

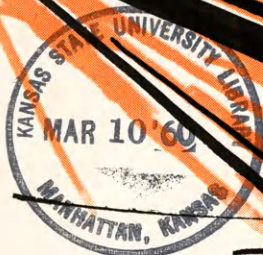
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# TOUCHSTONE

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

Last fall when I said, "What Kansas State needs is a literary magazine," I said it in the idle way in which such things are usually said across Student Union tables. Fortunately, however, I was not talking to myself and, as a result, the topic was pursued 'til the formation of such a magazine seemed absurdly simple. From those dream beginnings *Touchstone* has miraculously become a magazine with at least some degree of concreteness.

How did we get here? We aren't altogether certain, except that we know the process has not been absurdly simple. Perhaps at times it has been absurd; but simple, no. We have stumbled from one phase of growth to another and but for Mr. Berland's wise guidance we might not now have the opportunity to publish. Many other people also deserve credit for their help and encouragement, without which our growth would have been much more tedious, but we must give those people a "thank-you" as a group and say that if the "thank-you" fits, wear it.

One of the more easily solved problems which we encountered was the selection of a name. We finally arrived at *Touchstone* because it seemed to most nearly exemplify the purpose of our magazine. A "touchstone" is a velvety, black stone which is used in determining the relative amounts of gold and baser metals in alloys. A sample is rubbed upon the stone, leaving a streak, the color of which indicates the contents of the alloy. If there is a large percentage of gold a yellow streak will be left, and as the concentration of copper increases the streak becomes progressively more red. It is our hope that *Touchstone* will serve a similar purpose at Kansas State. The literary endeavors of the students will be rubbed upon it, leaving marks which the editors will analyze, attempting to separate the material with the highest concentration of gold. Perhaps, as the orange in our cover indicates, the material selected for this issue is not pure gold, but we feel there is more than enough good material to warrant publication.

Matthew Arnold has said that a touchstone is needed for judging literary excellence. We believe that ours can act in that capacity on a small scale, and, as a result, stimulate more creative writing of a high quality on the Kansas State campus. If we can accomplish that, *Touchstone* will be a success.

# TOUCHSTONE

## WINTER 1960

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Cover by MARILYN SUMMERS



# Ain't That a Laugh?

WILLIAM C. LATTA, JR.

Oh well, Tommy thought, if they don't want me to play, I can always find something else to do. After all, I don't have to play with them. Someday they'll ask me and I'll say I have something else to do and then they'll be sorry. He stood there and watched Jimmy Nelson swing a bat a couple of times and then step up to the plate. Boy, how he would slam one if he were batting. He'd swing smooth and level and the ball would sail clear over that fence in right field for a home run. If they'd just give him a chance, he'd show them. He really didn't swing like an old lady; it was just that he swung too hard and then he always missed the ball or popped it up for an easy out. Same way with his fielding, the fly would be coming out toward him and he would move under it and wait to hear it smack in his glove and then to hear them cheering him. But all of a sudden he would feel the thump against his glove and, before he could trap the ball with his other hand, it would be rolling away on the ground in front of him. If they would just believe he could do it.

"Go on home, Harper. Maybe your mamma can learn you how to play." That was Norm Stinson yelling. Tommy wanted to go back and poke him in the nose. It was always like that. Why couldn't he be like Rodney Nelson? Rod wouldn't take that from Norm. He would have dropped everything and knocked Norm silly. But Tommy knew he couldn't do it. Maybe I *am* a coward and a mamma's boy like they say, he thought. He turned his back to the laughter of the boys on the field and tried to keep the anger and disappointment from showing in his walk.

A while back, while school was still going on, Tommy had thought how different this vacation would be. He was going to show the guys that he really was a good ball player now, and they would want him to play every day and everything would be different. But now school had been out for a week and a half and things were the same as they had always been. Tommy found a rock in front of him and kicked it angrily. His toe missed and the rock rolled under his heel, turning his ankle. As he fell, the boys on the playground behind him laughed with added vigor.

"Look, you guys. Harper can't even walk." It was Norm Stinson again.

"You guys are so smart," Tommy said without turning around.

"What's that, Harper? We didn't seem to catch that."

Tommy walked on, trying not to limp. It was always just *Harper*. Why couldn't they call him Tommy? All the rest of the guys had nicknames, but he was always just *Harper*. Anymore it sounded like a swear word to him every time someone called him by it.

He was a couple of blocks from the school when he saw a moving van parked in front of an old, run-down house on Hoffman Avenue. He stopped to watch the men unload the furniture. A skinny little kid was standing beside the truck and, when he saw Tommy, he explained that he was waiting for the movers to unload his lead soldiers. Every time one of them carried something out of the truck, the kid would lean in to see if they had uncovered his box yet. Finally he saw it.

"That's my box." The kid pointed toward the back of the van. One of the men handed it to him and then he turned to Tommy. "Would you like to see my soldiers?"

"Sure. Why not?"

Tommy followed the kid over to the grassless yard and they dropped down on their knees with the box between them. Tommy expected the soldiers to be as dilapidated as the furniture he had seen carried out of the truck, but when the lid was



off the box, he whistled in surprise. Lined up neatly inside were double rows of brightly painted lead soldiers. Each wore black pants and a brilliant crimson coat with a high collar that fitted tightly around the neck. And each had one arm held rigidly down at its side, while the other was jointed at the body and held a long silver rifle that pointed back over its shoulder. All the little figures wore high black hats made of real fur and held on by tiny silver straps that ran down under their chins.

"My father sent these to me from England when he was there three years ago. They're British soldiers."

"Gee!" Tommy had never seen anything so grand. He carefully lifted one of the small figures out of its slot in the box. The solid weight felt cool and pleasant in his hand. After running his finger tips over the soft fur of the hat, he set the soldier down on the hard-packed dirt. It stood proudly on one foot with the other thrown forward for the next step. "Gee!"

"They're called the Royal Footguards."

Tommy looked back into the open box. There must have been almost thirty of these Royal Footguards, some lying rigidly at attention and some with their right legs lifted like the one Tommy had removed.

"Are you going to live here for good?" Tommy asked.

"I sure hope so. Mamma is a seamstress. You know, she sews. I suppose it all depends on whether she can find enough work here. We lived in Rouseville until now, but Mamma said there weren't enough people there who needed her to make things for them."

Tommy noticed that the boy stressed the last part of "mamma" but that only made him more interesting.

"Look, I suppose we'll be seeing one another around pretty often. I'm Tommy Harper. I live over on Harriet Avenue."

"My name is Jerome Cowan," the other boy said.

Then the two boys began to laugh for no reason, and Tommy glanced down to pick up the standing soldier. He wiped its base against the knee of his pants and put it back into its empty slot in the box.

"Well, I've got to be going, Jerome." Tommy stood up. "Why don't you come over to my place later on? It's straight over behind your house in the next block."

"Sure, Tommy." Jerome was putting the top back on the box of soldiers as Tommy turned and walked down the street.

During the following weeks, Tommy and Jerome were together almost constantly. Tommy learned that Jerome's father had been killed in France soon after he sent the wonderful lead soldiers to his son. He also discovered that Jerome's mother would not allow him to play ball or do anything else that might "harm" him. So the boys usually played with the soldiers when they were at Jerome's house, or built things, like bird houses or model airplanes, at Tommy's. Jerome was certainly different from anyone Tommy had ever known before. He knew more about birds and flowers and history than any of the other boys Tommy knew. As long as Jerome was around, Tommy was happy and he almost was able to forget about the other boys and the ball games on the playground. It didn't matter to Jerome that he couldn't hit a softball very well or that he wasn't very fast at running. Those things weren't *really* important. Tommy bet himself that none of the other boys could tell a hermit thrush from a common sparrow. And he knew they wouldn't know an Indian pipe if they saw it as he and Jerome did when they took walks through the woods up on Heckett's Heights.

There were some days, though, when Tommy would remember the other boys and wish they wouldn't make fun of him when he tried to play ball with them in

the school yard or kick-the-can down in the alley near Oak Street. Those were the days when Tommy would go over to Jerome's and would be told by Mrs. Cowan that Jerome had to stay in bed because he had a little fever or because his arms and legs were hurting him. Mrs. Cowan told Tommy that it was because Jerome had rheumatic fever, but this meant little to Tommy except that he would have to spend the day by himself or go through the usual razzing of the other boys. Fortunately, Jerome's sick spells lasted only a day or so. But when they happened, Tommy was almost lost.

One morning after Tommy found out that Jerome would have to stay in bed for a while at least, he decided to walk by the school just to see what was going on. As he neared the playground, he could see that most of the boys were there, playing work-up. Tommy liked to play this game because there weren't any sides and he didn't have to go through the agony of being the last one left when the sides were chosen. He tried his best to appear disinterested as he walked toward the boys.

"Hey, you guys, there's Harper." It was Norm. "So his mamma let him out for a while; ain't that nice though." Tommy's face burned from the comment and the laughter that it brought from the boys, but he tried to act as if he hadn't heard.

"Hi, guys. Mind if I play?"

"Why should we mind, Harper? Ain't you our star player?" Again the boys laughed. Tommy smiled weakly and ran out into left field to take his place at the end of the progression.

"Okay, we all hit to left field. Easy hit. Or do you think you might just happen to catch one today, Harper?"

Tommy glared at Norm. I'll show you guys, he thought. He tensed himself as Norm got ready to bat. He knew Norm would hit to him if he possibly could. Eric Hinski pitched the ball slowly so Norm would have no trouble smacking it into left field. But the pitch dropped short and rolled across the plate.

"Better back up, Harper. I'm going to hit the first good pitch out over your head." Tommy remained where he was for a moment and then slowly backed out toward the fence.

Eric's next pitch was perfect, and Norm hit it with all his might. The ball sailed toward Tommy in a long arch and he moved to the side a few feet to place himself under it as it dropped. "Please, God, let me catch it," he whispered as the ball raced down at him. But he knew he would miss it. It would hit his chest and bounce away on the ground. He was too stiff to catch it. Then he felt the sting of the ball striking against his gloved hand and watched in horror as it leaped out before he could stop it with his right hand. It bounced up against his chest and instinctively he trapped it there. At first, he was sure the ball had dropped, but when he pulled his hands away, it was in the glove. Tommy held the ball up for the others to see and waited for their approval.

"Pretty lucky, Harper. You didn't even know you caught it," Norm said bitterly. "Pretty lucky!"

Tommy trotted in to take the turn at bat that he had earned by catching the fly. Norm didn't look at him as they passed each other near third base.

"Don't worry, Norm. He won't be that lucky again," yelled Eric.

Tommy picked up the bat and stepped up to the plate. His elation had caused him to relax a little. He felt more confident now. Just wait, he thought. I'm going to hit this so far you won't be able to find it. And right out over Norm's head, too. Eric pitched the ball as hard as he could and Tommy swung too late and too low. The force of his swing threw him off balance and he fell awkwardly beside the plate.

"What happened, Harper?" Norm yelled in from the field. Tommy jumped up and beat the dust from his pants.

Eric smiled. "Look, Harper, I'll pitch this one nice and easy. Maybe then you can hit it, okay?"

The ball floated toward the plate and Tommy cut at it viciously. He felt the bat strike the ball and began to run toward first base. But the laughter from the others stopped him. He had fouled the ball back into the wire netting behind home plate.

"Hey, Harper, where are you going? You can't go to first on a foul ball!"

"Okay, you guys. I don't see what's so funny," Tommy said. But his remark only increased the laughter and razzing. His neck twitched and reddened. "Don't worry, I'm going to hit the ball yet."

"We'd better back up, you guys," called Norm. "Harper's going to murder the ball this time, ain't you, Harper?"

The pitch came in fast and chest high. Tommy swung evenly, but the ball shot straight up in front of him. Eric smiled and caught it in one hand without moving off the pitcher's mound.

"Wow, Harper, you really got a hold of *that* one," razzed Norm. Tommy meekly handed the bat to Eric and took his place on the pitcher's mound. As he turned to face the batter, Tommy saw Jerome walking over to the bench at the side of the field.

"Well, well, if it ain't Harper's buddy. Maybe you'd like to quit, Harper, so's you and your nature boy there can go look at some posies." Norm walked in from left field and headed toward the bench where Jerome was now sitting. Tommy dropped the ball he was holding and moved over to intercept Norm. The rest of the boys forgot about the game and followed.

"Hey, Nature Boy, why don't you come out and join the game? I'll bet you're a real slugger. Just like your buddy Harper here, I'll bet."

"Look, Norm. Leave him alone," Tommy said.

"Says who?" Norm asked, facing Tommy suddenly. When Tommy said nothing further, he turned back to Jerome. "What's the matter, you afraid you might get hurt or something?"

Jerome looked small and helpless as he sat in front of Norm, who was much larger than any of the rest of the boys. Tommy could see that Jerome was more pale than usual and he wanted to defend his friend, but he couldn't force himself to cross Norm. He really was a coward then, he thought. This proved it.

"I think I ast you a question, punk. Didn't I ast him a question, you guys? Hey, Harper, didn't I ast your buddy here a question?"

Tommy looked down and saw that Jerome was watching him. He turned to face Norm. He had to do something.

"Well, Harper? You ain't deaf, too, are you?"

Tell him to quit picking on Jerome, thought Tommy, or you'll . . . Or you'll what? Tell him to mind his own business and quit being such a big bully. Tell him . . . But Tommy lowered his head at last.

"Did I ast him a question or not, Harper?" Norm reached out and grabbed a bunch of Tommy's shirt in his large fist.

"Yes . . . you did, Norm."

"That's better." Norm let go of his shirt and gave him a little shove. Tommy looked around at the other boys standing in the knot about Jerome. They turned their eyes away from him and looked back at Norm.

"Okay, punk," Norm said to Jerome, "you heard your *friend*." He emphasized

the word "friend" with a sneer. The rest of the boys snickered nervously. "I ast you was you afraid you might get hurt?"

Jerome hesitated and then said, "No, I . . . I would like to play. But Mamma . . . my mother won't . . . my mother says I . . . I'm not well enough to play games like that." Tommy felt terrible. He knew Jerome was watching him, but he couldn't look down at his friend.

"How about that, guys? Nature Boy ain't well enough to play our kinda games. Ain't that a laugh?" He turned to Tommy. "Hey, Harper, ain't that a laugh, though?" Tommy began to back away, but Norm followed him. "Ain't it, Harper?" Again Norm clutched at Tommy's shirt, and Tommy wanted to strike out at the leering face more than he had ever wanted to do anything before.

"Yes . . . I guess so, Norm," he said.

"Aw, go on and take your stinking little pal home, Harper. Maybe you can find some *flowers* to play with." He whirled Tommy around and pushed him toward Jerome. The two boys walked away from the field and Tommy could still hear the laughter and catcalls of the other boys behind them when he and Jerome were a half a block from the school.

"Gosh, Tommy, I'm sorry I showed up and caused so much trouble."

"Aw, forget it." Tommy was surprised at the anger in his voice as soon as he had answered Jerome. He realized that he should be the one to apologize, but he said nothing. He knew Jerome was looking at him, waiting for him to say something. He was careful to keep his eyes lowered to the sidewalk in front of him.

"I can bring the soldiers out," offered Jerome as the boys reached his house.

"I guess not now. I'd better get home for lunch." Tommy kicked at a weed growing between the slabs of Jerome's front walk. "I'll see you later." Without looking up, he turned and ran toward his own home.

For the next few days, Tommy stayed at home. He repaired the new rabbit hutch that he and Jerome had built two weeks before, and then he decided to make a three-story bird house like the one he had seen in a recent *Popular Mechanics* magazine. Jerome came over after three days had passed and found Tommy picking clover grass from the front lawn to feed to his rabbits.

"Hi, Tommy. Can I help you?"

"No, I think I have enough for now." Tommy gathered the grass between his hands and started around the house.

"Have you been sick?" Jerome asked, following Tommy.

"I haven't been feeling too good, so I just stayed around here."

"Hey, Tommy. Would you like to walk up to Heckett's Heights?"

"I don't guess so today. I guess I'll just stay around here." He lifted the gate on the rabbit hutch and placed the grass on the wire floor inside. Then he filled the water tray from a can beside the hutch and let the gate slide down into place again.

"If you want, I'll go get my soldiers and bring them over here."

"No, I think I'll go in and read for a while before lunch."

The boys stood watching the two white rabbits eat the clover for a few minutes. Finally, Jerome spoke. "Well, Tommy, I guess I'll be going."

"Okay, I'll see you around, Jerome." Tommy continued to watch the rabbits until Jerome was out of sight. He started to call Jerome back, but then decided not to. He went into the house.

"Didn't I hear you talking to Jerome?" his mother asked as he poured himself a glass of milk at the kitchen table.

"Yes, but he had to go home." Tommy carried the bottle of milk across the room and replaced it in the refrigerator, avoiding his mother's questioning eyes.



All through the noon hour, Tommy regretted the way he had treated Jerome. By the time lunch was finished, he had decided there was nothing else to do but go to see his friend. If he couldn't make himself apologize, the least he could do was to go over and play with him. Besides, Jerome's soldiers were a lot more fun than building a three-story bird house.

Tommy was turning the corner on Jerome's block when he heard someone call to him from across the street. He looked over and saw Bob Knowles and Eric Hinski walking along the other side.

"Hey, Harper, wait up," Eric called, and they trotted across toward Tommy.

"Where's Jerome?" asked Bob Knowles, smiling innocently.

Tommy shook his head. "How should I know?"

"Well, we thought if anybody knew, you would," said Eric.

"Well, I don't, just the same."

"The reason we asked is we thought maybe we could get him to pitch for us today." Eric jabbed at Bob with his elbow and Bob laughed.

"Come on, Harper. Don't hide the big star. You know how much we need him." Now Bob nudged Eric and they both laughed.

"I'm sure he'd be a big help to you," said Tommy.

"Well, that's some way to talk about your buddy, Harper," said Eric.

"I don't know where you guys get that 'buddy' stuff. Anyway, I haven't seen him since the other day when he came out to the school yard."

Eric laughed. "I thought I saw him coming from your place this morning."

"Maybe he was. But I didn't see him. Just because I used to hang around with him some doesn't mean I know where he is all the time," Tommy yelled in irritation.

"Okay, okay, Harper. Don't get mad. We were just kidding you a little."

Tommy wiped his moist hands across the front of his shirt. Then he smiled weakly. "Do you guys mind if I play ball with you?"

"Naw, come on. Norm and the rest of the guys will be waiting for us," said Bob, and the three started down the street toward the school. "You know, Harper, you shouldn't let Norm bother you so much. He wouldn't keep it up like he does if you didn't let it get your goat so."

Tommy was afraid to turn his head as they neared Jerome's house. Then he heard Jerome call to him and he gasped for breath. Why hadn't they taken some other way to the school!

"Hey, Tommy . . ." Jerome was sitting on the porch steps, surrounded by his Royal Footguards. Tommy glared over at him and kept walking with the others.

"Hey, Tommy!" Tommy stopped when he saw that Jerome was getting up to walk over and meet them.

"Look, Jerome, leave me alone, will you? I want to play ball and you can't. So just leave me alone, okay?" Tommy was afraid Jerome would blurt out something about seeing him that morning and then the other guys would know he had lied. But Jerome only looked at him for a second and then went back to the porch.

After they were far enough away so that Jerome couldn't hear, Tommy said, "Just because I was friendly to that kid when he first moved here, he thinks he owns me or something." Suddenly Tommy was laughing with the others.

When they reached the school yard, Tommy saw Norm looking at him and he suddenly began to perspire. But he laughed self-consciously and walked up to the bigger boy.

"Hi, Norm. I know you'll be surprised to hear it, but old 'Stay-home' Jerome won't be coming around to bother us today."

"Say, Harper's made a funny. That's pretty good, ain't it, guys? 'Stay-home' Jerome."

Tommy glowed and the boys began to choose sides for the game. Norm and Eric moved their hands up the handle of the bat, and Eric won the chance to make first choice. Each of the two boys chose until only Tommy was left, as usual. But today the fact that he was last didn't bother him. He only laughed and walked out to take his place in the field with Norm's team.

"Where is the little squirt, Harper?" Norm asked as they got ready for the first pitch.

"Oh, he was sitting on that rotten front porch of his when I came by with Eric and Bob. I suppose he's playing by himself with those crazy lead soldiers of his. He can't get hurt playing with *them*, at least."

When the sides had changed and it was Tommy's turn at bat, he was surprised to hear Norm yelling encouragement to him.

"Okay, Tom boy, hit it over that fence out there. Just relax and pick a good one." Tommy was ecstatic.

As the summer passed and July simmered its way into August, Tommy gained more and more acceptance with Norm and the others. He began to feel thrilled at being a part of this group of boys. Only occasionally did he feel like the outsider he had been because of his lack of skill or his past friendship with Jerome.

One afternoon early in August, the boys decided to go swimming, since it was too warm for a softball game. After they had been splashing around long enough to cool off, Norm swam up to Tommy.

"Hey, Tom," he said, smoothing his wet hair back with his fingers, "want to race me across the pool under water?" Tommy saw him wink at one of the other boys as he spoke. They knew Tommy couldn't keep his eyes open under water.

"Yea, I guess so, Norm. If you want to."

"Well," said Norm, "you know I ain't much of a swimmer, but maybe I can get across."

Why did he have to start this, Tommy asked himself as the two boys swam for the side. Norm turned around and rested his arms on the rim of the pool, waiting for Tommy to reach him. He smiled toward the rest of the boys.

"Ready?" Norm asked after Tommy had turned to face the opposite side. Tommy took a deep breath and nodded.

The boys ducked beneath the water and thrust their feet against the wall behind them. Tommy shoved away quickly, but he could feel the ripples from Norm against his face and knew he was behind already. Suddenly he bumped into someone standing in the pool. He tried to open his eyes to see where he was, but the chlorine in the water stung sharply and he had to close them again. His lungs had begun to ache for breath, so he kicked away in what he thought was the right direction. Finally, when he thought he would have to give up, Tommy felt the smooth tile on the side. He rammed himself upward to the surface and let the stale air explode from his lungs. The boys were crowded around him snickering, and he saw Norm sitting calmly on the edge of the pool, a towel wrapped about his neck.

"What happened, Harper? Did you get lost somewhere?"

Instantly, Tommy's old hatred of Norm had returned.

"You ain't afraid to open your eyes under water now, are you, Harper?" All the boys were laughing at him again. Why did Norm have to keep it up? Once more Tommy felt the old urge to smash out at Norm's face. But he only looked up and laughed thinly.

"You guys *know* I did it all on purpose. I was just trying to show you how Jerome would do it if he was here. I thought I would look around for some seaweed on the bottom." This brought even more laughter from the boys, but now they weren't laughing at *him*.

"Well, if you ain't a clown," laughed Norm. He threw off the towel and cannon-balled into the water beside Tommy. Tommy waited until he came up and then chopped water into his face. Norm yelled in mock anger and grabbed Tommy by the head, forcing him under the water. Tommy came up coughing and happy again.

In the weeks that followed, a new game called 'Jumping Jerome' became popular with the boys, rivaling even softball and swimming. More and more it was Tommy who suggested that they play the game, and on days when the heat robbed the more active sports of their usual glamour, the boys would scout the neighborhood until they could 'jump' Jerome. The group would surround the boy and demand that he tell them about the birds and flowers and history he knew so much about. They always began this in the strictest mock-seriousness, and the one who could lead Jerome on the longest without laughing was declared the winner of the game. Tommy soon surpassed even Norm at this skill, and he glowed with pride as the others recognized his superiority.

One morning in late August, Tommy looked up from his breakfast to see Bob Knowles standing outside the screen on the kitchen door.

"Come on in, Bob. I'll be done eating in just a second." Tommy wasn't surprised to see Bob, for by now, one or two of the boys often showed up at the house while he was still eating breakfast to see what he wanted to do during the day.

"Naw," Bob said without enthusiasm, "I'll just wait around out in the yard until you're through."

Tommy nodded and lifted his cereal bowl to drink the milk that was left in the bottom, but he quickly set it back on the table when he noticed his mother's frown. He spooned the remaining milk noisily and then excused himself and hurried out into the back yard. Bob was lying under the large weeping willow tree that grew in the middle of the yard. He was absently picking up the slender yellow leaves that had blown from the tree and was piling them into a tiny mound. Tommy flopped down on the grass beside him.

"Hey, Bob, what do you say we find the other guys and go swimming as soon as the pool opens?"

Bob rolled over on his side and stuck a stem of grass between his teeth. "Tom . . . Jerome's dead."

Bob's words were so matter-of-fact in tone that Tommy did not understand at first. He sat up and stared at Bob.

"Yea, no lie. He musta died last night sometime. I was just walking past on my way over here and I saw Gordon's hearse drive up. Old Mrs. Bowers next door was sitting on her front porch and she called me over and told me. I guess she musta thought I was there to find Jerome."

Tommy tried to grasp the meaning of what Bob was saying, but somehow Bob's words didn't seem to go together to mean *anything*. People just don't die like that. They have to be in bed and terribly sick for a long time, just like his Grandma Harper and old Mr. Nichols next door had been. This had to be a gag of some kind that Bob was trying to pull.

"Come on, Bob, don't give me that. That's nothing to kid around about." Tommy laughed dryly and leaned over to poke his friend lightly on the shoulder.

"Honest, Tommy. Cross my heart. You can go over and see for yourself. Go over and ask Mrs. Bowers. Doctor Ada was there, too. She came out and talked to the men who came in the hearse."

But how could Jerome be dead? He had just seen him playing with the Royal Footguards on his front porch last night, after the boys had had to quit playing ball because it was getting too dark.

"But you saw him, too, last night, Bob. You saw he was okay then, didn't you?"

"I can't help it, Tom. He's dead now anyway."

Tommy lay down again and plucked at the grass. All he could see was Jerome's house with its peeling paint and sagging front porch. The steps sloped down to the right side and the board ends were jagged where rotten pieces had broken away into dust on the bare dirt beside the porch. And on the warped and soot-blackened porch floor, Tommy could see the rows and rows of brilliantly colored soldiers marching proudly through the desolation of the surrounding landscape. Then there was Jerome, sitting in front of them with his legs crossed, moving one a little now and then so it would stand a little straighter on the uneven boards.

Suddenly, Tommy wanted to jump up and run as hard as he could. Maybe he could go over and apologize to Mrs. Cowan. But that wouldn't do much good now. It was too late to apologize. Jerome was dead, and he was the cause of his death. He had killed Jerome a little every day, by not sticking up for him, by not paying any attention to him, and by making fun of him. Maybe if he had only . . . But he hadn't. He hadn't done anything for Jerome. He had only taken from Jerome, and Jerome hadn't minded that. But then he had refused even to take, and that was what had killed Jerome. Tommy knew it was. He looked up at the great, twisted limbs above him. Each one soared away from the huge body of the tree and divided into smaller and smaller branches until it finally ended in the narrow, supple shoots that hung almost to the ground, making the tree a huge tent. Maybe he can't see me here, Tommy thought. Maybe he isn't looking at me, waiting for me to say something or to do something. Maybe he doesn't even know he's dead.

"Mrs. Bowers told me Jerome had some fever and that's why he died," Bob said. "I guess it just stopped his heart from beating and he had to die. Gee, Tom, I didn't know he had a fever. I guess that's what was the matter with him."

If Jerome wasn't dead, I could go over and say I was sorry and we could get out the Royal Footguards just like we used to and everything would be the same again. What would I care if the other boys didn't like me. It's not so much to be good at playing ball or kick-the-can or . . . Tommy looked over as Bob climbed to his feet.

"Let's do something, Tom. I'll go see if the rest of the guys want to go swimming."

Tommy nodded, but he lay there for a few moments, reluctant to leave the shade of the overhanging limbs. I wonder if dead people really *can* see you? Has Grandma Harper seen all the things I've done since she died?

"Come on, Tom. Let's go."

Tommy sat up and lifted his hand and Bob pulled him to his feet. The two boys spread the willow shoots apart and walked out into the brilliant sunlight. What will happen to the Royal Footguards now that Jerome's dead, Tommy wondered. He stopped outside the back door.

"Wait till I get my suit and I'll go with you, Bob."



# Acropolis

ART HOBSON

Sun glints down on the Parthenon,  
Breathing a secret fire into these stones  
Quivering with thoughts of immortality,  
Breathing words never to be uttered  
But only witnessed.

Towers swell to the heavens,  
Not built but planted fullgrown  
By giants out of a land where reality strides  
The mountains from rim to rim  
And knows no chains;

Day bursts forth from the marble  
And this gold-swept tower is an anthem  
To all our expectations,  
A sinewed arm held aloft  
In noontime's brilliance.

Now send down magic, ye pillars!  
Hurl us your light through dust  
Of centuries to blast men free  
And bend eyes upward against the fierce joy  
Of pride unbound;

Shake the earth with laughter,  
A white-toothed smile down from Zeus;  
Turn our hearts from slumber and death worship  
To love that knows no prize  
But only itself.

Acropolis, what energy is it  
That has struggled within you these twenty-five  
Centuries? What is the thing which lies  
Deep in your throat, unspoken  
Yet eternally sung?

# The Woman of Milo

ART HOBSON

Stone forever poised in white hardness  
Forever; it had stood would continue to be  
While nations passed in wonder and a silent young man  
Stood gazing: stood bound in the glow of strength conceived  
In grace, of grace conceived in light.

The back! The classic back: a line curves upward;  
Loveliness is born where rhythm becomes  
A thing. From here! From this point: a breeze  
From shores Aegean where light and grace are strongly  
Bound brings tears to silent eyes.

# Lightning Slices Deep

ART HOBSON

Lightning slices deep through August midnight;  
Dawn will come no more when sudden thrust of  
Firebrand lashes dark to noon and every  
Stormy grey to mouthless shades of gold, molds  
Every unfirm hand to steel and granite  
Hurled against the grinning blindness.

Gone is day, yet always living with no  
Birth in time, no end in flow of distance;  
Gleaming halls of sun stand with no voice to  
Sound, no edge to grasp while spines are wrenched  
Free to stand unbent before the blinding  
Slices deep through August midnight.

Iron girders point toward stars; man sets his feet and  
Flings a gaze upon the sky: his eyes are real.

# The Dance

NORMAN HOSTETLER

"The music stopped," said Don. The two of them let go of each other quickly and applauded mechanically. "I like that slow music—dance to it easier."

"Sure," said Kathy.

"I kinda like that music better'n rock-an'-roll, anyway." Don paused a moment, opened his mouth as if to say something else, and then closed it again. Neither of them said anything for a minute. Then the band started playing again.

"Oh, listen," Kathy said, "it's that new song whose-his-name just put out. It's real crazy. Don't you just love that drum part?"

"I don't know. That wild stuff is kinda tiring. Would you like to sit this one out?"

"Well, if you'd like to—"

"Whatever you want to do." He paused a second. "I just thought that maybe if we danced them all—. Well, you know, don't want to get too tired."

"Sure," said Kathy. She started moving along the side of the floor toward the chairs.

"There's a couple of empty ones," Don said. They walked to the chairs in silence. Don let Kathy sit down, then sat himself.

Kathy hummed a bit of the tune the band was playing. "This is one of my favorites," she said.

"I s'pose it's all right," said Don. "I kinda like classical stuff." He turned to look out the window behind him.

Kathy shifted in her chair in order to follow his gaze. "Moon's full tonight. Sure is pretty."

"Yeah, I guess so."

Kathy turned around and faced the band at the other end of the dance floor. "I like this band," she said. Don turned around, but didn't say anything. "Do you play tennis?"

"No," said Don, "I always wanted to, but I sorta never got around to it. Do you?"

"Mmm. Julie and I played awhile this afternoon." They both watched the dancers in silence until the band quit playing.

"You think they'll play a slow one now?" Don asked.

"I don't know," said Kathy. She waited until the band started playing again. "Hey, it's a polka! I haven't heard one of these since last June."

"What went on last June?" asked Don.

"Oh, I was at my cousin's in Washington for a couple of weeks. They taught me how to polka. It's about all they did back there. Do you polka?"

"I'd like to," said Don, "but nobody ever had the patience to teach me." He drifted away into silence with a quiet, "Oh, well."

"'Oh, well' what?" asked Kathy.

"Oh, nothing."

Kathy yawned. "I've got a test in psych in the morning. We can't stay too late."

"You got Saturday morning classes? Gee, that's too bad."

"Yeah." Kathy concentrated on the dancers for a bit. "That one couple out there is good."

"I guess so," said Don. "I don't know much about polkas." He watched the dancers also. "Do you know the name of it?"

"That's the Leichtensteiner Polka. We played that one so much last June that I almost memorized it." They both fell silent again. "What time is it?" asked Kathy.

"Nearly eleven." Don waited until the band stopped. "Maybe they'll play one I can dance to now." He paused while the band started up again. "Good, it's a nice slow number. You want to dance?" He stood up.

"Sure," said Kathy. She got up from the chair, and they slowly walked back out onto the dance floor.

## Sonnet No. 3

WILLIAM LATTA

Do you remember now those hours with me,  
Those all too few in which I bungled so  
In my attempts to utter and to show  
The way you seemed to set my spirit free?  
Still now I see those silent, laughing eyes  
That I so loved and hoped each day to see  
In all their brilliant splendor turn toward me  
And cause me more to want and idolize.  
I see your hair, your fairy-pointed shoes,  
And, God! I feel I can not live apart  
From your delicious face, your fickle heart,  
Which my imagination now renews.

Do you remember, too, those golden hours  
When you seduced me with such gentle powers?



# Window

PATSY CAMPBELL

The window,  
Iced with thin, white curtains,  
Frames  
The bleak, grey afternoon.  
Black trees  
Silhouette against the dove-coloured sky  
Like switches  
Against a friar's robe.  
Grey smoke  
Rises over the charcoal city,  
Dirtied snow  
Lies at its blackened feet.  
A pale child  
Shivers at the cold window  
And waits—



## October Green

PATSY CAMPBELL

How sad the day is.  
It has rained and rained  
Until the sky is all washed away  
And there is only a dove grey nothingness  
Above the grey October green of the world.  
The rain has ceased its unchangeable hushing  
Leaving soft grey drops of sorrow  
To lie in the grass  
And drip from the still-green trees.  
Mute pools stand on quiet streets  
And old brick sidewalks,  
Transmuting into reflected nothingness  
As I pass by.

# Roll Over, Rover!

DONALD D. ST. CLAIR

(from the disrespectful pen of an erstwhile  
saint, inspired by that great song of the '50's,  
"You Ain't Nothin' but a Hound-dog!")

The foreman came down the line accompanied by another man with a small manila-bound manual in his hand. They approached a man working at a table, lifting grey metal objects off a conveyor belt, turning a screw on each of the objects, and replacing them on the conveyor again. He was working rapidly and mechanically with hypnotic rhythm. The two men watched him, mesmerized. A buzzer sounded in the plant and the conveyor stopped.

"Well, Al, you're all finished for the day," said the foreman to the man at the table.

Al smiled and nodded his head. "You've certainly been doing a fine job for us, Al," continued the foreman. "Al, I want you to meet our new man, Herb Delbert. Herb will be working with you from now on."

"I'm glad to see you, Herb," said Al. "Been doing the work of two since last Friday." Herb extended his hand and the two pumped hands vigorously.

"Now Herb," began the foreman, "let me tell you that I leave you in good hands. Al is one of the best men we have: winner of the highest award in bird-dogmanship and the highest award in production. On top of all this, he's been voted 'good guy' of the year. Al will take good care of you, won't you, Al?" asked the foreman, beaming proudly at a blushing, proud Al. "And say, Al, show Herb around, explain how things get on. He'll start to work tomorrow, so get him squared away."

"Sure," smiled Al.

"Fine, see you later, boys," said the foreman as he turned and walked away.

"You'll like it here," Al addressed Herb. "We have more spirit and life in this plant than all the other industries put together. You'll see. Have you checked out your dog yet?"

"No," replied Herb. "Just my manual of bird-dogmanship and my identification badge. I get my dog tomorrow. This is quite a program you have here. I can't wait to see the Dog Palace. The foreman said you would take me with you."

"You bet I will. I never miss a show," replied Al. "First, let me explain what our job is. You saw me working, didn't you? . . . Well, you pick up the part as it comes to you, take the screwdriver, tighten the screw and place the part back on the conveyor again. That's all."

"I see," said Herb. "What is the part you are working on?"

Al looked a little troubled. "A part; it's a part, that's all."

"I know, but a part of what?"

"Oh, I get ya," answered Al. "What is the part a part of, yeah. . . . Well, that's a secret. Classified information. I can't tell ya. Besides, I don't know anyway. Are you going to worry about such things?"

"Of course not," protested Herb. "That doesn't make a damn bit of difference—idle curiosity." He coughed and his face flushed.

"I didn't think it mattered to *you*. You don't seem to be that kind of fellow," said Al.

"Thank you," replied Herb.

"That was the trouble with the guy that worked with me before. He was always asking questions and when I answered them, he laughed. He was rather strange.

He didn't like dogs, and any man who doesn't like a dog just ain't a man, that's all. Ain't that right?" Herb nodded with alacrity. "Confidentially, he was fired because he didn't fit in. He came to work here before things went to the dogs; a man like him couldn't get in now because they screen everyone with tests. If you're not a real human being, you can't get a job here. There's not a man in the plant that doesn't like dogs."

Another buzzer sounded, doors opened, and men with lunch buckets began to pour into the building. "Here comes the swing shift," said Al. "We'll have to move out of here before they put us to work. Ha! Ha! It's time for the show to start anyway. Let's go to the Dog Palace."

The two men entered the Dog Palace and picked their way down an aisle. Rows of seats surrounded a roped area, beginning about thirty feet from the rear of the rectangular Palace, extending to a raised platform at the front. The roped area had an earth-covered floor and was about one hundred feet in length and thirty feet wide. Herb looked to his friend and asked, "You mean the Company built this enormous building for the dogs . . . er I mean, employees?"

"They sure did," exclaimed Al, smiling proudly. "Listen, boy, you're not working for a penny-ante outfit. This outfit appreciates good men and takes care of them. Yessir, boy, this is a great Company!"

"How did this all begin?" asked Herb as they sat down. "I mean the program of bird-dogmanship?"

"Well, it's quite a story," began Al. "Like I said, this is a great Company. It has foresight—you know what I mean! It has vision, real clear vision. The top brass knew that all the employees have to have something to pep them up. Working on the line can get pretty dull if you don't have something to think about. So the brass looked for an idea. Because the Company is a believer in Science, they went to the University to pick the finest of brains. They came up with a rat psychologist."

"A what?" interrupted Herb.

"A rat psychologist. Sounds goofy, but that's what they called him. I guess he was a scientist too, besides knowing all about rats and psychology. He wandered around the plant for days, writing on a little pad he carried. He would stop and ask questions, squinting his eyes, biting his pencil, and when you would say something important, he would say, 'Ah—Haaa,' and then he would jot it down on his pad. The last thing he did was to give a battery of tests to all the employees."

"But I don't see how this scientist fits into the picture," said Herb. "What's a rat psychologist got to do with bird-dogmanship?"

"Well," answered Al, "I don't know if I can explain it; there *is* a reason. You may not understand it but there's *always* a reason, even if it is complicated. One of the girls who helped with the paper work explained it to me. . . . Of course, she didn't understand it *all*, but she got the general idea. She said the scientist found that the work in the plant was monotonous and dull." Al smiled to his friend. "I told you this scientist was smart; he's right! That's just what the work is like. And to show you what a deep thinker this man was, he decided that dull, monotonous work kills human feelings. The workers just didn't have any love in them; they didn't love anything or anybody. You don't have to be a genius to know that a man without love is pretty dangerous; love's fundamental, that's for sure."

"That's right," nodded Herb.

"The scientist," continued Al, "discovered that a man can't really love a machine. A man's got to have something living, something warm, something to love him; that's the trouble with a machine; even if you love it, it won't love you. Yes, that's the trouble. The scientist discovered this, brilliant man that he was, but then he



ran into trouble. Just what can a man love? Now, that's a problem, Herb, you gotta admit it; just what *can* a man love in this world? What?"

"Gee," said Herb, "I don't know."

"I'll tell you, the scientist burnt some midnight oil on that problem. In fact, the girls in the office said they thought he was getting a little daft; he paced 'round and 'round his desk muttering, 'a man is dangerous unless he loves; a man cannot love unless he has something to love; if he loves something, he will not be dangerous.' Of course, this is the way a genius gets his ideas. Finally, he wore himself out and sat down to stare out the window, asking himself over and over again, 'what thing in this world can a man love?' And then, one day the answer came straight out of the blue.

"One of the secretaries came to work with sleepy eyes, and a snarl on her face. The scientist asked her if she had a nice time at the party. 'Party, hell!' she said, forgetting herself, 'one of man's best friends spent the night howling under my window.'

"'Man's best friend?' asked the scientist.

"'A dog,' said the girl, 'the miserable cur. . . .'"

"You would think a scientist would know what a man's best friend is," said Herb.

"Yeah, well, you know," replied Al, "when a man gets overloaded with all them important facts, he hasn't time to worry about simple things."

"No," agreed Herb, "I suppose not. What happened after that?"

"After that," continued Al, "the scientist began pacing 'round and 'round his desk again. Then all of a sudden, he threw up his hands and let out a terrific war-whoop! 'I got it!' he said, 'the thing, man's best friend! That's it, that's the thing—a dog, bless his mangy hide!'"

"He really got excited, huh?" asked Herb.

"Did he!" answered Al. "The girls are still talking about the way he carried on. I guess he was like a madman, running around, hugging all the women and yelling, 'Saved! saved! We're saved! Oh for a million miserable curs to sweeten the lives of miserable man!'"

"Gee, think of that!" marveled Herb.

"So, Herb, the program went into effect. Every man was issued a dog, a dog allowance and a manual. Now, everyone has something to love and cherish, and something to love him, and something to call his very own—without the First National owning half. Just to show you what a great Company we work for, they built this giant Dog Palace where the workers show their dogs. The worker and the dog are judged by that group of men." He pointed to a row of men seated just in front of the square arena.

Herb followed the direction of Al's finger. "I see," said Herb, "that the judges have black dogs; are they bird-dogs?"

"Oh no, those are Doberman Pincers."

"But I thought everyone was issued bird-dogs," said Herb.

"No," replied Al, "just the laborers get bird-dogs, pointers, that is. The judges are executives and they are issued Pincers; all of the foremen get bloodhounds; just the working men get the pointers. The President has a Saint Bernard which presides over every show." Al pointed to an elevated area at the front of the arena. "You see that?" he asked.

"You mean the platform with all those red, white, and blue do-hickies wrapped around it?" asked Herb.

"Yeah, that's the throne where the Saint sits and reigns over the pointers performing in the arena below. God, is he a dignified old dog! He's calm and wise; a perfect dog for a King, that's for sure! He wears a gold crown with jewels

stickin' in it and around his neck hangs a treasure chest with real money in it. You see the silver cushion layin' there—just below the place where the Saint sits?"

"Uh huh, I was wondering about that," replied Herb.

"Well, that's where the Great Dane sits; he's the Vice-President's dog. Around his neck is a chain with two keys hanging on it; one of 'em is iron and the other is gold—they have something to do with kingdoms and keepers; I don't understand it—too deep for me. Anyway, when the judges pick the winner of the show, they take the gold key from the Dane's neck, unlock the treasure chest, take the money out and give it to the winner. It's real purty, the way they do it; the band plays 'How Much Is That Doggie in the Window,' and a real live dog goes 'woof, woof' like in the song."

"Gee, I'll bet that *is* nice," said Herb. "Yes sir, that's *class* all right . . . uh . . . what do they use the iron key for?"

"Oh that," Al said, with a note of distaste. "They use that to impound bad pointers, the ones who won't point. Then they're shot."

"Shot!" exclaimed Herb. "You mean they kill them?"

"I know it sounds rough, Herb, but why should a dog be treated any different than a man? It's a rough world, that's the breaks."

"You're right. Dogs should be treated as equals. . . ."

"Shh," Al interrupted, "the show's starting."

French horns sounded, announcing the entry of the Saint Bernard and the Great Dane. As they entered, everyone in the Palace stood and faced the throne. The two majestic creatures were led by two men in flowing robes; when the great dogs were seated on their pillows, the men kneeled at their sides. A band played the national anthem and the assembly of dogs and men sat down. One of the judges walked to a microphone.

"Today," he began, "we have the two finalists of the day shift. As you know, these two pointers have defeated all challengers to come before them. Today, one of these great pointers shall emerge the winner and be awarded the prize of five hundred dollars, and go on to represent the day shift against the champions of the swing and graveyard shifts. Both pointers are fine dogs. The decision will be difficult and close. Without further ado, I present 'Kiss-em Kate' in the blue collar, and 'Old' . . .," the judge stuttered as he twisted his notes, rechecking the name, "and 'Old Rover' in the black collar."

Kiss-em Kate and Old Rover walked into the arena leading their owners by long, smart leashes. The owners bowed to the assembly and were rewarded by resounding applause.

"I would sure like to see Old Rover win this," said Al.

"That's the one in the black collar?" asked Herb.

"Yeah, that's the one." The two men sat watching as Old Rover led his master out of the arena and into the section reserved for contestants. Dog and man sat down to watch Kiss-em Kate's performance.

"You like that dog, huh?" asked Herb.

"I don't exactly like him, the dog I mean," said Al. "His owner's had a lot of sickness in the family; been with the Company twenty years and he could use the money. Besides that, he's a good Joe. Yes sir, Old Rover's owner is one of the best."

"O.K.," said Herb. "I'll root for him, too."

"Grab your manual, Herb," commanded Al. "In the back you'll find an appendix with the rules and procedures of bird-dogmanship which explains point by point the bird-dogging field trial." Al took the manual from him and turned to page forty-one. Pointing with his finger at the top of the page, he quoted, "In the art of bird-dogging, it is imperative that the pointer heel. The first test on the field

is a demonstration of the pointer's ability to obey the command, HEEL.' Now watch!" said Al.

The man in the arena called the command "Heel," and the dog wheeled in behind him. Then the man commanded "Advance," and the dog charged out front.

"Gee, isn't that precision!" exclaimed Herb, very much impressed.

The man in the arena finished the heeling performance by shouting, "Heel! Advance! Heel! Advance!" in quick succession, the pointer wheeling dizzily in a circle without moving his feet from dead center. The crowd exploded, yelling, stomping their feet and clapping.

"Boy, was that something!" exclaimed Herb, almost overcome. "Do you suppose I can train a dog to do that?" he asked.

"Sure, you can," assured Al. "All it is, really, is habit. Once you get the dog used to it, he likes it—it's as simple as that."

"I see," said Herb. "What does 'advance' mean? Oh, here it is," he said, reading from the manual, "'Rule number two: the dog or pointer must understand the meaning of the command *Advance*. At the command, the dog must dash forward, displaying exuberant energy and willingness to work the field set before him. The dog must not at any time work too far afield. He must stay within reasonable limits—preferably in front of the master, within the bounds of ordinary vision—and work the field of his master's choice with unlimited thoroughness.'"

"Kiss-em Kate is ready for rules three, four, and five," interrupted Al. "Those are simple. 'Jump to,' 'belly-down' and 'roll over.' Look, there she goes," said Al, pointing to the dog. "Down she goes, plop on her belly. See her squirm and look up at her master with that cute little grin on her face? Hey Herb, did you see that, huh?"

"God, yes," sighed Herb. "I guess that's about the most striking thing I have ever seen; yes sir. That's really something to train a dog like that!"

"Isn't it amazing," replied Al, "how much the dog enjoys it?"

"Hey, what are they doing now?" asked Herb.

"Well, this is the first part of the bird-dogging course. The pointer must begin at the far end of the arena and work up the trail field, pointing the proper places, until she reaches the last and most important point at the foot of the throne."

"But, what does the dog point?" asked Herb, scanning the arena.

Al laughed indulgently. "Oh, they're easy to recognize. I'll point them out to you. See the statue of George Washington in a rowboat?"

"Yes," answered Herb.

"Well, under his hat a grouse is hidden and the dog must come to a firm stand and a definite point at this first stake. Next comes a statue of Abe Lincoln splitting a rail which has a parrot hidden under it. On down the field, there is a tract home which has a turkey hidden in it and just behind it, and to the far right, is the First National Bank where a snipe is concealed. Over on the other side, sitting practically on the fence, is a model church. I don't know how they managed it, but inside, the boys have stuffed a big fat goose. Just under the throne, dead-center of everything, is the model factory. Do you see it?"

"Yeah, you mean the one with the big flag on top of it?" replied Herb.

"That's it. Well, just under the flag is the President's office and inside of that, they have a dove trapped. The dog must approach this straight on, or possibly from the far right. Under no circumstance may he come to a point on its left. This is the toughest of all because it's awfully hard for a pointer to know right from left."

"Oh yes," replied Herb. "I read something about that. When you breed for pointing, you breed out intelligence and . . ."

"Shh," said Al. "There goes Kiss-em Kate down the trial field."

The two men fell silent, watching the dog work her way through the obstacles. Tense but subdued "Ohs" and "Ahs" followed Kiss-em Kate down the field as she pointed every stop with flawless style. At the finish, Kiss-em Kate whipped around the left of the factory with a professional flourish and came to a solid, unflinching freeze on the right side of the factory. Every man and dog leaped to their feet, shaking the Palace with their cheers.

The judge called the assembly to order, announcing, "We must get on with the next contestant. Will Old Rover take the field, please?" All eyes turned to the new pointer in the arena.

"What do you think of this dog?" asked Herb.

Al studied for a moment. "I really don't know. In the past, he's acted peculiar at times. He gives you the feeling that he would like to break point, and he seems to halt just a little at commands. Let's watch him and see."

"Heel!" commanded the man. Rover came obediently to the rear of his trainer. "Advance, Heel, Advance, Heel." But at the second 'Heel' command, Old Rover stopped. The crowd stirred nervously. Old Rover had just the hint of a snarl, one fang jutted beneath his upper lip. His trainer looked nervous. "Belly-down," he called. Old Rover went down slowly, a second fang unsheathing itself. "Roll over, Rover," shouted his trainer. Old Rover's front lip began to curl. "Roll over, Rover," screamed the trainer. "Roll over, I say." He yelled again, but the dog would not budge. The man drew back his foot and aimed his toe at Rover's behind. When his toe reached the spot, Rover and his behind were gone.

Rover tore at break-neck speed across the field. He bowled headlong into the First National Bank. As he turned a flip and slid to a halt, a spectator tried to grab his collar. Rover snapped at his hand and raced for the other side of the arena where two other men tried to stop him. As he dodged away from them, he smashed into the church, causing the goose to squawk loudly. Men from the gallery joined the chase in the arena.

"Please clear the floor," ordered the judge over the P.A. "Clear the floor, clear the floor. Let the dog calm down, please."

The men halted their chase and walked back to their seats. Old Rover stood out in front of the throne, sniffing the ground before him. He began to move slowly toward the little factory with the flag on top. Herb looked at Al. "Do you think Old Rover is going to come to a point at last?" he asked, his voice saturated with emotion.

"He's a bad dog," said Al. "I don't think he will. He's too stubborn."

"But Al," protested Herb, "look at him, he's smelling the factory. Yes! Yes! Old Rover *is* going to point; see—he's freezing."

"That's the damndest point I ever saw," said Al. "Look! His head's clear past the factory, he's standing on the left side, and he's not pointing at the factory at all; he's looking up at the throne."

"No, no, he's pointing," shouted Herb. "See, there goes his leg into the air. *Isn't* that purty?"

"Purty! Hell, man, don't you see which leg he's . . . God a-mighty! He's not pointing. . . ."

"Oh no! no! . . ."

The assembly erupted with boos, cat-calls, and shouts: "Give him the Iron Key!" "Communist Dog!" "Take him away. . . ." Then Old Rover was caught and led out of the Palace by three men, two Doberman Pincers, and a bloodhound.

"That's the end of that dirty dog," said Al, with anger in his voice.

"Gee, that's too bad," replied Herb. "But like you say, dogs shouldn't be treated any different than humans."

"You're damned right," yelled Al.

As the two men were walking out of the Palace, Herb pointed to a man just in front of them. "Isn't that the owner of Old Rover?"

"Yeah, I believe you're right; it is, sure enough—the scum!"

At this moment, a voice from the P.A. system rang out through the Palace. "Attention, please. Attention, please. Will the owner of Old Rover come to the front office and turn in his badge and ration of dog biscuits. I repeat, will . . ."

Herb and Al were now quite close to Rover's owner. He had his badge in his hand and was looking at a picture of a dog which had the inscription "Old Rover" beneath it. The owner shook his head sadly at the picture and said, "Old Rover, why didn't you roll over?"

## XX

GARY BENNETT

The dollar

Is our medium of exchange  
The worthless paper certificate  
Is backed by a gold reserve.  
Someone could steal this gold.  
Maybe it would be better to use  
Something less valuable than  
Gold—  
Like Chinese children.

# An Introduction to Jazz

BILLY JONES

George Gershwin once wrote: "Jazz I regard as an American folkmusic . . . a very powerful one, which is probably in the blood and feeling of the American people more than any other style of folkmusic." This great composer's words have been borne out and confirmed in countless ways. Listen to our popular music, our modern "classical" composers, our native opera, the radio, television and motion pictures, and you will hear the influence of jazz.

It would be difficult to deny that jazz, in the little more than fifty years of its life, has, more than any other form of music, been a vital and exciting musical expression of the restless and dynamic world in which we live. More than that, people are rapidly coming to realize that this is an honest and sometimes even great music. But this realization has been relatively recent.

It was on May 21, 1938, that a fifty-three year old New Orleans-born musician sat down at a piano in the Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C. Over a period of five weeks, the man, self-assured yet slightly bitter, spun out in spoken words and songs the story of his life. What emerged was one of the most fascinating and remarkable documentaries in all the history of music. The musician's name was Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton, a composer, pianist, and bandleader then virtually forgotten, except by a handful of record-collectors. Morton died, still forgotten, in 1951, but those Library of Congress recordings lived on, because the setting down of the saga of "Mr. Jelly Roll" was the first official recognition that had been accorded this American art by Americans.

Transcending the limitations of traditional folk forms, jazz came into the world of art as a thing unto itself. Improvisational and spontaneous in character, jazz was originally created by musically illiterate men who looked upon their often home-made instruments as extensions of themselves. These men had something new to say musically and they said it in new and exciting ways. Their music was an essential part of their lives, and was born in the cotton fields, on the road gangs, on levees and in tent churches. It was nurtured in the brothels, dancing halls, funerals and street parades of New Orleans. From these earthy beginnings, jazz emerged, combining, as did the United States itself, many strains and cultural influences. To illustrate, I have a definition of jazz, arrived at a few years ago by a group of leading critics and musicians: "Jazz," they stated, "is an improvisational American music, utilizing European melody, Euro-African harmony, and African rhythm." This, like many one-sentence definitions, is an oversimplification. Certainly there are jazz scholars who will point out the West Indies and Asia as prominent influences on jazz, and they will be right, for jazz is an amalgam of cultural experiences.

A British musician, Constant Lambert, once said that during the short history of jazz, those who have been most critical of it either had little or no direct knowledge of the subject, or were talking about something else altogether. It is this latter group that is still in the majority. Far too long has jazz been mistaken for the commercialized popular music heard on the radio and on the jukeboxes. It is, however, an easy mistake to make, for there is a tremendous amount of pseudo-jazz on the market today.

Another original definition of jazz is simply, "Collective musical improvisations"; improvisations on any kind of music. Ephemeral as it may sound, improvisation is the soul of jazz; but if we accept the fact that improvisation is, after all, a form of composition, we have a basis on which to formulate a realistic approach to this



unique music. A good jazz performance is never repeated in exactly the same way. Solos are personalized inimitably by the musician, and, therefore, cannot be written down in the manner in which formal music is notated. The jazz musician is able to improvise spontaneously and creatively, utilizing a flexible and informal language, firmly based on a steady, driving rhythm.

Many schools, styles and forms of jazz have evolved in its colorful life, and many geniuses and "immortals" have emerged to enrich the music and offer inspiration to young musicians. Labels are often misleading, but it is easy to follow the path of jazz history by tracing these various styles that have been developed since its birth late in the nineteenth century.

Instrumental jazz is generally acknowledged to have started in New Orleans at the turn of the century. It was there that hymn tunes, marches and Creole songs were fused into the pulsating polyrhythmic-polyphonic band music that is known as New Orleans style. It was this cosmopolitan and musically vital city that produced men like Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, Kid Ory and King Oliver.

Jazz moved up the Mississippi River at about the time of World War I and settled a while on the West Side of Chicago, giving aspiring young musicians the opportunity of hearing the New Orleans giants. These youngsters—Mugsy Spanier, Benny Goodman, Bix Beiderbecke, Eddie Condon and Gene Krupa—took their cues from Armstrong and Oliver, but created their own way of playing. Only subtly different from the parent style, the music these artists played was called Chicago Style Dixieland.

The next major development in jazz was the formation of the large orchestras. Fletcher Henderson and the McKinney aggregation set the pattern for arranged big band jazz, which was followed in the late "thirties" by the highly successful orchestras of Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, Chick Webb, Jimmy Lunceford and other groups of the swing era.

Swing, a highly commercialized dance music, was the closest that jazz ever came to popular music; yet the swing era, although it produced a large amount of pseudo-jazz, did bring "hot" music to a greater audience than ever before in jazz history. With the coming of World War II, and the tamed "Sweet Swing" of Glen Miller, came the end of this era—simultaneously, though, another was beginning.

Jazz began to move in new directions. Young musicians, restless and searching, became determined to extend the range of expression of jazz. Some of them, trained in the best schools and conservatories both here and abroad, began to experiment with new harmonies and rhythms (Robert Graettinger, Sauter-Finegan, Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton). They were inspired by such modern concert composers as Stravinsky, Milhaud, Cowell and Riegger. The pioneers of the new jazz movement were intent upon proving that their music was not merely a primitive expression of emotion. Musicians like Dizzy Gillespie, Charley Parker, Thelonious Monk, Kenny Clarke and Lennie Tristano demonstrated that jazz could have form, intellect and profundity. The brilliant modern jazz pianist, Dave Brubeck, characterizes the present state of jazz as a challenge for the new generation of musicians. "The challenge," he declares, "is to improvise a known theme, using with taste the most advanced ideas of our times without losing the drive and rhythmic complexity of early jazz." Like other radical breaks, this new movement had its share of fanaticism, exhibitionism and faddism, but the immature attention-getting devices of artistic rebellion soon passed away.

Appearing on the scene simultaneously, with the exponents of the new or "cool" jazz, were the revivalists. This is the movement, an extensive movement it is indeed, made up principally of young musicians attempting to recreate the spirit and excitement generated by the early New Orleans bands. Emulating the style and

even occasionally the exact instrumentation of the great bands of the "Golden Era" of jazz, this group of enthusiasts has a large and sometimes violently partisan following.

Amazingly enough, all the styles of jazz are alive and active today, and an ever-growing audience acknowledges jazz as *the* American music. The interest in jazz has manifested itself in an increasing amount of recording activity, in the re-issuing of almost forgotten jazz masterpieces, and by appearances of jazz musicians on the stage of every major concert hall in the country. A whole body of literature, critical, historical, technical and fictional, has come into being. Conservative national magazines feature jazz personalities in their pages and on their covers; motion pictures (*Man with the Golden Arm*, *Anatomy of a Murder*, *I Want To Live*) and television serials (*Peter Gunn*, *Richard Diamond*, *Tightrope*) employ jazz scores for their music backgrounds. Colleges and universities now have jazz courses offered in their curricula, the leader of this group being North Texas State College of Denton, Texas, where a Bachelor's Degree in jazz may be obtained.

# The Hawk

KEITH PETERS

The hawk rises on curved wings  
Feather fans sweep the air and  
Height is dizzy, even from here below.

Now the master of flight hesitates  
To view the parts as a whole  
And to separate the parts from the whole.  
Wings rippling on the wind  
Effortless flight fed by currents  
Leading to nowhere. Then the fans  
Fold and the body plummets toward earth  
Like a stone, hard and cold.

Down below, with me, a field mouse  
Scurries from mountain to plunging valley  
Of the dark and furrowed ground.  
Searching for grain—a part of the whole  
He is servant of his element  
Many above depend on him as part to the whole.

A shadow, a blur of feathers, and  
The mouse suspended between curved steel talons—  
Like a thought, warm and trapped.

I watch and wonder at the waste of  
Nature's battle-playground, scythe in hand  
The sound of a nearby gun thuds my ear.  
The rising hawk falters and drops its prize  
And as I scramble to cut my master's grain  
My foot crushes a mound of soil and straw.



## The Hunt

KEITH PETERS

We were strong, fast, and full of breath  
Eager for the chase, mocking the beast  
Who was all things—having both life and death  
We closed the gap—savoring the thought of feast.

Many living and dead things blocked our way  
A tangle of twisted briar  
Enfolding a tablet of crumbling clay  
Tugged at us, thorns lancing fire.

Thirsty leeches pulled life from us  
Hungry predators maimed and killed among us  
Our number lessened—still we fought on  
Knowing the value of the beast if won.

But the beast was agile and eluded us  
The thought of encounter and prize deluded us  
Half mad, we struggled to lengthen our pace  
If not to capture the thing, to glimpse its face.

We slowed, paused, fatigue softening bones  
Our hands shook, a mantle of gray to remind us  
Of our chase. Brush crackled, amid despairing groans  
We turned, and fell before the beast behind us.

# The Leprechaun from Sirilius Seven

ROBERT M. HEPBURN

If it were not for the fact that Sauran Alph had green skin, pointed ears, slanting reptilian eyes, and a mouth that leered constantly like a well-fed and somnambulant crocodile, he might have passed for a human being; but he was only four feet tall and naked, if one ignored his scales, and he didn't stand a chance. Not that Sauran Alph would have given two hoots about passing for a human being—he was too proud for that—but it might have helped his mission if he had been a little more careful about his appearance.

Sauran Alph had a mission. It consisted of his scouting the solar system marked XRy2 on the star maps of Sirilius Seven, his home planet, and reporting back on the feasibility of establishing colonies on any of the planets of that system, should any mammalian types suitable for canning and export to the mother planet be discovered.

Sirilius Seven was facing a severe crisis. The big planet was overpopulated and food resources were so diminished that cannibalism was being practiced in some of the more depressed areas, and reptile devouring reptile had been unheard of on Sirilius Seven for almost seven thousand years.

A special meeting of the Sirilian world government had resulted in a crash program of galactic exploration. Single-place scoutships had been dispatched to all points of the galaxy, and giant transport and canning ships were being fitted out and held in readiness for their return. Already a small planet in the Cygnet system was sending back small amounts of canned bipedal anthropoids, but the climate was uncongenial for the sensitive Sirilian temperament and very few emigrated to the new planet. The Sirilian religion made it impossible for them to artificially curb the population growth, so it went right on growing at an ever-increasing rate. New food resources, new colonies simply had to be found.

2.735 Sirilian light years from home, Sauran Alph found himself circling a medium-sized planet which he had chosen for his first land-fall because of its greenish color, so much like the planet he called home. The planet was inhabited, whether by mammalian types or reptiles he would not be able to determine until after he had made contact. He decided to land on a small green island near a larger continental mass in the northern hemisphere of the planet. It was fortunate for the inhabitants of the planet Earth that he decided to land where he did. He landed at night in Killiecrankie Bog, near Castle Killiecrankie, County Clare, Ireland, on the 12th of September, 1959.

The scoutship touched hard bottom at twenty-two feet, and Sauran Alph stabilized the ship in position before clambering out of the airlock and slithering to the surface. He sniffed the air appreciatively and climbed onto firmer ground, satisfied that the tiny odor capsules which he had expelled near the escape hatch would guide him safely back to the ship. The customary dank smell of decay that pervaded the bog was now augmented by a richer, unearthly, more noisome odor, a mixture of putrefaction and musk, of polecat and amberggris, of Silurian ooze and wild poppies, of rotten eggs and dead cats—an odor that defied concise description—an odor that smelled worse than death itself—an odor that was literally from out of this world. At any rate, it satisfied the Sirilian, and he proceeded through the

bog in the direction of the few scattered lights that marked the houses of the tiny village of Killiecrankie, nestled a few hundred yards below the castle hill. The old stone castle showed one tiny gleam of light in one of the lower rooms. The rest of the castle was a bulky, black silhouette against the moonlit sky.

As Sauran Alph approached the castle, a dark form rushed out of the shadows and drew near, barking as it came. Sauran Alph came to a stop and allowed the animal to sniff suspiciously at his scaly feet, then leaned over and sank his fangs into the furry creature's neck. The animal whimpered once, stiffened suddenly, and then fell to the ground in agony. When it had ceased struggling, Sauran Alph dragged the body, which was of an obviously inferior meat quality, behind some bushes and then proceeded stealthily on his way. As he approached a rosily illuminated square of window, he could hear a high-pitched, pleasant, musical sound coming from within. The translator and speech-maker device, buried surgically in his thoracic cavity and hooked up to his central nervous system, told him instantaneously that the sound was a lullaby. Edging closer to the window, he pulled himself up to the edge of the sill and peered inside.

A female bipedal mammal of a type similar in structure to those few remaining on his home planet was rocking back and forth in a comfortable chair crooning to a young mammal of the same species nestled in her arms. A huge iron pot was suspended over an open fireplace and the lid pulsed up and down as the savory contents boiled away. Sauran Alph's darting red tongue curled outside his partly open jaws at the sight, not of the iron pot, but of the tender-looking and plump young mammal in the mother's arms. One of its tiny arms was raised to its mother's neck, and the delicate young fingers were fondling a silvery brooch which fastened her simple white blouse at the neck. There were no other occupants in the room.

Sauran Alph could contain himself no longer. He lowered himself to the ground and rushed over to a heavy door set in the thick stone wall of the castle which seemed to give ingress to the lighted room, intending to burst in and satisfy his hunger pangs—not that he hadn't had sufficient to eat during his interstellar trip, but high-concentration energy extracts and pills are poor substitutes for the real thing. The door was unlocked.

Big, red-haired Michael O'Gonigle, caretaker of Castle Killiecrankie, carefully extinguished his kerosene lantern after completing his evening inspection tour of the sprawling fifty-four room castle, which was vacant while an heir was being sought for it who would be willing to pay the enormous expenses for living in it, and set it down carefully on top of the locker in the anteroom of the apartment which he and his dark-haired young wife shared with his infant son, Timothy. He tested the air some six feet, four inches above the floor.

"Bafe stew," he said reverently, rolling his eyes ecstatically toward the ceiling and patting the region of his stomach with his spade-like hands. "An' who can make bafe stew like Kathleen O'Gonigle?" He opened the door which opened directly to the combination kitchen-dining room at the same time that his wife screamed. The smile of anticipation on his craggy, pleasantly-ugly features froze in astonishment at the sight before his eyes. The front door of the apartment was wide open and a little green man was running across the intervening space between the door and the family hearth, around which were clustered the rocking chair, containing his wife and son, and the family stew pot on the hearth itself.

"By the bones of St. Patrick!" Michael roared. "'Tis a leprechaun! Don't be takin' yer eyes off him, Kathleen," he added, springing into the middle of the room, "until I have him by the ear!" Saying which, he immediately implemented the words with corresponding action and had the invader from Sirilius Seven firmly by



the sensitive membranous tissue of his left ear. "Got him! I have the little devil, Kathleen!" he roared gleefully.

The room was in a turmoil for several seconds. The rocking chair had been overturned when Kathleen had sprung up from it at first sight of Sauran Alph in full charge, and little Timothy O'Gonigle was bawling his lungs out in understandable confusion at all the uproar. "Oh, Michael O'Gonigle, 'tis glad I am to see you," Kathleen sobbed. "That little monster was comin' for my baby. I'm sure of it. I don't know what he'd have done if you hadn't come when you did!"

"Now what would the little devil be wantin' with our little Timothy, Kathleen? Can't ye see he was likely afther our bafe stew? . . . Hould still, ye little devil! . . . Now why don't ye rin down to the village an' fetch all of the menfolk ye can rouse. Tell them I have a leprechaun by the ear that can make us all rich men if they hurry," Michael said.

"He doesn't look like any leprechaun to me, Michael O'Gonigle. He looks more like the devil's own kind, if ye ask me."

"Shoosh, shoosh, colleen. Ye're upset with all the excitement, an' who wouldn't be? There's nothin' to be afeared of. Take Timothy with ye if ye like, but hurry now!"

"Do ye think I'd be leavin' our son here with the likes of that, Michael O'Gonigle?" she sniffed. She lit the storm lantern, wrapped a shawl around a much quieter Timothy, put her coat on for "dacency's sake," and stalked out of the door, clutching her baby tightly to her breast as she went.

All this time, save for a sibilant but almost inaudible hissing through his tightly clenched jaws, Sauran Alph found it judicious to maintain silence. The constant, nagging pain from his sensitive ear was almost more than he could bear, but each time that he contrived to twist his head around to bite the Irishman, the increased pain that such a move engendered forced him to desist. He had been captured by a lowly mammal, and an insane one at that. What could he mean by saying that he, Sauran Alph, could make them rich? Who did he think he was? What kind of a creature was a leprechaun that it could make these mammals rich? Was it friend or foe to these creatures? Was it a super-mammal? Super-reptile? Was it benevolent toward these mammals? He shuddered at the thought and its implications. What if it were more powerful than he?

For the past few minutes his captor had been studying him carefully from head to foot, but maintaining a firm hold of his ear all the time. "Ye're an ugly little crature, leprechaun, an' it's no wonder ye don't show yerself more than ye do. I'd hide meself, with a face like that," O'Gonigle said, not unkindly. Sauran Alph hissed at O'Gonigle's words but otherwise remained silent. If there is anything a Sirilian doesn't have, it's a sense of humor, and he itched to sink his fangs into the big mammal's throat.

"Shore, now, an' ye musn't take me words for gospel, leprechaun. I suppose among yer own kind ye're a handsome enough devil. It's jist that there's somethin' about ye that makes me think of a snake or some sich reptile, but faith there's no grounds for thinkin' that of ye. There hasn't been a snake or like crature in Ireland for hundreds of years. Ye can't be related."

Sauran Alph's pride wavered at last and he found it judicious to break his silence and speak to this lowly mammal, if only to satisfy his curiosity. "Reptiles?" he hissed. "You say there are none here, Earthman?"

"Faith, an' ye've decided to use yer tongue, have ye, leprechaun? Do ye have a cold or somethin'? Ye sound porely."

"You have not answered my question. I will not answer any of yours until you have answered mine," said Sauran Alph.

"'Tis a fair enough proposition, since I'll be havin' occasion to ask ye a sensitive kind of question in reference to a certain pot that maybe ye know the whereabouts of. Of course ye know there are no snakes in Ireland, an' niver have been since the good St. Patrick drove them all out. They say, ever since, that any reptile of the kind foolish enough to bite an Irishman will perish itself; but, surely, 'tis a strange sort of question comin' from the likes of yerself, a leprechaun. Is it a stranger ye are to these parts, from Dublin maybe?" O'Gonigle asked.

The conversation was interrupted by a general hub-bub of excited voices coming up the path from the village, and presently a stream of excited villagers bearing lanterns and lights of all descriptions poured into the O'Gonigles' apartment.

"Bless me soul, if it isn't the truth she was tellin' us—a leprechaun—in the flesh!" exclaimed Rory Muldoon, the red-faced tavern owner.

"An' a green one at that!" said Finian McDonal, the brawny village blacksmith.

"An' whit ither color d'ye expect, ye overgrown blatherskite!" said Sean McAninch, the stocky carpenter.

"Has it spoken to ye at all, Michael O'Gonigle, about the gold, I mean?" asked Aloysius McNamara, the little tailor.

"Don't crowd so close, ye blitherin' idiots!" O'Gonigle shouted. "D'ye want me to lose me grip on the little devil's ear? No, we haven't raised the question of the gold yet; an' we won't till ye stop this crowding an' palaverin'. Move back, I say!"

The dozen or so excited men moved back and stood in a wider circle about captor and captive and maintained a reasonable silence as they peered in awe at the diminutive green creature from Sirilius Seven.

"Where's Kathleen an' the baby?" O'Gonigle asked, peering around the room.

"At my place, Michael. She said she wouldn't take another step in this place until that little green fellow had gone," said Alexander Donnaughy, the fish merchant. "An' besides that, my Clara wouldn't let me step outside the door unless Kathleen agreed to stay an' keep her company."

"Fine. Fine, Alexander. 'Tis maybe just as well. Now let us get down to the business at hand, leprechaun," Michael O'Gonigle said.

A very frustrated Sauran Alph stood in the middle of the group of excited men. A dozen times the opportunity had offered itself to sink his fangs into an Irishman's flesh, but he had thought better of it when he thought of the possible consequences to himself. How had those other reptiles, those "snakes" as they had been called, died? Had they curled up and died at once, or had they lingered on in unspeakable agony? Who was this "St. Patrick" that O'Gonigle had spoken about? Was he one of the creatures that he, Sauran Alph, was supposed to be, a leprechaun? What did they really look like? Obviously they looked somewhat like himself; the actions of his captors proved that. Sauran Alph gave up. The best thing for him to do was to bide his time and escape to the spaceship at the first opportunity.

"Well, leprechaun," said O'Gonigle, pressing Sauran Alph's ear in what was intended to be an affectionate manner, but which caused the latter to wince audibly, "'tis a well-known fact that all leprechauns have a considerable amount of treasure hidden away in places best known to themselves, usually in an old iron pot, and usually one filled to the brim with gold coins or the like. 'Tis also a well-known fact that leprechauns have little use for the gold themselves, bein' creatures that lack for nothin' in this world that they might want, an' no need for such a triflin' thing like gold to get it. Now, my proposition is this: you lead us to your pot of gold, and we'll be settin' ye free again. What d'ye say?"

Sauran Alph sucked in a deep breath. These leprechauns must be super-entities, else why would they desire to *play* with these lower mammalian types? If these leprechauns had no need for precious trinkets, which he supposed these gold coins

to be, then why didn't they just hand them over to these mammals and tell them to leave them alone? The whole idea disturbed him, but he forced himself to think over the big Irishman's proposition. This was his way out, of course, his means of escaping this accursed planet! All he had to do was agree to lead them to a pot of gold, take them to the bog where his spaceship lay hidden, say that the gold was hidden at the bottom of the bog, dive in, climb into his scouter, and blast off! It was almost too easy. "I will take you to the gold," he promised, quivering slightly, partly at the thought of his freedom, partly because O'Gonigle was pinching down on his ear in his excitement.

"Hurrah!" There came a chorus of wild cheering from the gold seekers and if his ear hadn't been so firmly anchored to O'Gonigle's fingers, he would have been hoisted onto the group's shoulders.

"Git back! Git back, ye brainless bunch of hares! Do ye want the little div—gentleman to get away? Where do we go from here, leprechaun?"

"To the bog at the foot of the hill," said Sauran Alph.

"To the bog, boys! To the bog!" said Michael O'Gonigle.

"Lead on, leprechaun!" McAninch shouted, waving his lantern recklessly in the air.

As the curious lantern-lit procession wound in single file down the hill and approached Killiecrankie Bog, the excited whisperings and exclamations of the men gradually ceased and were replaced by a curious snuffling sound from Sauran Alph and tentative and somewhat sceptical sniffings from the Irishmen.

"Whit in hiven's name is it?" someone spat.

"Lord bless us, an' is that a smell or a taste?"

"The closer we come, the worse it is!"

"Niver have I known Killiecrankie Bog to stink like this before. 'Tis the worst thing I have smelt in me life!"

"Ochone, 'tis more than a man can stand—enough to make me pore old mother turn over in her grave, I tell you!"

"That's it! That's it! Maybe that's the cause of it all, O'Rafferty. I've always thought the churchyard was too close to the bog. 'Tis an unsanitary situashun, I tell ye, a turrible thing."

"Oh, shut yer prattlin' big mouth, McNamara, an' let the honored dead slape in pace! Another word like that about me pore old mother an' I'll sink ye in the bog—an' that's a promise!"

"No offense, O'Rafferty. No offense. I was marelly tryin' to be scientific about the whole thing. No offense."

"Hush, now, you two! Will ye listen to the little fellow? He sounds for all the world like a bloodhound on the trail. D'ye suppose he's smellin' the gold?"

The further they went into the bog, the stronger the smell; the stronger the smell, the louder the snuffling from Sauran Alph; the louder the snuffling from Sauran Alph, the faster he seemed to go; the faster he seemed to go, the more firmly Michael O'Gonigle held on to his ear; and the more firmly that Michael O'Gonigle held on to that ear, the more certain was Sauran Alph that he wanted it free. Never in his whole life had he been so outrageously humiliated.

"Slow the little divil down, Mike! He's got us half up to our necks in this muck as it is!" Sean McFlaherty shouted from near the end of the procession.

Sauran Alph's delicate sense of smell had told him that they had reached the area where the odor was at its greatest intensity, and he and the Irishmen stood in a dripping circle around a muddy pool in the middle of the bog, their lanterns casting a ghastly yellow light on the ooze. "He says it's down there, boys," Michael

O'Gonigle said, taking his free hand away from his nose and pointing at the middle of the pool. "Shall I be lettin' him loose to get after it?"

"It appears to me," said Rory Muldoon, "that we have divilish little choice in the matter. Turn him loose, but lit ivery man keep his eyes on him, an' be ready to catch him by his little p'inted ears, the instant he tries to break out av the circle."

"He's right. Turn him loose, Michael O'Gonigle," said McNamara, and a chorus of assent came from the others in the circle.

"All right, leprechaun," said Michael to Sauran Alph, "I'm turnin' ye loose, but don't try to break away from either yer solemn promise to bring us the gold, or out av this circle." He shook Sauran Alph's ear, which had swelled up considerably, for emphasis and then pushed him gently into the pool.

"Look at him go there!" O'Rafferty shouted in admiration. "He's shamin' the very ducks in old Mother McNamara's pond!"

Sauran Alph felt like he was in his own element at last. He slithered and swam to the center of the quagmire and then slipped below the surface and dove for the bottom and the haven of his spaceship. His chemotactual senses told him that he should be near the escape hatch of his little vessel, and he reached exploratory hands to make contact with it. Nothing! He inched forward, downward, sideways, backwards, forward again, around the circumference of the pool, along the bottom, diagonally; and then he stopped inching and churned the water and mud until the surface of the pool seemed to boil and bubble like a witch's cauldron—but still no spaceship! He redoubled his efforts and checked the pool again. Nothing.

Just as suddenly as it had come, his panic disappeared. He relaxed somewhat, as best he could under the circumstances, and allowed himself to bob to the surface. He must be in the wrong pool. What with all the strain he had been under, it was a wonder he was in the right bog. "The spa- The gold is not here. It must be in another part of the bog," he informed the waiting Irishmen, and he offered no resistance as Michael O'Gonigle leaned over from firm ground and claimed his left ear again.

He led the procession in the direction which his nose told him was the right one, to a pool over to the east of his original attempt. There could be no mistaking the place this time. The unearthly smell was now stronger than it had been before, if that were possible; in fact all the Irishmen had tears streaming down their cheeks, and some had even gone so far as to take off their socks and wrap them around their faces, muffler fashion. But nothing seemed to help. Again, a circle of men and lanterns around the perimeter of the pool, and again Sauran Alph plunged into the mire, this time with more anxious excitement beating at his heart than before. This had to be the pool. It wasn't.

"'Tis the first time I ever heard of a leprechaun fergittin' where he left his gold," said a sceptical voice as Sauran Alph bobbed to the surface for the second time. "Are ye sure, Michael, that the little divil isn't tryin' to trick us all?" said Rory Muldoon.

"Faith, an' if he is, he's puttin' himself to a divilish deal of work," answered O'Gonigle. "Look at the look on his face. I truly belave the little leprechaun has honestly forgotten where he put it. Have patience, me boys. Give the little green fellow his chance."

And so Sauran Alph tried in another spot, and then another, and another after that, until the morale and the patience of the Irishmen were at a low ebb. Sauran Alph was more than merely discouraged and demoralized. He was thoroughly frightened. Something was unquestionably wrong. His mission had been tampered with and he felt that someone or something was playing with his destiny. His spaceship had been either moved or deliberately lost. He had left the odor pellets

at only one place, yet all the quagmires smelled like the right one. But who or what was the agency behind all this trickery? Certainly not these gold-seeking mammals; the disappointment on their faces was only too real each time he came up from the mire empty-handed, but who? Sauran Alph's mind balked at the answer and he put his thoughts aside and went on seeking with the abandonment of the damned.

Finally, when the pink light of dawn was beginning to peep over the hills of County Clare, Sauran Alph dove into the most unlikely pool in the bog and pulled his exhausted body into the airlock of his misplaced vessel. He crawled into the control room, strapped his weary frame to the seat, punched the drive-control button and blew the little space craft clear of the clinging mud and headed for the stars. A very surprised and disappointed circle of Irishmen were blown off their feet and left with nothing but an unearthly smell, which clung to them for several weeks, as a reward for all their efforts.

Sauran Alph's troubles were far from over. When the scoutship had reached maximum velocity and the automatic computers had provided him with a tentative heading for the Sirilian solar system, he unfastened his seat harness and gulped down some tranquilizer pills, after which he settled himself down to write an abstract of his sojourn in the solar system, which he had just left so hurriedly, while his thoughts were still fresh in mind. He could have beamed the report on the ship's highly sensitive but powerful radio transmitter, but since he was traveling at near-light speeds himself he would arrive at his home planet at about the same time as any radioed report. After he wrote the abstract, he would have plenty of time to write a full-length and detailed report, but for the present he busied himself with the following, which he entered in the ship's log:

"Abundance of bipedal mammalian life of type externally similar to that on Sirilius Seven discovered on green, medium-sized planet of solar system XRY2 but unfit for use as food because of high toxicity factor of an unknown nature present in the bloodstream. Unable to obtain specimen because of mammalian invulnerability to venom, and because attempted injection would have proven suicidal to injector. A prolonged attempt to obtain a specimen made inadvisable because a super-mammalian, hostile type, called 'leprechaun' by the lesser mammals, in evidence. Lesser group of bipeds apparently under the protection of the super-group. These leprechauns are an unknown quantity but possess considerable power—may be more advanced than us in that respect. Suggest attempts be made to seal off that section of the galaxy containing solar system XRY2, and research instigated that will enable us to effectively combat any attempt that may be made to infiltrate our civilization by these leprechauns."

As Sauran Alph finished the abstract, he gazed mournfully at the double image of his face reflected on the normally translucent astrodome of the spaceship by the green instrument lights, and a thrill of utter horror passed through every fiber of his body. Only one of the faces was reflecting a true image of Sauran Alph; the other was wearing a cheerful smile, like an imp from the inferno, an enormous tile hat, and a green bow tie! That Sauran Alph was not alone on his journey to the stars was confirmed a moment later by a soft intonation, peculiar only to the inhabitants of the Emerald Isle, speaking in his throbbing ear. "Top av th' marnin' to ye, Sirilian. Since we have a divilish long ways to go an' a dridful spate of skulduggery to undo, would ye mind puttin' the wather on for a spot of tae?"

# The I.Q. Test

EARL GILMORE

I'm just an ordinary guy, you understand, with no claim to fame but . . . well, I'll tell you about that later. I never thought myself to be intellectual before, and it worries me how someone as dull as I could have thought of it. "It" is a story I wrote the other day. I felt a little depressed, so I tried to cheer myself up by writing something. As I was thinking about the story, suddenly the real meaning of life was revealed to me. It fit in very well with the plot, so I put it in. It was a wonderful feeling to know the Truth.

I suppose I didn't understand it very well. You see, I took the story in to one of my college professors (a brilliant man), and asked him to read it. He read it once, and started over it again. Suddenly he screamed twice, and slumped down in his chair. Dead!!!! The coroner said there was no cause for it . . . he just quit living.

But I guessed what had caused his death. It was my story. Somehow, the meaning of life had scared him so much that he died. He could see the real meaning behind it, but I couldn't. He had an I.Q. of 180; I had one of only 120. To test my theory, I took the story to another professor I knew (a brilliant man), and the same thing happened. Only he didn't scream. That same day I took it to four more members of the staff, and they all departed in some fashion or other. One, an atheist, died laughing. None of them could explain it to me before they went, though.

I felt no shame for what I had done, for all of them were looking for the meaning of life. I merely spared them the trouble. Still, I wasn't sure that I.Q. was the criteria for understanding the piece, so I took it to my faculty advisor. He read it twice and gave it back to me. Told me to work on it more, 'cause there isn't any message. No message. Hah!

This proved my story was written for a select group. Only extremely perceptive people can grasp the idea. I'm not really sure if I feel bad about not getting the meaning.

Now you want to know the story? Well, it's about this man who dreams that he is a butterfly (funny, huh?). On waking, he isn't sure if he was dreaming the butterfly or if the butterfly dreamed him. It worried him. He found others who had had the same experience, and they formed a society dedicated to find the answer. Among the members, there was a noted mathematician who believed that a transcendental equation was actually dreaming him. One day he ran into a meeting waving his arms and screaming. Here's the gist of what he said: "I have found that there are not only three dimensions, but six. The answer to our problem lies here, for it reduces us three-dimensional creatures into . . . . ."

I won't tell you the punch line, because I want you to finish this story. However, if you are very smart, and if you think long enough, you should find the answer. Don't let me know if you do.

Oh, yes . . . the complete story will be in next week's issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Somehow it got by the whole editorial staff without one fatality. If you know someone who is bright, have him read it. See for yourself.

As for me, I figure that after all the geniuses are gone I'll be considered a real brain. I always wanted to be intellectual. That's not all, either. When all the great authors are gone my story will become a classic. All the people will read it, including the kids . . . . .

# Steeple-Top

IMOGENE LAMB

Chalk, white, pinnacle of purity  
    spangled in the golden blood  
                    of sky,  
    sponges up the morning wound.

Solemn spire, sentinel of shadows  
    softens on the lap of night,  
                    creation  
    agile in miraging hour.

At dawn, at dark, I measure me  
    beside the slight, transcendent stone.  
                    I stretch;  
    my arms, and legs, and soul have grown.





# Absolution

IMOGENE LAMB

Clouds

hung about the necks  
of the mountains like fallen halos,  
and man staggered  
under his own.  
Stopping, at last,  
he slid  
the hoop  
down his body,  
stepped out of it,  
stretched—  
smiled,  
and strode on.

# There'll Be All Those Rich Guys and Things

LARRY PATTERSON

Homer patted the quivering shoulder of the mare and tossed the reins among the spikes of a green picket fence that separated a finely groomed lawn from the rest of the farm yard. He scanned the porch of the shaded frame house for some sign of Doris. After a moment, the outline of a white blouse appeared in the shadows of the doorway, then a face in a scarf, and white calves bared beneath rolled up blue-jeans. He walked to the gate.

"Hello, Homer," she said, dropping from the porch to the sidewalk in one step. "Molly looks like you've been running her."

He pushed the panel open for her. "Pasture's been making her fat."

Doris slipped through the gate and closed it, leaning back with her hands behind her. "Nice day," she said.

"Yah, I guess." He glanced at her, then raised one hand and started to pick at a callus. "How's everything with you?" he said.

"Fine," she said. "You?"

"Fine." He rubbed the hand on his sleeve and held it up for inspection. "Guess you'll be leaving for that college pretty quick."

"I guess so," she said. "I'm taking the noon bus from Washington."

"Figured you would," he said, glancing at her.

A gust of air swept across the barnyard, twisting a long tight roll of dust toward them. Doris touched the print scarf and tugged it over one of the pincurlers that clasped her hair close to her scalp in dense ringlets.

"I was kinda out exercising Molly, and figured I'd stop," he said finally. He waited for her to speak, but she simply stood against the gate looking at him. "Well, I wanted to say goodbye!"

"I wasn't so sure you'd be over at all," she said.

"How do you mean?"

"Well . . . last night, when we came home."

"I suppose I did get a little sore, didn't I?" He backed against the fence beside her.

"A little."

"You know I didn't mean all that," he said, tossing out his hand with a jerk. "Not even very much really, the way I said it."

"I wasn't so sure then," she said evenly.

Homer stared out across the barnyard, past a barbed wire fence, and into the pasture. Rolling grass slopes dropped gently away from the fence toward a narrow draw that ran diagonally to his line of vision. It wrinkled the pasture heavily, then flattened and disappeared beneath the cottonwoods of Salt Creek, several hundred yards to the south.

His eyes fell on a cluster of willows in the draw. "Let's take a walk," he said, pushing himself away from the pickets.

"We could talk here."

"You don't want to," he said.

Doris straightened up. "No, it's not that. But I have to leave for the bus before too awfully long, you know."

"I know," he said glumly.

"Well," she said, reflecting for a moment. "I *am* packed and everything. . . . All I have to do is dress and take the curlers out of my hair."

"I didn't mean for very long," he said. "Maybe kinda stroll down by the spring or something like that."

"I could ask Mama to call us when it's time. You wait!" And she was gone through the gate. With each step, her blouse pulled tightly across her back; and she kept her fingers against the scarf to hold it in place. Homer watched the doorway until she reappeared.

"She's going to yell at us pretty soon," Doris said. They walked across the barnyard to the pasture fence. Holding down the lowest strand of wire with his boot, he pulled the next one upward while she moved carefully through the barbs. He slid between the wires himself; then they started, single file, along the dusty cowpath that was cut in the grass and led to the spring.

"That college of yours takes up in three or four days, doesn't it?" Homer said.

"First classes are a week from today."

"Well, how come you have to take off so early? Seeing as how you won't be back till Christmas, I'd think you'd want to stay a day or two longer . . . with your folks and all."

"Homer, it's a real long trip and the catalogue says I'm supposed to register and get settled. Besides, I have to go through what they call 'orientation.'"

"I was just asking," he said.

The path cut through a bank of streaked clay that was deeply pitted by hoof marks made earlier in sticky mud, and now baked hard and ceramic-like.

"And then there's that boys' school there too. . . . What'd you say the name of it was, Dorry?"

"Fairlane," she said, testing her footing on the rough surface of the path.

"They probably date the girls from your school, don't they?"

"I suppose some of them do," she said.

"I'll bet a lot of rich guys go there with cars and a bunch of stuff like that." He stopped momentarily and stuck one thumb in his front pocket. "I'll bet they come a-roaring over where the girls stay and toot their horns and those girls come flocking down with their feathers flying, like a bunch of hens."

Doris turned, arms akimbo. "Homer, can you see me acting like that?"

"Well, I didn't say that; but I'll bet there's plenty who do."

A clod in the path crumbled under her foot as she took a step, and her ankle turned sharply.

"They probably wear their hair plastered down and dress in fancy suits all the time. I suppose they have to . . ."

"Homer Jandrea!" she said, her lower lip rounding. "I just turned my ankle! Are *you* going to help me or should I crawl the rest of the way?"

His ears flushed pink. "Guess I didn't see," he said. Lightly putting his arm around her waist, he took her hand. "Is it sprained?"

"No, it's just twisted a little," she said. "But the way you were carrying on, I thought maybe you'd just let me stand there on one foot all afternoon."

"I just didn't notice right away." He gingerly helped her balance herself while she tried the ankle.

"That's kinda the way you got last night, you know," she said as she put her

arm around his shoulder and started to hobble forward. "I would try and explain it all; and then 'boom,' you were shouting."

He walked along beside the path, supporting her and taking high steps through the buffalo grass that tugged at his boots. "Now you really couldn't say I was shouting," he said. "I just got a little carried away."

"No, you were shouting," she said. "Not real loud, I guess; but you were *definitely* shouting."

Before them in the draw stood a circle of willows that ringed a pond covering an area about the size of a barn. There was a raw dirt levee built across the draw at the lower end. A frog sprang from the bank, sending faint ripples expanding across the still, muddy water.

"Supposing I did get a little noisy," he said as they turned toward the head of the pond. "I mean maybe I shouldn't of, but I did have some reason."

"If you had let me explain before you started shouting, there might not of been any reason," she said.

"You gave my class ring back sure enough," he said, shaking his hand before him in frustration. "You took it off and stuck it in my hand like it was a piece of dirt or something! 'Here, Homer, take your ring'—nothing else—just 'take back your ring.'"

"Homer," she said. "I was *trying* to tell you, but you just scooched down under the steering wheel and glared. So then I tried to say something again, and you jumped up and hollered and threw it out the window."

"Well, I was surprised," he grumbled.

"Surprised! Homer Jandrea, you used words I have *never* heard you use. You said 'damn' and 'hell' and some others that really weren't very nice at all!"

"Well, maybe I shouldn't have used those," he said. "But I didn't cuss right at you, did I?"

"Not really, I guess," she said, slowly. "But you were definitely cussing."

"Heck! What could I have done?"

"You could have listened a minute," she said.

As they passed along the willows, flies buzzed around small stagnant pools formed by hoofprints beside the water's edge. Doris sat down on the edge of a wide sandstone rock that jutted out just over the water at the head of the pond. From a hollow beneath it, a clear rivulet of water issued up through a tangle of fine roots and spilled down, causing tiny eddies in the clay-colored surface. Homer picked up a small chunk of dirt, then dropped down beside her.

"Dorry," he began, hesitantly. "Really, why do your folks think like that . . . I mean, why do they want us to break up?"

"You can't honestly call it breaking up, Homer," she said. "They just thought that I ought to give it back, since I won't be home again till Christmas."

"I don't see the difference," he growled. "When you give somebody's ring back it means you're through . . . nothing but through." The chunk of dirt shot out over the pond, broke in mid-air, and rattled softly on the water.

"They just think I ought to be freer to mix with the kids at college, and . . . well, you know."

"You still could've kept it," he said. "Put it in a box or something."

"I couldn't lie to my folks," she said, leaning forward.

"You wouldn't have to lie. Just put it . . ."

"But that would be almost the same."

"I suppose so," he said, drawing up his knees and hunching his shoulders in despair. They sat quietly for a moment.

"Anyway, did you go back and find it?" she said finally.

"Yeah," he said, staring sheepishly at the water. After a moment, he got up and dusted the seat of his pants. "Dorry, can I ask you something?"

"Sure."

"Well," he began slowly. "I wondered if that wasn't kinda what you might of thought you wanted to do; I mean give the ring back."

She looked at him and her lips tightened. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, I'm not sure. I just kinda felt . . . Well, maybe not."

She leaned back on her hands. "Homer, you know it wasn't my idea." Then, with hesitation, she added, "But the folks do kinda have a point." He glanced at her, and his mouth bent downward at the corners. "You wouldn't want to stay around a room while other kids are going out either."

"I know," he said flatly.

"It doesn't have to completely change things. I'm coming back at Christmas."

"Four months," he said.

"But I *am* coming back."

He stared gloomily at the ground. "It'll never be the same. You'll meet one of those rich guys, and that'll be all."

"Of course I'll meet people, but it isn't fair to say a thing like that."

"But it could happen, couldn't it?" he said. "I wish I was rich."

"Why, you talk like all I think about is money!" she said sharply.

"Maybe I'll go off to Omaha and work," he growled.

"Well, I judge people by other things, not just money," she said.

". . . or Wichita, like Chuck did."

"Homer Jandrea! You're not listening to me!"

"I am too. Go ahead."

"I was *saying* that other things count besides money."

"Could be," he said.

A warm puff of breeze passed around them which caused the willows to quiver and scrape against one another.

"I could start drinking," he said.

She didn't answer.

"Well why not?" he said, thinly.

"Because you won't."

"A lot of other people do it!"

"Well, you won't."

"You never know, I just might."

The breeze had passed, and the boughs hung quietly once more.

"Homer," she said, "you're acting like the world is going to end. Sure I feel sorry about it too, but I also want to go to school; and it won't be as bad as all that. You'll see."

"Nuts!"

"No lie, I really will miss you."

"Dorry," he said. "I used to think maybe sometime I could rent a place and get started and then maybe . . . Oh, I don't know."

"You never can tell, Homer," she said. "Something like that could still happen."

"Fat chance!" he muttered. "I'll probably end up an old bachelor, like Harry Hasko. You know, he had a girl one time that died of typhoid. Just goes to show you."

"Show you what?" she asked, tugging at a corner of her scarf.

"I mean, it just goes to show you."

"I'm not going to die from typhoid or anything else," she said. "And neither are you."

"No, you're just leaving; going away." He let himself down on the rock, and his shoulders sagged.

"Homer, you just mustn't feel this way about it."

"Nuts!" His heel dug through a patch of pale moss at the base of the rock.

A shrill voice pierced the draw where they sat. "Do-o-oris, it's time to go now."

"Maybe I'll go off somewhere," he said.

"I thought you were going to work for Jackson this fall."

"I'd probably get too restless."

"Where would you go?"

"Oh, Omaha, Kansas City, Timbuctoo."

"We better start back," she said.

"I suppose so." He let out a long slow breath.

"Well, you'll be here at Christmas," she said.

"Will you?" he said.

"Sure."

The draw was still, and only the hushed tones of the spring hung in the air. "We better go," she said. "I can't be late."

"Yeah, we better go," he echoed, sliding to his feet and turning to her.

"You'll write like you said you would?" she asked.

"If you will."

"Oh, I'll write every time I get the chance," she said.

His eyes turned away toward the pond; the patches of light skipping on the water made him squint. "I suppose there'll be lots of nice things to see on the bus," he said.

"Yes, probably," she said.

Homer turned back, and they looked at each other for a long moment. Then her gaze faltered. "Well, you could kiss me goodbye," she said.







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