

LITERARY EDITION HOUGHTON STAR

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HOUGHTON COLLEGE, HOUGHTON, NEW YORK

MAY 11, 1944

Third Prize Story

"You're a Good Kid!"

"Thoughtful study of a psychopathic case" ... conveys a conviction of reality ... significant for its sustained and animated conversational patterns ... deserves careful reading ... watch the birds.

WILLIAM SMALLEY

"Nobody loves anybody!" A short, stocky man with a worn tan cap and rough, brown work clothes stopped as he was passing the spot where young Howie was sitting on the lawn in front of Producer's Dairy. Howie was eating his lunch under one of the old elm trees that shaded the street for several hundred yards down the road. Across the lawn behind him he could hear the sounds of the dairy machinery, with the rapid clump, clump of the ice machines, the steady grinding whirr of the bottle filler and cellophane wrapper, and the clank and tinkle of the bottles, both empty and full, as they came down the runways to and from the machines.

Howie noticed that the man's shoes were well-worn and unpolished when he stopped in front of the spot where the boy was reclining. For a moment the man stood there as if undecided as to what he should do. Then he said again, "Nobody loves anybody," and nodded his head in a vague affirmation of his own statement.

Howie turned over on his back and looked up at the stranger standing on the sidewalk. He finished his last mouthful of cheese sandwich, and asked, "What makes you say that?"

The stranger looked up and down the street. Then he looked over at the dairy. Suddenly he sat down on the grass beside Howie and took off his cap. "I'll tell you," he said. "You're a good kid. I'll tell you what I mean." Howie noticed that the man's shirt and pants were old, but they were not very dirty. The man's face and arms were clean. Only his shoes were entirely disreputable. "I'll tell you what I mean, kid." The stranger was not looking at Howie. He was looking at something far beyond him, even beyond the barn that lay over in the fields across the street. Suddenly the stranger lay back and stretched on the grass. "Gee, but it is a beautiful day," he said.

Howie was just finishing his piece of cake when the stranger sat up suddenly and looked the boy straight in the eyes. "Did you ever kill anybody?" he asked. The man's eyes were a clear gray, and they looked as though they should be friendly, but they were not. They were frightened eyes, and they looked beyond Howie.

"No, I never killed anybody," Howie said, grinning a little nervously, and returning the man's stare as steadily as possible.

The stranger dropped his eyes, smiled slightly. Then he took a long breath, "You are a good kid," he said. "I like

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PRIZE WINNERS

SHORT STORY

BETTY KEENAN
ELLEN GIEBEL
WILLIAM SMALLEY

POETRY

CORALIE ALLEN
ALICE WILLIS
MARY DUKESHIRE

But the Judges . . .

How many aspiring literati fold up what might be budding genius "because I didn't even get honorable mention." In every heart of hearts (yours of course) there moves a vague longing to know just how the judges could have passed up that rare gem ... "and I worked so hard getting my story typed before the twelve o'clock deadline."

The machinations of the judges to throw your submission into the discard were absolutely scandalous ... in fact they tried to throw everybody's literary effusions out and almost succeeded. One brain cell intrigued with another ... inhibitions were at work ... one judge was irked by high-flying and jaunty diction ... another satisfied his pet peeve against Saroyan ... Aha! ... these judges are both fallible and prejudiced ... can they be sure. What is a poetic subject ... I take the liberties of Sandburg ... I'm another Whitman. ... I like free verse and thirteen line sonnets ... Who was that now that first broke convention? Give me my anthology ...

But remember, my dear, those weeks of bliss as you scornfully laughed at

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First Prize Story

AS THE LILACS BLOOM

"Plot not notable ... distinguished by a superior diction ... the most mature and assured in handling words and materials ... a feeling poise ... impressive because of its wholesome simplicity and unassumed candor.

CONTEST NOTES

There were seventy-two entries in the short story division. Fifty-three poems were submitted.

The work of the preliminary judges entailed a choice of ten poems and ten short stories from the bulk of contest material. These judges spent hours of painstaking labor in the evaluation and the preparation of the final list.

Dr. Lauren King of Wheaton College and two of his associates judged the first ten stories. The first, second, and third stories were rated closely together. Richard Hazlett's "Help not Wanted" was in a class by itself. There was nothing distinctive about "A Day of Life" by Margaret Fancher, "Ramblings" by Joyce Flint, and Marcia Forsythe's "For this Cause". Harris Earl's "What a Shame", "Reversed Reaction" by Oliver Karker and "No Not That" by Phyllis Nelson took the last three places.

The first prize story was chosen by both the local and final judges for that position.

Top Eleven Poems

The eleven final poems represented five contestants; four of these were women. Coralie Allen had four poems in the final group, Alice Willis three, Mary Dukeshire two, Cecile Hapeman, and Harold Crosser one each.

The judges in the poetry contest were Miss Francesca La Sorte, Mrs. Ardith B. Burns, and Mrs. Erma A. Thomas of Rushford, New York. Mrs. Thomas, a Houghton alumna, is the author of *The Man of the Hour*, a biography of Dr. James Luckey.

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BETTY KEENAN

My name is Elsbeth Glass. I have seen ninety-six bleak Vermont winters, and ninety-six golden Indian summers, ninety-six purple and green springtimes. I have watched the Dorset lilacs bud and bloom and wither and come back again the next lovely spring, only to repeat the cycle. I used to wonder why they were so insistent when they knew their only possible fate. I still wonder.

Once the splendid, silent sun shone on auburn waves; that same sun shines still, but on thin white hairs. And the sun, the sun of so many years, shines still on the same green carpet in the same stone house occupied by the same soul and body for nearly a century. I love Dorset, and I love her people, and I love life dearly, but when an old, old lady sits in her parlor all alone watching for the sting of death that even a poet's versing does not keep from stinging, she is likely to think of what might have been if she had taken the road that she didn't choose. On this, my ninety-sixth birthday, I allow my perfectly sound mind to meander back across the span of years and remember those precious, hurtful, seconds of youth that fled from my reach so quickly and so completely.

Mine is not an easy story to tell for it goes back to the year eighteen thirty when a blustery November wind took my soul to earth and that of my mother to heaven. Death by childbirth was a tragedy then as it is now, but it was not an unusual incident, especially when the woman was like an orchid taken from a Boston hot house and placed on a rocky, Vermont potato patch. They say that she was very beautiful and that she lived with an intensity befitting a ... but that does not enter into the immediate story and I must not allow my mind to wander as it is prone to do.

My father was a seafaring man. What to do with a motherless baby girl was a problem for a young and grief-stricken man. The answer came in the spring of thirty-one when a spinster-aunt volunteered her services. Arrangements were made to take baby Elsbeth to the great old farm where Aunt Jessica already harbored one motherless young nephew and a variety of animals which she nursed with tender care and great anxiety.

We were a funny, compact, little group, shaking around in our big house which lacked only an uncle to make it really home, and we loved each other very much, although we never said so. I guess we just took one another for granted as we did everything else. David, that was the young cousin who helped absorb half of Aunt Jess' lavish

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Pioneer

This gentle land is lovely, that I know,
And yet I see within my secret eye
A mountain where the pines rise, row on row,
To greet at last the sulky winter sky.
O would that I could leave this smiling land
To climb that dark, forbidding slope once more—
Could feel the trees' rough bark beneath my hand
And smell the leaf-mold of the forest's floor.
The wind that blows across the mountainside
Would stir my heart most strangely with its wail,
And through my veins would flow an urgent tide
That swept me ever up the rocky trail,
Until I stood upon the utmost height
With nought between me and God's burning sight.

Alice Willis

HOUGHTON STAR

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As the Lilacs Bloom

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ly bestowed kindness, and love, was my very best friend and my only childhood companion. We hunted fool's gold along the creek bed together, and we made a baby lake by damming up the trickle of water from the little stream. Together we adventured through *Robinson Crusoe*, and we cried with David Copperfield and Nicholas Nickleby. When we were eight, David smoked a pipe of tobacco down under the bridge and I found him there, green and afraid, but I never told; only helped him what I could with my limited knowledge of such affairs.

One day, Aunt Jess took us to a wedding in the town. It was our very first one and we were so impressed that we even forgot to squirm around in the hot pew. That night after we finished repeating our prayers together as we usually did, David said, "I think it would be a good idea if we got married when we get old, don't you?"

I agreed with him gravely, and that night the acorn of the mighty oak was planted.

... Three months later our salty tears mingled over a smooth, gray casket. . . . Aunt Jess was in the casket.

Comfort was not in the carnation scented air. . . we were not hungry for the chocolate frosted cakes and the baked beans that sympathising neighbors brought in. Aunt Jess had been home and family and life to us, and now she was gone and nothing but evil could come to us without her, that we knew with great surety.

Soon the funeral rustle was over and our Aunt Jess was a piece of native granite on a windy hillside which possessed many similar blocks of stone. . . . At first we made daily pilgrimages to the little cemetery on the hill, mourning her death and speculating on our futures. These were stopped when two puzzled and wifeless fathers came to collect their motherless offspring. After some debate, a few significant glances, and too many secrets between the older men, David was sent to a Southern military school and I went to a school for girls in Boston.

We stood for the last time on the steps of the old farm house, miserable and alone.

"I'll see you again pretty soon so don't cry," said David tearfully. . . .

And I said nothing at all. The carriages and fathers came quickly and after more brief and general goodbyes, we drove off in opposite directions, leaving the kind woman who had cared for us in the last few weeks to heave a sigh of

relief. . . and lock up the house which would soon be sold at public auction.

School was fun, a bore, a tearful, fearful experience for a ten-year-old, and yet I rather enjoyed it. I never thought of writing to David and I guess that the thought never occurred to him either. Besides, I was very busy and only a lurking shadow of curly brown hair and loving blue eyes would even make me wake up and say a prayer for my very best friend. . . and sometimes I didn't pray at all. Nobody made me and I really had nothing to pray for anyhow.

And so I grew tall, and went home for vacations with my father, whom I was growing to love a great deal. And he was proud of me because everybody would say, "Who is that lovely girl?" He was kind to me and good to me and we lived in a brick house with trees around it, and we had a colored maid-mammy who was just like those in books I had read. I was very happy and why shouldn't I have been? . . . Still there was an acorn in the bottom of my heart. Sometimes it grew very heavy, but mostly it lay dormant.

When in the spring of forty-seven, I was graduated from Miss Porter's school in Boston, father made a suggestion that sounded particularly dull. He wanted to go back to Dorset where he was born and where I was also born. He wanted to buy the old homestead back and settle down there, he said.

I had come to like Boston and the numerous parties to which we were invited. Next season was to mark my debut at the cotillion in the governor's mansion, and even this season there were escorts and plays and a certain amount of social life.

I started to say these things when there flitted across my memory a medley of windy cemeteries, and blocks of granite, and loving blue eyes, and a small boy comforting a smaller girl of so great loneliness. I, in my selfish quest for little pleasures, had forgotten the impelling forces in my life.

We closed up the town house about a week later and started the long trip from Boston to Dorset in a fine carriage. Accommodations were poor in the little town and so we continued on to the nearby city where an aunt lived. In this city was located the state university which was admitting girls to the regular courses for the first time in its history. When Aunt Julia had greeted us warmly as it is fitting to greet distant relatives, we were told that the boys would be in shortly from their classes. It seems that childless Aunt Julia was now boarding

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Honorable Mention

SHORT STORY

RICHARD HAZLETT
MARGARET FANCHER

JOYCE FLINT
MARCIA FORSYTHE

POETRY

CECILE HAPEMAN

CONTEST NOTES . . .

(Continued from Page One)

Some of the pen names were more ingenious and original than the accompanying submissions. Notta Nauthor admits the worst. Vic Tim felt she was being persecuted. Then there was Merrie Chatters, Matin Belle, Miss Nomer, Dee Ceased, Miss Demeanor, and Gremlin Girl.

H C

BUT THE JUDGES . . .

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the deadline date and then . . . hours of writing under pressure . . . a great deal of hurry and no speed . . . are you even sure you did the proof reading . . . remember Webster should be consulted for connotations and spellings.

But the judges . . .

"You're a Good Kid!"

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fellows like you. You're all right." The stranger lay back on the grass again and stretched out his whole short body. Suddenly a bird flew low over the spot where he was lying, and the stranger followed it with his eyes, turning over on his side to watch its flight. "Wouldn't you like to be able to fly like that," he said very quietly. "To be able to soar away from your troubles, to be free, to be uninhibited in your actions, yet not to be plagued with human vice so that your uninhibited state is a bane to all society?"

Howie looked the stranger over more carefully. "For crying out loud," he thought. "This guy is no bum." The stranger was lying there quietly, looking at the tree that spread over him. His eyes were quieter now, less far away. "What makes you say that nobody loves anybody?" Howie asked.

The stranger smiled. "I did say that, didn't I? It is strange that in all this beautiful country nobody loves anybody." His eyes grew narrow. "Am I right, kid?"

Howie kept his eyes steadily in the gaze of the stranger who was sitting in front of him now. "I'm afraid I can't agree with you, sir," he said.

The stranger smiled slowly again. His eyes dropped to the ground as he said quietly, "Thank you—sir!"

Howie crumpled the wax paper and the bag in which his lunch had been wrapped, and then finished the last few swallows of milk in the quart bottle he had with him. "Do you like milk?" the stranger asked.

"Yes," said Howie. "I can't get enough of it. I guess I must drink two or three quarts a day. I bet I eat pretty near a quart of ice-cream a day, too."

"You work there?" the stranger asked, pointing to the dairy.

"Yea," said Howie. "I'm working there for the summer." Howie tried to seem friendly, but he watched a little nervously as the stranger appeared gradually to lose the quiet, friendly look that had been coming to his eyes. The man was restless. He kept leaning back and sitting up, constantly changing his position until he was very close to Howie.

"What is wrong with this guy?" Howie thought. He felt, to see if he were still sitting on his wallet. The stranger seemed again to be looking through Howie over into the dairy beyond him. "It is a swell place to work in there," Howie said, to break the uncomfortable silence. The stranger paid no attention to the boy, but continued to watch the dairy absently. "See that machine going around in there?" asked Howie. "That is what puts the caps on the bottles."

The stranger did not answer, but looked down at Howie's empty milk bottle for a moment. "You're a good kid," he said, "I like you." He paused a moment, and then added quietly, "You drink milk, and I drink booze." The stranger's face was so near to that of the boy that Howie drew back a little from the man's eyes. There was no smell of liquor on his breath.

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Second Prize Poem

Resurrection

Beneath my hands the soil is warm and soft;
I feel the sun, a halo round my head.
Its rays, warm gold, shine through the tulip's bloom—
A stained glass window, vital glowing red.

One dark fall day, I piled the cold earth deep
Upon a bulb, a shrunken, lifeless thing
That lay, a frozen corpse, until it heard
The low, compelling notes—the voice of spring.

And now my eyes are wet, because I know
That from that ugly corpse this flower burst out—
It lives again transformed: thus He who died,
And rose again, has healed me now of doubt.

Alice Willis

"You're a Good Kid!"

(Continued from Page Two)

There was a long silence as Howie watched the man stretch back on the grass again and close his eyes. "Were you in Hawaii?" the stranger asked.

"No, I never was there," answered Howie.

The stranger sat up and looked at the boy again. "You weren't there?" he asked. Howie shook his head. The stranger smiled absently again. You're a good kid." He lay back on the grass, but suddenly sat up again. "Did you ever kill anybody?" His eyes were fierce now.

"No," said Howie uneasily. "I told you I never killed anybody."

The stranger looked unbelievably into Howie's eyes. "Did you know Jack Sharkey?" he asked.

"No," said Howie, "I do not believe I ever knew him."

"You don't know Jack Sharkey? You know Jack Dempsey, don't you?"

"I know who they are, of course," answered Howie, "but I never saw either of them."

The stranger looked puzzled. "You're a pretty smart kid, though," he said. "I like you." The stranger looked down at the grass for several minutes. Suddenly he looked up again. "Punch me in the mouth," he said abruptly, bringing his face up near the boy's.

"I wouldn't want to do that," said the boy as steadily as possible.

The stranger looked a little annoyed, but he lay back on the grass again. "You're a good kid," he said. His eyes seemed to lose their fierceness as he turned to watch a robin fly low over the lawn. "I saw a man kill a pheasant up the street here a little ways, about an hour ago," he said very quietly. Then fiercely, "I could have wrung his neck." The stranger's hands were clenched as if choking the life out of a body. "The murderer!" he whispered.

Howie looked at the distance between himself and the dairy apprehensively. "He can't do anything to me out here," he thought.

The stranger turned fiercely to Howie. "Did you ever kill anybody?" he asked again.

Howie shook his head. "I never did," he said.

The stranger's eyes softened, and he lay back on the grass again. "You're a good kid." After a long pause he opened his eyes. "I have a wife and four kids," he said.

"Don't you love your wife?" asked Howie.

"Yea, sure I love my wife. She is a school teacher."

"Then why do you say that nobody loves anybody if you love your wife?"

The stranger looked annoyed. "Nobody loves anybody," he said wildly. His eyes were blank. "Did you ever kill anybody?"

Howie shook his head and the stranger leaned back again. "You're a good kid."

In a few minutes the stranger turned to Howie, his eyes friendly and intelligent again. "Have you done much reading in psychology?" he asked.

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Second Prize Story

"UNDELIVERED"

Meritorious because... "clean, precise handling"... epistolary method... envelope denouement... eternal theme... almost a short story.

ELLEN GIEBEL

Mrs. William L. Nixon
58 Laundale Court
Laceyville, Ohio

S/Sgt. William L. Nixon
32132152
6th General Hospital, APO 746
% Postmaster, New York, N. Y.

February 4, 1944

Dear Bill,

The time has come when I feel that I can no longer put off writing this letter. I have dreaded the moment when it would be necessary for me to write you this and to put down in ink all my thoughts and feelings concerning this matter. Believe me it is hard; but I feel that I can no longer conscientiously put it off. I shall be as brief as possible in stating the case, and I hope that you will find it possible to listen with an understanding mind.

To begin with, last Christmas when I was visiting the Killgrews I was introduced to a Bob Wainwright, a young draftsman working in the Brewster Plant. We were paired off for two or three functions and became very well acquainted. We found that we had much in common. He is fond of social life like myself, enjoys music, and tries his hand at writing as I do. By the time my visit was drawing to a close I felt that things were getting a bit too serious. Not feeling that I was being fair to you, I told him that it would be bet-

ter if he didn't try to see me again.

I had been back home only two weeks when I found myself missing him very much. Then one night he drove up. Well, from then on his visits grew to be very frequent. Several times I told him that we were not being fair to you and that he shouldn't come any more; but he would not listen and insisted on coming anyway.

After a while I gave up trying to refuse him for I found myself deeply in love with him. I now know that he, only, can make my life happy and complete.

I guess that is about all there is to tell to the story, Bill. I know this is going to hurt you; but I think you realize as I do how we have always been mismatched. You do not care for social life, know nothing about music, and can only think of your medical work.

I hope that you will see this all in a clear light and feel as I do that it is all for the best.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth

S/Sgt. Wm. L. Nixon
32132152
6th General Hospital, APO 765
% Postmaster, New York, N. Y.

Mrs. William L. Nixon
58 Laundale Court
Laceyville, Ohio

February 18, 1944

Dear Betty,

Your letter came to me as a great shock. I had to read it through twice to believe the words; and even now it doesn't seem real.

It seems as though it were just yesterday that you and I were planning for our future together. We had our castles all built high. Then came the war and Uncle Sam's plans postponed some of our plans for the time being.

However, we married immediately and I never shall forget those eight beautiful months spent with you before I was shipped across. Life seemed to hold so much in store for me with my future in

medicine and you by my side as a constant help and joy.

Living apart from you these ten months has not been easy, and my work has been hard and strenuous. But when the hours of loneliness and discouragement came, thoughts of you and our future were always there to cheer me.

Now life seems so fruitless, so bleak, and bare! I ask myself how life can be so cruel but can find no answer. As it has happened to countless others so it has happened to me.

No, Betty, I cannot find it in my heart to blame you entirely; and my pleadings would be useless if you have already made up your mind.

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As The Lilacs Bloom

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three "med" students from the university and that they were "just like sons".

Looking at father and dropping the vague and rather coy mannerisms she usually affected, Aunt Julia said, "Elisbeth should remember the one, because it's that David whom Jessica took in when his mother died."

"His mother was Elsa Fairfield, wasn't she?" said father strangely and quietly... and Aunt Julia quickly affirmed the statement, then with studied carelessness changed the conversational drift.

"I don't know why, but my hands were wet and shaky as I went to the gay room my aunt had given over to me. I washed in cold water and changed into a becoming new dress made especially for the trip. The mirror said that the dress was more than becoming, but as I placed my belongings in the drawers of my chest, flashbacks of my childhood insisted on bounding back and forth, back and forth, making me grow steadily more nervous. I finished my tasks and once more prepared to go down to dinner.

As I started toward the door, it opened. David was standing there and his hair was brown and curly, his eyes very blue and loving. My feet wouldn't move, and my heart couldn't beat because it was all stifled with emotion. There stood the David I had known; and there stood all my girlish dreams. He was tall and broad shouldered, so very handsome—and as he moved toward me, I could see that he was lithe and graceful.

"I told you I'd see you pretty soon. Now I've kept my word," he said in a voice resembling the little boy David's, yet very different.

"David, dear David," and that was all that I could say, so I extended my hand in Miss Porter's best style, and he accepted it as any Admiral Farragut student would; but no one had ever said that a handclasp could affect a person as that one affected me and seemed to affect him.

"Dinner's ready,"... Aunt Julia hurled the words up the staircasing and partially broke the spell. He released my hand and we went slowly down the stairs to dinner.

... And the next few days and weeks followed in a gay dervish. We walked the treesy streets on starry evenings and loved the blooming lilacs; we talked and read together as we had in childhood; we remembered and our spirits clung together as we did; we were silent together, understanding completely each other's mood. Still, we were swept along passively, saying nothing of the vast current dragging us and doing nothing about it for fear it would break like a bubble that is hollow.

All this time father had been saying little, but he appeared to be worried... about something which I did not understand. As we were placidly eating our dessert at the dinner table one evening, father rose and said, "Elisbeth, we are leaving for Boston a week from today. I have changed my plans. I hope that this will not inconvenience you too much."

It was a stilted little speech and very
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As The Lilacs Bloom

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short, but it killed my heart for an instant. Then it kindled an indignant flame. I looked at David and he looked at me, his blue eyes loving but fierce.

That night David and I walked farther than usual and in silence. Suddenly and without preliminaries he said, "You do love me, don't you?"

"Oh yes, David." The words were breathed softly, not uttered.

"Will you marry me?" . . . but he did not wait for my answer.

Instead he pulled me to him, not at all gently, and held me so close to him that I couldn't breathe, and kissed me. I shan't describe that kiss to you for it is a most sacred possession, and I keep it in a remote treasure box where no one but I can see it. And sometimes I bring it out and fondle it and remember the passion and the earnestness behind it. Then I replace it like a shining Spanish dollar, in its plush case.

That night we decided to tell my father that we were going to be married very soon. We thought that he would be happy with us, and yet we were a little afraid of what he would say. Perhaps it was premonition.

David went to my father the next night to tell him, or more rightly, to ask for my hand. Father did not say a word to David while he made the request. He just sat there in silence and listened. When David had finished he stood up and spoke to both of us these indelible words.

"Your mother was my first cousin, David," he said. "She was lovely and good. When I was away from home and working my way through school, she was the only friend I had. I fell in love with her. I wanted to marry her but I couldn't, because the church could never approve a marriage so close, and because I had no money. There appeared to be no way out for us, and so we made one. Then we learned you were to be born, and we aimed to save Elsa's name if nothing else. She married David Fairfield, the man you call father. Because he loved her and always had and was willing to take her at any cost, he married her when she was pregnant with another man's child. I was the cause of her death and you are the result of it. You are my child as much as Elsbeth is. You and Elsbeth are half bro-

Third prize poem

More Reasonable

I do not ask for the moon, my own;
How could I send thee so far
To reach through the night for a satellite,
While tiptoeing on a star?

I do not ask for the moon, my own,
Nor send thee beyond my sight;
Lest, leaving, you find the distance unkind,
And the glare of the sky too bright.

I do not ask for the moon, my own;
She is cruel, and white, and cold;
Let her reign above, and to prove thy love,
I ask but one moonbeam to hold.

Mary Dukeshire

LOCAL JUDGES

POETRY

MR. SHIRLEY BABBIT
DR. PIERCE E. WOOLSEY
MRS. STEPHEN PAINE

SHORT STORY

MRS. GEORGE MORELAND
MRS. MARY NEIGHBOUR
MR. AND MRS. LE ROY FANCHER

ther and sister, but no outsider has ever guessed this or ever will. Now you know the truth, and now you know what you cannot do, don't you?"

. . . I went back to Boston and David finished medical school at the university. After graduation, he went out to Iowa to take a position. Tho' I never again saw him, I later heard that he married a nurse from his hospital and had four children. Yes, he was successful, quite some.

. . . As for me, father died and I took the old farmhouse in Dorset, which he left me, and built a life around it.

No, I never toddled a grandchild on my knee, or saw life of mine give life to another. I never celebrated a golden wedding anniversary.

And now I'm ninety-six and I have lived and let live, and I have watched all the century's lilacs bud, and bloom, and waste away, and come again, because even though they know their lonesome fate they love life enough to face it over and over again.

That's the way I feel. I wish I could face life over and over and over again.

HC

Nocturne

Quietly there!
Please just keep
That laughter softer —
He's most asleep.

He's had me
Running every minute.
If he sees anything
Next thing he's in it.

Achoo! Now
You did it!
Phyllis Nelson

"UNDELIVERED"

(Continued from Page Three)

It is hard for me to say more and so until I hear from you again —

Regretfully yours,
Bill

March 10, 1944

Dear Bill,

Again I am confronted with the problem of where to start. But I guess the best place to begin is to ask you the question, "Can you ever forgive me?"

For two weeks Bob's visits had been getting less and less frequent. I had heard some rumors about him which I didn't like and told him so and asked him if they were true. He admitted them and said it was none of my business. Hereupon, we quarreled — not once but two or three times, during the evening. Finally, when it came to parting he left with the clear understanding that it was all over between us.

I was angry clear through that night and couldn't sleep a wink. Towards dawn I began to realize what a fool I had been. I had thrown away your deep devoted love and hurt you unmercifully in exchange for a passing affection of a

cheap shallow love.

Oh, Bill! What a fool I've been! It cuts me deeply every time I think of the pain and heartache that my selfish desires have brought upon you.

Could you possibly find any forgiveness or any love left for one who has treated you so cruelly? My earnest desire is to make up to you ten-fold for the great sorrow I have caused you.

I will be anxiously awaiting your reply.

Hopefully,
Betty

ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Washington, D. C.

March 20, 1944

Mrs. William L. Nixon
58 Laundale Court
Laceyville, Ohio

Dear Mrs. Nixon:

We regret to inform you that your husband, S/Sgt. William L. Nixon, was killed in action March 8, 1944.

Sincerely,
H. Stimson, Sec. of War

Mrs. Wm. L. Nixon
58 Laundale Court
Laceyville, Ohio

UNDELIVERED

S/Sgt. William L. Nixon
32132152
6th General Hospital, AP0 765
% Postmaster, New York, N. Y.

"You're a Good Kid!"

(Continued from Page Three)

"Why, I have taken a couple of courses of it in college," the boy answered. "I have only an elementary smattering of it, though."

"That is interesting," said the stranger. "I have done some reading in the field myself. I was never able to go to college, but I married a college graduate, and I have done a vast amount of reading in a large number of subjects. The field of psychology occupies my interest right now." The man smiled ruefully, and his eyes became slowly blank again. "Do you know where Pearl Harbor is?" asked the stranger.

"Yea, sure. It is in Hawaii. That is where the Japs attacked us." Howie was a little relieved at the new course of the conversation, but suddenly the muscles of the stranger's face tightened, and his hands clenched again.

"Are you a Jap?" he asked.

"Who, me?" asked Howie, surprised. "What do you mean, am I a Jap? My skin isn't yellow, is it?"

Slowly the stranger relaxed. "No, I guess it isn't at that," he said. He lay back on the grass, "I like you. You are a good smart kid."

"For crying out loud, what is the matter with this guy," wondered Howie

nervously as he watched the stranger lying there perfectly still. "The guy must be crazy."

"I have a wife and four kids," the man interrupted Howie's thoughts quietly. "I have a wife and four kids but I enlisted before the beginning of the war . . . They sent me to Hawaii. My family came with me . . . No, you told me you were never there. You are a good kid." There was a long pause as the man lay quietly, and Howie could hear the dairy machinery as the noise of the bottles came across the lawn. "Say kid!" Howie could not see the stranger's eyes, for they were closed as he lay there on the grass. "Say kid, when you were studying psychology did you ever read much about subjects like, well, say amnesias and phobias and delusions?"

"Not too much," answered Howie. "I've never taken too much in that line."

Suddenly the man stood up and looked around himself absently "What is twenty-five times twenty-five?"

"Twenty-five times twenty-five?" Howie started to do multiplication in his head, while the stranger watched his face.

"Don't you know?" the stranger asked.

(continued on page five)

Disappointment

The gathering night lay darksome round about,
And all the trees cast shadows on the ground,
The darkened pools were sheltering their trout,
And all was still with neither move nor sound:
When slowly, from above a distant mound,
Arose the round and full October moon,
And suddenly a baying hound
Lifted up his head to moan a doleful tune.
Not far away he spied a scurrying coon —
Enchanted by the flirting of its tail,
He started after it, but not too soon,
So that he stopped to utter a sad wail,
Because he could not catch the hastening creature,

(Continued at bottom of page)

Dear Diary—

NO. I

BY IRENE ESTABROOK

April 11, 1944

Dear Diary: Such a lot has happened today that I won't be able to put it all down. Some of it I never want to think of again. The way Jim kept hanging around that new girl as if he didn't even know I was watching him. Heavens! You'd think he would realize that he belongs to me. Why our parents promised us to each other when we were three weeks old. Just because he's two whole days older than I am he doesn't need to think he can boss me around. I'll just show him!

That new girl, Mary Lou Smythe, thinks she's so smart the way she gets all the fellows' attention. Her blond hair—huh, it looks like straw, and I bet she greases it because it lies down so flat all the time. And the way she rolls those big, blue eyes. They're so big they look like saucers. And she dares to get away with wearing make-up and nail polish. Just because she's from New York. Well, I'm going to show them. Dick Foster's been asking me to go to the football game with him Saturday, and I'm going to go. I'll show that James Townsend Comstock, Jr. that I'm not jealous.

O, diary, I wish mother would let me take her lipstick to school tomorrow; and maybe if I ask Jean she'll let me use her nail polish. They should realize that I'm growing up!

April 12, 1944

Dear Diary: Today I wore my wine velvet to school. Mother doesn't know it, because I took it off just as soon as I got home (she was at Red Cross), and she'll never see the spot I got on it where I spilled the nail polish. I sneaked a little of her Evening in Paris perfume as well. A little spilled on her dresser, but I sopped it up with her hankies so it wasn't wasted. She told me I couldn't wear anything but natural nail polish. Mary Lou wears a darker shade, though, so I took Jean's Garnet

this morning. It looked lovely with my dress, but how am I going to get it off before the family see it—they had dinner at Foster's tonight.

Dick asked me again if I'd go with him Saturday, and I said, "Yes." Maybe he's better than Jim after all. Jim was with Mary Lou again. She had on a blue jumper—I heard Jim tell her that it just matched her eyes. He said it was practical. Hmm, he used to tell me it was nice to see a girl around school without the usual skirt or jumper and blouse. Diary, do you suppose I could bleach my light brown hair to blonde?

April 13, 1944

Dear Diary: Well, today was the big game. Dick came for me this afternoon, I wore my new jumper that mother bought in town this morning. Jean let me wear her tweed coat—it's warmer than mine. We got to the stadium and there was Mary Lou Smythe in a fur coat! But the boy with her wasn't Jim at all—it was the rich Higgins boy from the other side of town. I kept watching for Jim all during the game, but I didn't see him anywhere. I was pretty miserable when the game was over. I didn't even care that Cornell lost. Dick wanted to go down to the "Pantry" for some hamburgers, so we went, but I didn't have a very good time. It was noisy in there, and Dick wanted to be with the gang—Jim and I always sat in the back booth by ourselves and talked.

When we got home Jim was sitting on our front porch waiting for me. When he saw me with Dick's face got red, and I could see that he was angry. Dick left right away, and I asked Jim why he hadn't gone to the game. He said I promised last summer to go to all the games with him, and that when he came after me I was gone. Then he got up and walked away without waiting for me to explain. O, Diary, do you think he'll ever get over being angry with me? If he doesn't I'll just die!

(Continued on page six)

Disappointment . . .

That is, I mean, it was too hard to reach her.

"You're a Good Kid!"

(Continued from page four)

"I haven't figured it up yet," answered the boy.

"Look," said the stranger, "I'll tell you a short way of doing it. What is two times two?"

"Four."

"Yea, that's right. You're a good kid." The stranger was counting off each step on his fingers. "Now what is three times three?"

"Six."

"Now add one to the highest number until you get the answer."

"You mean four times four is sixteen and five times five is twenty-five?"

"No," said the stranger patiently. "Add one to the highest number until you get the answer."

"I am afraid I do not understand what you are driving at," said Howie.

psychology to me," said Howie. "I never read anything like it in my psychology classes."

The stranger frowned. "This is not the kind of psychology which you read. This is the kind they ask you."

"What do you mean, they ask you?"

The stranger shook his head vaguely. "You're a good kid, just the same, even if you do not know psychology." Suddenly he lay back on the grass again. "I wish I were dead." The stranger broke a long silence. "This is a lovely old tree, isn't it?"

"Yea," said Howie, "It certainly is."

"Do you like beautiful things?" asked the stranger, looking at the boy.

"Yes, I do."

The stranger reached up toward the boy's face. "You have a spot of something on your cheek," he said. "Let me take it off." Howie drew back a little, and the stranger looked into his eyes, "You are afraid of me, aren't you?" he asked quietly.

"Yes, I guess I am, a little," answered the boy.

"Why are you afraid of me?" The stranger's eyes were piercing.

"I never met anyone like you before," Howie answered steadily.

"Do you dare let me brush that spot off your cheek?"

"Yea, I guess so. Go ahead."

The stranger watched Howie's eyes as he reached out and flicked Howie's cheek. "You are a good kid," he said. "How old are you?"

"I'm twenty."

"When are you going into the army?"

"I don't know. I've been lucky so far. I'm in school. I'm just working here to get a little money."

"Didn't you ever fight?" The stranger's eyes were becoming vague again. He was nervous and restless as he sat there.

"No, I never did."

"Did you ever kill anybody?" The stranger's eyes were piercing.

"I told you I never did."

The stranger quieted down. "Yea, I guess you did. You're a good kid. I

(continued on page six)

FINAL JUDGES

POETRY

MRS. HUGH THOMAS

ARDITH B. BURNS

FRANCESCA LA SORTE

SHORT STORY

DR. LAUREN A. KING

The stranger sighed. "I'll try to explain it to you. It is very easy." He paused thoughtfully. "Let's see if I can make it clear. The answer you want is twenty-five times twenty-five."

"Yea," said Howie.

"Well, you start with two times two and add one until you get the answer, just like I told you. Do you see what I mean?"

"I'm afraid that I do not," answered the boy.

The stranger was annoyed. "This is psychology," he said. "Don't you know anything about psychology?"

"You mean that getting twenty-five times twenty-five is psychology?"

"Yea, you take two times two and add one to the highest number until you get the answer."

"It sounds more like arithmetic than

I'm Eighteen Now

I face a world to me almost unknown
My spirit ebbs, then surges at the sight;
I sigh to think that I shall soon be grown,
And deep within there lurks a sense of fright.
I have so many plans and hopes and dreams,
So many fond ambitions unfulfilled;
The burning fire of youth within me screams
To do great deeds: my spirit soars—I'm thrilled,
Determined that in future years I'll find
Some better ways to gladden humankind. . .
But mine is still a single untrod life,
I'm the only one in this vast realm of strife;
I feel my courage sink, my faith grows wan.
God, take my hand in Thine and lead me on.

Cecile Hapeman

Dear Diary -

(Continued from page five)

NO. II

BY BETTY KEENAN

Jan. 1, 1930 (seven years old)

Dear Diary: I got you for Christmas from Uncle Louie, and I am going to write in you every nite of the year. There is room for five years on each page, but I write so big I got to use all the space for one night so I guess Uncle Louie's gotta give me a new one next year. I didn't get awful much for Christmas this year, but I am satisfied 'cause I think we are poorer than we used to be. Even though I know there's not a Santa Claus, I pretended that I thought my stuff was from him 'cause it makes mother and father happier. They think I'm still a baby. Now there's no more room so I must close for tonight — John

Jan. 1, 1937 (fourteen years old)

Dear Diary: Another diary from Uncle Louie for Christmas. Maybe I'll do a better job of keeping this one than I did the others. How I'll ever fill up the space I don't know because nothing happens to me any more.

Dear Diary -

NO. III

BY JEANETTE FRIESS

June 20, 1928

Dear Diary: Sometimes I like Buddy real well, and sometimes I don't. We had fun today though. Did we ever catch the crickets? We musta had fifty hundred of 'em in one can. I showed him how to do it too. He just tried to catch a lot lifting the board up with one hand and catching crickets with the other, but I showed him how to flop the board up in a hurry and plop on the crickets with both hands. I caught more butterflies than he did too. Boys are slow pokes sometimes anyhow. Ma made me do dishes twice today. I spose she thinks I'll forget how. I wish I could knock all that crazy old stuff off our walls. Everytime I hit them I scratch myself all up just like I did today when I fell off the chair. Oh, boy, I guess Buddy knows I ain't scared to take a dare. We was digging angleworms out back of their garage today, and he dared me to eat one. I ain't no scardy cat so I just ate a half a one. Well, Ma says I gotta go to bed, so good night.

Sept. 17, 1928

Dear Diary: Well, was I scared today? At recess this morning Jimmie Smith came running back into the "dog house" (portable school building) hollering "fire, fire." I thought sure the big school house was on fire. I ran back into the room and got my books and put on my sweater and cap some way and started running home, a bawling. I don't care. I'm scared of fire, and I ain't gonna have my books burned up. Well, I met Ma and Aunt Garnet coming across the lot toward me. Ma comforted me and said it was the filling station and not the school house. I went back then and watched the station burn. I could kick that old red-headed Donald to pieces. He chased us girls all around the school yard this afternoon trying to

I had a permanent cap put on my tooth I broke last fall. Yesterday I practiced talking down low, but my voice still goes up when I forget. It sounds so childish, that no one knows I have grown up.

Some numbskull gave me an erector set for Christmas. I loved the one I got when I was seven, but I'm too old for that stuff now. John

Jan. 1, 1944 (twenty-one years old)

Dear Diary: Uncle Louie gave you to me for Christmas. Seems to be a habit with him, and for once I'm glad because the kakhi binding makes things official. When I was a kid I used to always start in on Jan. 1 with great intentions. This year I guess I'll keep things in a kind of journal to give to my grandchildren — that is if I ever come back and get around to making arrangements.

War is a grim affair, but thank God I can fight, and, thank God, I will fight until I die or they die.

Funny, but I love the Japs tonight just like everybody else, and yet I'm going out to kill them — hope this mess comes straight sometime — spoils a fellas thinking and living and loving — everything — just like kid-days — five years space gone in one night. John

kiss us. I don't like any old boys, especially red-heads kissing me. Ma had some of that smelly old sauerkraut for supper. Oh, I don't see how anyone can like rotten cabbage like that. Ho hum time for bed again. Good night.

Oct. 1, 1928

Dear Diary: Buddy's a funny kid sometimes. Ma told me he came over this afternoon after I went to school. He should have known I was gone. But she said he hollered "Mis Friess, Mis Friess, where's yer girl?" Ma said, "She's gone to school Buddy." Then what do you suppose he said. He just up and said "Tain't no sense to take off your skin and dance around in your bones." I guess I like Buddy pretty good tonight, but this is enough. Good night.

- H C -

LEAVE US NO LONGER WRITE POETRY

In olden days it used to was
That anyone could use a 'twas,
But nowadays the way things is
I cannot even use a 'tis.

*First Prize Poem**Violin*

Oh, vocal voice, that catches moods of men —
The lilting tunes, the solemn sounds express
His thoughts, his fears, his griefs — you effervesce
With boundless joy as does the warbling wren.
You have the mighty gift of tongues, and when
You speak to those of any land or dress
They comprehend; you speak with such finesse —
Your thought not bound by words as my poor pen.
Most versatile of instruments, you play
The songs of strife, of war, of peace, of love,
You sing of dawn, of night, of break of day
Of joy and hope, of pain and grief — withal
You sing more solemn thoughts of heaven above.

Coralie Allen

Autumn Symphony

Here on the edge of nothing stands the tree,
Outlined against a wall of silver mist,
Its boughs emerging in a tracery
Of sable hue; the leaves which long have kissed
These boughs are loosing now their hold,
But still they fall unwilling to the earth,
Reluctant to surrender to the cold
Without a last bright show of winsome mirth;
And each, in haste before it flutters down,
Has stolen from the day a bit of sun,
And from this fabric stitched a golden gown
To make its final hour a lovely one;
So we enjoy an autumn symphony
Of flaming gold and darkest ebony.

Alice Willis

"You're a Good Kid!"

(Continued from page five)

kill anybody?" he hissed.

Howie made a strong effort not to flinch. "No, I never did," he said.

The stranger relaxed. "You're a good kid." He stretched back on the grass. "I wish I were dead," he sighed.

Howie looked at his watch. It was time to go to work. "Well, so long," he said as casually as possible. "I gotta go to work now." He stood up and started for the dairy.

The stranger started, "Yea, so long, kid. You are a good kid. Yea, so long. . . ." He watched Howie cross the lawn and enter the front of the dairy. Just then a bird flew low over the lawn, and the man followed it with his eyes as it soared up again into the sky and over the trees that composed the horizon.

Howie was watching the man from inside of the dairy. The stranger stood up without taking his eyes from the spot on which the bird had disappeared. Slowly the man turned and looked up and down the street. Then he started down the sidewalk to the town. The stranger walked slowly at first, but before he was out of sight Howie noticed that there was a spring in his step. The stranger turned the corner walking energetically into town.

like you." There was a long pause. "I'm thirty."

"Only thirty?" Howie blurted the words. "You must be more than that!"

"I've got a wife and four kids." The stranger was dogged and listless.

"Do they live here in town?"

"No!" The stranger screamed.

Howie was startled, and changed the subject rapidly. "Are you working now?" He was really intrigued by the peculiarity of the stranger.

The stranger put an arm in front of Howie's face. The muscles were hard and knotted. He opened his hand, and Howie saw tough calouses. "See that?" remarked the stranger. "Do I work?" He looked into Howie's eyes.

"Yea, I guess you do. I guess you work a good deal harder than I do."

The stranger laughed shortly. Then he smiled grimly. "I imagine I do at that." The man's eyes were smiling and friendly again. Howie noticed that they were a clear gray. There was nothing of the distant, haunted look.

"By the way," Howie approached cautiously, "how come you had a wife with you in Hawaii if you were in the Army?"

The stranger stiffened. "I joined the army before the war, and although I was only a non-com I thought it would be better to have her over there with me. Then I could be there with her and the kids." The stranger had become very tense.

Howie spoke very deliberately. "I think you must have loved your wife, in spite of what you say." Howie watched for the reaction which he felt sure would come.

"Nobody loves anybody," said the stranger slowly. "Nobody loves anybody," he screamed. Suddenly he was very calm and cruelly deliberate. "Did you ever see a bomb land on your home?"

Howie was no longer able to look into the stranger's incandescent eyes. "No, I never did."

The stranger sat staring interminably. "I saw a cat kill a robin the other day," suddenly he screamed. "I could have choked the life out of it." His face was up near Howie's eyes. "Did you ever