This issue of the ICON is in honor of Dee Phillips, who shared her artistic gifts through her dedicated art editorship of the ICON for five issues.
ICON

FALL, 1981

VOLUME XIX Number 1

ICON, the magazine for literature, art, and photography of the Trumbull Campus of Kent State University, is sponsored by the English Department in conjunction with the Art Department and is funded by the Student Affairs Council.

Faculty, students, former students of the Trumbull Campus, all Kent State Campuses, and other universities are invited to submit poetry, essays, fiction, art work, or photography. We welcome submissions from anyone—student or nonstudent—in the Trumbull County area.

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ICON Logo Design: Nathan Segall

The ICON would like to congratulate Nathan Segall for his winning logo design.

Our grateful appreciation is extended to Mrs. Carol J. Perich for her excellence in typing the ICON.
This magazine's name originated from the following poem written by Valerie Marttila.

icon...
image
of individual reflections
on a paper mirror.
iconoclastic...
image
shatters
at the vibration
of trembling lips;
at the precision
of a silent poet.

by Jefferson R. Weekley
TWINS?

Pearl B. Segall

Surprise!
It's true
the one
so long awaited
has turned out to be
TWO.
Two smiles,
two hugs
from four little arms
that squeeze mine--
while happiness squeezes
my heart.
Loving them
with such intensity
becomes almost unbearable.
Such joy!
Four brown eyes,
twinkling.
Four dimples:
two always apparent,
two kept for quite
special occasions
(but always there.)
This is a revelation,
an important one.
So alike,
so different.
Wonderful!
Mine.
No,
OURS.
Parenting
Dorothy Sterling
So much depends
Upon
Money clothing
Sheltering
Loving sharing
Caring
Responsibility liability
Hostility
And a lifetime
Career

A Tanka: Untitled
Morningstar
Teddy Bear winking
at me from his rock-
ing chair,
Tin Soldier standing
attention behind his
stare,
list'ning to my bed-
time prayer.

Doris Vine
So much depends
upon
a small child
going on a
big yellow bus
the first day
of school

by Don Mathews

See William Carlos Williams, “The Red Wheelbarrow” in Modern Poems: An
Introduction To Poetry, ed. Richard Ellman and Robert O'Clair (New York:
Changeling

Mary T. Brizzi

Oh the faith of grandmothers
that she can tie him to a chair
make him eat supper
when there are tricycles, driveways, and worms outside.
Mothers know: he will NOT be a human
but will someday change form
wriggle free from his clothes
and fly up, like a bat or a bird,
apotheosized.

“Strike three, you’re out!” they said.
The sting of tears was felt.
(Their fragile egos needed a boost.
As by their sides I knelt.)

As mother of these mini-jocks
The coaches’ words weren’t true.
(He wanted them to toughen up.)
When love was what they needed.

“Shake it off!” were his soothing words.
For routine bumps and sprains.
(No emergency room, no X-rays.
To check their childhood pains.)

When did the changes first occur?
How many innings had passed?
When reason began to counter
And enjoyment surfaced at last.

Summer-safe and quiet days
Brought changes by the score.
Stubborn pride would soon end
Where fear had lurked before.

Three years have gone, and all
Have stories we can tell:
Like how the boys were tough
(Along with Mom, as well!)

For, amidst the excitement and
(And tension so dramatic),
I’m the first to admit that I’ve
A Little League fanatic!

Plastic Love

Mary G. Hejli

Alison sleeps with Malibu Ken
she thinks he’s a beauty
With painted on smile and pate
her bedmate’s a perfect pet.

Alison threw over plain old Ken
when Malibu entered her life.
She took one look at his mirror
and said "He’s the one I need!"

Alison sleeps with Malibu Ken
and loves him lustily and
But over in the corner in Barb
plain old Ken is makin’
NEW FAN

Pearl B. Segall

"Strike three, you’re out!" the umpire yelled;
The sting of tears was felt.
(Their fragile egos needed a boost,
As by their sides I knelt.)

As mother of these mini-jocks,
The coaches’ words weren’t heeded.
(He wanted them to toughen up,
When love was what they needed!)

"Shake it off!" were his soothing words
For routine bumps and sprains.
(No emergency room, no X-rays
To check their childhood pains?)

When did the changes first occur?
How many innings had passed
When reason began to counter the fear,
And enjoyment surfaced at last?

Summer-safe and quiet days
Brought changes by the score.
Stubborn pride would soon emerge
Where fear had lurked before.

Three years have gone, and all of us
Have stories we can tell:
Like how the boys were toughened up
(Along with Mom, as well!)

For, amidst the excitement and shouting,
(And tension so dramatic),
I’m the first to admit that I’ve become
A Little League fanatic!

Plastic Love

Michelle Griffiths

Alison sleeps with Malibu Ken
She thinks he’s a beautiful sight.
With painted on smile and painted on tan
Her bedmate’s a perfect delight.

Alison threw over plain old Ken
When Malibu entered her life.
She took one look at his mirrored shades
And said “He’s the one that I like.”

Alison sleeps with Malibu Ken
And loves him lustily and heartily.
But over in the corner in Barbie’s townhouse
Plain old Ken is makin’ it with Barbie.
PSYCHE

Eula Hyer

Guardian of my dreams
Keeper of my sanity--
When fancy's flight
Takes me to another realm,
You gently guide me
To reality again.
I'll linger just a while--
To obtain a healing balm
For pain and sorrow--
Then I can surely face
A new tomorrow.

Vicki LaVelle

When we wish upon a star,
We wonder who and what we are.
We dream of things that are to be
And try so hard to look and see
The time when we are no longer small
When we think we understand it all
And in our hearts we try to believe
That our children will be able to conceive
The knowledge that the world can bring
So that they won't have to wish upon a star
And wonder who and what they are.

NIGHT DANCE

Carole Davidson

High on a grassy hill as the moon spilled silver liquid
upon the naked silhouette, she skipped merrily, her softly
padded soles barely touched the dew beneath.
Gentle departing breezes carried her tinkling laughter
everywhere; as towering oak trees nodded amorous welcome
to her there.
Softly, the velvet blackness caressed her, the yielding
shadows gave their tenderest kiss.
Lovingly, her eyes responded with a sparkle of the rarest
gem when seen beneath shimmering ripples of the sea.
Reaching out from deep within, she beckoned to the await-
ing quietude, till all of her embraced all that was there .
Alas, total, surrender, such sweet bliss, hidden in the
secret of the night dance, she keeps this innocent love affair.

I PREFER STRAWBERRY

The judges gather in a circle
in my corner of the laboratory.
I look around and wonder
what is on the other side -
the side that I have never seen
beyond my part
of blues and browns and greens -
where the backdrop may be different
the textures gentler or harsher
and the faces of the judges different
perhaps another color their eyes
their numbers lesser or greater -
but their tasks the same as mine -
For we are all under the same Admin
who walks and works among us -
although we seldom see Him man
and some do not seem to know Him
His supervision covers all the labor
more than my small corner -
donw long white cold corridors
with Andean walls where Auracas
echo under high vaulted blue and
and along dry precipitous stone flr
and carpets of soft spongy green
kept continually warm and moist
and other halls and walls
all of them in an orb circling back
to my small cell.
And all of them designed
and under the eye
of the Administrator.

I have watched the judges journey
through the laboratory.
Most of them dislike their space -
I PREFER STRAWBERRIES

Jeri Bidlack

The judges gather in a circle in my corner of the laboratory. I look around and wonder what is on the other side - the side that I have never seen beyond my part of blues and browns and greens - where the backdrop may be different the textures gentler or harsher and the faces of the judges different - perhaps another color their eyes more slanted their numbers lesser or greater - but their tasks the same as mine mostly. For we are all under the same Administrator - who walks and works among us silently - although we seldom see Him many of us - and some do not seem to know Him at all. His supervision covers all the laboratory - more than my small corner - down long white cold corridors with Andean walls where Auracanean calls echo under high vaulted blue and golden ceilings - and along dry precipitous stone floor and carpets of soft spongy green kept continually warm and moist - and other halls and walls all of them in an orb circling back to my small cell. And all of them designed and under the eye of the Administrator.

I have watched the judges journey through the laboratory. Most of them dislike their space -
they see the ceiling as always gray
and flat and never seem to notice
that the light sometimes changes it
to varied shades of brilliant blue -
and in the dark it becomes
like a velvet cloak to deaden the din
and clang of the day.
Those same ones see their walls
as marble-cold and colorless
impenetrable slabs -
preferring the insulation
which they themselves have crafted.
They judge me as foolish
for loving the laboratory
for preferring to step through
the cold marble
and dissolve it.
It is warmer without walls -
walls only block the view
of the blue and the green and the gold -
and stop the sensing.

I used to believe
they were not all judges.
They are we are
in varying degrees self-proclaimed
overstepping and ignoring
the work assignment.
Most of the judges spend their time
examining the products of each worker -
the products of one another -
closely microscopically scrutinizing -
and avoiding examination
of their own product.

The problem lies in conception
of the product.

If I produce
what the Administrator desires
I may some day be transferred
to a position in His higher laboratory.
Most of the judges prefer a product
of their own taste -
and they insist
on my making specimens
foul dark rancid
and dung-smelling.

I prefer strawberries.
They call them seedy -
but seeds are a source of more berries.
I might hide them -
they would not grow hidden.
I place them therefore in my corner
where they can be seen and reflect the light.

The circle of judges tightens -
faces like vultures yellowed beaks open -
their claws reaching to slash
at my berries.
Perched squawking
they surround me -
"Dung! Dung! Make it dung!"
I cower in fetal position
my arms about my head.
"No! Strawberries! I must make strawberries!"
Their piercing flashlight eyes
penetrate my closed lids.
I blink mine open slowly carefully
against the penetrating light
streaming through my window.
they see the ceiling as always gray
and flat and never seem to notice
that the light sometimes changes it
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Their piercing flashlight eyes
penetrate my closed lids.
I blink mine open slowly carefully
against the penetrating light
streaming through my window.
Rushing through the door, he utters his greeting: “Good morning, my friends.” And that they are. Good friends, and lovely ones. Radiant, actually. Colors vibrant—reds and oranges, many yellows, a few pinks, luscious verdant greenery. Each more special than its neighbor. The ones with problems get extra attention, a little more love. And much more time. For the problems are relished, a challenge to his creativity; special solutions for each special problem. The winters are difficult. Spring is awaited with mounting anxiety, with a mixture of joy and fear. Will they make it? Can they survive once again? But then, they always do. Most times. The survivors are a triumph, those lost are deeply mourned. But then my husband, so gentle with his good friends, his flowers, shares his gift of giving and preserving life with others. New shoots and cuttings will soon become familiar with his friendly greeting. So constant, so caring, so predictable. With his plants as with his family, so loving.
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With his plants
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so loving.

My Man's Best Friends

Pearl B. Segall

by David Victor
Truth
Selina Bartlett

The world--
Running from the lonely one who looks
for a way out
Friendless,
Looking through the mirror of intentions
and reasons,
But finding none.
The shameless face of the liar
Recedes in the force of life,
Playing hidden games with the
Silent Majesties.
The challenge lies inside the ancient faces,
whose mysterious ways holds the truth.
The children,
trying to find truth in a world of despair,
where no one finds the way out--
Only through themselves.
The lovers--
with fresh, vital intimacies
only succeed in pretending.
The World.
Listening,
Watching silently,
Laughing.

PERFECTIONISM
Dr. Marvin R. Kollar

One of my interests is leather-carving. One evening, when I was
laboring over a wallet that I wanted to turn out perfectly because it was
intended as a gift for a very special and beloved professor of mine,
my dye brush carried a bit too much brown dye and promptly flooded a
small portion of the design for which it was not intended. I was
disappointed that an otherwise well-executed piece of work was less-than
perfect. I had marred a fine design; I had erred; I had faulted!

The brief moment of dismay and self-blame soon passed as I kept
thinking about the incident. The Navajo, for example, are expert weavers,
but they intentionally provide some flaw in their products. Their explanations
are based upon their religious notions of animism because, as they
express it, “This lets the spirit of the material freely enter or leave.” I,
of course, offer an alternative, secular explanation. Their deliberate errors
are made to demonstrate that they are human, or, as the Good Book says,
“We are all a little lower than the angels.”

I am not consciously trying to rationalize my own imperfections,
although, I am sure there are those who would say that I have already
done so. What I am saying is that one should certainly strive for
perfection or excellence. If, however, one falls short of reaching for the
stars, there is no need for despair or self-flagellation. Rather, I maintain,
we are made of the common clay by the Creator and, quite often, when
we are “held to the fire,” the pottery shows the hairline imperfections
most clearly.

Just now, during Final Exams Week, I am getting phone calls and
visitations from students who “can’t understand” how they received a
letter grade lower than their expectations. I ask them if they have done
everything in their power. If they have done so, they have done their
very best and have been found wanting...a most human experience. If they
have not done their best, they have used up their options and need look
no further. If they do not choose to perform well, why do they require
it of others?

It is exhilarating to achieve a near-perfect performance or to create
a perfect product. But, it is, perhaps, in the shortcomings, the near
misses, and the imperfections that we come closest to our links with the
sacred mysteries of life. When we err despite our zeal, we have pro-
claimed that we have a far distance yet to travel before we may ultimately
rest from our duties.

Prejudice
Patty Miller

Confined in a space allocated by society,
It is a painful process by which a mind grows.
Straining against walls
erected by society,
of different heights, mortar and age.
Preoccupied with the struggle,
the key which can unlock the gate
goes unnoticed.
Truth
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Running from the lonely one who looks
for a way out
Friendless,
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sacred mysteries of life. When we err despite our zeal, we have pro-
claimed that we have a far distance yet to travel before we may ultimately
rest from our duties.
We eat weight fat exercise re-re-do reduce calories car carbo, "Hi" carbohy, "Drat" carbohydrates we ate we die we diet

IN ITS SIMPLICITY
Vicki LaVelle

It’s as fresh as.....
.....a bag of bread when you first remove the twistie.

It’s as colorful as.....
.....New Orleans during Mardi Gras.

It’s as small as.....
.....A distant star on a cloudy night.

It’s as big as.....
.....an oriental fan that is open, spread wide.

It’s as free and beautiful as.....
.....
.....a bird in flight.
Composition of a Diet

_Vivian Anne Bowker_

We
We ate
weight
f
fat
ex
ex er
exercise
re
re-do
reduce
cal
cal or
calories
car
car bo
carbo, "Hi"
carbohydrates
we ate
we die
we diet

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I. B. Travesty (see contributor's page)
A SENSE OF SENSES

Jeri Bidlack

I never thought about seeing--
'Til the time that I lay in bed
With dressings covering both my eyes,
Pain exploding in my head.
Sight's blessings I took for granted--
Like whitecaps on emerald seas,
Expressions on a loved one's face,
The glint of the sun through trees.

I never thought about touching--
'Til I needed touch to find
The corners of each doorway
Once I'd placed them in my mind;
'Til the sharp prick of my fork prong
Showed me that was not my spoon--
And the hand that grasped my groping hand
Brought comfort through my gloom.

I never thought about tasting
Whatever filled my plate--
'Til taste became my only way
To know what foods I ate;
With sweet and sour a guessing game
That no colors could give clue,
'Til the taste of salt upon his cheek
Showed his quiet suffering, too.

I never thought about smelling--
For smell--I could do without;
But fragrance speaks as pictures
To reveal who moves about.
Food smells announce my mealtime,
As ozone odor means rain--
And the men's-talc smell is my husband's kiss
When he soothes away my pain.

I never thought about hearing--
That footsteps down the hall
Might one day be my only clue
To who had come to call;
When hearing had to substitute
For eyes that could not see
Flickering firelight, children's play,
Or robins in a tree.

I never thought about life's gifts--
'Til the loss of only one
Brought a sense of devastation,
That all joy of life was done.
My sight returned, in time, restored
In part; and now I'm "seeing"
The sensations of my senses--
The blessedness of being.
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'Til the time that I lay in bed
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In part; and now I'm "seeing"
The sensations of my senses--
The blessedness of being.
The Masterpiece

*Suzanne E. Butcher*

Today,
the fiery red and golden bonnets
Of the trees
Frame the pearl-gray sky.

The icy hand confesses
in its
Chilling touch
The advent of death.

But I am not afraid.

For life casts itself into the
comforting lap of the wind.
To face a rebirth in another place and time.

The snow-covered leaves of violets herald the promise of
Spring.

The wise woman has
stroked her life-giving brush against the
canvas of time.
And with care produced a masterpiece, Autumn.

The ICON would like to congratulate *Suzanne E. Butcher* on winning the High School Poetry Contest. This contest is co-ordinated through the efforts of *Professor Mary Ann Lowry*. 
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the High School Poetry Contest. This contest is co-ordinated through the
efforts of Professor Mary Ann Lowry.
The Back Way Home

Michelle Griffiths

Something strange always happens when I take this back way alone at night.

The winding road seems deserted, and my footsteps are the only sound.

A sly orange moon hangs down low in the sky and hides behind the trees.

I have heard it said that some strange things happen when there is a full moon.

The sky grows darker, distant horizon rumbles, wind rustles the trees.

Birds call sharply to one another; then the rain comes softly, then harder.

The wind whips some loose thing around, lightning bounces across the open ground.

I hurry on with a sense that I’m no longer alone on the road.

Something flies by, and at first I think it’s a bird, but I’m mistaken.

Something is moving across the ground, probably a frightened mouse.

I realize that I am running and soaking and panting for breath.

I feel like Thursday’s child on nights like this when I take the back way home.

SO MUCH DEPENDS

Jeri Bidlack

So much depends upon

my walking too fast

my walking too slow

and what I leave behind.

OCTOBER

Maxine Reinard

Early morning sunshine shimmers thru the chill.

Southbound birds are resting on top of yonder hill.

Trees wear different colors as their leaves begin to fall.

Bright blue skies this month are the brightest blue of all.

Air is less polluted, humid days are gone.

Smells of over-ripened fruit seem to linger on.

Add to all that beauty the very best reward—

The grass at last stops growing—

Praise the Lord!
The Back Way Home

Michelle Griffiths

Something strange always happens when I take this back way alone at night.

The winding road seems deserted, and my footsteps are the only sound.

A sly orange moon hangs down low in the sky and hides behind the trees.

I have heard it said that some strange things happen when there is a full moon.

The sky grows darker, distant horizon rumbles, wind rustles the trees.

Birds call sharply to one another; then the rain comes softly, then harder.

The wind whips some loose thing around, lightning bounces across the open ground.

I hurry on with a sense that I'm no longer alone on the road.

Something flies by, and at first I think it's a bird, but I'm mistaken.

Something is moving across the ground, probably a frightened mouse.

I realize that I am running and soaking and panting for breath.

I feel like Thursday's child on nights like this when I take the back way home.

SO MUCH DEPENDS

Jeri Bidlack

So much depends upon

my walking too fast

my walking too slow

and what I leave behind.

OCTOBER

Maxine Reinard

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Praise the Lord!
Sunday

Barbara L. Schmidt

So much depends
Upon
Chilled red
Wine
Split stacked
Hickory
Two cold
Noses
And a warm
Kiss

Memory of a Kiss.

Patty Miller

Tasteful memories touch my mind.
A sense of adventure quickens the exploring.
Need answers need.
Um
m
m.

Tasteful memories.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON MRS. KNEPP

Kathy Croft

She is trying to teach me how to teach.
She is the teacher that I want to be.
She uses terms I've never heard,
I try to understand.
She says I'll need them, someday,
If I am to do her work.
She says the nurturing of minds
Rests squarely in my hands
So my head reeks with all
These thoughts and I wonder
If I can?

All those students become my own
Each one I will shape and guide
(as she is molding me)
The responsibility is up to me alone,
I will not brush it aside.
I have this dream, this hope, this plan,
I want to live it if I can.
She says I can, and
She's the teacher.

For Betsy and the English department

Mary T. Brizzi

I see in these faces
the frayed consciousness of fortynine
that misses the romance that seventeen
doeful and silly
scribbled on envelopes and napkins
or perhaps never wrote at all
lost in sweet fantasy
empires of air
infatuation forever--
ArtBeautyFuture
lives for a while in these eyes.
Dear student,
how will you live when you are forty nine
paying the lightbill and smiling a threadthin smile
(if at all) to see your child taller than dreams?
Will you regret seventeen?
Will you remember?
Or must the whole of you live in my file drawer--
strange wild fancies you wrote in response
to Theme III: Process Analysis: How Worms Fall in Love.
Sunday

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Morningstar

Linguistics are rubberband things
that stretch or sometimes bind
And the poet’s “tool” which
continually etch mind tides.

My Poetry Is Only for Me

Vivian Anne Bowker

Poetry is strictly for lunatics.
We write and re-write to make the words fit.
Proud of our rhymes, we start the next verse
As our unwanted critics read and converse.
They laugh at us and say,
“Why on earth do you write this way?”
I fly off the handle with, “Oh, let me be!
I’m writing these words only for me!”

Only One Definition

Patty Miller

Poetry is akin to pain.
For the more one has experienced
the better able he is to express it.

SURPRISE!

Eula Hyer

You thought you knew me,
Knew every nook and cranny of my mind:
But I fooled you, didn’t I?

You just don’t seem to understand,
I can’t fit into that narrow definition—
That stereotype.

So please,
Don’t try to tell me
Where I am,
What I am,
Why I am,
Or Who!

(I might get hostile, if you do;
And then, I’d lose a friend.)

A Lesson Learned

Patty Miller

I taught you to be calloused and
I was wrong.
I gave you eyes that saw too much when
I was blind.
I closed your ears to crying when
I was deaf.
I tried to imprison you and
I was hurt.
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Vivian Anne Bowker

A rms, empty
Longing for some-
One to hold
Near throughout the
Endless night.

Morningstar

Tarnished silver linings

(looking thru venetian blinds is a layered, narrow view)

and non-verbalized disagreements

(but the sand conforms so easily to the shape of the hourglass)

never reflects a ray of sun
nor is refreshed from the stalemate

(and Time marches on).

Illusions Undone

Sarah L. Rider

Golden rings of pleasure
And flower-strewn pathways
Do not a marriage make.
Neither are stars diamond-studded
And visions crystal clear
But soon prove to be all fake.
Rather the heavy yoke of today
And blocked roads of tomorrow
Are the concessions done for our sake.

Not just any Room--

Morningstar

She can be found any night
sleeping on the too short couch, one foot dangling
when she isn't curled up--
Separated from the room and double bed
where southern morning light nurtures the plants and infiltrates the memories.

Our Love

Vivian Anne Bowker

Our love was an hour-glass.
A sudden beginning,
The minutes passed.
Paying no heed
To the end drawing near,
The sand trickled through
Displaying no fear.
The moments slipped by
One
By One,
'Til love was finished
Over
And
Done....
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As a Lady

Mary T. Brizzi

As a lady who loves books and particularly old ones,
I sometimes pick through my litter in the fallow of the day,
wondering not just at the Latin translation of Jabberwock
 to which some perverse child lent her afternoon's industry,
or old etiquette books that define proper boundaries of
 feminine conduct and proscribe meat and other foods that
 heat the blood
(stopping to erase from the fly the name of the book's true
 owner, for in books, God knows, I am not above theft,
or remembering where I bought this beauty at three for a quarter),
but also rubbing a little shoe polish into the leather
clucking a bit at the foxing and brittle-beyond-remedy yellow,
and hoping that someone will treat me with respect and
 sour affection
once my spine is old and weak, like these.

The Desk

Maxine Reinard

Cast off
Its finish crazed
Its parts unglued
Still stick together
From years of habit
Dust and grime
And cobwebs woven
By the hands of time....

Restored
Its soft patina
Glow through the Deft.
Parts lovingly reglued
Are firm and strong.
The vivid grain
Of Curly Maple
And ageless beauty lives on....

by David Victor
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Memories Kept

Sarah L. Rider

Remember me as I was
And ask no questions of me
For I've changed along the way
And am afraid you'd disapprove
Only to tarnish your ideals
Of me when innocence was real
And white was white and black was spade
Until the colors became mixed
To cause values to vanish
While self moved over to second place
To make way for a new game
Yet your memories of me remain the same.

Nostalgia

Michelle Griffiths

There is a picture
of the two of them before they were married
sitting together
before they bought the house they lived in
together for forty-six years
with their arms around each other
with the senile mother-in-law
in the upstairs bedroom
holding hands
before the kids went off to college one by one
and never came back
looking off into the distance
into their common future
before he retired and got bored
and drank himself to death
frayed at the corners, curled, and yellowed
before she got senile like her mother
and didn’t even know her own kids
in a cardboard box in the basement.

One More Slice of Bread, Please

Ted Pawcio

Two old men are sitting alone on a park bench. Leaves are falling, falling to the ground. One by one a leaf flutters, halts its descent, and continues onward until ground and leaf are one. The sky is cloudy over. It is the last of all autumn days.

"And my family doesn’t want me anymore. They don’t want me. I’m no use to them anymore," said Silas. His family forgets Silas has been in World War I; they do remember the cost of the pair of shoes they bought Silas six months ago. And Silas’ feet have bunions, sores. The shoes do not fit.

"The nursing home is an ‘inevitable reality’ they say; they say it’s too hard to mow another yard. And the leaves are too much bother. Just yesterday my son came to help in the yard. He says the spouting needs fixed. I told him I do what I can," says Silas.

A jogger goes jogging past the park bench. With a nod of his head he continues homeward. The old men watch him go by.

"I always put food on the table. And I worked plenty of overtime in my life! Never once did I give my family reason to grumble. The nights those boys would take the car I never once said no, and now they won’t take me grocery shopping. I waited on Tuesday, but no one came until Friday. Now I go hungry, but do they care?"

The children playing in the leaves at the park are on their way home now. They wave to the men on the bench.

"Do all lives end like this, just one more slice of bread, please?" asks Silas.

His companion gets up from the park bench and starts slowly walking away.
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Insanity by Jefferson R. Weekley
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