From the Memoirs of a Smooth-Shaven Man

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On Seeing Lake Michigan

By Audrey Spencer

The gray clouds scuttled, whirled, and skipped like fluff
From cottonwoods. The dune stretched up the sky,
All smooth but where the wind could whip a scuff
With bleached and sifted sand. Sea gulls flew high.
We labored up. Our shoes engulfed such sand
We took them off and let it swish between
Our toes. We stopped to breathe and grasp a hand,
And wonder what such awesomeness can mean.
Then suddenly the top sheered off. And oh!
The blue and green and purple edged in lace
Came thundering up the beach so far below
And rolling off to meet the sky and trace,
In mist of those two perfect blues, release
From doubts, uncertainties—a joyous peace!

From the Memoirs of a Smooth-Shaven Man

By Don Jackson

I AM SHAVING. Time was when this novel process seemed
great fun, but today I hold the entire performance in deep
contempt, even antipathy.

I long for hot water. Each morning I creep to the faucet, half
expectant, half sneering, to see if the impossible has happened—
but it never has. Someday I shall throw all cares aside, bid my friends farewell, and make a lone pilgrimage up into the mountains. Then I'll kindle a fire, put on a kettle of water, and prepare my beaming face for a memorable shave. Boiling water! Bubbling and steaming! And I am fully convinced that no one but me remembers the way to obtain hot water. The art is nearly lost.

How I hate the odor of shaving cream! I think it must be the attar of pansies and geraniums, with a hydrogen sulfide base. Even this could be endured if the horrible aroma would perform its intended duty and then vanish—but no... it lurks about all day, wafting into my coffee and potato salad.

The color scheme, however, is not to be slandered. Cool summer shades predominate. The pale green of the corroded razor, the creamy pink where my blood, painfully spilled, blends with the white shaving cream, the purple of my veins making traceries on my forehead as the torture heightens, the mottled gray of the beard itself—all blending in a harmony of color not easily duplicated by artificial means.

My hand is clammy as I daub the awful cream on my face. The perspiration on my brow burns like acid. I begin to picture myself with bristly whiskers—a trim goatee, or a long flowing affair that requires no attention. I finally decide upon the long one.