitted, figuring it would be more of a hassle to get out of it then to go along with it.

In a moment my green dress lay neatly across the bed and the white one was on its way over my head. I thought absurdly, this is the first time since I was five years old that I had help getting dressed.

Then it was on. It was about five inches too short everywhere and my brown suede shoes and green stockings stuck out underneath. Too much, I thought, and asked, "Do you have a mirror?" There was one on the closet door.

"It's kinda small," Joanne said. An understatement. But Auntie Do wasn't phased in the least. She was pushing and yanking at the zipper to make it go up. I pushed my ribs out as far as I could but after a considerable bit of trouble she got it up anyway. Then she stood back to get a more objective look at it.

"How about if you step out of your shoes." This, she must have reasoned, would make the dress longer and wider. She looked thoughtful for a moment, then her face lit up.

"You know what you can do," she said, "I know a store in town where they have the most **lovely** lace. Now, you could lengthen the dress by adding a panel of lace to the bottom."

"Yeah!" Joanne was pleased; they both were. "It does look **so** nice on you Alice," she added.

"Hm-hm," I agreed, but I knew it looked ridiculous.

"And you could do the same thing with the sleeves," continued Auntie Do who was now holding up my arm. "You could get another panel and slip it into the middle like a band all the way around."

Yes, that would make it longer alright.

"Does it feel comfy?" Joanne asked. Comfy! I thought that had nothing to do with it.

"It's pretty tight," I told them.

Auntie Do knew exactly what to do. "You can get some of the same lace and make panels along the side." She looked around and picked up the veil. "Here, let's try this now."

It was one made of stiff net that looked like someone had tried to cut it with a saw. I looked even more bridish. They tried to get me to squeeze my feet into Joanne's tiny satin pumps but I told them I had blisters on my feet so would rather not.

We all stood quiet for a moment studying my ridiculous image in the mirror; at least I thought it was ridiculous.

Joanne broke the silence,

"Well we just wanted you to know you are welcome to wear it if you want to. It would save you so much money."

"You're very thoughtful," I said, and felt a little awkward. "But like I said before, David and I aren't getting married." Now I felt embarrassed dressed the way I was. I took the veil off.

"If it's because of money, Alice," Auntie Do said almost in a whisper, "David's Uncle Roger and I are in a position to help." She would not back down: we **were** getting married, and we **did** need money.

"Thank you," I said, "I'll remember that." And I started the struggle to get out of the dress. In a few moments I looked like my plain old self again and felt tired and ready to go home.

In the living room Uncle Roger, Robert and David sat watching TV. David gave me an odd look and I returned one which meant I would explain later. Then he announced that he was on a health kick and wanted to get to bed before ten-thirty. That was baloney but they all thought it was marvellous. He had a knack for thinking of appropriate excuses.

So we left the Dibson family in the comfort of their living room. As we pulled out of the driveway and onto the street, four smiling, happy faces and waving hands could be seen through the window.