

Pat Shelton

THE THING ITSELF

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Prize-winning entries were judged by English and Art faculties of each respective school.



Marilyn Springs
Our Lady of the Lake University

The Tempering

Matty stood motionless in front of the living room picture window, her arms folded in front of her. She stared thoughtfully at the houses where so many of her friends had lived, houses that were empty now. It had been a long cold winter, Matty noticed the dead yellow grass and the withered brown stalks of last year's flowers. She rocked gently back and forth on her feet, murmuring softly to herself, trying to put aside the sense of loss that came over her whenever she thought of her husband. She thought about a recent conversation with her daughter.

"Mother, things aren't the same now with Dad gone; you would have to keep the house up by yourself. Look at all there is to do: pay all the bills, tend the yard, keep the house in repair. . . I know you don't like the idea of a nursing home, but it would be so much better for you! You could relax, make new friends, and sew or bake in your spare time. And besides, they have doctors and nurses there twenty-four hours." Becky spoke with the solid, common sense authority of a mother of two.

"I just don't know, Rebecca. I'm getting too old to be moving around."

"That's what I mean, Mother!" Becky was exasperated. "When you're seventy-six years old, you have to have someone to help you out."

"Well, we'll see. . . ."

Matty felt the arthritis in her legs beginning to ache and she stirred uncomfortably. She pulled the old sweater tighter around herself and thought that perhaps Rebecca was right, maybe she did need someone else. But she grew sad at the thought of leaving her comfortable home, the familiar neighborhood.

A small rumbling in her stomach reminded her that it was getting close to noon, time for lunch. She moved toward the kitchen, walking slowly, trying to ignore the pain in her legs. By the kitchen door she stopped to look at her hanging coleus plant. Was it dying? She poked around in the dirt, fussing with the branches, removing dead leaves. Deciding it needed water, she went across to the sink, where she picked up a glass from the drainboard and filled it full. When she carried it over to the plant, her arm shook slightly and some of the water spilled out, splashing into little water pebbles on the gleaming waxed floor. Matty scolded herself softly and stepped cautiously around the water. She watered the plant, lifting the branches and measuring water out until the glass was almost empty. She started to carry the glass back to the sink.

A stab of arthritis pain shot up her right leg. She shifted her weight to her left leg to relieve the pain and her foot landed in the spilled water. Her leg slid out from under her, the glass flew from her hand, and she fell heavily on her left hip and her outflung left arm. Waves of pain and darkness engulfed her. She lost consciousness.

Matty felt herself floating up through darkness growing gradually light. She felt the presence of two brightly glowing white spots, one nearby, the other slightly further away. She floated closer and closer to the lightness, then up through the surface.

Matty blinked and tried to focus, feeling confused and dizzy. The bright spots resolved themselves into throbbing aches in her wrist and hip. She stirred and tried to rise, but her hip shot waves of pain through her, causing her to groan and lie still. Remembering what had happened, fear welled up inside her, numbing her mind, choking her. She wanted desperately to wake up in her bed, to feel the relief of discovering it was only a nightmare. None of this was real, it must be a dream, a dream that would go away soon. Closing her eyes, she willed herself to relax. It was only a dream. But when she opened them, nothing had changed. Fear overcame her and she began sobbing; "Help me, dear God, please somebody help me!" she moaned softly.

For a time she lay still, vaguely aware of the clock on the wall ticking softly. Then she began to notice other sensations: the dampness of the water through her skirt, a curious sticky sensation in her right hand. She turned her head slowly to look at her hand, her stomach knotting into a ball of fear when she saw the bright red blood. Her hand had been cut by the shards of the broken water glass. Matty whimpered fearfully; why didn't somebody help her?

She lay on the floor, staring sightlessly, her face drawn tight with pain and despair. Rebecca was right, she couldn't live alone, she had to have others. Matty cried, feeling the hopelessness of her position, the throbbing pain in her leg. Tears burned her eyes and blurred her vision; she wished dearly that she could die. For long moments there was no sound except her sobbing. Slowly she quieted. Then she lay still, her mind paralyzed with fear. For a long time she lay motionless, in a daze of despair and pain.

A screaming tearing jangle cut across her nerves like a saw. The phone was ringing! In amazement she turned her head and looked for the phone, out of sight on the table by the door. Someone was trying to call her! She had to answer the phone! Matty struggled to move but the intense pain in her hip was like a blow, knocking her back, causing her to cry out. She lay and yearningly listened to the phone ring its noisy call for attention. It stopped abruptly, the final ring reverberating soundlessly in her imagination.

So someone had been trying to call her! Matty felt surprise. The fact that life had been going on undisturbed had not occurred to her. After having fallen she felt as if time had stood still, waiting for her to get up again. But it hadn't. People had gone on the same as before, working, shopping, eating. Nobody knew she was hurt, nobody was rushing to help her. Even her own daughter was miles away, caring for the kids, running errands. She had no one to depend on, no one to help her. She was alone.

Matty felt a curious sensation, something beside the pain and fear. If she was alone, and there was no one to help her, then her situation really was hopeless. Unless. . . unless somehow she could help herself. But what could she do? She was old and weak, her hip was probably broken, arthritis plagued her, and yet. . .

Matty strained to see around herself as far as she could. She was lying on the floor in front of the kitchen sink. The L-shaped counter ran in front of her, the short end jutting into the kitchen to her left. Between the short end of the counter and the wall was an open space where the breakfast table was; she could see the end of the table from where she lay. The back door by the table was closed tight.

Through the open window over the sink she saw it was a beautiful clear day, warm with the promise of spring. A gentle breeze rustled the curtains through a small crack in the window. She tried calling for help, but when she heard the weakness of her voice, she knew it would not be heard outside of the kitchen. Somehow she had to let someone know that she needed help, she had to attract attention. She looked at the window and considered trying to break it. Maybe the noise would attract someone. But what could she throw? The only thing heavy enough was her shoes, and she could not reach them because of the pain in her hip. Even if she could, she knew she did not have the strength or accuracy to hit the window. It was hopeless; what could she do?

Her eyes fell on the table again, and as she stared at it she felt a tingling sense of relief and elation sweep over her; the telephone! Matty felt momentary irritation that she had not remembered it sooner.

But how could she get to the phone? It was no simple matter of walking over and dialing the operator. But she HAD to get to the kitchen table, a distance of nine or ten feet. Then she either had to get herself up to the phone, or the phone down to her.

Matty considered her position. She couldn't walk or even crawl; she was sure she had a broken hip, and probably a sprained left wrist as well. Maybe she could slide. She reached behind herself with her good right hand and grabbed the bottom broiler handle of the old stove, resting her injured wrist on her stomach. Then she lifted her right leg slightly and using the heel of her shoe she managed to push-pull herself a few inches. Immediately her hip sent up a protesting hammer of pain. She gasped involuntarily, feeling dizzy. But as soon as she could, she pushed-pulled herself again, and again was forced to halt because of the pain. Slowly she inched her way across the floor to the stove, stopping frequently to rest and let the pain subside.

Matty reached the stove at last and rested, exhausted from her efforts. The table was still five or six feet away. Fighting the feeling of frustration, she started to slide herself across the floor again. She could no longer use the broiler handle, so she pushed herself along with her right hand as well as her foot. Pushing caused the small cuts on her hand to re-open, making it slippery with blood. She hesitated, then wiped it off on her sweater and kept going. Soon she had moved to within three feet of the table leg, her head resting near the outthrust end of the counter.

She felt a warm sensation on her right arm and looked over at it. Pale yellow sunlight filtered in through the back door window; Matty looked at the angle of the light and knew from experience that it was somewhere around 4 o'clock. She rested for a long time, watching the treetops tossing in the breeze, noticing the yellow-green haze created by the budding leaves. A feeling of calm strength spread over her. She knew she wanted to live.

Matty collected herself and looked backwards to the edge of the table. She could only see the curling black cord of the receiver; the rest of the phone was hidden by the edge. Matty shut her eyes, feeling exhausted and frustrated. All this way, and now what could she do? The phone might as well be a million miles away.

Determination welled up inside of her again. There had to be a way to the phone! Her head slowly drooped over in thought; she considered possibilities, then discarded them. Frustrated, she frowned in concentration, staring at the blank counter as if she could force a solution to appear there.

And as she stared, her attention was finally attracted to a small grey square at the bottom of the counter. She could just barely make out the outline of a bell on top, but the round black cord which ran out of its side was distinct. In wonderment her eyes followed the cord up to the table, some two feet behind the phone. Because of looking over backwards, it had been out of her line of vision; she had been unable to see it before.

Matty went limp from relief. With revived hope she started inching her way over to the outlet. Using her good right hand she reached up and started tugging on the cord. As she pulled, the back of the phone and the earpiece of the receiver appeared over the edge. . . the black footpad . . . the silver volume wheel . . . then the phone teetered precariously on the edge of the table. She gave one more tiny tug, and watched as the phone started a slow motion tumble over the edge. She flinched when it crashed with a musical clanging on the kitchen floor, then lay buzzing softly to itself, as if irritated at being disturbed. Using the cord she pulled it over to herself, setting the receiver back in the cradle. Then she rested, her neck and shoulder muscles aching with the strain.

A shattering jangle erupted beside her.

Startled, Matty jerked her head up and stared at the phone as if it were alive. Hesitantly she reached her hand out and rested it on the receiver. She lifted it slowly, with difficulty; it felt as if it weighed pounds. Choked with the overwhelming sense of relief, she slowly began to lay her head back and brought the receiver to her ear. Thoughts, emotions, words of relief and thankfulness crowded into her mind; "Y-Y-Yes" was all she could manage to get out.

"Hi, Mother? This is Becky. I just got through talking to a really nice man from the nursing home and made an appointment for you to see him tomorrow. OK? At least talk to him and see what he has to say, OK?"

Matty lay immobile, tears welling from beneath her closed eyes.

"Mother?"

Matty swallowed and coughed, trying to regain control. "Cancel it," she said, and released, began to sob uncontrollably.

Charles Gallatin
St. Mary's University
First Place, Prose

The Darkling Rose

*Denzell Allen . . . folds his life into a suitcase,
Creases his hopes in two,
Shakes the dust off from his dreams,
And tries to hum a tune.*

*Denzell Allen . . . cast away in make-believe,
Crushed between what seems and is,
Captured in a tarnished cage
Of you and me and them and him.*

*Late-night lanterns turn down low
And quilted comforters warm the night
In velvet rooms across the way,
But Denzell stays--still wrapped in why.*

*Eyes that touched keen, blazing gods,
A demiurge, his kindled mind,
Sweet thoughts he wove into a web,
Sweet thoughts, come back, make quick the dead.*

*Denzell Allen . . . Keeps his vigil until morn,
Lets fall on dusty tiles a tear,
Plays the Stoic with his tongue,
But far within hides raving Lear.*

*Denzell Allen . . . chantez bien, mon pauvre, mon pauvre,
Sing me the dark, damp cobblestone lanes,
Sing me the pale and moonlit plains,
Dance me the dance of the universe.*

*Good Apollo, Athena graced,
Please, please, have mercy on his mind.
Denzell Allen . . . casts away,
Dreaming marble . . . doomed to clay.*

*Marty McGovern
St. Mary's University
First Place, Poetry*



Rachael Poussin
St. Mary's University

Paint

I am a nude descending a staircase.

Last night.

But a string of pearls.

Leaves me wearing basic black.

Hand on rail, lightly

Head on neck, sprightly

Toe before foot, always

I was a melon luscious Guaginchua

Maybe.

*Natalie C. Bowman
St. Mary's University*

Portrait

*And then I turn, and there you are again:
An aged face, old creases carved from wood.
I wish you could have lived today, not then,*

*Not when the pains of wars, now won, begin.
Now, days are tranquil; men know brotherhood.
And then I turn, and there you are again,*

*Whose portrait in a gilted frame knows when
To be serene, yet not become subdued.
I wish you could have lived today, not then.*

*Grandad, not then. I look away; neat den
Reminds me of what life you chose and viewed.
And then I turn, and there you are again.*

*[My mother once told me how you seized ten
Soldiers all by yourself; she thinks you shrewd.]
I wish: "You could have lived today, not then."*

*Not way back when. The wars have silenced men
Like you, whose strength showed in the way you stood.
And then I turn, and there you are . . . Again
I wish: "You could have lived today, not then."*

*Michael Diaz
Our Lady of the Lake University
First Prize, Poetry*

Eulogy for my Great-Uncle

*They say
When the doctors told you
What was wrong
You defied them:
You had lived all your life
And not known--
What difference did it make?
A man, you felt,
Should not admit
That his body had betrayed him,
Should not appear so weak.
You went back to the farm
And worked beside your sons,
Doing what you knew best---
At peace with God
And the earth.*

*When I saw you lying there,
With too much makeup,
Looking as though
Your traitor heart still beat,
I saw only those
Strong, sun-browned hands.*

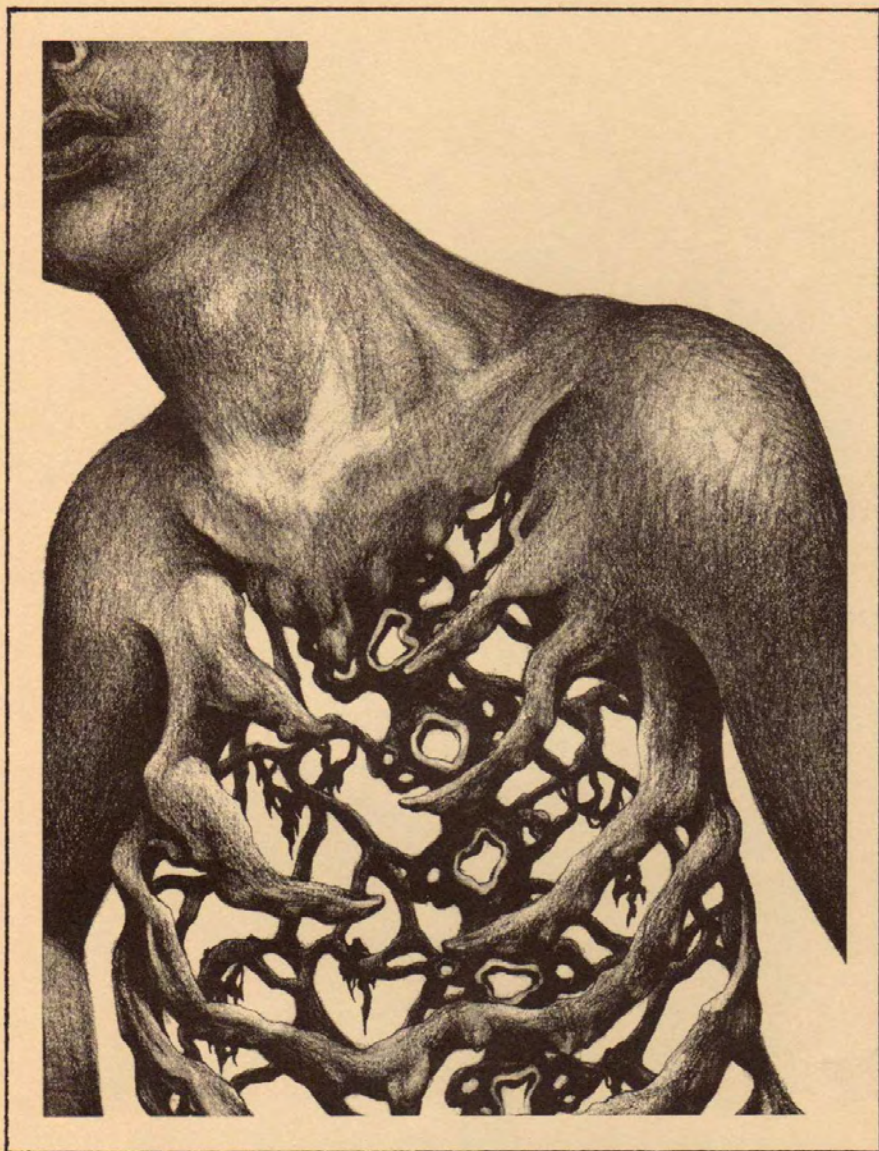
*Lynn Garcia
Incarnate Word College*

Now it's almost Friday, and John Maynard lies dying.

*He walks along the banks of the river,
Passing time, thinking.
When was it? last Saturday?
A man came down the hill riding an old white horse.
Three withered men
Waiting at the tavern door
Saw him,
But ignored him.
The three stayed a day, then left unsatisfied.
Their caravan traveled two days,
Delaying its progress only long enough
To buy six nubile pairs of breasts.
[One of the men
Had grown weary of the party's bevy of supple flesh---
To him they were old hags,
Grown rubbery with use.
And wrinkled from constant toil.
He needed new blood.]
As they were not disposed to
Travel on rough waters
They sought a port where the still surface
Promised an easy journey back to their home.
Finding it on the second day of their search
They made ready to sail.
[That the ship formerly carried
A score of praying little men
Did not bother them;
They had a more important destination
And these lazy louts deserved expulsion
Through their lack of adequate protection.]
A day out at sea
Each of the three opened his little box
And partook of the magical powder within,
The powder which sustained them,
Which inspired them,
"Lo!
The lady in the sky with diamonds
Comes, promising a new way,
A new order,
A new god."
"Heed her,
And you shall find so near the
Paradise that was once so far."
"Yeah,
And there shall you possess infinite
Virility,
Power,
Wisdom---
You shall be as a god!"
Too late the captain cried out
His discovery of the storm.*

*He turned from the river
Knowing that with John Maynard's death
All he had wrought would also fall.*

*Carlos Alvarado, Jr.
St. Mary's University
Honorable Mention, Poetry*



Rachael Poussin
St. Mary's University
First Place Art

THE TREE

Mary stepped from the car into a soft wind as shadows danced below a tree that towered over the paved street and sidewalk. Her breath was short, causing her breasts to bounce atop her protruding stomach. There was the tree she had planted fourteen years ago, strong and tall as it reached into the heavens. She thought of the day her father had given her the tree; a day of white dresses and picture-taking relatives, the day of her first communion. Her father gave her the tree so that she could watch it grow as her faith should grow. She thought of how hard she worked preparing the hole, planting the small tree exactly nine inches deep, filling the hole with rich, black dirt, and then watering the tree every night. Now the tree stood as a gigantic cross as she stared upwards into its branches. The tree stood as a symbol of the faith she had placed in God, a faith so alive and growing that it too touched the face of God. She thought of the baby she was now carrying, how she would give the child everything it needed to grow, and someday this baby would reach higher than her tree.

Mary slipped out of her daydream into the reality around and within her. How do I explain to the man I love that he is not the father, that there is not any father at all except for the Father of all things. I just pray Joe can understand and know the Truth. My wonderful Joe, he loves me so much. He seems to know the wonderful love Jesus taught even though he does not go to church. He thinks the church is a symbol of all the fairy tales ever told and that God was made in man's image only to control weak men. Now he must know and understand that God is not just imagination, that this beautiful being inside my body is God's baby, that the Messiah will again walk the earth.

Joe had just returned from overseas where he had fought in a war not of his own making. He had known death and experienced the injustices that men can do to men. He had learned hate and now he only wanted to forget. He had been home a week, but with all the processing and paperwork that had to be done, he was only now able to head for the home of the woman he loved. Joe and Mary had written often and he had hopes of being married soon. During the war he had more than once fought off depression with thoughts of Mary. He had dreamed a life with her while men died around him; he had thought of a home and a secure job as cities were blown apart. Now all these thoughts, dreams, and hopes could come true. To Joe, Mary symbolized what love must be like when it walks, talks, laughs and is very much alive. Joe had even learned to love the moments when she was miles away, adrift in the clouds, walking in a world created long ago and so far away, moments that he could only pray to be part of and share with his young virgin.

Joe saw the shadow of the tree surrounding Mary as he entered the street on which she lived. Mary was touching the tree while staring high into its towering branches. What beauty, he thought; she seems an angel within paradise. He honked the car horn and stopped the car beside the curb in front of her house.

Mary turned, her thoughts accumulating toward the sound of the horn. She saw Joe and she saw his face drop its smile as a plane drops its bombs on that which it doesn't understand but never-the-less hates. Her eyes caught his eyes as he stared deep into her abdomen. His face flushed, his eyes glowed red, it seemed as if the whole front-yard swam in the bloodred sea of anger and hate.

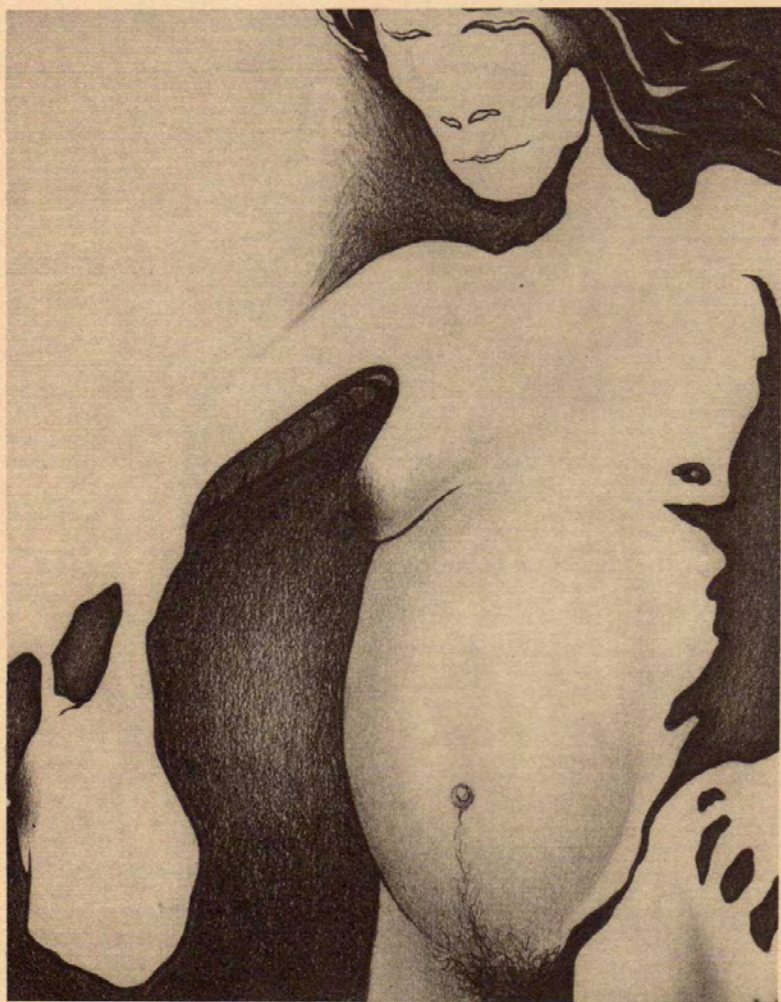
Joe stepped from the car, a knife pushed forward by a killer's hand. He was furious and felt like a fool for being cheated. His mind was screaming as he grabbed Mary and pressed her towards him, eye to eye, chest to breast, belly to belly. His anger had become an icon; it functioned on its own in total control of his existence and being. Anger turned to hatred which bred Evil, irrational Evil that crawls into the corners of the mind searching for the food of light that it may devour with its cold-black shadow.

Mary was screaming, her words swallowed by the fury of Joe's passion. She was explaining, pleading, praying that Joe would listen to her words. The baby was God's! She was blessed! He would be the father of the Savior! Mary's eyes filled with tears that flowed down onto her breast and then upon her stomach, baptising her abdomen with her own frightened, screaming faith.

Joe shook her as hard as he could. His anger boiled as lava from a volcano. He was no longer human but the Devil himself, epitomized in the emotions and silhouetted as the barbaric half-man who has given his rational mind away and all that remains is the relative satisfaction of a moment's whim. He searched around him, his eyes searching for any instrument that could hurt and destroy, satisfying his desire for revenge. He beheld the tree standing tall with its many branches hanging, swaying with the wind. He reached upwards, grabbing a small limb with such force that its end splintered into a sharp point as he pulled it violently towards him. The force of the pull had knocked Mary to the ground but he still held her with one arm as she fell. Mary was pleading for him to let her go. Killing her would prove nothing! The baby was innocent! This was God's plan to save the world! Joe lifted the broken limb high above him with one hand as he pressed her to the ground with the other hand. The sun reflected from the sheet-metal of the car, caught the limb and seemed to cut it in half as it crossed the bark. Joe brought his arm down, down, piercing Mary's dress, her flesh, her blood, her baby, her soul.

Mary awoke, the anesthesia weighing heavily on her mind. A nurse was situating the sheets beneath her, every once in a while giving Mary a bored but well rehearsed smile. Joe was bent over her whispering that everything was all right and that the abortion was finished. Mary looked into Joe's eyes remembering the decision they had had to make. They couldn't afford a child right now and besides, this was not a very good world to raise a child in. She felt different, though, almost empty, as if her very soul had slipped from her body. Nonsense she thought, it is only the drugs. The abortion is through and everything is fine. A drug-filled thought floated within her mind. She caught a glimpse of a tree, a tree that her father had given her long ago for a reason that she could no longer remember. Funny that she should think of the tree now, it had not lived long because she kept forgetting to water it. All she could really remember is the sad look on her father's face when the tree died and his muttering that she should be more concerned with the life of things.

*John Hoskins
Our Lady of the Lake University*



Rachael Poussin
St. Mary's University

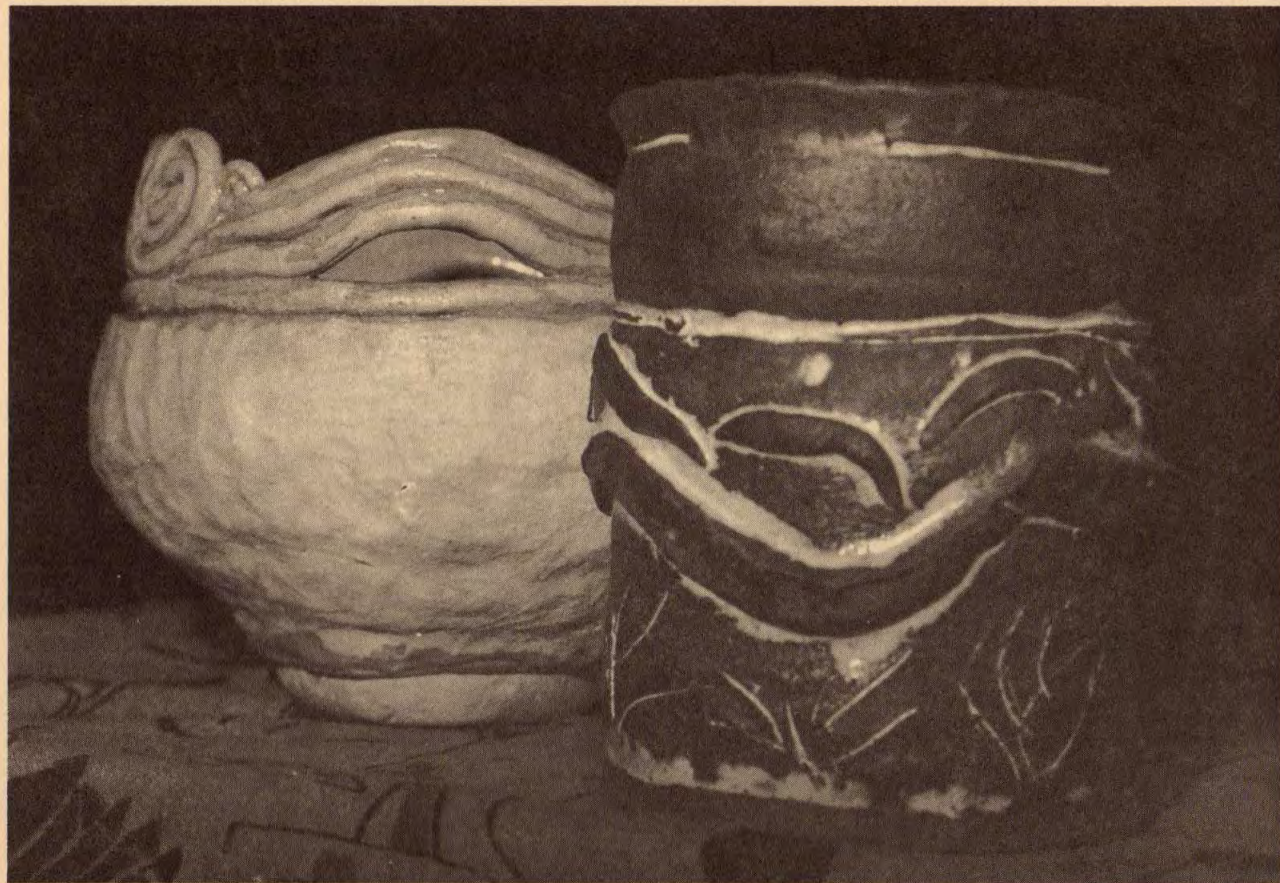
Teilhard

*When will man learn
to become what he can . . .
to personalize -- to evolve
into a cosmic man . . .
Will he ever learn
Can you tell us
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*

*Man, once mere 'stuff of the universe'
has been evolving
'spirit-matter' has transformed him
into a thinking being,
but will he ever realize
the answer lies, with you
so tell us Teilhard,
Tell us Teilhard de Chardin*

*Will man ever leave his
consciousness of the past
and realize that he
is a part of a greater mass.
You have said that man
has become aware of himself,
but will he grow,
Do you know?
Tell us Teilhard, do you know?*

*Gary Scarzafava
St. Mary's University*



Handbuilt Stoneware by Gloria Moreno
Photographed by D. L. Chandler

Handbuilt Stoneware by Bann Williams
Incarinate Word College

THE POTMAKER

*Kneeling beside the hill,
She pulled her fingers through
Dry clay beneath her shadow.
She breathed its earthy scent.
Rising, she walked beside the stream,
Feeling with her feet
Fine, tan sand.
Clearly, the stream
Bespoke its purity
With peaceful patter.
Sun rays warmed
Her dark face;
This was her
Chosen Place.
Gathering half each, clay and sand,
She pounded and moistened her mixture
Well with water.
Slowly, smooth round coils were placed, patted, pinched
Into pots.
She left them drying in the sun,
Going to gather wood.
Tomorrow, as the sunfire baked the earth,
She would fire her own creation.
The making of things is not always left to God.
Some duties were relegated to the faithful few--
Such as she--who knew
Clay and sand and water and fire
To be God's own elements.*

*Ann Yanelli
Incarnate Word College
First Prize, Poetry*

*please please please
stop talking echoing
damn decorum
propriety
appearance*

*pluck them out
the eyes that have seen
miracles life
blind them
the price they must pay*

*in the innocent silence
no more shock
stares
social dissection
no difference*

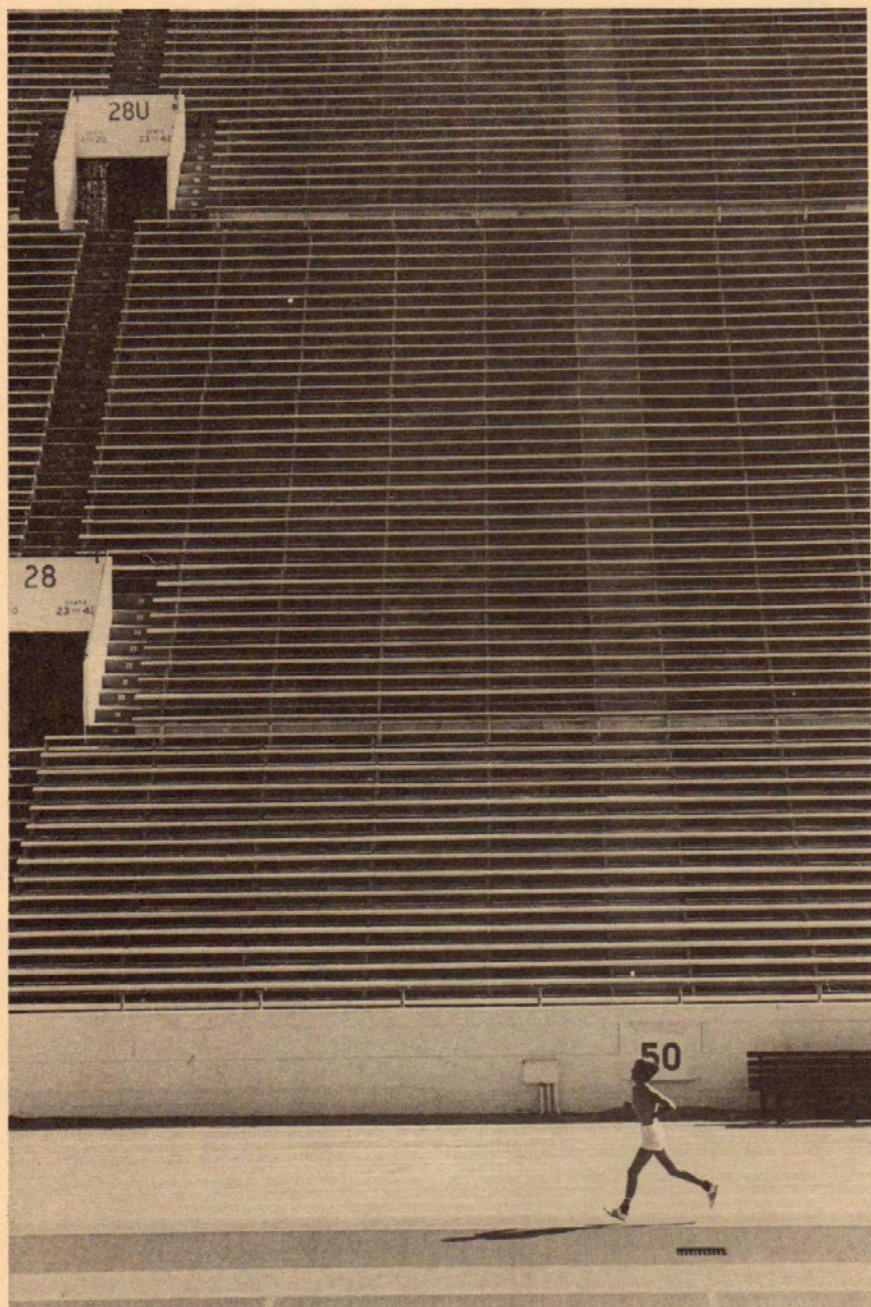
*so
close your eyes too then
touch me
[no one is looking]
please*

*Diane Kaminski
St. Mary's University*

Deaf Ear

*Your words file my teeth like knives--
electric, and hot with steam--
in one spouting burst,
dispersing anger atoms of repression.
A filter, I hear you.
From the distant plain,
I nod a smile.*

*Marianne M. Walder
St. Mary's University*



Tom Taylor
Incarnate Word College

*There are no people I can closely know.
When passion stirs the spirit soaring 'round,
Diffidence or apathy will melt or freeze
The urge to make the joy deliberate.
Are you what tenderness is left for me
To grasp with stoic, lofty defenses?
I'm breathing bleakness. Times like this feel
My face smothered in your arm's unconcern.
Initial impulses abort in the absent love.
Consuming warmth and light and beauty forced
Into an alien mold.*

*I meant to say that there are times
When I am sorry that I spilled across your borders,
For they can empty my selfish soul.
We pass to opposite but chosen sides
Of the same locked door, in search of one another.*

*Across a vast abyss the heart may be
But this, our link, will not securely hold.
Still, often others have searched and found
A waning heart is not a darkened void;
Only barren, hardened, frozen grounds that loom
Where steadfast roots have struggled and died too soon.*

*This germ has lodged upon the youngest grain
Within the gloomy oyster of the soul.
What substance 'round this foreign body
Can pearl it smooth? What words can make me whole?*

*Betty Alford
Incarnate Word College*



Pam Morales
Incarnate Word College

MOTH TALK

*His eyes soften,
His body hardens
With gentle harshness.
I open to him,
Softness envelops hardness.
Yet I don't know him.*

*Soft words sift down
To settle beside me--
Not inside me.
The hardness that is ME
Turns aside his patient probe.
He may never
Know me.*

*[The soft white moth presses ever closer
To the bright night light,
Soft moth breath, silent moth thoughts.
He must listen with his soul
Before he hears moths talk.]*

*He should know me,
Just this once--
If I could be found--
Before the hard white light
Burns away my sound.*

Ann Yanelli
Incarnate Word College



Bonita Paine
Incarnate Word College

"The Same Old Song And Dance"

*It's the same old song and dance
She's searching for romance
But it's leading her no where.*

*She comes to me for advice
If only she'd look twice
I'm sure she'd see
My love life
Has been boarded up
Like a condemned house
Where once someone lived
Lived and loved as if
Love would never die.*

*So I listen to most of what she says
But it's the same old song and dance.
Her words carry me far away
Down, down, down,
Alice knows the journey
No maps, no landmarks
Only a well worn path.*

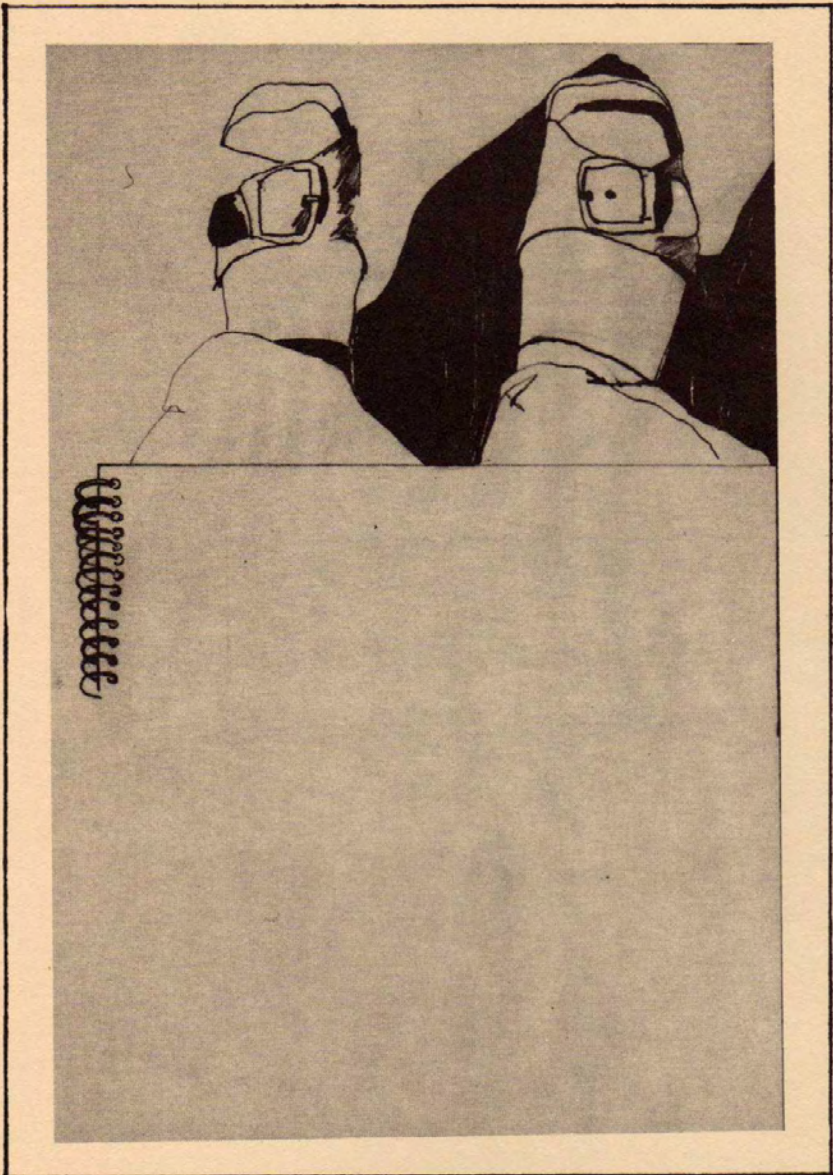
*I hear footsteps far behind me
Distant, faint as the sound of a
Snake's belly slithering on a smooth rock.*

*I hear them in my mind
Memories shattered, like bits of glass
Carried by the river on its journey home.*

*She will not understand my answers to her questions
But she wants them, anxious coyote waiting for prey.*

*I am tired now.
Can't she understand I've gone too fast?
Too fast, too strong.
It's all the same old song and dance.*

*Pat Shelton
Incarnate Word College*



Pat Shelton
Incarnate Word College
First Place Art

BABYGIRL

*Fathered by MS, the Boston Book Collective, ERA the
Need to grow,
Nurturing came not from your
Mother's womb, but from
Your own and you*

Labor

*"Congratulations, Today was born your
Baby girl, your
Savior. I hope you nurse and raise
Her much better than your
Mother raised you,
See her, Seeking?*

*But emerging from my womb, turning, she
Devours me, [For substance or merely to destroy who
She was?]*

*Seeker, I gave birth to you
I am your comfort, your
Protector, your
Security, You need
Me, your link to
Humanity, to
Sanity, to
You R [my] Mother, to
You R [my] God, to
You R[my] life.*

*But I cannot nurse you,
Cannot teach you, blind seeker,
Emerging from my womb, you turn, devouring
Me.*

*J. James
St. Mary's University
Second Place, Poetry*

A DREAM

I

dreamt a

mountain's monstrous monolith

and

climbed

platonic relationships.

I sheltered doubt, starving Faith.

I beheld inspiration erased in Reason.

I asked for guidance and ran a Fool's errand.

I sought Truth and found Resolution:

maneuvering, measures

of my

convolutions.

I scaled the Rock, then

jumped

as

electrons

within a storm.

I

bolted

aerial, atomic, afflatus.

My

atoms

split into suns.

I revolved around him who forms the cornerstone.

I stood in consecrated defense, iron became my faith.

I washed my soul and my flesh rusted.

I dissipated before the altar and was baptized;

Spasmodic, spatial science

became I

hypnotized.

I

walked

with servility

[where one can give until one's sore].

I fell as Adam, my eyes washed by the Flood.

I registered Communion, my heart filled with love.

I took account of Sundays, I played jester with the Masses.

I became encased in Law, I locked myself in Consciousness.

I

awoke around the

ressurrection

rosary.

John Hoskins

Our Lady of the Lake University

finity

*i feel what i touch
yet cannot touch
what i feel*

*a carrioned carcass
i rot
in the redolent waves
of a humid madness
that rocks the very shores
of the core of my belated being*

*scathed and uncaged
i prowl the midnight streets
at an insane pace
searching for a place to put
my faltering words
and unheard feelings
senses reeling with the omnipotence
of the fatal fall
into a bloated eternity
where the wonderers wander
in restless, un-named pain*

*to the lullabye of their own
aimless rain
years of tears
and stumpy feet
that pound the unpaved street
to find the sweet unpromises
and loose the thoughts
that keep the whole
and hurting
self deserting
in the endless, friendless desert
of cafeteria kindness
and solitary obscurity*

*Cindy Flatt
Incarnate Word College*

*It was only ayer que fui niña,
Una niña joven, muy inocente, que siempre trataba de please my parents.
I did things for them and they did things for me.
Mi madre, una persona extraordinaria, siempre got up early on Friday
mornings to make my tuna fish sandwich for my school lunch
porque no se comía carne en los viernes.
Mi padre, el padre más cariñoso en el mundo, siempre me daba dinero
cuando yo le decía, "Papa, me da un nickel?"
I remember those days clear as daylight and I laugh at myself cuando
recuerdo las ocasiones que mi padre regresaba a casa con ice cream
and I, instead of welcoming him home, grabbed the bag full of ice
cream goodies.*

*It was only ayer que yo le ayudaba a mi madre with little things
around the house.
I helped her sweep the floors, I helped her mop the floors.
I helped her wash the clothes and I helped her cuidar a mis hermanitos.
Me sentaba en la mecedora and I rocked my baby brother to sleep
as I sang my favorite lullaby to the words of,
"Duérmase bebito, porque viene un cuco, y se lo comerá."*

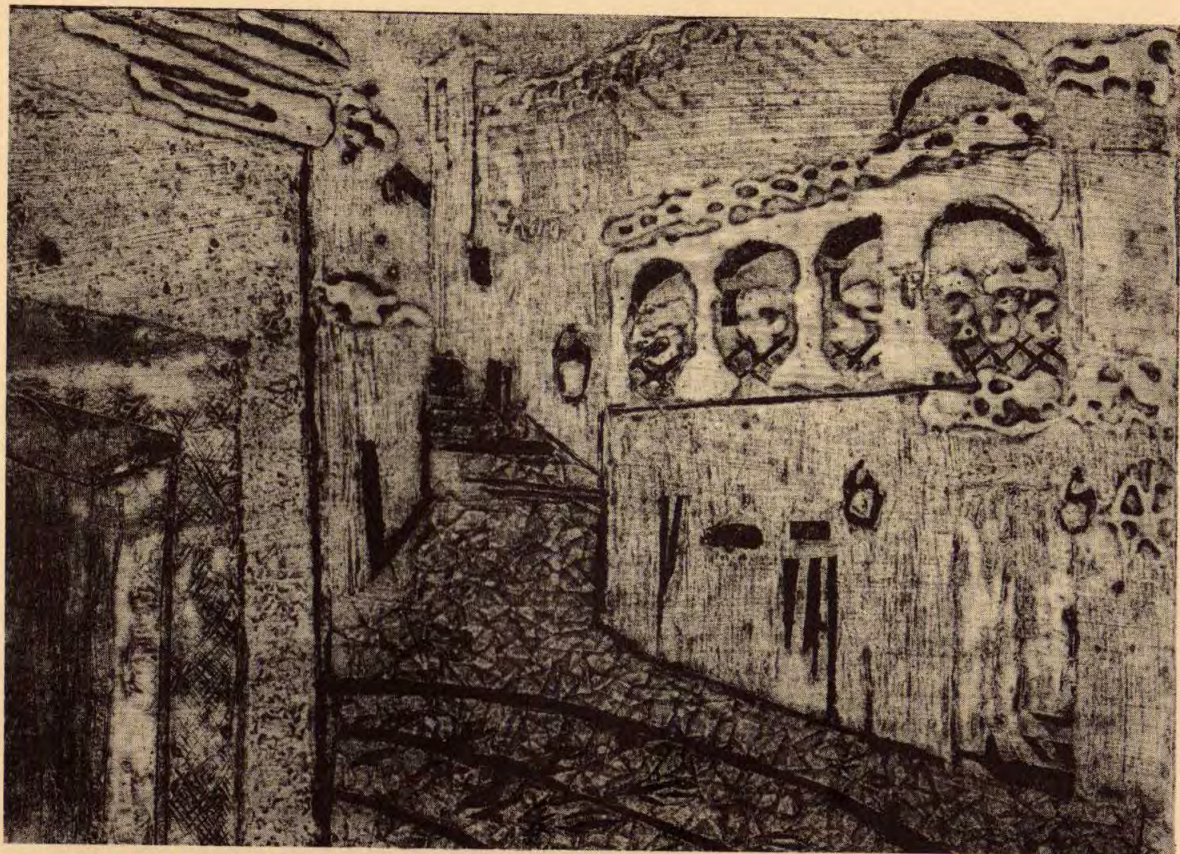
*It was only ayer que sufrí unos momentos pesados en mi vida.
One time my mother punished me porque no quise regresarle el
"handkerchief" a mi tía cuando ella había venido a visitarnos
y accidentalmente lo habia dejado en nuestra casa.
It wasn't that I didn't want to go, but I was afraid to go around
the corner for I had frequently heard that a "bruja" or
"la llorona" lived at the house at the corner street.
Another time, mi madre me regañó y me hizo llorar porque yo no quería
que mi smart sister me enseñara como multiply the
times tables.*

*¡Ay, pero que días tan más memorables
Días llenos de happiness y días llenos de sadness.
Sí, it was only ayer when I looked forward to going to my first
"Chile Bowl" game, a game that pinned our mighty VOKS from
Lanier against the Buffaloes from Fox Tech.
O como nosotros México-Americanos decíamos "La Garra" contra
"La Tecla".
Pero cuando llegaba el día que yo tanto esperaba, mi mommy, me
decía que no podía ir y there you had me crying a million
tears.
I would get upset and angry because I envied my older sisters
who always got to go.*

*It was only ayer that my hair was very very long.
Recuerdo que me tenía que levantar temprano porque mi mamá
tenía que hacerme mi trencitas antes que me fuera to school.
Y mis amigas, cómo les encataba mi pelo largo, mi pelo negro,
mi pelo bonito.
I was their little Indian girl at times and at other times I was
their little Mexican girl.*

*Sí, it was only ayer que yo fui niña.
Pero ayer es algo que I will always treasure.
Ayer es algo especial para mí.
Ayer que me da tantos momentos memorables.
Ayer que me da mi past pero que tambien me dará mi future.*

*Irene F. Martinez
Our Lady of the Lake University*



Laura Berta Blanco
Our Lady of the Lake University



Laura Berta Blanco
Our Lady of the Lake University



Fronzell Spellman
St. Mary's University

Rainy Day

*On a rainy day
When people are racing under umbrellas
in and out of sheltering buildings
Grunting of the bad weather
and stockmarket.
There still shines a tiny bit of sunshine
on a corner bustop;
A black child dancing back and forth
to the radio in one hand
sings sweet melodies
in the drizzling rain.*

Carmen T. Garza
St. Mary's University

La progression des saisons
[The march of the seasons]

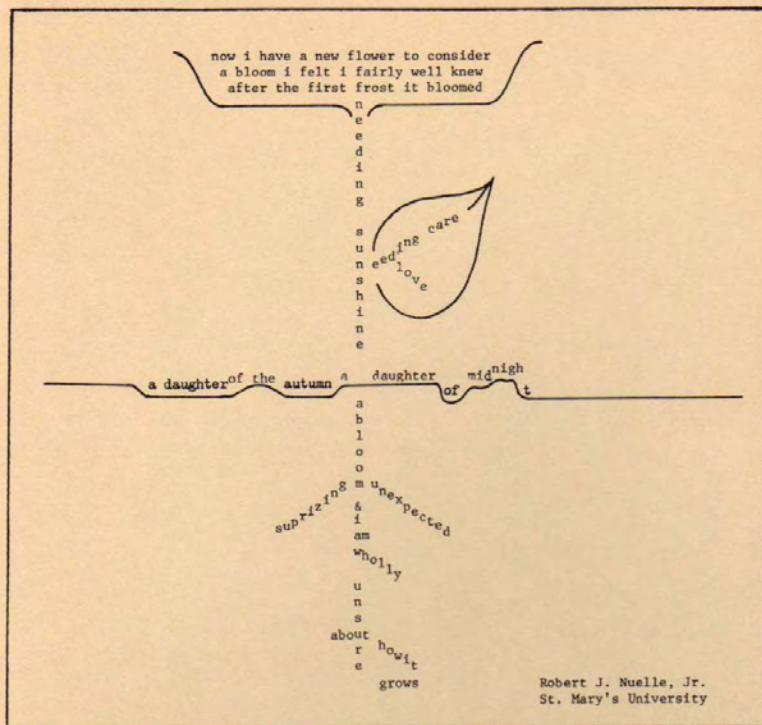
l'automne
The trees drop their life
when the winds cut through to their hearts
when the dark comes earlier
and stays through the night

l'hiver
A frosting of temporality
suspends life from my eyes
but it is only a covering force
soon removed by a healing love

le printemps
Quelle belle surprise!
a bursting of light
through the despair of the land
a changing of the guard
a coming of love

l'ete
A dragging of moods marching half-step
a subtle colour fading, time for deliberate growth
barely breaking but bravely bonding
simply, slow, motion, life.

Robert J. Nuelle, Jr.
St. Mary's University



UNA ROSA

Una rosa

¡Que creacion!

¡Que cosa!

...es una rosa.

Su spléndidez

Su maravilla de hermosura

Ríe con maravilla en juventud

Pero llora con miedo en sus últimos días.

¡Que misterio es una rosa!

Brilla con vida al nacer...

Pero se va con el día

como se va la vida

---de una querida.

Carmen T. Garza

St. Mary's University

Winner, Spanish Poetry



Weaving by Dahlyn Herold
Photographed by D.L. Chandler

Incarnate Word College

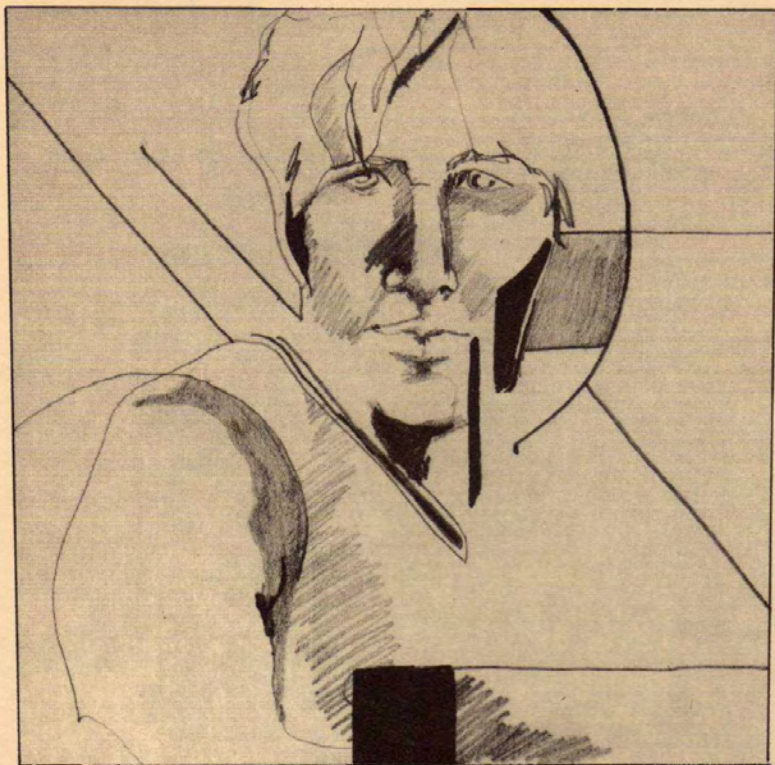
AUTUMN

*The leaves swirled through the air
Brightly coloured dried up dancers
Performing their last act
In the gray sky.*

*The green-gray moss hanging
From gnarled knotted branches
Sway and blow like an old man's beard
Caught in the wind.*

*The gray fog covered even the
Smallest rays of the sun trying
To break through and touch the
Dying ground.*

M. K. Milne
Incarnate Word College



Pat Shelton
Incarnate Word College

*Above me
the large frosty frame of stars
moves in behind the clouds;
the snow pushes on the tent
to keep me from dreaming:
clear sky illumination.*

*Daylight switches on.
We begin to rise
awkwardly between shivers.
An hour of cold desperation
pushes us
before the fire catches.
Only an ice scent
hovers
on the empty morning air.*

*Betty Alford
Incarnate Word College*

Lately Grown Up

*The oldest of the children plodded
Up the path toward home,
Barraged by many questions,
"Where've you been?" "Where's Mommy gone?"*

*With the manner of an old, old man,
The sixteen-year-old said,
"Don't be so impatient;
Come inside with me instead."*

*He sat them on the davenport,
Six eyes at him astare,
And he sat slowly down in what was
Known as "Daddy's Chair."*

*Then facing them he felt contortions
Forming on his face.
"I've got to be a man," he thought.
"Heart, slow your crazy pace!"*

*"Now you kids know that Dad's been sick for
Quite a long, long time.
Exactly what they couldn't tell, but
Something 'bout his mind."*

*"Ah, we know all about that stuff, but
Where is Mother now?"
"Don't ask me goddamned questions--I
Won't answer anyhow!*

*There's something you three better learn, that
From this moment on
You had best obey me if you
Want to get along."*

*But by his voice he knew that
This was harder than he'd planned;
Telling them was bad enough,
But telling like a man!*

*A bolder brother challenged, "I
Don't think you have the clout."
"You might be right," the oldest said.
"Try and you'll find out."*

*When Mom and I went to the ward, I
Saw Dad's empty bed:
His suicide, Mom's heart attack, now
Both of them are dead.*

*I've made all arrangements with
The exception of you three;
And now I have concluded that you're
My responsibility."*

*Six wide eyes fixed him blindly,
Blindly, and bone-dry.
"I know just how you feel," he said,
"Too shocked to even cry."*

*I know we'll grieve our parents,
And often we'll be blue;
But we will go on living, for
'Living's what the living do.' "*

*As he spoke, he saw the others
Start to see the light.
"For all of us I hope" he thought, "that
Robert Frost is right."*

*Seeing tears, the lately-grown-up
Beckoned with his hands;
Crying with the other three, he prayed,
"God, help me be a man."*

*Wilbert Oliver
Our Lady of the Lake University*



Bann Williams
Incarnate Word College

*something trickles from
the ego center
like water
dripping
 from a pipe within a wall
 out of reach
something, essentially American
seals us off
speaking, unhearing, we are out of chord
with nature
with foreign men
with each other
sojourners out of synche*

Betty Alford
Incarnate Word College

Have you ever wanted something so badly that you could almost taste it, that the need to achieve that certain something was so intense it completely permeated your thoughts and affected your actions? Subsequently, the mere entertainment of thoughts of failure in achieving your needs would literally make you sick. Why, the mere contemplation of such thoughts was to be avoided at all costs; they were simply too dreadful to even contemplate. I possess all of the above characteristics, many times amplified, towards the D-2 Alaskan land policy now before Congress. The thought that the D-2 land policy might not get passed leaves such a vile taste in my mouth and an emptiness in my heart that I dare not think of it again, lest I suffer some dreadful consequence as a result of my poignant feelings. Therefore, the D-2 land policy, in its present form, must become the law of the land.

What is the D-2 land policy in its present form, and what does it represent? Briefly, it is a piece of legislation that would set aside some 101 million acres in Alaska as national parks, national wildlife refuges, and it would declare forests and rivers scenic and inviolate. On a larger, more-down-to-earth scale, the policy concerns countless fauna and flora and countless numbers of "native" and "white" Alaskans. On a more panoramic scale the policy concerns the world in general, as it could set a life-preserving precedent for all mankind by disallowing the needless exploitation of millions of acres of irreplaceable land by money-hungry oil and mining companies. The D-2 land policy represents a chance for mankind to do it right the first time and not destroy the priceless gifts given to us by our Creator. Once destroyed, the lands can never be replaced.

I so vehemently want the D-2 land policy passed for obviously all the reasons given above, but, more importantly, also because I have first-hand knowledge of the splendor of the land. I have lived in Alaska and seen, on a clear day, the majestic peak of Mt. McKinley; I have seen the feared grizzly and witnessed the unique summer season in Alaska, when the flora flourishes for eight short weeks, ultimately giving away once again to the harsh Alaskan winter. Likewise, read the quotations of other men who have gone to Alaska and it becomes little wonder indeed why we all share the same goal. Witness John Seiberling, Congressman from Ohio, who said, "Alaska is Yosemite, the Grand Tetons, Yellowstone, the Grand Canyon, Glacier National Park, and the Serengeti Plains all rolled into one," or Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary of the Interior, who called Alaska, "America's crown jewels." Need it be said, then, that to destroy Alaska's lands would be akin to destroying America's crown jewels. Therefore, heed the cries of those among us who have seen the feared grizzly and witnessed the awe-inspiring peak of Mt. McKinley, and know this too, that Alaska's lands must be preserved as they exist today, not only for the benefit of this generation, but for the benefit of future generations to come.

Finally, I will close on the foreboding glimpse into the future. It is taken from a movie, entitled, Silent Running. It is the story of the earth totally void of all flora, save for one solitary forest grown and cared for not on earth, but on a spaceship far out in space. With this point taken, is this to become a valid portrayal of the future? Let us, as Americans, take the first step to ensure that this does not become a valid portrayal of the future by passing the D-2 land policy now, before it is too late. Our posterity demands it of us.

Plaint of the Put-Out Poet

*Our modern-day vernacular
Is, shall we say, so unspectacular.
A rose, in rhyme,
Must no longer be a rose,
Indeed, by any other name,
For rose now goes with hose and nose--
Thanks to Barbarino's braggadocios.*

*The poets' moon, as in June and croon,
Has been so overwrit
As to make you spit,
So overblown as to make you groan.
With so few rhymes left,
This poor lyricist, betimes,
Is left bereft.*

*Ah, we moderns.
We turn on, tune in, sit in,
Fit in. You know, let go, shout,
Put on and out, let it all hang out.
Man, it's so bad
Have we all been had?
Are we mad? Aren't we sad?*

*Where are those Poes of yesteryear,
With their "silken, sad, uncertain
Rustlings of each purple curtain?"
Where are the soft and sybillant sonnets
That graced our heads as silken bonnets?
Dear Annabelle Lee, in your sepulchre by the sea,
The wind and I will whisper rhyme to thee.*

*Ann Yanelli
Incarnate Word College*



Laura Berta Blanco
Our Lady of the Lake University
First Place Art

