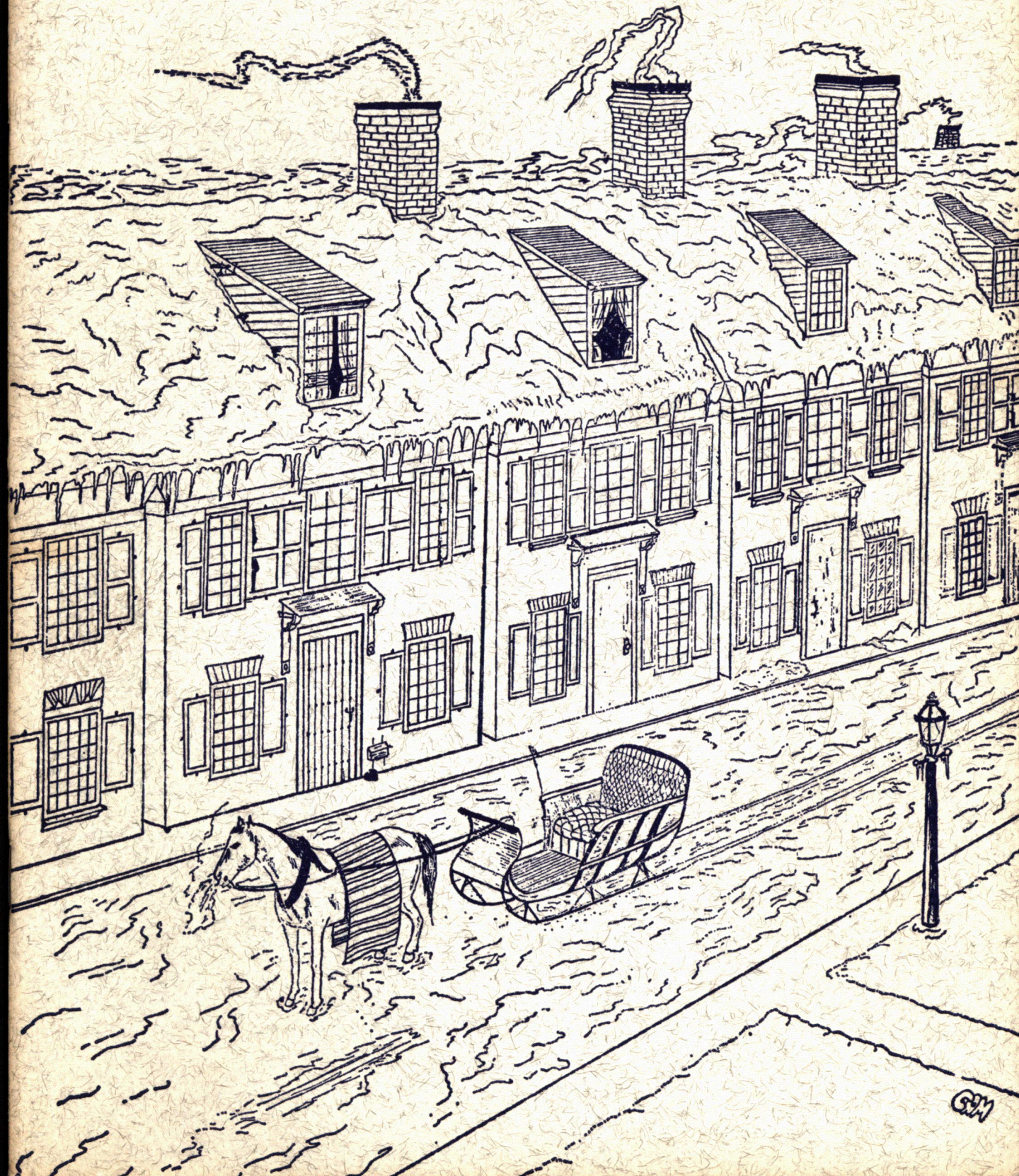
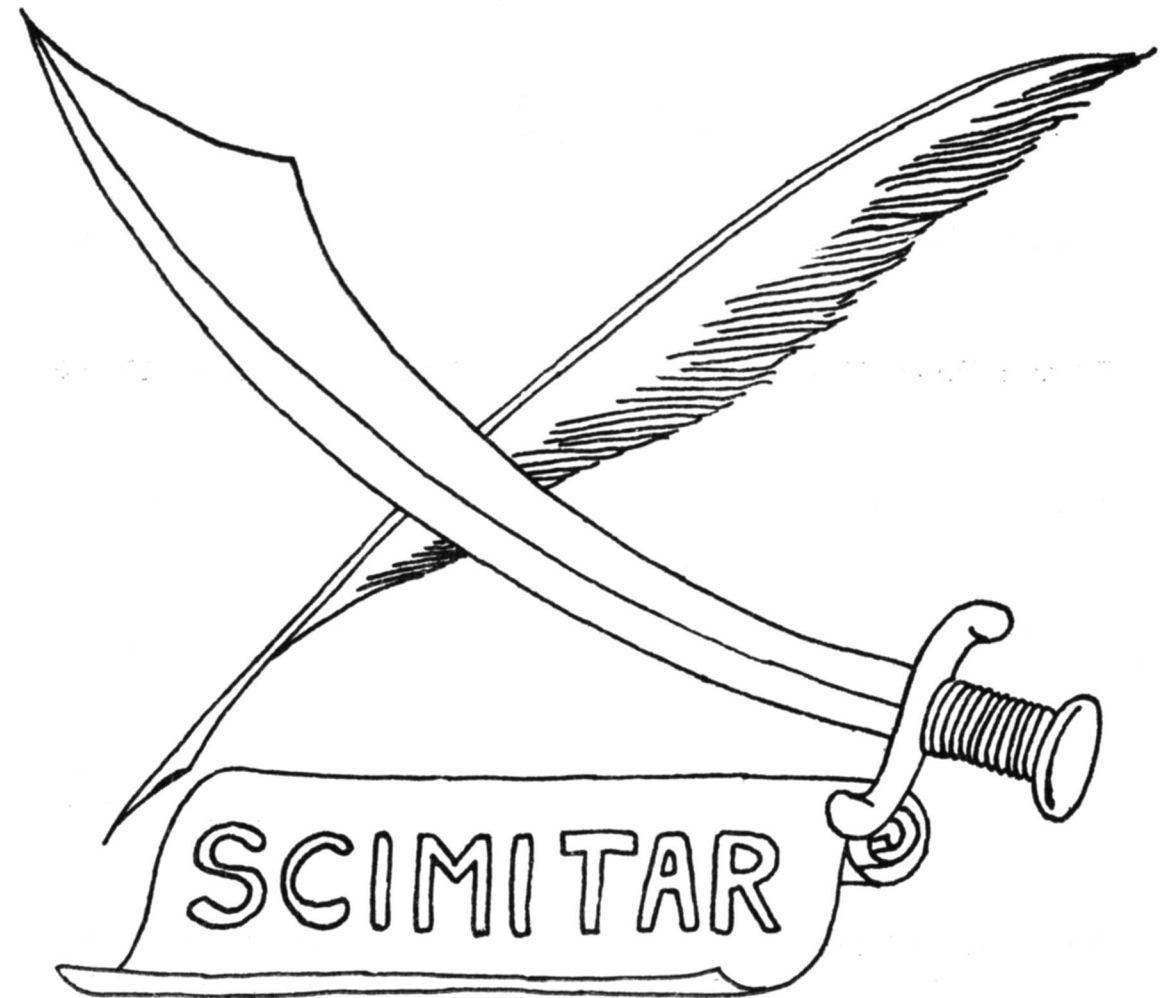


# S r i m i t a r



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**WINTER EDITION**

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## THE TRAVELER

by Ed Hara

THE STRANGER seemed tired, as if he had come a long way, and bewildered, for he had come to a dead end in his travels. He had been called for, had responded, and had been given directions, yet the scene before him seemed to confuse him. He knew what he was looking for, but saw no signs indicating where he should go next. He sat down on a rock and mechanically fished in his pockets for a cigarette, then swore softly to himself as he remembered that he had none and that there were none available in this land.

A group of teen-age school children passed by him as he sat there thinking, none of them seeming to notice him in his plight. He watched them pass, then, suddenly lifted his head and looked around the craggy terrain slowly. There seemed to be music in the air, a strange phenomenon, since music never reached this land. He had heard many rumors, and had seen his neighbors going off after being called for, but he had never thought that they, whoever "they" were, would want him. He knew that nobody ever came back, that people who were called to this new land had to serve "them," but he couldn't figure out why they had called for him. He was no nuclear physicist, only a car dealer. Still, perhaps there were none of his kind here yet.

He looked down at his grey tweed suit, at the gayly striped tie he was

wearing, and at the light blue shirt that offset the suit so well. He wished he had worn something a bit cooler. It was a very hot day. He wiped his brow with a rough, scarred hand, running his fingers through his sandy-colored hair. I know I've not completed my journey, he thought, but I'm not allowed to go back. The guards will get me if I even try. He shrugged his shoulders, knowing that they would have come for him anyhow, had he refused to come.

"I wish a guard would find me," he muttered to himself, "so that I could ask him for directions."

He got his wish. A rough hand grabbed him by the shoulder and pushed him into a crowd of milling people. Other guards clamped handcuffs on him, and chained him to a large link chain holding the prisoners together. He knew better than to protest, and he felt relieved, knowing that this MUST be the way to get where he wanted to go. The guards were cruel at times, but helpful, or so he had heard.

"Were you turned away?" questioned a young man next to him. The young fellow seemed to be about 25 years old, and was dressed in Bermuda shorts and a loud shirt.

"No," he replied softly, "I came directly." He felt it necessary to whisper, since the young man had done so in questioning him.

The young man nodded knowingly.

"I, too, came directly." He went on to explain something which couldn't be understood. The older man merely nodded dumbly at intervals.

"You were burned," the young man stated, noting the scars on the older man's hand. His voice still whispered, as if afraid of something.

"Yes," answered the older man, but too loudly he spoke, and in the next instant, felt the stinging crack of a whip on his back.

"Quiet!" roared a voice, and the hills echoed back, "Quiet!"

The older man had been staring at his feet as he marched along. Now he looked up at the landscape. The horizon stretched out in front of him, dotted at the middle by what must be the city. On either side of him, great crags rose out of the ground, and farther away, tall mountains rose splendidly.

"This is the desert," the young man whispered. "We still have a long way to go."

"How do you know?"

The young man smiled. "I've made this trip before."

"You mean we do get to go back. We can return?"

"After they are done with us. But we don't remember anything of the trip back. Nor can we remember the trip here. Only when we return do we remember, and then, we remember it all. But only for as long as we stay."

"As we stay?"

"Certainly. After they are through with you, you will be able to stay as long as you want to. It's really nice..."

But he never finished what he was

going to say. Again the whip cracked through the air. The young man bore the sting of the whip silently, perhaps afraid to cry out. The older man said nothing in protest.

"Why the whip?" questioned the older man.

"They are afraid we will get away, or become unruly. Usually they don't chain the ones who have made the trip before. It's the new ones they're afraid of. The new ones have heard all sorts of, well..." He rolled his eyes, searching for a word. "Stories—or lies. Whatever you call them."

"They're afraid we'll become panicky."

"Sort of like that," the younger man replied.

"Nobody remembers..." the old man mused.

"Not until we come back again," the younger one echoed.

"This is my first time then—I remember nothing."

"Some like to go back immediately after they're finished. Others prefer to stay."

The older man seemed bewildered. "I never thought..." He paused. "What is the treatment like?"

"Sometimes it's not so bad, sometimes..." He gestured with his hands as if to say, "Why do people have to come back?"

"And you?" the older man questioned.

"I dunno. I think I'll stay a while after this time. It's not so bad here except..." He paused "Such a warm place—most of the year, too."

"The women?" questioned the older one.

"Beautiful."

"And drinks?"

"Whatever you like, except wine."

The older man looked around the countryside, the mountainous plain. The dots on the horizon had grown larger. He turned to the young man.

"Have you got a smoke?"

"They never bring enough the first time," grinned the younger one as he fished through his pockets for a cigarette. He lit one on the cuffs he was wearing and passed it to the older man.

"How long do these punishments last, anyhow?" the older man asked.

"Sometimes three or four months," the young man replied, taking a drag from his cigarette. After a few more steps, he looked up. "We're almost there. You can't talk once we go into the caverns."

"How does one return?" the older man asked.

"By taking the form of a newborn child before its soul has formed."

"Where did it all start?" the older man questioned, to nobody in particular.

"I really don't know," the younger man replied. "You know, the first time you die, then you are doomed to die at that age thereafter. I die at 27, each time I go back." He paused, then added, "Strange, I understand that if one dies and goes to Heaven the first time, then he never comes here. But if one comes here the first time, he can go either way after that."

So on they walked, the stranger much wiser, though there walked two men still mystified, even in death some questions yet unanswered.

## MEDIATION

I've often wondered when he'll come,  
Because now I'm supple, good-looking and young.  
I look down upon myself and feel  
'Tis a pity that my fate is sealed.

The moment I was born, I began to die  
As the day in the morn watches dark draw night.  
I wonder when it will be  
When tender daylight finally takes leave?

The lowly worm will inherit my brain  
Whilst others partake in lower frame.  
For that disgusting repulsive fate,  
These young fair muscles are forced to wait!

But, of course it is a hard thought to adorn,  
To see myself in some moldy form,  
To grow old, corrupt and die  
When I look around I am alive!

At this moment, I approach my death  
At the end of this journey, I will rest.  
I play a game I cannot possibly win,  
I only duck, dodge and do it again.

When the grim reaper tires of my insolent game  
At the bottom of his forsaken precipice I'll lay slain  
I cannot win, but dear friend smile on, maybe he'll  
Do me in before the first light of dawn!

No one knows how or when it will strike,  
In the warmth of the day, or the gloom of night.  
Will I find the resolution of the brave,  
Or like some contemptuous coward scream and rave?

Listen, oh listen to your mortal son the slave,  
Who abhors, fears, and shuns the coldness in the grave.  
For when my time comes, in all its finality, I the knave  
Shall ask, undeservedly, the immortal gift of the brave.

Oh my father through your infinite power  
Give me the strength not to cower  
When my cloaked friend draws near to my door,  
To tell me in his various ways that I live no more.

Whatever my end shall be,  
However he may take me,  
Be it sudden, harsh or mild,  
I desire to meet the victor with a smile.

Darrell Richardson

## ODE TO A SIGHT...

I saw a squirrel nibbling on a nut today,  
I stopped my walk and quietly watched him,  
A little envious at his freedom and carefree ways,  
an unshackled renegade who answers to whim.  
Should that lucky squirrel begin to roam,  
and look for a human, wild and free.  
With a careless life, like his own,  
think of the many miles he would see.

Darrell Richardson

## THE SIMPLE MAN

by D. M. Freidberg

THE OLD drawn farmer leaned upon his crude hoe and stared blankly at the passing soldiers. He had seen many soldiers pass his thatched hut, the uniforms were different, but the eyes remained the same. The weathered peasant had seen the French, the North Vietnamese, South Vietnamese, Viet Cong and now the Americans walk boldly past his rice paddy.

He brought his bony delicate hand up to his face and shaded his eyes as he watched the soldiers disappear along the trail. He did not hate the soldiers any more. His eyes had seen too much hate. He no longer thought about the soldiers who had raped and killed his wife and daughter and burned his crops. Which soldiers were they? The French, Vietnamese, or Americans? It did not matter. They

are all the same. One army may tax more than the other, but otherwise they are all the same.

He returned to his crop. Painfully he hoed the paddy, his old shoulders sagging as if under a weight. His face was wrinkled by the years of toil under the unmerciful heavens. His whole body struggled against the hard earth as he pulled on his hoe.

He was content to work his small farm, he didn't complain at the exorbitant taxes, he cared nothing of politics, but merely wanted to work his small farm unmolested. He was a simple man who did not know what to make of the pods of jellied napalm that tumbled from the jet as it swooped over the village. He never had time to realize that he was dying for Democracy.

## TOMORROW

Tomorrow, Tomorrow,  
We will meet again.  
When it turns from storm and rain,  
We will meet once more.  
Before Spring arrives  
So wait for me,  
I'll be there.

Tomorrow, Tomorrow,  
And forever will be ours.  
Happiness, understanding, wisdom and truth,  
Life will be ours. The world  
Each sidewalk, mountain, field and stream,  
We'll know them all,  
Tomorrow, Tomorrow.

Lynn P. Kentfield

## THOUGHT UPON A WILD NIGHT

In a cold deserted field on a gusty winter night,  
With naught else for a table, on a forlorn old stump, I write.

The wind, like the sea, does bathe me with each frozen blow,  
Like a rolling crest.  
It chills me to the bone, but heightens the roaring fire  
Within my breast.

A solitary tree is at my side with its wooden web of leafless twigs,  
It clatters above me.  
The mist which swirls above, and below: the nightmarish pattern  
Of half melted snow, I see.

I hear an organ, but it's only Winter's breath in the limbs.  
A chime? No, an icicle's tear, and a ripple which swims.

Dry twigs protest under my feet as I walk away.

David Pomeroy

## JANUARY DUSK

It was a stirring death that ended today.  
It came in a quiet and pastel way.  
Slowly, like candles, each star was lit,  
The moon, a frozen white tear on the sky's face.  
On the horizon, silhouetted, naked trees sit.  
For the sun's coffin: a border of black lace.

A gallant effort to warm the icy world  
Had been obliterated by chilling winds that swirled  
Around the sun's dazzling bright beams  
Freezing them like the brittle snow beneath.  
Rays shone down on the snow, which in reams,  
Now lies dim and grey like a wreath.

A lonely sparrow calls from across the field,  
While in its last glories, the sun does yield  
A final faltering warmth, also there comes from  
Its blood red color and bright orange rays  
A hint of its resurrection, and days to come.  
Then, at last, it's entered in the far away haze.

David Pomeroy

## TO A FATALLY EARLY SPRING

In this field, a grassy sea, do I detect a hint of green?  
 Is it my imagination; a robin in some faraway tree unseen.  
 Has this past week's warmth convinced the bud it's time to grow?  
 At the ground the dark earth cracks as a flower pushes from below.

The playful zephyr against my cheek entices my joy to break its shrouds,  
 To burst free from its winter sleep and soar among the clouds.  
 I, too, have been deceived by Nature's ever so lovely gift.  
 How I love this wonderous time as all my sorrows begin to lift.

And yet woe is at my heels, and sadness at my back,  
 For it is still January, and the weather is sure to slack.  
 Ah foolish plants, you try so hard, but it's to no avail,  
 For as days become weeks you'll sing your song from beneath the  
 freezing hail.

David Pomeroy

## LONELINESS AND AN OIL FILM

I move through the damp mist of life,  
 So dreadfully alone in every crowd.  
 I contemplate my trudging feet,  
 For there's naught else to look at.  
 The click of my heels; the tap of my toes  
 Reverberate inside my brain,  
 In a symphony of loneliness.

The asphalt moves beneath me, as I walk,  
 Over the embedded black pebbles,  
 Made glossy, by the freezing rain.  
 I come to a halt, for at my feet, an oil film,  
 On the somber black canvas; a rainbow of colors.

For an eternity, I stand gazing  
 At the rare beauty against the horrid ugliness.  
 I see the pastel hues bleed,  
 As the rain floats away the ever so thin film.  
 A rivulet of murky water  
 Washes away my multi-colored companion.

As I walk away, I hide the burning in my eyes,  
 And quickly wipe away  
 The tear which warmly rolls down my cheek.

David Pomeroy



## TO A LITTLE DOG

by Darrell Richardson

IT WAS A warm day in early spring. I had just finished feeding our horses and was letting them out of the barn to graze. Suddenly into the barn dashed our cat, with a little brown pup in fast pursuit.

This was the first time I ever saw the mongrel, and, at that moment, I was a little amused at our pompous cat's predicament. When I approached the little dog, his wet tongue soaked my hand in introduction. Then gathering up his forgotten dignity, he scrambled out into the pasture to stalk a butterfly.

He soon made friends with my two German Shepherds, and became a regular visitor to our farm. He was the typical "happy-go-lucky-mutt," and so I named him, appropriately, "mutt". Even our pious horses soon became friendly with him, and the small brown mongrel had the run of the farm.

As all good things must come to an end, so this did too, and one morning found me packed and ready to go back to school, my spring vacation over. I bade everyone good-bye and reluctantly began the walk to the highway, accompanied by the dogs, to catch the 2:10 bus bound for Staunton.

The time at school flew by, and soon commencement, with all its "good-bys and good lucks" was here. I was looking forward to many good times that summer, and was very tired of the academic-military atmosphere of Staunton Military Academy.

It was a burning hot day in June. A fiery red sun, in a hazy summer sky, beat down on my back without mercy while I struggled with the ancient post-hole digger. Everything, it seemed, was lying down to die. Even our cattle had ceased to graze and sought refuge in the lake. "If you had a particle of sense," I thought to myself, "you would be in that lake yourself. Cattle aren't so dumb." At the time I did not look too optimistically at the prospect of putting up fence all summer. I was beginning to wonder if I had lost my mind completely when I heard a familiar whine at my feet. It was "mutt," or was it? He looked like a skeleton, his stomach was bloated from malnutrition and his once clear bright eyes were now dull and glazed. Poor mutt was covered from "stem to stern" with ticks and fleas and smelled of all the combined filth known to man.

Weeks passed, my father did not want him near our place, and mother and I sneaked food to him. Finally the dispute over the little dog came to a head. One morning when my conscience couldn't bear to watch him suffer any longer, I told mother that I was taking little "mutt" to the Humane Society the next day. Mother stood firmly behind my decision.

The next morning I put him in our station wagon, and in an hour we arrived at the Humane Society. "Mutt," pathetic as his plight was, was enthralled by the strangeness of

the city but terrified by the big black buck who pulled him on a leash to his cage. I cannot forget the fear in his dark brown eyes as the little brown dog, nobody wanted, looked back to bid his friend good-by, forever.

I went home, promised by the attendant that they would nurse him back to health and find him a good home. At the end of the week I went back financially prepared to take care of the dog myself. My heart broke as the lady finally told me that they had

put him to sleep because they had not found him a home and they needed the cage for another. As I walked alone to my car, suddenly life was not so sweet. My heart screamed out in protest, why did that poor creature, six months old, have to live a life of an outcast? He was so full of love for a world that gave him pain. I shall never forget that kind little dog, who by accident came into a world that wasn't ready for him, yet.

### DO REMEMBER

When first I met you on the sand,  
I gave a smile, then took your hand.  
Do remember how I stroked your hair  
And gave to you my lonely heart to wear.  
T'was not too late that first dark night,  
When the stars and the moon found me holding you tight.

A lonely fire on a deserted beach  
Caressed by a cool night breeze,  
Kindled a flame in our two hearts,  
As together we lay by the sea.

Since then, my love, many nights have passed,  
And as our lives take separate paths,  
Do remember the feelings we shared  
When we were young without a care.

In the land of swaying palms  
Where the Spanish moss droops low,  
Began the burning ember glow  
Kindled by innocence and hope.

If hope is everlasting and love is true  
There is one thing more I will ask you to do,  
Do remember that first dark night, while all alone were we  
Do remember when our love was born all alone down by the sea.

Darrell Richardson



## SILENCE

It's four in the morning, and not a sound  
 Floats through the air, that usually abounds  
 With the joyous laughter of those who play  
 All day long, but in sleep now lay.  
 They miss the beauty of this morning hour,  
 That is loved by one who never tires,  
 Of the wonderful silence in which he hears  
 The sounds of the life that have no peers.  
 These sounds are not those to be heard;  
 They can be described by just one word:  
 These sounds are feeling, through feeling we hear,  
 Through hearing we love and value them dear.  
 The mournful cry of the whippoorwill.  
 That never was there and yet, still  
 Could have been heard, and could have told  
 Of the substance of life found in his soul.  
 The wind that whispers to trees now bare  
 And gets no answer, but doesn't care;  
 Instead rushes on, with a heart not cold,  
 But a soul that's free, and being so bold,  
 That it finds friends in another land  
 Simply by just believing it can.  
 A flock of birds as they roar by  
 With heavy hearts and souls that cry;  
 For they did not heed the call of life,  
 And when winter came, met with strife  
 With their friends all gone to a warmer land,  
 They now push on led by God's hand.  
 It was offered before, but they didn't heed  
 The warning of winter, there was no need;  
 They knew it all, these birds so young,  
 Now, they sing the song that all have sung.  
 The call of God comes through the night  
 And whispers low, "Get up and fight  
 For what you believe, and do not hear  
 That if you believe in me, others will Leer."  
 The church bell rings its warning clear:  
 "Time moves on; keep idleness from here."  
 Five times it strikes, and yet it seems  
 That its many echos are to mean  
 The many dead hours of wasted time,  
 When people heard the church bell chime,

But listened not, and didn't care;  
 They thought they had the time to spare,  
 Until like the birds, they saw their plight,  
 And started too late on their "southern flight".  
 The hour moved on, the darkness waned;  
 A dim light showed, the night was tamed.  
 The flock of lonely birds is gone,  
 And the whippoorwill, who for so long  
 Let loose his mournful cry of woe,  
 Now glides across the horizon low.  
 Leaving me alone to guess his sin,  
 While the throbbing of life begins again.  
 These sounds of life, to be heard so plain,  
 Would have been lost if I had lain  
 Wrapped in my troubles, content that way,  
 Heading only what men will say;  
 Forgetting my Father, whose love unfurled  
 When he said, "I have overcome the world."

Charley Hyatt

## MEMORIES

Memories are made of many things,  
 Of thoughts and friendships, smiling faces,  
 People, parties, lovely places.  
 Dreams fulfilled, and those undone,  
 Strivings made, some lost, some won.  
 Happy feelings, peace and love,  
 Blessings given from above.  
 A fireside glowing with radiant light,  
 Shelter from the weary sight.  
 A place once visited faraway,  
 Sunrise at the break of day.  
 A dainty flower in the grass,  
 Or a parade as it would pass.  
 A tree or field in which to play,  
 A barn, a horse, a pile of hay.  
 Someone you meet and came to know,  
 A dance, a date, a walk in the snow.  
 Yes there are memories of many things,  
 Of year's gone by. But Angels' wings,  
 Are flapping near,  
 Sweet memories gone with someone dear.

George Tompkins

## TO AN OLD MAN

His pale white face, his time worn smile,  
Were but a mask of years gone by.  
His strong broad neck was once a spile,  
Now to his age, they testify.

For now his life is near its end,  
He knows it well, but tries to lie,  
The happy times cannot extend,  
The things he's missed all amplify.

The pleasures, pain, sorrow, strife,  
What he wishes he cannot buy.  
The simple common joys of life  
Are always priced a little high.

He wants to do again those things,  
He did so many years ago,  
To live again those youthful springs  
When all life seemed to be aglow.

He did not see 'till they were past  
Those fleeting joys that make life bright  
He did not know until the last,  
They'll always be just out of sight.

This life is made of pleasant dreams,  
Bright colored rainbows in the sky,  
For all men want the most it seems  
When life's already passed them by.

Robert Rossi



## TEARS

Tears are falling for foolish pride.  
Proud men crying in their lust  
Of earthly things in earthly robes.  
They hide their faces from unwanted truth.  
Withdrawing into corners,  
Dreaming, striving to create another world,  
Of perfect happiness.

If tears are shed upon the dry parched earth,  
The seeds of despair will sprout.  
They grow as vines deep-rooted in the soil  
Of man's soul.  
Only the radiant sun can dry the tears,  
And make the poisonous leaves to go away.

Past thoughts of years gone by,  
Are cast away as ashes in a hearth.  
Useless dust, that falls upon the faces of sad men,  
Which puts them into darkness,  
And makes them cry.

Oh mother earth, what lies within your heart,  
Swallowed by the earthquakes and the gales.  
Innumerable things and people  
Are held within your prison chambers.  
From Forth your dark, cold portal,  
Have fear and despair come forth.  
We have asked what is left for those who sit and cry  
To you the mother of things,  
But you answer not—there you lie,  
Drinking men's falling tears.

Frost in the early morning breaks beneath the feet Of armies marching on to conquer. Going to sundry places midst the cries Of those who feel the bites of death. And what is gained? Little — only tears From the running beasts.	What thought is this that haunts me? I know its purpose, but not its face. Yet my will is stronger, My eyes are sealed. And from me it cannot take, My own, my precious tears.
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George Tompkins

## SOMEWHERE

When I see the morning sun begin to rise,  
It will be time for me to tell this lonely mountain good-by.  
I'm like the wind that blows in the trees,  
And with a smile on my face, I'll wonder, alone and free.

The sun will warm my weary back,  
As I bid farewell to this forsaken shack.  
I'm tired of these chilly lonesome hills,  
And I'm tired of working at that dreary sawmill.

When the cold hard winter comes with rain an' snow,  
And paints this lousy mountain like the valley so far below,  
When the winds cut through your cabin and freezes you to the bone,  
It's time to pack your bags and quickly be gone.

I'll never be a king, but I must leave and start anew.  
I've never had a great house, and somehow I don't think I will.  
But there must be a better life, if the word of my Father was true.  
I remember how he used to tell me about it, before he was killed.

Darrell Richardson

## FEBRUARY NIGHT

As I walk down the evening lane, with July six months away,  
The naked twigs fight to loose themselves from the limbs which only  
sway.

An icy butterfly flaps against my face.  
And through my coat as if it were lace!  
Lifeless leaves waltz at the side of the road,  
And the churning clouds are laden with a freezing load.  
A wild cloud of dust swirls around my head  
And in my eyes, giving the moon blurry spokes of red.  
A soft gloved hand gives each a gentle wipe,  
And a tear on my cheek has left an icy stripe.  
Lovely is the landscape, for now, my vision's Clearer,  
And with warm relish think of the home which each step brings nearer.

David Pomeroy

## THE TOLL OF THE CLOCK

Off and off in slumber they slept,  
The children are dreaming, good-by and a pet.  
Cause the time keeps on moving  
The mark must be met.  
As the clock struck its hour  
The number was one.

No sooner than this, did the second begin.  
He knew not the job, he knew not the way,  
But hurry the time comes  
Here is the day  
Cause the clock struck again,  
And your number is two.

And think not of past days, though they were good  
God now is calling your name on the list  
But don't be worried,  
No others were missed.  
The clock strikes a third time,  
The number is three.

Another day's gone into past,  
Yet no one is sleeping, there now is  
For hearts aching near the Hudson's shores,  
And away in Arlington.  
Cause clock's struck the number,  
And taken its toll.

George Tompkins

## LIVE EACH MOMENT

There are many things in this world,  
Which shun from explanation.  
Why is it that Spring's beauty  
Follows Winter's harsh cold spell?  
And why should love and friendship,  
Be proven so dear when we're alone?  
Yes, life is full of miracles.  
It's a pity we see them best,  
After they have passed.

Lynn P. Kentfield

## ODE TO THE WEARIED

When the dawn approaches  
You will find them,  
At their post, never leaving.

When the city comes to life,  
And the noises crescendo,  
They are still working, never stopping.

Far into the all-enclosing night,  
The silence serene as well as frightening,  
Some will have left, but others take their place.

They come from all corners of the world,  
And they are everywhere,  
High in the sky, under the seas, and in mankind's hearts.

For as long as enemies still live,  
And danger threatens our way of life,  
They will remain always ready.

They will never rest.  
For they are the wearied,  
The sentinels of freedom.

Michael D. Elins

## BARREN ON THE WAYSIDE

As I see the countryside from my view,  
Man's imaginative art has come true.  
Thoughts are passed, as picture windows are traveling by,  
I see degradation of a century's evil eye.  
I wonder then lost in deep concentration,  
To see the mark of a civilized imitation.

H. Carmel