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Some moments are in slow motion, others are fast forwarded, and some moments are forgotten. Things go fast and slow, but time is always passing.

I am driving through The Land of Many Uses with winds howling around when my car begins to slide. The moment lasts forever as the car slowly moves forward and gets closer to the car stopped ahead. When the cars collide the passengers heads jerk back, and then life returns to its regular pace.

A group of friends sits around a campfire telling stories and laughing. The northern lights dazzle in the moonless night. Some marshmallows twirl above the fire, approaching golden brown, and others sit in the fire getting scorched. It is a perfect moment that won’t be appreciated until it is a memory.

The notepad with “Things To Do” sloppily scribbled at the top of the page sits on the white desk. A lengthy list goes down the page left over from the week before as new items are added. An extra day is needed added in order for the growing list to be completed.

This edition of the Athenaea is dedicated the moments that feel as though the world has stopped and a single moment that lasts forever, the moments we don’t cherish until they are memories, all of the time we think we have and all the things we don’t have time for, all the time in the world, and wasting time.

-Courtney Wheeler
-Claire Blood-Cheney
From a Place

I come from pottery plates and squinty eyes from waking up in sleeping bags.

I come from a place that cherishes the yellow of aspen leaves as a god. From a place that honors scratches and blood from hiking off trail.

I come from a love for blackberries and the quaint kerplunk of small, wild blueberries into a tin bucket.

From long, humid car rides back east and gazing at the starry abyss behind our little cabin in the woods.

I come from the opening riff of a Van Morrison CD, and the clinking of rings against wine glasses.

I come from a place where cheese slicers are worshipped and Billy Collins is read aloud.

I come from a place full of worn dictionaries and hearts.

-Sage Reynolds
-McKenna Monk
-Will Eustace
Might

Mountains are Mother Nature’s crown,
Giant walls for mountain towns.
From up top, rivers come rushing down,
Bouncing eagle screeches, mighty sounds.

Stretching far, from here to there,
Bringing silence to the air.
I come to lay my emotions bare.
I am safe in Mother’s care.

Some fear the mountain’s mighty face,
Afraid to give fresh air a taste,
But this giant being of massive space
Will always be my sacred place.

-Sosie Nixon
Thumb Tacks

I kept the ball of string
--convoluted, tangled, and twisted--
because when she handed it to me,
a similar piece in her hand,
she said it was friendship string.

I put it on my bulletin board
next to the small, plastic topper
with the purple praise: “Good job!”
that I got off a cupcake at
my middle school graduation.

Above these memories is a quote:
“The universe is not only queerer than we suppose,
it is queerer than we can suppose,”
that means more to me now than it did
when I put it on a poster as a freshman.

There is a picture of my swim team
next to my varsity letter, which is below
pictures of my dog when she was a puppy,
right after she received the scabbed scar
on her nose from a playful golden retriever.

Tucked into the frame and filling the gaps
are tickets to movies and the theatre
and boarding passes to Washington D.C.,
Sitka, Costa Rica, and Colorado.
There's a shriveled piece of duct tape that I wore around my wrist for a year before it exhausted itself and broke, and a faded blue and purple name tag from my cubby in preschool.

I can’t remember where the floral sticker is from, nor can I discern the importance of the orange fair ticket with bold words telling me to “KEEP THIS COUPON.”

Perhaps I kept it because it told me to.

-Samantha Pratt

-Claire Blood-Cheney
Flight

I waited for my parents and siblings to fall asleep, counting the hours patiently. The sun had long since been swallowed by the dark, gaping peaks in the distance, and the stars had already begun to venture from their cloak of day. Just as dreams started to tempt hypnotically at the back of my mind, the grandfather clock finally rang midnight. Thrumming through my blood with a fiery fervor, anticipation pumped my heart with blazing streams of pure excitement, hunting down and dispelling all traces of drowsiness that may have lingered from just a few moments ago.

Constraining the dizzying adrenaline for sake of calm control, I slowly pulled back the covers, slipped on a pair of boots, and stepped cautiously across the room to my window. Unclipping the metal bar and spreading the glass squares wide, my heart caught as a shrill squeak resonated through the air. I froze, listening intently for any signs of movement down the hall. Silence reigned; I breathed a sigh of relief and proceeded to heave my legs over the windowsill and lightly spring off.

The cool breeze swirled through my messy locks and chilled my pale countenance as I descended, the earth rising up to catch me atop a carefully situated hay pile directly below. Bouncing slightly at the impact, I glanced back at the window and cautiously listened for noise once again. Hearing only the melodic notes of nightfowl, I quickly brushed a few strands of hay from my hair and clothes and ran towards a wooden stable behind the house. Outside, a large, dark green dragon was impatiently drumming its claws on the soft ground, an aura of irritation emanating from its figure.

Where were you?

“I was waiting for them to fall asleep. I don’t want to be caught again, Virenael. We have to be back before dawn this time.”

Fine... Will you be all right with just your sleepwear?

“Yeah. I don’t get cold easily, and the leather saddle is soft and insulated.”

Let’s get going, then.

Virenael was already harnessed from earlier that afternoon. I strode up to him, hooked my left boot into the strap, and swung my right foot swiftly over his spiny back. Virenael turned around and loped toward a grassy clearing about twenty yards away from the stable. As soon as his claws stepped from the hard dirt road to the plush, cushioned field, Virenael snapped his wings open and sharply beat down, leaping into the air with practiced grace. Breaking through the thin clouds at a sharp angle, he spun and leveled eight
off into the open space beyond, moonlight bleaching his scales metallic silver.

My eyes slid shut as the early morning breeze gently caressed my face and played lightly with my auburn locks. I relaxed into the saddle as Virenael flew smoothly across the dark, twinkling sky. The stars had already disappeared behind the misty veil of night as the presence of dawn threatened to outshine them within the next few hours. Feeling myself fall into the fuzzy, tranquil pool of thoughts deep within my mind, I let the intermittent wingbeats echo rhythmically in my ears and carry my spirit to dreams.

***

Hey, wake up. Dawn is almost upon us.

Jolted out of my lulling thoughts, my eyes shot open as Virenael's voice streaked through the placid waters of my mind, sending ripples across the surface and stirring billows of turbid debris from the bottom. My body jerked as my muddled mind processed his words. I was about to yell at him for not warning me sooner, when a patch of brightness intercepted my line of sight. As I watched the horizon, the air left my lungs.

The sun slowly climbed the distant, justified mountains. Reaching the jagged zenith, a warm current spiraled toward us, staining the clouds a myriad of soft, vibrant hues. As the fiery orb rose higher and higher, a glare emanating below redirected my gaze. Mirroring off the crystalline waters of the bay, aureate rays of light refracted and bathed Virenael's underscales in a sheen of white as he flexed his wings and dove closer. Skimming the surface, a cloud of moisture rose up from both sides as Virenael delicately dipped the tips of his wings into the cool, clear liquid.

Pulling up and soaring northward, Virenael executed a complicated maneuver consisting of sharp turns and quick, evasive tactics. The waves rippled and sparkled in the morning glow as we laughed in enjoyment, syncing as one entity. Our joy receded into a comfortable silent, as we admired the beauty presented before us, our souls singing a common tune of contentment. Observing as the sun climbed higher into the cerulean dawn, a warning rang through my serenity; I gasped in horror.

What?

“Dawn! My family will be up soon!”

I was thrust forward in the saddle as Virenael unexpectedly halted and snapped his wings, forcing us into a clumsy U-turn. Not waiting for me to regain my balance, the dragon zoomed back the way we came. As I frantically grasped a handhold and
repositioned myself, I felt my anxiety rising. If we were caught again, I would be grounded for a month without flying! The thought itself nearly sent me into a panic attack; my life revolved around the sky and Virenael.

We arrived at the clearing in record time. Landing abruptly, I winced in alarm as the jarred movement almost flung me out of the saddle. I quickly jumped from Virenael and sprinted to the house, while he rushed toward the stables. I vaulted off the carefully placed grain barrel beside the bed of hay and grabbed the windowsill. Pulling myself up, I flung the rest of my body inside and hastily closed the window as silently as possible. Leaping onto my bed, I threw the covers over my head just in time as my mother opened the door and peered inside. I stifled my harsh gasps, heart thundering in my chest; I prayed to the lords she wouldn’t notice. After glancing around, my mother quietly shut the door. I released my stinging lungs and proceeded to regulate my heavy breaths. As the cool air relinquished its chilly grasp and dissipated into the fading night, I snuggled deeper into the warming pillows and blankets, a smug grin flashing across my countenance as my thoughts began to shift towards the next flight.

-Ashby Baker

-Aleck Chen
YOU dream
WE LIVE YOUNG AND TRANSPARENT
wild
ALIVE
MORTAL
surreal and RADIANT

-Zoe Holman
Body

Her nose, subtly grazing the star-soaked above
Eyes with deciduous trees hidden in her pupils
Lips: silky with moss and sage brush
Her back: only explored by those who wander to find hidden mosaics,
filled with the cool water of alpine lakes and bluebells.
And her cheeks, wrinkled with our hiking boots and sleeping bags.

-Sage Reynolds

-twelve

-Claire Blood-Cheney
Ode To October

‘Tis finally the first of October.
Today, we awoke to the morning mist.
The greens are fading; summer is over;
Our cheeks are blushed with autumn’s frigid kiss.
The sky’s complexion turns from blue to gray;
The trees resign to the changing of leaves.
Come, gird the horses and bundle the hay.
Goodbye shorts and tees – hello to long sleeves.
But, ready your skis and dust off your boots.
Heat up the stew and gather ’round the hearth.
Step outside, listen, the horned owl hoots;
Pull on your sweater and don your knit scarf.
We will look forward to the promised snow;
For now, we still have many months to go.

-Honors English II Class

-Maddy Cook
Curling

Curling is a change of direction. My entire life has been characterized by my straying from the normal path, and Olympic Curling is a perfect example. Imagine Santa Fe, New Mexico, a desert, and within that desert a sixteen-year-old boy crouches down at an indoor ice skating rink in mid-July—casting a forty-two pound granite rock 140 feet down the ice. My entire universe is focused on three intense feelings: the weight of a granite rock pushing against my palm, the intense cold of ice seeping into bare fingertips and through the toes of leather sliders, and the often minuscule window into which I must cast my stone. To achieve perfection, I must aim impeccably, but luckily I don’t have to aim alone. The skip\(^1\) points her red broom three inches to the left of the button\(^2\), then walks two and a half feet to the right and holds her right hand out. If my shot is to be true, I need to align my hips, shoulders, and eyes with the skip, but I must also completely lose my mind and soul in the cold air seeping into my lungs and brushing my face as I slide from the hack\(^3\).

My stone gradually curls on pebbled ice, gliding, then resting inches from the button. Curling, the sport, resonates with me so deeply because it contains so many blatant metaphors relating to life: the longer you play the easier it gets; miss by a hair and sometimes you hit the wrong stone entirely; if you don’t put your own spin on the stone, the ice takes it where it wants; our mentors (the skip) can help guide us, but ultimately, if the stone goes astray, we take responsibility; loved ones (teammates) can always help our life move faster.

Olympic Curling is not the only curl that has entered my life, even if it is one of the unique ones. So much of my life relates to different manifestations of curling that sometimes I wonder how curled I seem to those around me.
A spiraling lock of my thirteen-inch hair, auburn in the sun, curls around my neck. My right foot plows through a soccer ball, sending it arcing silently through the air; curling into the upper right corner of the net. Ten toes—crammed into my too tight shoes—ten fingers—tight with frigid morning air (and my numerous calluses), locked on thick slabs of rhyolite⁴, curl voraciously around the lip of a Diablo Cañon cliff. My mother, father, sister, brother, and I slip into our sleeping bags as we curl together in negative ten-degree weather; a family camping trip in the Pecos wilderness. My two thin lips pulsate up and down as they curl over a choral arrangement of “Let It Go” (from Disney’s Frozen), then again while I sing Ombra Mai Fù for All-State choir auditions. The flowing melodies and harmonies of any type of music seem to enrapture me. Flowing words of Robert Jordan’s The Wheel of Time series bore into my mind, curling my emotions and coloring my imagination. Literature and a curling plot have always fascinated me (probably in part because I was raised without a TV). A spinning Ultimate Frisbee disc leaps from my hands, curing from the wind and sliding into my dad’s rough hands.

Even though I have not been curling competitively for very long, curls are extremely prevalent in my life—from luscious locks of hair to my first memory of a camping trip to a love for great literature—and have defined who I am as a person. As I curl away from high school, I grip my future like my curling stone, sending it down life’s slippery path, but aiming it how I choose.

1 The most experienced member of the team who places her body where the rock-thrower aims.
2 The very middle of a curling target.
3 A bar of metal with rubber footpads, raised from the ice and used to propel a thrower forward.
4 Rhyolite is a type of stone.

-Taran Hunter
All trees will wear
Red or yellow clothes
Changing designs for winter

-Yu Akimoto

Dear retreating chipmunk,
Do not be afraid,
I’m vegetarian.

-Sosie Nixon

Soaking in star light
No sleep
Childish jokes

-Skye McCurdy

It was a day,
Where memories slipped out my eyes,
And rolled down my cheeks.

-Zoe Holman

Bald mountain top
Where are your trees?
Must have cut your hair

-Skye McCurdy

sixteen
-Elle Markley
If the Universe Were a Mural

If the universe were a mural;
painted on a white wall,
insignificance would strike the mind.
You are smaller than 1/4th of a grain of sand
and so is your lover.
And the detail you notice in the corners of her evergreen eyes,
scrunching as she howls with joy,
are smaller than 3/8ths of a grain of sand.
And that delicate movement of her freckled back as she takes in a breath--
smaller than 1/8th of a grain of sand.
But you, your lover, her evergreen eyes, and her freckled back
are equal to 1 grain of sand.
And a grain full of that much grace...
well, that’s enough for me.

-Sage Reynolds
our garden heard you

break like glass.

the OLD birch SWAY ed to that MUSIC

and mushroom s GAZE d SOFT ly at YOUR DISTRESS

a purple leaf shivered at your PLEA

as dandelions SING a whisper

I try

THE GARDEN HEARD you

and OUR house, green was empty.

-Samantha Pratt
Innocence

Sadie was laughing intensely, as we rolled around in the bright green grass. She stopped on top of me and proudly exclaimed, “I WON!” Unaware any competition was happening I just smiled enjoying the simplicity of her thoughts.

She slid off the top of me and laid by my side. Both of us stared straight up at the clouds in the sky, in her quiet voice she asked, “Is Connor dead?” Not expecting this I answered, “Yes he is.”

Still enjoying the clouds above, she questioned what that meant. Not truly knowing myself, I simply put it, “We won’t get to see him again.” This time she looked away from the sky and turned to me and said, “Until we’re in heaven, too”
Before I was able to respond
her six-year-old mind
returned to the sky,
and, with excitement,
she pointed out
Connor in the clouds.

-Courtney Wheeler

-Claire Blood-Cheney
Confucius articulated that “everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.” The violin is a seemingly squeaky, boring instrument, which few appreciate and believe to hold beauty. As a child, I believed classical music to be especially ancient and bland: Vivaldi and Barber sounding like a foreign language. That was before I knew what beauty was.

Mangled, scratched, and covered with grimy handprints, my new quarter-sized violin laid in my reckless hands. Given to me the previous day, I had already managed to break the bridge, rip off the strings, and permanently damage the faux-wood body; but, for some reason, the violin was mended, given back to me. I was oblivious to the value in that small, black case. The seemingly meaningless, plastic instrument had much to teach me.

That violin taught me math like no teacher could. The sheet music unveiled the world of algebra: revealing patterns and fractions through Bach’s Bourrée and Dvořák’s Humoresque. My mathematical and musical education progressed simultaneously. While we learned about sinusoidal curves in pre-calculus, I came to understand the precise reasoning behind each note. Each pitch represented a different curve. The flats, the sharps, and the arpeggios all became perfectly clear. Suddenly there was an application for mathematics. For the first time, I did not question why we “had to know that equation.” Music became a bridge between the classroom and the real world. The harmonics and the perfect fifths, too, had a graph to accompany them. Just as I fell in love with playing the violin, I fell in love with math.

On December first, a petite, blonde girl with large, blue eyes--not unlike myself at the age of five--asked me to teach her how to play. I had always kept that small case under my bed; physically containing my first violin, but also the source of my passion. I knew then, the best place for the violin was no longer concealed in my room, but rather placed in Isla’s reckless hands with the hope that she would find in that small, faux-wood, quarter-sized violin the same inspiration that I discovered. That she would one day allow music to be her teacher, as it has been for me. And with that, I grew to understand beauty; the little things that teach us to love learning, to live fiercely, and to never stop dreaming.

-Sierra Caldwell
-Elley Markley
We Must Pick Raspberries

We must pick raspberries
one
by
one
we must walk on the rocks and moss
bare foot
after bare foot.

-Sage Reynolds

-Taylor Furrh
Up To My Kees In The World

“I was up to my knees in the world.”
~ Annie Dillard

This is my world and I delight to be in it,
to imagine eels and owls,
to discover creekside Edens
alive with cicadas,
goldfinches and thistle.
This is my world and I can pretend to be king,
to raise my arms and conduct
a thudding arsenal of grasshoppers.
This is my world and I can sleep on a porch,
close my eyes and listen
to the stridulations of crickets
and imagine stardust
falling upon my upturned face.
This is my world and I delight to be in it,
to feel the rise and fall of the air,
to be up to my knees in the realness of living.

-Samantha Pratt
The Program I Carry

Dear Tyler,

Your smile, partly hidden behind a hand adorned with a gold watch, flashes after me every time I pass by my door. Your eyes, melancholy and youthful, glance into my own periodically throughout a night of studying spent on my bed across the room. The geometric patterned shirt that grazes your caramel skin reminds me of ancient Navajo designs woven into a new generation. As you gaze out of the photo, I catch your glance and smile briefly, lost for a moment in the past memories that have rushed to the surface of my brain. Similar to the shirt against your skin, the photograph jumps to the center of the papyrus colored paper of the program that bears your full name and the phrase “Cherished son and brother. A best friend to us all.”

After we said our goodbyes in Dolores, I carried you out of the community center and into the sunny parking lot, where loose cotton from the cottonwood trees floated whimsically over your two dimensional features, such as dandelion seeds blowing over an awaiting camera lens. From that moment, I knew that I would carry this program, with the Navajo prayers, comforting font, and numerous smaller photos of you in moments of joy, both inside my heart and nestled in between the soft leather walls of my purse. From that moment in the parking lot, I carried you to Albuquerque where you snuggled by my side while I stood by your brother’s, both of our eyes searching for something to say. I carried you back to Manitou Springs, where you slid between drawings of Hindu goddesses and words from friends where the emotion has long been lost. I carry this image and the contents of the program with me on the dusty hills of the back prairie, on my lilac colored walls of my room, in my unconscious thoughts at night, and every day I walk around the rolling green hills of campus. Your face, forever looking back with a courteous glance, will meet my gaze in the windows of old classrooms and hangout spots, as if to remind me that it’s okay to remember the past.
At times I unclip the glossy paper and read through the Navajo words, part in an attempt to form the phrases and part trying to find an answer to the daunting question “Why?” I look across at the program and wonder “Why are you looking at me through a paper, and not across the room in English class?” or in general, “Why I am looking at your face above the words ‘In Loving Memory of?’” Sometimes the weightless paper crushes down on my chest, with the words, photos, and tears slamming into my being like the bullets tearing through their target, direct and forceful. But I still choose to wake up, see your face in the morning sun rays, and close my eyes and begin the day remembering the warmth of your hands and twinkle in your brown eyes. I carry your program and the memory of you because I have no choice in how I remember your soul and our time together. It is both a joyful and miserable burden to bear. Whether through tears, anger, or glances of your smile, I carry you to remember the essence of the past and keep your being in motion through my thoughts, like a kite gliding on an endless wind. Every day, your face grazes my mind, forever staring back from the front seat of that gold Acura’s leather seats. And every day, I nestle your face into my thoughts and carry you throughout my life so as I live, you may always be by my side, glancing backward into my eyes.

-Abigail Gustke
-Samantha Pratt

twenty-eight
From The Vault

This year, Fountain Valley School of Colorado celebrates its 85th anniversary. Much has changed since 1930--this school, the American West, the United States as a whole, the world. Since then, we have invented the computer, trampoline, ballpoint pen, and the microwave oven, put a man on the moon, fought a second World War, and developed abstract expressionist art and the electric guitar.

Fountain Valley, too, has undergone many changes since 1930. Then, Elizabeth Sage Hare founded the school with the vision of creating a progressive school in the West in the fashion of the prestigious schools of the East. She bought the land--then a ranch--from Jack Bradley for $150,000 and opened it as a boarding school for boys in September 1930. Since then, we have become co-ed, transformed the Art Barn from a barn to a gym, to a theater, to a studio, have had eight headmasters, installed a keycard system, and changed the schedule.

As we celebrate our anniversary, I can’t help but look back in awe at how far we have come as a school and as a world. I am humbled to think of all the people who have come before me, who have loved, died, laughed, cried, and fought to make this place better for their posterity--for us. Anniversaries mark our progression forward through time, and provide us with the opportunity to look back, appreciate our past, and acknowledge all who have come before us.

In order to celebrate this anniversary, we have compiled several poems and works of art from the first ten years of the school, back when the Athenaeum was the Fountain Valley Literary Magazine. We hope you enjoy what the students from 1930 to 1940 had to offer.

-Samantha Pratt
Lines Written Showing the True and Clear Path of Righteousness and the Evil Cross-roads thereto which Beset and Bewilder the Honest Traveller with Sore Temptation, and which Lead to Consuming Fires of Hell, along which the Author has Travelled and Knoweth the Way Back therefrom; as hath been Set forth in Divers Good Works.

1
There lived a man, (such happen can),
devout and good was he.
He sang loud Praise t’ th’ Ancient of Days
and hated Popery.
“God of Our Fathers, (also of Mather’s),
save us from sin, we Pray.”
Thus rang his prayer up through the air
on every Sabbath Day.

2
And in his town there lived a clown,
of such there many be,
A damned elf who earned his pelf
by making fun of he.
The pious man he after ran,
and stepping on his heels,
The fiend would blat with laughter that
his brain was made of wheels.

3
The Godly man this could not stand,
and so, next Sabbath Day,
His usual prayer he did despair;
this was what he did say:
“O Righteous God, Your Head please nod
and send unto perdition
This devil's imp who, little shrimp,
makes fun of my condition.
“Make him in oil red hot to boil
until his skin do drop off,
Then make him vault in a pile of salt
and do not let him hop off,
Until his flesh, caught in the mesh
of Satan's giant net,
From off his bones be drawn with groans;
then you may go him let.”

But God was in a wrathful mood,
for, wakened from His slumber,
Our hero’s head, with impact dread,
He crushed with bolt of thunder.
The merry fool, with mocking cruel,
this epitaph hath wrote,
So all can see how blameless he
is of this awful smote.

(signed)

THE FOOL.

-Unknown (Autumn 1931)
Lines

The rustle of leaves in summer evening--quiet,
    hushed trees, breathing softly the
    fragrance of dew;
The silence, come with the going of the sun;
The tiny, jumping, chirping cricket--
    with his busy sounds and infinitesimal
    movements in the tall grass;
The cool, relaxed relief after a summer storm;
To roll a rock back quickly and discover tiny bugs,
    disconcerted by sudden intrusion, scurrying
    away to shelter as a man and woman would, caught
    suddenly without the decorum of clothing;
Soft snowflakes, drifting down to earth, as
    if perplexed and in doubt as to whether
    this was their ultimate destination,
    excite curiosity and sympathy.
Glomerulus, complicated and lovely,
    lie motionless, vanishing into mystery
    from whence they came;
The massive foliage of a giant and stately elm,
    the gloom and patience of the same tree
    in winter;
The sleeping earth, waiting for the spring and the
    omnipotence of life and nature.
All these things are given me.

    -William Burrage (Winter 1931)
Anniversary

July the fourth; the sun in noon-day blaze;  
The pop of fire-crackers. In the air  
The smell of smoke, and heat. The debonaire,  
Gay picnickers speed off in Ford coupes,  
While bunting flags droop in the sun and fade.  
And band goes by; the sweating street-crowds cheer.  
The tramp of marching men in the parade,  
And children gape. The Legion’s out for beer.  
The sun goes down, a molten disc of fire,  
And hordes of people leave the darkening sea.  
Sky-rockets, flares and torches all conspire  
To make the night a garish sight to see.

For years ago was made a Declaration  
Of Independence for, a hopeful Nation.

-John Eric (Spring 1932)
Squashy Squid

Wallowing in the turbid depths
   Of the ancient ocean,
Lives the gangly, ghostly squid,
   Neptune’s quaintest notion.

She is but a jelly head
   Strung with jelly feelers.
But like our gangsters, Squashy Squid
   Does away with squealers.

When a seaman, rowing by,
   Haps to sight our playmate,
Up she comes and lifts her hat,
   And she says, “Good day, mate.”

This is but a subterfuge.
   Squashy’s really raging.
Now her squirmy wrath’s aroused,
   There’ll be no assuaging.

Down her flailing arms descend
   Round the sailor’s belly.
Squashy squeezes sailor’s sides
   Till he too is jelly.

-Paul C. Harper, Jr. (Spring 1937)
These Be The Leaders

This Emanuel settles in his chair. It is a pillowy chair, well suited for the task of supporting the ample buttocks of the public-spirited Denouncer-of-Capital that is this Emanuel. And the thick, soft back of the chair allows the thick, soft back of the man to sink into it. That back of dubious spinal facilities pushes into the cushions and spreads out. Then Emanuel is ready for discussion. Surrounded by eager admirers, he expounds and propounds and variously pounds out the salvation of us all. We who labor in the mines, we who slave in the mills, we who sweat at the mimeographs—all of us should come up for a waft of air and get the hot, fetid, belch-ridden breath of Emanuel blown in our faces. The drought thus created will not cool us off, but instead it will make us warmer and hotter, until we become red hot and see red flags waving, and we follow the ones with that sickle and that hammer on them. Those are Emanuel’s flags. See. He is out there leading the procession in his big, soft armchair. Miners, millers, mimeographers, all lifting up on it as if it were a sedan chair. And up there sits Emanuel, protesting and belching and smiling to himself.

Then, later, he gets red spots on his face, and the mayor of Terre Haute, Indiana, has him put in jail.

* * *

Up gets Rurik in the morning, big and strong and full of vigor. He puts on a suit with a gold braid on it. It is a worn suit but a wearable one, and it has little swastikas and other symbols sewed on it. There is a big black-snake whip standing in the corner which comes to Rurik when he calls it and which attaches itself to him—affectionate black-snake whip! Then big, strong Rurik puts peas in his shoes, the small hard variety so popular among devout flagellants. But Rurik puts on thick woolen socks too. Then when he walks on the Wilhelmstrasse, the peas will drift out to the soles of his shoes, and people will point and say, “Look. There goes Rurik, self-denying, disinterested Rurik, with peas in his shoes.” The people do not see the thick woolen socks.

Then, just after those same people have elected Rurik to the governorship or the chancellorship, that faithful black-snake whip is ill and has a litter of black-snake whips.

-Paul C. Harper, Jr. (Spring 1937)
An Empty Day

A small boy flattened his chubby nose against a living-room window. A light sigh, barely audible to me, escaped him as he sulked gloomily at the outside world. By the sad, hopeless look on his ruddy face, a casual observer would have thought that the little fellow had lost a favorite pet. This, however, was not the case. He was depressed because the sun had not shone all day, and the rain had come down in persistent buckets. Thus he was unable to go outdoors and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine, as he would have liked to have done. Silently the child watched and watched the hateful drops bounce off the steps that led to the rock garden, noticed with characteristic keen observance how the drops raced each other down the panes of the windows that alone kept him dry. Finally his mournful glance chanced on the ditch that ran parallel to the glistening street. Then he watched, fascinated, while tiny bits of wood and paper flowed down this little depression, already a miniature raging torrent. His childish imagination carried him out of his despair, and all at once he imagined himself at the helm of a ship, battling a riptide in a storm. Vanished into thin air were the sounds of the house, the living-room clock, and the vacuum cleaner on the back stairs. Only the sigh of the wind in the saturated trees outside remained audible. That sound served only to heighten his imagination.

Then, all at once, the bubble of his dreamy reverie burst. All too soon the little fellow opened his eyes to the reality of his situation. Although his childish sadness may have seemed foolish to me then, I now realize how unjustly interpreted were his feelings. I continued to watch him as he again flattened his nose against the window.

-Robert Windsor (Winter 1937)
Little World, What Now?

And when the last great building crashes down,
And cars that sped on highways of smooth glass
Lie dead; when all the submarines are drowned;
When engines stop, and pumps run dry of gas;
And when the hum of dynamos is hushed,
And factories full of frantic noise are mute;
When monstrous trains that once had heaved and rushed
Sleep steamless on each rusty, washed-out route;
When the skies once dimmed by smoke and factory stinks
Clear to leave towering chimneys stark and bare;
When eons pass while no inventor thinks;
And when this age decays without care–
Shall we at last turn back as Christ had deemed,
Or build an age of which we never dreamed?

- Anthony Whittemore (Autumn 1938)
Strong Storm

The sulking clouds will blank
The clean, cold stretch of space.
The earth-breath, foul and dank,
Will choke against the face.

The starless sky will press
Down on the cross-blown moors.
The trees will rough caress
All shrieking out-of-doors.

The shaggy wind will blow
Upon small, craven men;
They’ll crouch and burrow low
Beneath the shaking fen.

The wind will strain its wrath
Against the brave and strong;
Erect, they’ll breast its path,
Although the night be long.

-Holland Hunter (Spring 1938)
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