

LITERARY ISSUE

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"To the Depth and Breadth and Height"

by Roberta Chancey



Roberta Chancey

Marriages fall into a certain pattern after a period of years. There is a time for meals, a time for work, a time for relaxation, a time for being apart. Such was the pleasant order which nine years of marriage brought to Robert and Elizabeth Harrison.

I have known the Harrisons since they moved to Porterfield six years ago. They were wonderful neighbors from the beginning, as well as active and interested citizens of the community. They had much to offer and willingly contributed what they could. Likewise, the community offered much in return. Elizabeth accepted a position as fourth grade teacher in Porterfield Elementary School, one of the finest schools in the state, and Robert became a successful accountant.

Upon first meeting the Harrisons, I was impressed with their dignified manner. They were very hospitable and considerate, very calm and orderly. I didn't really think that I would ever be close to them, however. They seemed too detached to desire close relationships except with each other.

I suppose it was actually through my three little extroverts, Todd, Kelly, and Lisa, that Elizabeth and I became well acquainted. They were always disappearing, and I invariably found them in Elizabeth's back lawn or in her kitchen having cookies and milk. Children are supposedly excellent judges of character, and if so, Elizabeth Harrison ranks among the saints themselves.

Elizabeth had a knack with children. Perhaps it was a result of her training, maybe a personal philosophy, or possibly just something from within that the children sensed. At any rate, the longer I knew her, the surer I was that she should have a houseful of children of her own. During the first three or maybe four years that I knew

her, I kept waiting for her to smile calmly and tell me that she was pregnant. But the day never came. I toyed with the idea of asking her if perhaps there was some medical reason, but I decided against it. Why should I chance hurting a friend to satisfy my own curiosity? So the subject was never brought up.

Life continued in its variations of routine until November of last year. Then years of calmness and order were changed by the appearance of one ten-year-old boy. Mark came into Elizabeth's classroom when he and his parents moved to Porterfield from upstate New York. He made quite an impression on Elizabeth. His sandy hair, freckles, and cute little smile made him almost irresistible, she said.

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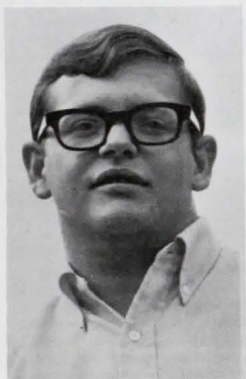
Summer '64

by Jim Moorehead

Sam had always been a "go getter." At least that is the way his father John Hale liked to describe him. His father's Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry and his mother's English vein had made Sam a hard working person with bulldog determination to get ahead, to be a go-pher in his own way. Perhaps it was this somewhat strange ancestry which had prompted Sam to continue his education when most of his high-school friends had leisurely accepted the regional apathy by allowing themselves to be drafted or live off their parents until they slid easily into a hometown job. These people got married and began to live as their parents had lived—merely hometown boys.

Oh, to be certain many others had gone on to college, but they would return. They would take over dad's business or settle down teaching school somewhere in the county and continually perpetuate the cycle from which they were born. Not Sam. Perhaps his ancestry, his parents daily will to meaning, had lifted him above the regional complacency and motivated him to get a job in a Cleveland steel mill after his freshman year at college. Well, no matter what it was, the Greyhound was moving swiftly over the rolling countryside of the Ohio Valley. There was no turning back until the summer's end.

Thinking of his farewell to his parents, Sam's anxiety was dampened by a touch of nostalgia. His father's firm grip and the kiss he had placed on his mother's tear-stained cheek along with regular letters were all Sam felt he would have left



James Moorehead, a junior English major, is from Namo, W. Va. He was graduated from Marsh Fork High School in 1965.

of home. Later, though, his mingled feelings slowly subsided into weariness.

As Sam stepped from the Greyhound at the Cleveland terminal, he tried to assume a look of worldliness; but he felt everyone knew he was just another West Virginia Hillbilly seeking employment he could not find at home. "What the heck," he muttered. "I have got to find Bill now."

"Hi, Sam," said Bill Wright as he stretched out his hand. "I didn't recognize you at first. A few years can make a lot of difference. You sure have changed a lot."

"You're right, Bill."

It took several hours that Sunday morning to tell Bill Wright and his small family all about what was happening at home.

Once this was done, they started an immediate search for an apartment for Sam.

He would never forget that first day, because of a small incident which occurred as Bill and he went to a small delicatessen to get another newspaper. An early morning rain had ruined the one delivered by the paper boy.

In his polite hometown way he opened a door for a man who had a bundle of newspapers. Sam was dazed by the stare the bovine man gave him. He remembered that cold, harsh stare all summer—it was a part of the city, his job, his life during those three months.

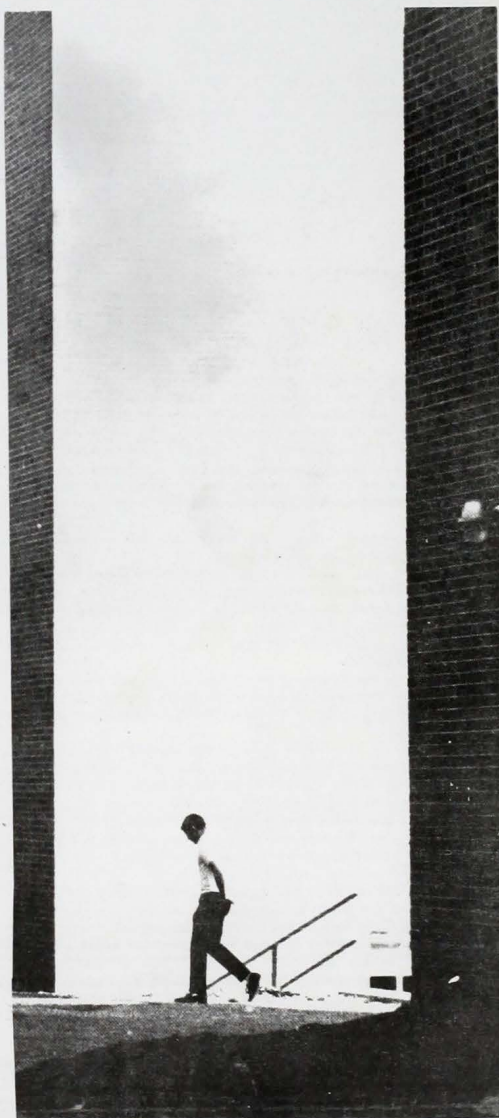
"Bill, why did that man stare at me as if I were crazy?"

"That's the city. You don't do anything for anybody you don't know. People think you're trying to take advantage of them, because everyone is out for that buck; and they don't give a darn how they get it."

Even though this had bothered him, he let it go in passing. He was filled too much with his own importance; but after a couple of weeks, his self importance began to give way even as the novelty of living in the city wore off. He settled down to a commonplace way of life—a life apart from the city, a life as an entity. That was the way other people seemed to live. Why not him too?

After settling down, he had begun to see less and less of Bill and his family. He came to know one way of life, one road—both ends being void at first.

A senior, Robert Cooper is an English and social studies major. A 1964 graduate of Sutton High School, he has been a photographer and editor of the Kanawachen. His hobbies are: photography, writing, bicycling, and water sports. Cooper has had articles printed in the literary issue in two previous years.



FIRST PLACE

by Robert Cooper

The Infidel

Kathy Cheslick

I am sure that he doesn't suspect that I know. He considers himself too clever for me. A business trip! How absurd! He must think me a mere moron. I am certain that it is Nicole. They are seen together constantly. The rising, young senator and his personal secretary do much more than just discuss his great political future which lies just ahead. Here I sit, his own loving wife, drinking a toast to my dear husband. It seems ironic. My husband? Nicole sees more of him than I, yet I know she will never have him for her own.

Ken interrupted her thoughts. "Enjoying yourself, darling?" "Why yes. It has been a delightful evening, though I imagine that you feel rather tired, don't you dear? Campaign speeches, banquets, political rallies, -I wish you would slow it down a bit, Ken. I wouldn't want you to have a break down at twenty-nine."

He smiled at her and kissed her lightly on the nose. "You always think of me, Paula. I guess that is why I need you so. These last four years have been the happiest that I have ever known. What do you say I take a couple of days off, and we go up to the lake?"

"That would be relaxing for a change," Paula replied. "When do you think that we could go?"

"I'll have to talk it over with Nicole and check on my schedule for the next few days, then I'll let you know."

Nicole would she never be free of her? As she sat watching Ken discuss some political issue with a fellow senator, Paula's thoughts drifted back to when she had first met her husband. She was a junior at the university, and he was a brilliant law student. They had both been popular, yet somehow they had never met one another until the day that Paula's brother brought Ken home. She was alone at the time.

"Hey, anyone home?" Jim yelled as he burst into the house. (Continued on Page Five)

To the Depth and Breadth and Height

(Continued from Page One)

"But there's something so strange about him," she mused that first day. "I feel so drawn to him. He seems to remind me of someone."

Elizabeth was concerned at the time, but eventually it became unimportant. Then one day Mark came to visit the Harrisons on Saturday afternoon. Since his father had to work on Saturdays, Mark was overjoyed when Robert suggested that Saturday afternoons might be a good time to get a little fresh air and exercise by playing football. After that, the Saturday visit became regular.

It was in March that the accident happened. It was a terrible disaster. Forty three people dropped into the Bay River when the bridge fell, Mark's parents among them.

Everything happened so quickly then. A ten-year-old boy was left homeless. With no relatives to take him in, other than a seventy-year-old aunt, Mark was sent to the county orphanage. Elizabeth and Robert, unable to bear the thoughts of his being alone in a strange place, went to the orphanage to make arrangements to bring Mark home with them, temporarily, at least. There they learned the facts about Mark's life. He had been an adopted child, placed with his foster parents when he was only six weeks old. He was born to an unwed mother in New York on March 23, 1958. The records were fairly complete, although some facts are never revealed in a case such as this.

I don't know how Elizabeth reacted to the information at the time. That evening she told me that Mark would be coming to their home in a few days. She and Robert had talked of taking Mark permanently. When I turned from the kitchen sink after finishing the dishes and really looked at Elizabeth for the first time since she had come in, I saw that she was pale and shaken. Her usual calm composure had given way to a show of deep emotion. For a moment there was silence. Then there were tears. Elizabeth sank into a chair and began to tell her story.

"I didn't know until today at the orphanage. How could I have been so blind? He's my son. Mark's my son."

As she talked, tears-slow, hot tears that come from deep within-streamed down her cheeks. Nevertheless, she kept her voice steady and continued her story, seeming to find some relief in telling it.

"It happened so long ago, before I met Robert. I was in college. Maybe I could blame my youth. But, then, I suppose I can only blame myself. I was so gullible.

"I'll spare you the details. I found myself pregnant, went away and had the baby, and gave him away without ever seeing him. I felt that I have to give each of us a chance. He deserved it, if I didn't. Then I met Robert.

"I wanted to tell him before we were married, but I was afraid. He was so good and had such high morals, and I didn't want to lose him. So I kept my secret. Later I found that I could have no more children. Robert wanted to adopt a child, but I wasn't sure that I deserved one. And now here's Mark, legally ours if we want him, mine even if we don't. Do I deserve him? Could I possibly bring him home without telling Robert the truth? And would telling the truth mean choosing between the two? I couldn't!"

I wondered what to say to her. Actually, I said nothing. Instead, I simply pressed her hand, hoping somehow to give her strength.

Burdens sometimes become too heavy for one person's shoulders to give bear, and one lightens his load by sharing it. Although I gave no advice to Elizabeth, she shared her burden with me. She made her own decision and credited me with being the wise counselor.

I understand Elizabeth much better now. How little I understood before! There is a bond between us which will never be broken. Mark, Elizabeth, and Robert are joining us for dinner this evening. They have been a family four months now. Elizabeth kept her secret. She decided that she shouldn't jeopardize the relationship which existed among the three of them.

Of course, Mark will need time to adjust. He needs all of the love and affection which Elizabeth and Robert can give him. And what greater or deeper love could possibly exist than that which caused Elizabeth to hide the truth, to keep her terrible secret as a constant but unshared burden?



SECOND PLACE

by Rod Engle

And Then There Was Nothing

by Pat Kincaid



Patricia Kincaid, from Swiss, W. Va., is a junior English major with a minor in library science. She is a 1965 graduate of Nicholas County High School.

And Then There Was Nothing

"Mother, there is something I have to tell you," Julie Hilliard mumbled nervously as she followed her mother into the hall. "Later, darling, I am late for Garden Club. Tell your father. You know how well he enjoys hearing about your puppy-love romances. Oh, dear: He won't be home until late because of a business engagement. Why don't you discuss it with Vammie? Good-bye dear," Valerie Hilliard

called as she picked up her gloves and ran to the waiting Limousine.

"Discuss it with Vammie," That was the story of Julie's life. Well, this is something I cannot discuss with Vammie. This is one time that Vammie cannot play the role of mother, as she has done so often. When I was in the First-Grade Play, mother and dad were in Europe, when I was crowned Snow Queen, they were visiting with the Governor, and now Mother is too busy to hear what I have to say. How will I ever tell her? It is not really mother I am worrying about- it is dad. He had always been so trustworthy, so honest,

(Continued on Page Four)



Rod Engle

FIRST PLACE

Cleanliness begs for sticking mud. Rascals long for security. Virgins yearn for pounding blood. Billygoats pine for purity.

Michael Ireland

Michael Ireland, sophomore, is a speech major. An active drama enthusiast and member of the Ohnngohow Players, Michael reports drama news for the Mercury. A graduate of Troy High School, his main hobby is reading. He is president-elect of the Literary Society.

Microcosmic Love

by Michael Ireland

SECOND PLACE

In a grain of sand the world is seen

So in you I love this earth. I see and love what might have been

Were man of nobler birth. Unable to love my fellow man I love you. It is enough.

Midst all the other grains of sand

We are beautiful. We love.

An Escape from Life

by Linda Seckman

The last of the fading rays of sunlight were filtering their way through the trees as Tod Collins swung his luggage into the back seat of the station wagon and climbed into the front seat to wait for his mother. He was a tall, well-built youth with sandy-colored hair and laughing gray eyes that mirrored his youthful vitality and love of life. His life had been a happy one for most of his seventeen years—fuller than most. He could remember the times that his father had taken him fishing, camping overnight in a small pup tent beside the stream and the times his mother had helped him with his arithmetic when he had had trouble with it in school. That was a few years ago and now he had grown up into a self-disciplined individual who knew what he wanted and what he must do to get it. College loomed ominously ahead and with it the prospects of someday becoming a writer. He had grand and glorious hopes for his future but, more importantly, he had the fortitude and self-drive to mold these dreams into a reality. He honked the horn now but not impatiently.

"Are you certain that you have everything now?" his mother asked earnestly as she approached the car. Teasingly, he nodded negatively to her question but she, nevertheless, started the motor and backed carefully out of the driveway. "Oh, by the way, did you get your checkbook from the desk drawer?"

"Yes, Mother. If there's anything important, just send it along on the next Pony Express!" He grinned impishly and she knew that she would miss him while he was gone. But she also knew that it was important for Tod to see his father again and she knew that Nathan wanted to see his son again, too. The visit would be good for both of them.

"Don't look so sad Mom. I'm not going to be gone all that long. After all, you don't want me to stay tied to your apron strings for ever, do you?" He smiled teasingly at her and she noted the irony in his statement for Tod had never been the type to be tied to anything or anybody. He had always been independent, never wanting or needing to depend upon others. In that way, he was like his father. Nathan was the epitome of the self-made man and he had certainly made a successful life for himself as an aeronautical engineer. His business life had been a success even if their marriage had not been.

"What time is it, dear?" she asked, fearful that they might be late.

"It's 7:40. Don't worry. The plane isn't scheduled to leave until 8:30 so we have plenty of time. Besides, if I'm late, he added jokingly in a pseudo-dignified manner, I'm sure they will wait for me!"

"Oh, I'm certain that they will," Joan Collins replied, stressing the word certain. Tod knew just how to make her forget her troubles and his jovial manner was just what she needed now.

Summer '64

(Continued from Page One)

At one end of the road was his room, eight by ten and ancient. When he looked out the window, he no longer saw green lawns, flowers, children playing, and older folks talking. He saw the asphalt playground and the shopping center. Because it meant solitude, he had never really gotten used to the room. The drab green walls and dirty white ceiling reminded him of the janitor's storeroom in his dorm at school. The furnishings were worse. His bed was pallet-like and its sagging rut in the middle told its age. Many others had slept there. A shabby-curtained window above the length of the bed allowed the light to cast shadows from his toiletries on the mirror. Other than this, there were two other things in the room which he had rented for nine dollars a week. One was a chair, the other a closet. He hated the room.

His hatred of the prison-like room drove him to the streets. There was nothing there for him, since he was too young to drink beer and too old and too good to fool with the neighborhood punks.

The other end of the road showed structures of steel and concrete, blast furnaces, sweat and toil. This end had one consolation—eight hours a day of labor. This was the steel mill, and he hated it too. Knowing it meant money for school was the only thing that kept him here.

It has been said that each man is merely a cog in the machine. If this were true, he wondered why the mill operated. There was no acceptance of the new, especially if the new happened to be a college kid on a summer job. Showing them nothing and



Miss Linda Louise Seckman is a junior math and English major from Vienna, W. Va. She is a 1965 graduate of Parkersburg High School.

ignoring them, the older men seemed the embodiment of resentment. To be certain there were exceptions, and he could readily recall one—Jim Hawkins, a middle-aged Negro.

Their meeting seemed strange at the time. Operating a sweeper which was built like a small hoist, Sam maneuvered himself into a corner. Being trapped and knowing he would damage something before he could get out caused him to break out into a cold sweat. A bead of sweat ran into the corner of his eye and blurred the smirks of the older man watching him. They had been waiting for this to happen.

"Hey, man, need uh hand." Looking over his shoulder, he saw a robust, middle aged Negro. Why hadn't someone else come? He had never liked Negroes; but in a half-hearted voice vindictive of failing youth, he answered, "Sure."

An hour later when the whistle blew, he grabbed his lunch and

They drove in silence along the darkening highway. The lights from the passing cars broke into the darkness and flashed bold yellow beams into their private thoughts. Tod was thinking of his father and of his own trip to Baltimore for a three months' visit with him. It had been almost a year now since he had last seen him. Even though they wrote and occasionally telephoned, Tod felt a breach or chasm had been made between the two ever since the divorce. Now maybe this reunion would draw them back together again like it had been before.

Joan Collins' thoughts followed the same lines as those of her seventeen-year-old son. It had been hard for them all because of the divorce but she and Nathan both knew that it was inevitable. Five years ago she would have said that it could never have happened. Today, she realized all too keenly that it had. Tod was the only one she was concerned about now. She knew that the divorce had hurt him deeply but he had never let his pain show. She had tried, tried earnestly, but somehow the situation grew increasingly worse instead of better. Looking back over it all now, she asked herself—Did I really try hard enough? Was there something else that I could have done? Time passed as if their thoughts could travel on to eternity.

Suddenly, seemingly from out of nowhere, a car with blinding beams bore down upon them, tearing them out of their thoughts and into terrifying reality. There was no time. The car was approaching with such speed that it was only a matter of seconds before the horrible sounds of screeching tires, shattering glass, crushing and twisting metal, and helpless screams broke out into the once tranquil night. And then there was nothing but horrifying silence. "Tod . . . Tod," she moaned. "Oh, Tod, where are you? She lay slumped over the steering wheel in a state of semi-consciousness. "Tod, please be all right. Please, Tod, please. Then there was silence once again.

The huge, massive door of the hospital room was opened by a doctor dressed in a surgeon's long, white coat. He moved quietly, almost reverently, toward the bed, gazing down at the motionless figure with the anguish and pain known only to a doctor—a feeling of utter helplessness. The doctor knew that soon he must tell Joan and Nathan Collins. He stood for a

moment, pondering many questions which troubled his mind. The boy is lying there, he thought, not as a living human being but as a breathing corpse. He can breathe but nothing more. How can I tell his parents that Tod is no longer the Tod that they once knew. Nor will he ever be for the impact of the crash was so great that his skull has been crushed, his brain damaged beyond repair. He is no longer a human being capable of functioning as such. Even though I hate the term for all its crudeness, he is indeed, what the newspapers call "a human vegetable." I must tell them so they can make the decision, perhaps the most important one of their lives.

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THIRD PLACE

by Robert Cooper

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(Continued on Page Four)

education if they wanted to go on. "Da got quick minds, smarter 'n me."

He would never forget Jim's advice for married men.

"Sam, when yo' git married do yoself a favor as well as yo' wife."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, a lot of people never make it, 'cause da don't know if da kin talk with each other or not. Da is too busy lovin'. And don't forget dat when yo' git married and start lovin' da is a lot o' thins dat kin make yo' married life a lot happier."

Jim had given him invaluable advice. After Sam was married, he never took his wife for granted. At least he tried not to. He played the dominant, the comprising role. Giving his wife variety added spice to their life. He told his wife about Jim.

Obviously, Jim Hawkins was not an educated man. He had secured his job before the company required a minimum of a high-school diploma for a job.

Reality

by Pauline Vineyard

THH THIRD PLACE

It can be to a child
The touching of snow, or
The realization that
Dolls can't grow;

That tricks lie beneath
Magic spells, or
That the alternative of Heaven
Is Hell.

How brief the moments
Before this spent
In gurgling trusting
Enchantment.

Although he had quit school as soon as possible, he was not ignorant. He had learned to live and cope with a white man's world. It was the lasting influence of this one man that caused Sam to react differently from the other people in his hometown when heated riots broke out from the black man's unrest a few years later.

Being acquainted with Jim Hawkins, made his room seem more like a prison. Waiting for another shift, eating a meal in the shopping center, doing his laundry were all routine—all the harnesses of daily life. Sam looked forward to work.

The summer passed, and late in August he said a final goodbye to Jim, turned in his badge and identification card and left for his room to pack. The taxi arrived to take him to the bus station. One last look in the mirror at his sturdy frame, a quick comb through his shock of brown hair, and home, later, much later.

Washington Zoo

by Rod Engle

A man is praised
and tears are shed
when he is gone
And the people come
to see
with cigarettes
and cameras
dirty stories
and filthy thoughts
They read the words
on the expensive monuments
But they don't understand
or care to
They have come to see
to say they have been there
For this is America
a land of dead heroes
and bubble gum
a land of Lincoln
and television
The great cemetery
Is a showplace
Shallow pictures are taken
Little Laura smiles
beside the obelisk
then cries for a popsicle
A hero is a hero
when he is dead
The statue carved
The monument erected
He is esteemed
he provides an outlet
for the summer vacation
His tomb provides
material for slide shows
Many people climb
some 800-odd steps
to see the view
The domed building across a pool
filled with cigar stubs
and paper cups
Bury me not on the lone prairie
but in a marble coffin
Marble can wear the footsteps
Marble is easy to photograph
And marble is cold
You don't need guards
around a marble coffin
But guards are needed
where the torch burns
For many people seek
to quench the eternal flame
for summer vacation
is a time for fun
The city is ready
The heroes are gone
And the people are willing

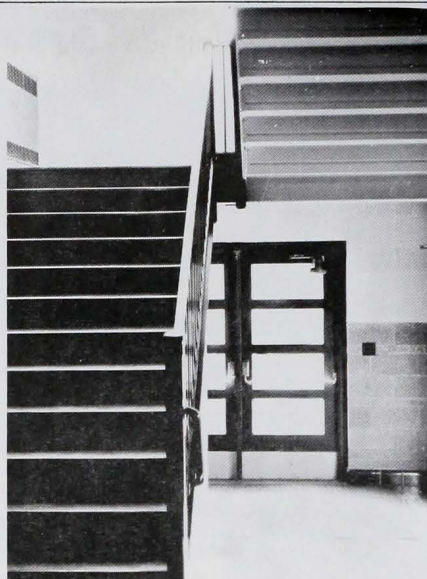
An Escape

(Continued from Page Three)

Ever since the new law has been passed, there have been more and more cases in which parents are faced with this same decision—to let the bodies of their children live while their minds have ceased to function or to let their bodies unite with their dead minds in total death. Of all the cases I have encountered, there has not yet been one in which the decision was made to discontinue medication so that total death would occur. Looking down at this helpless body now, it would seem much kinder to him and to those who know him to let him die. The circumstances are utterly hopeless. There could never be any miraculous discovery found to return him to what he once was. Just when does life end and death begin? Does death begin when the brain can no longer function? How does one measure death? Must it be in entirety or can it be in parts? He knew no definite answers nor where he might find some. But now he must tell them about their son so they can decide.

A gray swirling mist of nothingness spiraled upward and onward—a continual sluggish movement of ordered chaos.

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Darey the Dachshund

by Ruth Semerad



Mrs. Ruth Paugh Semerad, a 1965 graduate of Lost Creek High School, is a junior majoring in speech and English.

Darey the Dachshund lives in a small Southern town near the city of Nowhere. Darey is an ordinary-type dog. He has small pointed ears, bright green eyes and a long sleek body. Darey, belonging to the canine species, has desires much the same as other members of his family. Darey enjoys rising early each morning and traveling down the road for a brisk walk, past his favorite fire hydrant, up Cat-Lane Alley and back of his meagre two foot by four foot home on the edge of the railroad tracks. Darey has lived alone in this small home for some months now, since the death of his mother.

Darey is old enough to care for himself, and no longer being a young puppy, must carry on his shoulders the burden of a dog. Never having worked before, Darey's great ambition in life, now that he is old enough, is to be a railroad watchdog. It is for this reason that Darey secured the small home by the tracks. It is often dirty with smoke and noisy there, but Darey does not mind.

Each day Darey enviously watches the other dachshunds at their duty, moving briskly back and forth along the rails, seeing that no unwanted dog or cat hitches a free ride on the train.

Darey has spoken to the boss of the railroad about the job many times, but he is only ridi-

culed, the boss shouting, "Get away from me white dog. Ain't I told you there just ain't no job for white dogs in these parts?"

Unlike other dachshunds, Darey is white. Darey is a white dachshund in a black dachshund society.

The second greatest desire which Darey has is to speak to the young dachshund who comes down to watch the trains coming and going. She is a small dachshund and younger than himself. Her coat is always neat and shiny and her throat adorned with a bright orange bow. Many times Darey has stood at the door of his home, watching the young bitch from out of his small corner of the universe and wishing desperately that he had the courage to speak.

On this particular morning, just after finishing his breakfast of a bone and Alpo (and noticing again, as he had frequently, that his food was almost gone, this being the last of his Alpo), he looked up to see his adored coming toward the tracks. Swallowing hard, Darey rose on all fours and walked toward her. When he was within hearing range, Darey spoke:

"Hi," he said, "Do you like the trains, too?"

Turning on him with a look of wrath in her eyes, the black dachshund spoke:

"What do you mean, speaking to a black dog? Don't you know better than that? You don't have no right to speak to us black bitches like that, you white dog. Now go away—get out."

Perplexed and deeply hurt, Darey retreated backward to seek the security of his home. Once inside, he cowered in the corner, his paws drawn up around his head as if to alleviate the pain by blocking out the sunlight. Outside the trains continued to move, but Darey neither heard nor cared. He was tired—tired of the weeks of trying. He knew then that he must get away, but he could think of no way to leave, nor of any place to go. Having no money to finance his travels, Darey decided to wait until nighttime and hide on one of the outgoing trains. Knowing the schedules, he was sure that the watchdogs would not catch him. Maybe he could go north;

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And Then There Was Nothing

(Continued from Page Two)

and so loving to all of us. I can never tell him! How could I ever look him in the face again? Julie picked up her cashmere sweater and jumped into her car and raced off to meet Scott.

It was late when Julie returned to Orchard Manor. However, the huge mansion was all lit up like a lighthouse in the harbor. Julie strolled around the sprawling twelve-room house and tried to think of a way in which she could tell her parents about Scott and her. Walking on the soft, green carpet of grass, Julie touched the flowers with her fingertips. How dad loves those flowers. I guess they are the only thing he really enjoys in life. Mother is always running off to a meeting. Tod, Jr. is dead, and I never have the time to share with him anymore. Loud voices broke the silence which lulled over the darkness. Julie found herself standing directly under the windows of her parent's bedroom and what followed seemed to be a story from a cheap magazine and not the voices of her parents.

"This does it Tod! I have overlooked this cheap affair which you have been carrying on for ten years but tonight did it! How could you take her to the club in front of all of our friends? I have never pushed you. I have closed my ears to gossip and prayed that Julie would never hear it. I have been blind to the nights that you never came home and lied to Julie about your absence." Valerie Hilliard's stinging words pierced Julie's heart.

"How could I do it? Well, I'll tell you how I could do it. Twenty years with you—that's what did it. I never loved you! I tried but you never knew the meaning of the word. I could hardly stand your stiff, cold responses to my touches. Why do you think I married you? Your money, your father could put me at the top—that's why I tolerated your snobbish arrogance," her father shouted.

"So that's why you moved to the spare bedroom? You couldn't even stand to sleep with me. You were constantly preoccupied with her. Well, I'll show you—I'll show you both! My father will ruin you and you'll never hold another position as long as I live! You have used me as long as you are going to. Get out! Get out of MY house! Take your cheap little whore and live with her," mother screamed breaking into loud sobs.

"You asked for it Valerie! You never had the time to be a wife. Women's Clubs, Garden Clubs, dinners, parties, clothes, board meetings, came first! The only thing you ever loved was the precious Straton name. Well you take that name and all its glory and go straight to hell," Tod Hilliard screamed as he slammed out of the house.

Not dad! Cheap affair for ten years! Not Dad—not Dad who tucked me in all those nights that mother was being hostess at parties, not dad who took me to the circus on Saturday afternoon while mother shopped for clothes. Cheap affair for ten years kept rolling over in Julie's mind. All those years her dad had been living two lives—living a lie! It wasn't the firm which demanded all of dad's time but that cheap slut!

Thinking back over the years, Julie saw her mother in a new

light. It was Mother who made him what he is. Her constant nagging for dad to watch his grammar and remember his manners was really for him—to put him among the elite and the polished. Her devotion to her clubs was for her family so that they would have a dignity in the community!

Quietly, Julie let herself in and made her way up the curved, red-carpeted staircase to her room. From behind the closed door, Julie could hear her mother's cries. Mother had never cried before! Not even when Tod was killed in Viet Nam and Tod was always her favorite. Tod was the best—the best athlete in high school, a straight "A" student, and he attended the best Eastern University. Tod let her down, too. He withdrew from school and was killed in Viet Nam two months later.

"He will be buried in Arlington Cemetery," was mother's only response to the young Marine who brought the horrible news. A faraway look came over her face and she moved without cause, but never did she breakdown as dad did. She only reminded me, "That we were Stratons and we must maintain our dignity in public. People of our stature do not give themselves to grief," she spoke assuredly.

Now, added to the grief, I must tell mother of the baby which grows within me everyday. I must tell her that the supposed trips to the library every night were turned into a raging affair at the lake. Night after night, Scott and I drove to the Forsaken Lake and there shared the love that was sacred to man and wife.

"We will marry," Scott had promised her tonight. Mother will never adhere to that. Next week I am to leave for school, for mother's Alma Mater. Scott—Mother would never accept Scott—his father was only a coach at the local high school and his mother graduated only from high school.

Julie pulled her robe tight about her growing body and tapped lightly on her mother's door. "Come in," her mother called in a low voice.

"Mother, there is something I must . . . " Julie stopped instantly. This was not her mother. This woman was a beaten, lonely vegetable. Her broad, straight shoulders were slumped and rounded as though they were weary from years of heavy burden. Her elegant black gown was wrinkled and soiled. In her hand she clasped a glass of brandy tightly. Her once neatly filed and polished nails were now bitten and split and chewed to the flesh of her soft, tender hands.

Valerie Hilliard raised her head and gazed at her young daughter. Julie was so innocent and pure and she will now have to hear the truth about her father. I had hoped that Julie would leave for school before the gossip reached her youthful ears. Now, I have to tell the whole filthy, rotten story. For ten years, I protected her but now she has to know!

Julie was speechless. A tear fell from her mother's black-circled eyes. Yes, black circles now encompassed the troubled blue eyes which at one time had been as blue as peaceful as a brook. Pain, frustration, emptiness now clouded her face. What was once an ironclad

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The Infidel

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"Be down in just a second." She scurried through her closet, picking a favorite dress for casual wear. She could hear the two boisterous voices from below. She finished dressing and went downstairs.

"Hi, Sis!" Jim gave her a fast peck on the cheek and turned her toward the houseguest. "Paula, I'd like you to meet Ken Jonson. Ken, my little sister."

"Well, Jim, I wasn't aware that you had such an attractive member stashed away in your family closet. I am very pleased to meet you, Paula."

"Better watch this one," Jim chuckled. He has got more girls on the string than he knows what to do with."

Paula could readily see why, too. She admired his clean-cut features. The coal-black hair emphasized the face, which possessed a rich, bronze tone. He towered above her five feet eight inch frame, and she liked the slimmness of his waist coupled with the broadness of his shoulders. She was attracted by Ken's clear blue eyes which seemed to penetrate her very existence. His voice was smooth and eloquent. He was rather conservatively dressed, yet his good taste was quite evident. He had a certain polished charm which, when added to his good looks, summed up an air of worldliness which Paula at once appreciated. She and Ken hit it off quite well together. He had remarked, in his familiar good-humored nature, that the Weir Sisters had decreed them to be everlastingly intertwined. She and Ken had married soon after her graduation, even though Ken had another year of law school to complete. They were both from upper-middle class families, so naturally money was no problem. Yet neither craved materialistic wealth. They loved each other completely, and each one's life was devoted to the other. That is unusual now!

Ken nudged Paula back into reality. "May I have this dance with the loveliest lady of my life?"

It was the first time that they had really been together all evening.

Darey . . .

(Continued from Page Four)

he had heard of other white dachshunds up there, perhaps he could join them.

As darkness came and Darey prepared to leave, he thought of the stories that his mother had told him, of the time when white dachshunds had tried to gain rule.

"But that is all in the past," he thought as he heard the whistle of the train, saw the wheels begin to move and felt the motion beneath him. "The blacks are the rulers. They were rulers. They were stronger, greater in number and more vicious than we."

Darey curled himself into a ball and watched the blur of scenery and lights as they sped hurriedly by. Sometime he slept, or when he awakened the bright light was glaring harshly in his eyes and some dog was barking. "Hey, there's a white dog asleep up here. He's hitching a ride on dogs, let's get him."

Darey dashed out of the train on to the hard gravel below and sped across the rows of tracks into the city. It was a large city,

"I appreciate your being so agreeable about this dinner-dance," Ken said soothingly. "I realize that it was such a short notice, but I knew you would come through as usual. I think it is coming off rather well, too. You and Nicole are indispensable."

Her eyes burned into him at the mention of Nicole. Yes, Paula believed that Nicole was, indeed, indispensable. Why must he lie to her so? But of course she knew exactly why. Ken mustn't rock the boat, now of all times. He couldn't take a chance on a scandal at this point of such a high and mighty career. What would happen if word would reach the press of Senator Ken Jonson's lewd affair with Miss Nicole Martin? Paula was aware that only she knew of his unfaithfulness. She would never reveal what she knew to anyone else, because she also was aware of the fact that she would always possess him.

"Paula, do you feel all right?" Ken asked.

"Don't worry about me, dear. I'm just a little tense. That's all."

"But I do worry about you. You have been acting so strange lately, Paula. You seem to be miles away, when I try to discuss something with you. Maybe you should talk to Dr. Benson again. He seems to do you a world of good."

Why did he always do this to her. She reminded herself often enough without Ken calling her attention to it. It was satisfying to know she had not thought of it once this evening, until now. It seemed so long ago since it happened. Their baby was only fifteen months old. They were the ideal family until the day of the accident. She was never actually sure that it had been an accident. Paula was playing with Timmy when the phone rang. She had left him on the floor and somehow he had reached the lighter on the coffee table. By the time she heard the screaming it was too late. She became ill and was unable to attend the funeral. Dr. Benson confined her to her bed. Ken took it hard at first, but he had tried to cheer Paula with the prospects of a new baby. Tried, that is, until Paula was told that she would never be able to have another child.

This was why Ken hated her, she thought. She could never

give him another child. Never! It was all her fault. Ken realized that as well as she did. She knew he held no love for her, because of what had happened. It was at this point that he had turned to Nicole for the love and understanding she had once been able to provide.

The drive home had been a long and cool one. Ken tried to start a conversation, but his attempts soon dwindled into nothingness. The sight of home seemed to relieve some uneasy tenseness growing between them.

"Why don't you go on up to bed?" Ken asked patiently. "Tonight was too much to ask of you after all of the traveling we have done this past week. Please forgive me. I should have known better than to have expected so much of you in so little of a time. I am sure Nicole could have gone."

Paula felt her nerves shatter. "Nicole, Nicole! Will you please have the damn decency not to throw her in my face every time I turn around? I know that I am inadequate as a wife. I realize that I can offer you nothing, but please have some compassion!"

A flood of tears broke loose. Ken stared in disbelief. He could not grasp this alien, unresponsive face. "Paula, what are you talking about? I can't understand why you are so upset. Was it something that I said or did this evening?"

"This evening?" she cried. She began laughing hysterically. "Can you really think that I am so blind. Oh, Ken, why do you torture me so? I try to be a good wife. I try, I try! Oh, God, help me!"

Ken caught her as she fell. He carried her upstairs and put her to bed. Then he called Dr. Benson.

"I have given her a sedative to calm her down, Ken. She should sleep the rest of the night."

"What should I do, Paul? I thought she was getting along fine, but things just haven't been the same between us since She imagines that there is something between Nicole and me. Maybe if I take her away for awhile, to Europe or South America. She loves Rio in the fall."

"The change might do her some good, Ken. Let me know what you decide. I'll check on Paula tomorrow."

It was a brisk October morning, and the wind seemed to cut

through Paula as she hurried toward Chapline Street. She was ten minutes late for her appointment already. She tried to seem calm as she sat down in a rather large, overstuffed chair.

"It has been nearly two weeks since I caused that small disturbance, Paul, and I feel just fine." She tried to seem cheerful this time. "I guess my nerves were frayed, that's all."

Paula pulled herself in tightly. I've got to relax. She kept pounding that fact into her head. She was certain that Ken had been with Nicole constantly within the past couple of weeks. She hated them both now. She had been degraded long enough. She must put an end to this debauchery.

Dr. Benson seemed satisfied with Paula's condition, and he sent her off with hearty congratulations commending her improvement. She had won the first round.

She went directly from Dr. Benson's office to Ken's. He was alone.

Nicole must be out to lunch, Paula thought. How nice for her plan to work out so well. But what plan? She had no idea of what she intended to do, except that she had to destroy Ken, just as he had destroyed her love and everything they had ever had together.

Ken glanced up as Paula entered the room. "Darling, what a surprise. I am so happy to see you looking so much better."

Why did he have to lie? She could not stand his lecherous lies any longer. She could feel the quivering inside and the hatred rising to its peak. She understood what she must do. A man so corrupt could not be allowed to live. She picked up the letter opener. Someone, someone unknown to Paula, seemed to be compelling her, enticing her onward.

The tightness inside made it difficult for her to breathe. She started toward Ken.

"What is it, Paula? What are you doing . . . ?" She plunged the would be weapon directly into the heart. Again and again she stabbed him, and each wound released an inner tension within her body.

She knew she would never forget that horrible expression on his face. A look of disbelief.

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And Then There Was Nothing

(Continued from Page Four)

structure was crumbling like an ancient wall. Mother's face was now troubled and her forehead bore the wrinkles and scars of time. Daddy did this to her! A man did this! Will Scott do this to me in time?

"Yes, dear, what did you want to talk with me about?" Valerie asked.

Julie did not have the nerve to tell her mother now that she was pregnant so she said, "Mother, I just wanted to talk with you about my fall wardrobe, but you look tired. We will discuss it in the morning. Good night."

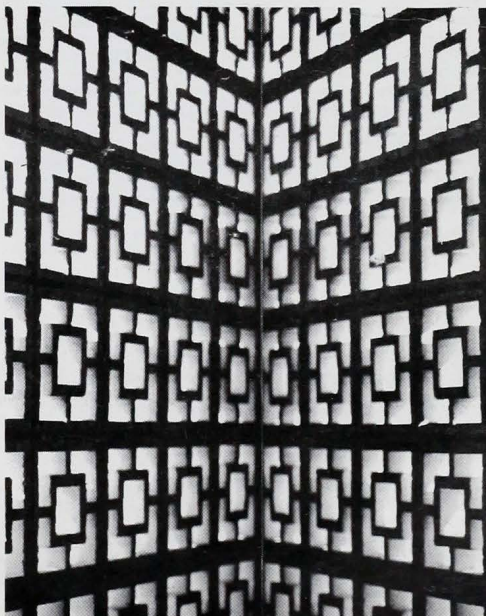
Julie leaned to kiss her mother and her hands touched her hair. Even the shine and gleam had left her medium-length blond hair and her bouncy curls were bedraggled and dull. The lines around her full, firm lips were tight and drawn and a gray mist covered her silky complexion.

She will never know about me! She will never know that I am no better than dad! Julie reached for the sleeping pills and walked to her room and closed the door behind her!



FOURTH PLACE

Patrick McCartney, a junior, is a math and physics major. McCartney is a 1965 graduate of Glenville High School. He is presently photographer of the Mercury and is a former member of the band and chorus. His hobbies are: riding, photography, poetry, nature study, and reading.



It Might Have Been

by Greta Hayhurst

When she finally stopped crying and the tightness in her breast became the only feeling of which she was aware, Elaine began, as all others had before her, the inevitable pondering, the inevitable questioning of Why? Why had this happened? For what sane reason, what earthly purpose this untimely death? Oddly enough, this was the first time that she had viewed death in this manner—untimely. "I don't believe it . . . she was confused, Janet didn't really call me. Surely I'll wake up and discover this is just a bad dream."

But the matronly housemother coming to her room with a mild sedative and a few impersonal but kind words told that it was true.

Today had begun as most Saturday mornings in the dormitory. Inside could be heard the sounds of slamming doors, running water, and chattering girls exchanging joking remarks. Outside on this late April day the sun was warm, promising a pleasant day outdoors—perhaps a few hours on the sun roof. Elaine wanted to have a good start on a sun tan before she went to the university for the big weekend as Brett's date. Then, as Elaine was dressing in her quiet, utilitarian-type room, she heard one of the girls call down the typically deserted, echoing weekend hall, "Phone for Elaine." She answered the girl and, buttoning her blouse, ran to the phone, only vaguely wondering who could be calling her.

Disbelief, the senseless, inane reply, "You must be kidding," was her reaction when Janet tried to explain gently that some of Brett's fraternity brothers had just given her the news. "But," thought Elaine, "Brett can't be dead! I just saw him last weekend—only 7 days ago. It has to be a mistake." But the receding of all around her, the sudden vacuum in which she was standing alone, told her that something terrible was wrong even if her mind refused to acknowledge exactly what it was.

After the call Elaine began the strange journey back up the hall to her room. Unexplainedly she found herself out in the stairwell crying. She wondered, "How did I get out here? I meant to go to my room." Opening the hall door, she looked up the corridor which now seemed so coldly endless, so unreal, and began walking as if in a trance. She realized in a few moments that evidently she must have passed someone and explained part of what had happened because when she finally made it to the security of her room (security? how odd that the essence of a room could change so suddenly—that the place to sleep and change clothes only had become a haven, a shelter, a retreat) the housemother had come.

It seemed like hours she lay there on the narrow, comfortless bed, waiting for her brother to arrive. She yearned to go home; yet she wanted to stay here in the solitude of her room. She wanted to think; yet she dreaded to commence remembering. A record player down the hall wailed out the popular, melancholy song of "Stranger on the Shore." Elaine felt like the song sounded. She instinctively knew that from now on she would never hear that song again without recalling this morning. She instinctively knew that this tautness in her breast would return each time, perhaps diminished, but it would return each time, perhaps diminished, but it would return. Then, "But Brett was so healthy, so full of life. He's somewhere now, laughing and joking. He simply can't be gone."

Elaine thought back to the previous weekend. They had gone to the drive-in theatre on Saturday night and had eaten some custard at a small frozen custard stand before he had taken her home. On Sunday she had to leave for school earlier than anticipated and had called Brett to tell him. He had been in his usual teasing, good-natured mood and had only casually mentioned that he did not feel up to par, that evidently the cold custard had irritated his stomach.

Now, only a week later, Elaine first learned that he had had trouble with stomach ulcers for quite some time and had just a few hours ago died on the operating table from a bleeding ulcer. Perhaps this was a part of her disbelief, her reluctance to accept the idea. "Young boys in their twenties don't have ulcers. They don't die from ulcers."

Perhaps another reason for this unwillingness to accept the idea was that Brett had always seemed so self-sufficient, so in command of all situations, so immune to distractions, to interruptions to life. Brett was the one person she knew who was really unaffected by such things as petty opinions and judgments of those around him. Probably the age difference explained this.

Elaine drifted back to their first—a blind date it had been—not quite a year ago. High school graduation was over, the excitement was gone, and the dullness of summer in a small town had begun to show its effect. Therefore when a mutual friend arranged a blind date for the two, Elaine had looked forward to the night with great anticipation. She was somewhat intrigued by the age variation as well as the fact that he was a college junior and she a timid freshman.

Caged

WHEN I — with raptured emotion filled stand — inspired in Life's awesome cathedral — NATURE *** I whence from anger came not knowing of the passion decreed by an expressionless force.

Wanting to explode, implode or deliver through self . . . for agonizing relief — that which fills the soul with inexplicability. BOTTLED AND CAPPED

by man's inability to communicate — That which surges to the crevices of the incomprehending — unable yet craving . . . the mind constricting, throbbing — — commandeering but oh so fleeting and faltering — aching to free the self of the aware unknowledgeable being.

J. H. Albert, Jr.

She had to laugh the next day when her mother expressed concern over a seventeen year old girl dating a twenty-five year old man. "Relax, Mom, he's not an ogre contemplating my ruin!" How could she explain to an anxious mother that they had actually spent the majority of the evening discussing and arguing about predestination? But then how could she even explain to herself just what the attraction was that Brett held for her? He definitely was not handsome, or cute, or "tough", as the pre-college crowd was learning to say. Actually he was sort of pudgy, short, and just plain-looking. He seemed interested in Elaine, she thought, but she still had the feeling that he was quite amused at her ideas, her conception of life. They dated all summer and their relationship developed, quite naturally, physically as well as intellectually. Brett gradually and deliberately awakened her to her emotional and intellectual capacities.

Then, college at last! In the first few months, dorm life, new friends, new classes, and other customary elements of a freshman's life kept Elaine busy, and although she and Brett corresponded and continued to see each other occasionally, their relationship did not evolve further—that is, not until she began experiencing a period of depression. College life was losing its excitement; the local boys on campus somehow seemed pallid and insipid in comparison with Brett. Elaine, though she had not led what could be termed a sheltered life, was disturbed by the general amoral or immoral (she knew not which) attitude she was encountering.

When she confided in Brett during a weekend when both were home from school, he did not laugh as she had half-nervously expected. He managed to convey to her his personal philosophy concerning the matter. He told Elaine that if she felt she could indulge in the activities so commonly participated in by others and not have any doubts or questions about the "rightness" of the matter, that she should go ahead and do as the crowd did. "However", he said, "if you have what is commonly referred to as a guilty conscience and just plain don't feel right about your actions, then let them consider you dull and square. You'll be the winner in the long run." And Elaine had gratefully accepted this solution to her problem with a feeling of relief.

In some way, after talking with Brett, the matter which had seemed so important became almost insignificant. Their knowledge of each other subsequently increased and it seemed to have a settling effect on Elaine. Brett could arouse deep and wonderful feelings in her which made her appreciate what a relationship could offer and caused her to anticipate a more perfect, more consummate relationship. Elaine had been on the brink of discovering the pleasures of such a consanguinity when death had intervened.

Harshly the buzzer sounded in her room and Elaine's brother was there. Had it only been two hours since Elaine had called him? Riding home the realization gradually began to take place. The despair gained full entrance to her mind and heart and once more Elaine cried. Her hurt, bewildered mind kept jumping from the past to the future and back again to the past. She kept going over and over all that she had shared with Brett but could never share again. She thought of what they might have shared but had not. Then her thoughts would turn again to the future but only fleetingly because she could not bear to think of a future without him. Fragments of a quotation kept running through her mind: "Of all sad words of tongue and pen . . . saddest of these . . . it might have been."

Abruptly Elaine realized, "All this sorrow and pity had been centered about me. I haven't even thought of what Brett's family must be going through—I haven't even thought of the incompleteness of Brett's life, what he will never live to see or do. I've only been thinking of how I feel, or what this is doing to me." And, being young, Elaine could not yet realize that this is precisely why death is naturally so dreaded, so terrible for most people—because it is so personal—and guilt over this selfishness began to edge its ways into her already crowded heart.

The summer which followed just two short months after the shadowy weekend of the funeral was a crucial one for Elaine. "What do I have to lose? Who cares now whether I am 'good' or . . . indiscreet?" She was bitter, felt cheated of Brett's companionship. It was, however, a busy summer, working five days a week for the federal agency in the huge, uncaring city, and partying every weekend. These weekends became more and more a temptation. She became more and more inclined to give up the "battle"—to give in to the incessant demands of her numerous, worldlywise dates. "They don't really believe I'm even vaguely angelic after a year at college; they believe my protests are superficial, so why keep it up?" But she did restrain, she did keep the battle up. She met each challenge, each demand with a reason, a counterattack, although being so far from home and on her own was certainly a weakening force.

Later, not quite a year later, Elaine could once more face life soundly. She could accept what it had to offer without the terrible bitterness which had temporarily possessed her. Her philosophy of life began to solidify and she could look back on the summer as a crisis, but a crisis which had been met successfully. She still judged others by Brett and still felt influenced by all he had taught her, had awakened in her, but she could begin to see how propitious it had been to know him, even if for a limited time, and the feeling of bitterness, of despondency began to be mellowed by that reconciler, that balm of all wounds—Time.

The Infidel

Why should he disbelieve that she could destroy him after all he had done to her?

She began to race against the day. She returned home, and as she entered the living room she was startled by the appearance of Nicole.

"Hi, Paula. Hey, where is that husband of yours anyway? I really have to hand it to him. He really laid it right on the line this morning."

Paula tried to collect her senses. "Why, Ken is at his office where he always is. He

won't be home until after six o'clock. You know that, Nicole. What are you jabbering about anyway?"

"Now, Paula, you mean you weren't aware of what Ken has been doing?"

"Would I be standing here in such a damn stupor if I did?" she snapped back.

"Well, then, let me be the first to let the cat out of the bag," Nicole bragged. "Ken Jonson is so in love with his wife that he has given up a brilliant career."

"Will you please stop talking



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An Escape

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Scattered blobs of white darted into the gray mist for only a fleeting moment and then the rise and swirl of intermediacy began again. Is this death or is it life? . . . I am aware and yet unaware — two opposites but at the same time one and the same. . . I must straighten my mind so that I can know where I have been and where I am going. How did I get here? Why can I not move my body . . . The accident . . . What am I . . . Why can I not speak . . . Don't look at me with those pitying eyes as if this is to be my existence for ever . . . Or is it . . . No, I would rather be dead in body too than to live this kind of existence . . . To lie here is not even living . . . It's as if I am a ward of the state, a state that feels obligated to take care of myself . . . If I can't do that then I don't want to be at all . . . You must know this but how can I make you understand . . . Mom . . . Dad . . . I have lived my life and it has been active and happy but now that life is over . . . So show me now your love in my death as you did in my life . . . Show me that you won't make me pay for what has happened by allowing me to stay in this non-existent existence. Show me an eternal kindness and let me escape this doom . . . I beg of you . . . I beg . . . now . . .

The doctor came to the bedside and administered the clear liquid into the boy's arm, looking, as he did so, towards the weeping mother and the grief-stricken father. For Tod, the heavy blanket of gray mist was moving in its continual swirling motion once again. Only this time it was more oppressive than before and darker.

The blackness continued upward and onward, never to return.

in circles, Nicole."

"In other words, Paula, Ken fears that you are heading for a complete nervous breakdown because of the position he holds. Today he resigned that position to devote full time to the one that means the most in life to him. That's what we have been doing for the last two weeks. We had a lot of loose ends to tie up. Paula, are you listening? Paula, are you all right?"