Sudden Spring

Charles Hopper∗

∗Iowa State College

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Charles Hopper

Abstract

The little park shivered and huddled closer under the lee side of the dreary skyscrapers...
The evil tentacles of Science are slowly relaxing their strangling hold upon the throat of Art.

SKETCH

IOWA STATE COLLEGE

MARCH, 1949
Winter quarter brought another large enrollment to Iowa State. Over 9,000 students registered, the largest number to appear at the college for the Winter quarter.

Religion in Life Week was the first big event of the quarter. Rev. William Alexander, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was the speaker.

In the concert series, the students heard the duo-pianists, Vromsky and Babin and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Metropoulos. For those who enjoyed the popular side of music, the quarter offered the combined talents of Woody Herman and his band and the King Cole Trio.

Sports fans found much to keep them happy with the Cyclones offering basketball games, swimming meets and wrestling matches.

Thursday afternoons found many students enjoying the book reviews at Books and Coffee; a program presented by the Department of English and Speech.

The Winter Sports Carnival, Union Night Club, Engineers Ball, Harmony Ball and the Wintermezzo were all present on the social calendar for Winter quarter.

Campus Varieties saw the organized houses and residences’ members combining their talents to compete for the trophy presented each year.

Dr. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, noted author and lecturer appeared on the college lecture series.

Union lab. dances and the Union 4:10 series made another appearance during this Winter quarter.

WOI Radio Workshop produced a daily serial for children, “Robin Hood.”

The annual Sor-Dor Sing was presented in Great Hall, Memorial Union again this quarter.

Bridge players entered the All-Residence and All College bridge tournaments.

The Iowa State Theater produced shows during this quarter. A musical comedy, “A Hair Perhaps,” by Norm Filbert, E. Sr. and Bruce Weiser, Ex. ’47, and “Tartuffe” by Moliere.

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We must examine candidly, think honestly, strive to write with
power and purpose.

We must experiment, improve our craftsmanship, and work to
polish and perfect techniques.

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The little park shivered and huddled closer under the lee side of the dreary skyscrapers. The low, grey, ominous clouds chased each other viciously among the building towers. A few pedestrians, clutching umbrellas, skittered along the rain swept street past a statue of one of the city founders. The statue looked cold and dismal as he stood there in his dripping cloak. An empty bench stood forlornly beside the lagoon in the center of the park.

And suddenly a miracle happened. The clouds lunged at each other and melted away. The sun beamed way up in a powder-blue sky. The statue began to take a greater interest in life. A little, old couple spread a newspaper on the bench and sat together, watching a group of whitecaps scamper across the lagoon. A flock of pigeons waddled sedately along the sidewalk; a wren chittered in a nearby tree. It was spring.

Charles Hopper, Chem. So.
DAWN is a thin, gray line of half-light, dividing the earth into two parts. The bright half men call day and the dark half, night. As the earth swings in its circle about the sun, the great continents and seas, the mountain ranges, the broad valleys, the little towns and the cities slide through the band of dawn from darkness to light and back to darkness. At any instant some towns and cities are bathed in the new light of dawn, others in the glare of the noonday sun, and others have already moved on into the edge of the night.

At 8 o'clock, Pacific time, George P. Morton—G. P. to his business associates—finished patting flesh tinted talcum into his flabby jowls, knotted his tie, and turned away from the mirror without bothering to switch off the light. As he descended the thick-carpeted stair, he heard the big clock in the living room chime eight. He carefully moved the hand of his watch up one minute.

"Good morning, dear," Mrs. Morton said, reaching over to fill his coffee cup. It was a routine as old as their twenty years of marriage. "Did you sleep well?"

"Lay awake until 2:15. Stomach again." He reached for a slice of toast, buttered it thickly, then laid it down to dig into his grapefruit.

"Well, it's no wonder, the way you stuffed yourself last night, his wife said. "A man of your age——."

"Now Millie," G. P. said defensively. "Eating is my one pleasure. And Swiss steak with mushrooms!" He shoved aside the grapefruit shell and attacked the piece of toast. "What's Dora got for breakfast?"

"Wheat cakes," Mrs. Morton said. "She's keeping them warm in the kitchen."

G. P. gave a grunt of satisfaction, thinking of Dora's golden brown wheat cakes, stacked high, with butter melting down the sides, and Vermont maple syrup. He reached for the bowl
of cereal in front of him. "Did you pay the bills yesterday, dear?" he asked, pouring a liberal quantity of thick cream into the bowl.

His wife sighed. "Yes, and it's just terrible, the way things cost now. Our light bill was four dollars more this month and we owed Goodman's Department Store $147.50 and all I bought there was a hat and a pair of shoes and some little things. But you just have to pay that to get good things now. And that raise we had to give Dora! And the food bill!" Mrs. Norton made a helpless gesture with her hands. "Almost three hundred dollars."

"I know, I know," G. P. growled. "It's the same way at the office. Labor wanting raises all the time and materials high, when you can get them." He seized another piece of toast, took a savage bite, and waved it at his wife. "It's this damn Marshall plan and things like that," he said. "No wonder things are high when we're sending all we have to Europe. Wrong, that's what it is. All wrong. No sense making good people in this country do without, so we can feed a bunch of foreigners. They started the war in the first place."

"That's just what I told them at sewing circle the other day," Mrs. Morton said. "And most of them agreed."

G. P. pushed back his cereal bowl. "Dora," he called, "We're ready for those wheat cakes." He reached for the morning paper, glanced at the headlines, and picked up the financial page.

"Hmm, I see Senator Barker speaks at a chemical and dye manufacturer's dinner in New York tonight," he remarked, sipping his coffee. "Barker has the right idea on tariffs. Should be running our foreign policy instead of these crackpots. He'd know how to handle these beggars. Haven't heard much from him for several years now.—"

At 11:15, eastern standard time, Senator Horace M. Barker buzzed for his secretary. Time to get started on the last part of his speech, he thought, leafing through his notes.

"Get your pad and pencil, Miss Rogers," he said to the thin, nervous girl who had appeared in the doorway. "I want you to take the rest of my speech."
As she disappeared, the senator raised his bulk from the chair and began to pace heavily about his office. He stared at the thick carpet. It was a good office he had here, but nothing like the one he had had in Washington. Those had been good days, until the Japs had struck at Pearl Harbor. He had been a leader, a spokesman for his kind. And now here he was, back home practicing law. After December of 1941 his kind had not been popular. Isolationism, they said, was as dead as an Egyptian mummy. And they had elected another man in his place.

The senator smiled, a thin smile and a bitter one. So the isolationist was a thing of the past, was he? He knew better. After the first war, he had watched the feeling of international good will in the minds of the people die as the wranglings around the so-called peace table went on. And it would happen again. The only way to do business with these foreigners was to run them all out and build a wall high enough so they couldn't get back in. Then let them squabble and fight if they wanted to.

The thin girl appeared in the doorway again, pencil and pad in hand, and he turned sharply on her. “What have you been doing all this time, Miss Rogers?” he asked, frowning. “Got to get this speech down this morning. It's important.”

“I was just answering the phone,” she began, but the senator cut her off.

“Excuses, excuses. That's all you youngsters know how to do—make excuses. In my day we had to produce. No alibis then. He snorted and began his pacing again.

“Sit down, Miss Rogers. I'll stand. Always think better on my feet. Have to if you're a politician.” He paced in silence for a while.

“Let's see, where did I leave off yesterday? Had we come to the part about how increased tariffs would help keep the German dye companies in their place?”

“Yes sir,” Miss Rogers said. “You'd just finished that.”

“Oh yes. Well, next I want to hit this European aid business. Not too hard, you understand. Not yet. But I want to let them know where I stand.” He cleared his throat.

“How does this sound? 'Gentlemen, when I was a lad of six, in a one-room school house like the ones that many of you started in, I learned that two plus two added up to four. And
it still does, to the best of my knowledge. But some people in the administration today just can't add.' "

The senator strode up and down in silence for a while, smiling, pleased with himself. Haven't lost the old touch, he thought. Raising his voice, he went on. "Gentlemen, this idea of sending our raw materials and foodstuffs to Europe to help them build up industries that will soon be competing with us for world trade,—this idea just doesn't add up . . . ."

His back pressed flat against the cold stone of a shattered wall, the boy stood peering out of the alley toward the lighted window of the bakery shop. It was nearly dark in Berlin now, the early evening darkness of winter in northern Europe, and a fog was moving in, gray and wet and cold. The dampness heightened the smell of burnt wood from the charred ruins around him.

The boy shivered as the chill seeped through his thin gray jacket. The war had not twisted and stunted his body, as it had those of so many of his kind. And because he was tall and strong and clever, he hunted alone, instead of in a pack. The danger was greater, but so were the rewards.

Why didn't the baker lock up? It was past time. For three days he had watched him as he left, timing him. Soon the police patrol would get here. Hunger gnawed at his stomach. He couldn't wait. He would have to go ahead, police or no police.

The lights in the shop suddenly went out; then he saw through the fog the dim shape of the baker as he locked the door and moved away down the street. He waited two long minutes, counting off the seconds to himself, then crossed the street. It was quite dark now. At the shop front he felt his way down the wall toward the rear, searching for the window. His fingers touched it, and he stopped and looked back. The street was silent, deserted. He took the bar of flat steel from under his jacket, put it under the window and pushed down hard. Inside, something snapped and the window slid up easily. He put the bar back under his jacket, sliding it under his belt, hoisted himself up, and wriggled through the window.

Inside, it was black, and the air was warm and fragrant with the smell of fresh-baked bread. He closed the window behind him, afraid suddenly that the smell of the bread might drift out and give him away.
For a long moment he stood staring into the blackness, wait­ing for his eyes to accustom themselves to it, but it was too dark. The fog and the wall of the building across the alley shut off all light from the street. He felt for the wall and began to grope his way along it, probing the black void ahead with his foot before each step. At the corner, he still had found nothing.

For the first time since he had crossed the street, the feeling of apprehension returned. The patrol would soon be here. He felt his way long the second wall, one hand outstretched into the blackness before him.

Halfway down the hall he found it—the shelf with the long loaves of hard-crusted bread, ready for the housewives who formed their long line in front of the shop each morning. He seized one of the loaves, still warm from the baker's oven. The crust was soft, and the smell of it was overpowering; for a moment he felt dizzy as the hunger pains gripped him. He dug his fingers into the loaf, tore off the end, and began to stuff it into his mouth in great bites. In the stillness of the room he made little animal-like sounds as he ate.

When the end of the loaf was gone, he turned again to the shelf and took loaves, shoving them under his left arm. He re­traced his path, moving surely this time, the fingers of his right hand just brushing the wall. At the window he stopped to adjust his load, then he climbed over the sill.

The drop to the ground was not a long one, but he lit awkwardly, burdened down with the bread, and dropped one of the loaves. He picked it up hastily had moved back up the alley toward the street. At the edge of the building he paused. It was clear. He stepped out from the building.

"Halt!"

The rough voice stopped him midway in the road and waves of fear traveled up his spine. The patrol! To his right he could see two shapes advancing through the fog. He was caught, he thought in terror. Caught.

He was not conscious that he had begun to run; animal-like, his instincts took over. He sprinted for the alley on the far side of the street, grasping the loaves of bread with both hands so they would not slip.

"Halt!"

Again the voice rang out, harsh and brutal; and then—the re­port of a gun and the crack of a bullet just above his head. He
ducked and swerved. He was almost in the alley, almost in its shadow. They hadn't caught him yet. They—.

There was a smack, as if a great whip had lashed out, and a stunning blow on his side that spun him half around and knocked him to his knees. A wave of dizziness came over him, and then he was on his feet again running. The blackness of the alley swallowed him as he ran, lifting his feet high to avoid tripping on the rough cobblestones. He had been hit. He could feel a warm wetness creeping down his side.

Behind him, feet pounded in the alley. His legs wobbled as he tried desperately to force more speed from them. He had dropped all the loaves of bread but one, which he gripped in his left hand. His right arm hung limply, swinging by his side. Something seemed to be pressing in on his chest, cutting off his air. He had to stop. Had to rest.

Suddenly he saw a faint light through a hole blasted in a wall on one side of the alley. He dodged through it and staggered a little way before he fell. Behind, he heard the feet of the two patrolmen as they stumbled on past. He was safe.

He was in a small courtyard behind the ruins of a large apartment house. The shattered walls towered over him as he lay on the ground and a loose shutter creaked as it swung on its hinges. He could not hear the patrol now. The fog had swallowed up their footsteps. He struggled to his knees. There was a small shelter over in the corner, piled up from loose bricks by some homeless survivor of the war. It was empty. He crawled awkwardly with his one good arm, pitching forward each time he moved it. At last he reached the shelter and half-fell into it.

For several minutes he lay there not moving. In the distance he could hear the voices of the two policemen calling to each other in their foreign tongue, searching for him. He turned to face the open side of the shelter, like an animal at bay.

He remembered the bread, the last loaf. Out there in the courtyard. He had dropped it when he fell. He struggled to his knees again, but he could not move. He would get the bread later.

He felt for his arm, then his side. His jacket was wet and sticky, but there was no pain. Only a great numbness was seeping slowly over the rest of his body. If only he could breathe.

All at once, he was shaken with a great spasm of coughing that convulsed his whole body. He choked and gasped, arching
his back and clawing at the collar of his jacket as he fought for air. A trickle of blood ran from the corner of his mouth. He stared out at the darkness, his eyes wide and frightened. As he stared, the black became blacker, and he felt himself slipping down and down, until there was nothing but blackness, velvety soft blackness.

At noon, having just finished dictating his speech, Senator Horace Barker stepped out of his office. It had been a good morning's work, he thought, as he started briskly down the sidewalk. And now he was hungry as a bear. A steak would hit the spot, with some French fries perhaps, and a salad of juicy sliced tomatoes. And then for dessert—.

At 9 o'clock, Pacific time, George P. Morton shrugged himself into the heavy coat which his wife held out for him, and dutifully pecked her on the cheek. "Don't worry about those bills, dear," he said "We'll make out somehow. Things will get back to normal sometime. By the way, what are we having for dinner tonight?"

Against the ebony blackness of space, our earth shines with a cool soft glow as it spins its way about the sun. As you move away from it, you can no longer see the towns and cities or the mountains and valleys. Even the great continents dwindle and disappear, and finally the light and dark halves of the earth are gone. All that remains is a tiny luminous seed pearl, our globe, lost in the terrific silence of the universe.

Edwin Sidey, Sci., Jr.
To Sleep

The black fog stymies
Feeble flashes from weakening grey soldiers
To repulse the numbing conqueror.

It is creeping,
This rotting decay of deadened senses,
Eating its way to total
Unconscious coma.

Green and yellow
Visions dazzle sightless eyes,
While unsorted herds of data
Gallop down empty paths.

Nightmare, feed elsewhere!
Stir not the fall on pasture
With biting gooves
Shod with rusty memories

Forged in the fourth dimension
Of intruding reality.

New Roommate

"... but that ain't all; he darn near drowned when he let loose!"

"Yeah," I say mechanically without looking up from my book, "yeah, I'll bet he did."

I force some feeling into my voice:

'Man, this psych is sure rough reading!" I rifle the pages and glance at my watch as if I don't know the time. "Jeez! Seventeen more pages and only half an hour to study 'em!"

Blunt, but it will shut him up.

"Yep... eee-yup, yuh oughta seen his face."

I turn a page and try to read.

'Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that the frontal lobe of the brain functions...'

"But the craziest think I ever seen was when Loomer Skideria tried to count seventy."

Oh fine! Great! If there's anything I need to know for this psych test, it's how Loomer Skideria counts seventy!

'Sixty-six, six-seven, sixty-eight he'd say, sixty-nine... skibunty!"

Study, dammit, study.

"Skibunty is what he'd say. Haw!"

Still no laugh from me.

He leaned forward: "What he was really trying to say was se-ven-ty." He articulated the word carefully for my edification. "See?"

"Yeh, I see." A sickly smile. By this time the only thing I am seeing is red.

"Yup, he was tryin' to say seventy. See? But he'd say skibunty! Jeez, some of them farmers is dumb."

My thought, exactly. I nod my approval. Encouraged, he goes on. I compress my breath and glare at my book.

"Skibunty, he'd say. Countin' out bushels of wheat: sixty-eight, he'd say, then sixty-nine and then skibunty! Whoop-Haw! If he wasn't a queer one."

Damn, wasn't he funny, though? Then aloud: "Yeh, he musta been; he was a queer one all right."

Study. You've got to get that psych.
'Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that... compels the conclusion that... damn! Objective consideration. . .' 

"An' that's the way he'd allus count 'em out: sixty-eight sixty-nine, skibunty! Skibunty-one, skibunty-two, skibunty-three, (obviously pleased with his imitation of Loomer Skideria) skibunty-six; an' that's the way he'd count."

He brays loudly and slaps his knee. "Funniest thing I ever heard."

"Yeh, sure is. That's real funny."

He wanders aimlessly, searching for other bits of information or stories to lighten the drudgery of my studies.

". . .because most of the new models have a power take-off,. . . But I don't suppose you'd know anything about that" (superior intelligence), "... on the John Deere, Ford-Ferguson. . ."

Prattle on, professor. Damn! Study! Try to concentrate.

'Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the tractor to pull a manure spreader at the same time the frontal lobe of the brain is commensurate with the hydraulic lift which has the innate capacity to shift the nervous system into low and lift four or five bales. . .'

'Oh, hell! What's the use.

Howard Lambert, G. E., So.

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Diggers

Men burying pipe.
Diggers with callouses on their hands, and dirt-brown arms and shoulders.
Diggers of tons of earth
And thinkers of a thousand thoughts.
Brothers to the mole.
Men who have Friday night's ringer
And Saturday night's beer,
And only a mountain of dirt between them and a stretch of blue sky.

Dale Blichmann, Sci., Fr.
"Tell me, Mrs. Morrison," the man's voice asked, kindly, 
"When do you feel Jubie began to, as you put it, go 'bad'?

There it was again, the same old question! Impatiently she repeated her answer.

"Like I told you already, after me and Al got married he just seemed to turn against me, even stole money from my pocketbook. But I told you all this before!" Her voice whined a little as she said the last, but Lord, she was tired of his dumb questions.

"I don't see it matters," she whined on. "There ain't nothing can help him now!"

"Yes, it is a little late." The psychiatrist was silent a moment, seeming to direct his attention to the odd little figures he was drawing on the paper before him.

Leona Morrison fidgeted in her chair. She wished they'd let her go home. There wasn't anything she could do for Jubie now, and she was about to point this out when Mr. Whatever-his-name-was started talking again.

"You see, Mrs. Morrison, at the trial, all these things will have to be brought out in Jubie's defense, and I want to help you recall the testimony you will give. Not only that, there may be others who will benefit from what we can learn from you."
He edged his chair closer to his desk and folded his hands in front of him. He looked at the woman seated across from him. It was important that he arouse her desire to confide in him, but—

"He was just rotten bad to do what he did. I don't know what your fancy words would be for it," Mrs. Morrison's harsh voice filled the silence, "but he's just plain no good!" This guy was getting on her nerves so bad she was about to scream. "All right, Madam, we'll use your term if you wish."

How he made her squirm when he acted so cold, and imagine calling her Madam. She suspected he was trying to insult her, calling her that. After all, she wasn't ladylike enough to be called lady-like names. For just a moment she wondered if he meant—

"See here, you," she bristled, but he cut her off. "Mrs. Morrison, I'm only acting as a friend to Jubie. And to you," he added. "In return I want something from you. You can help other parents perhaps, and other children, and you can very much help Jubie, if you help me to know him. The person he is, and why. That is, you tell me all about him, and perhaps I can learn why he—ah—committed this crime." He toyed with his pencil a moment. "What about Jubie when he was smaller?"

Her and Jubie had been awful happy when he was little. It had been hard mostly, trying to get enough cleaning to do to keep him in milk and having to take him out to her work with her, but she'd been proud that she'd kept her baby after Fred left them. Her mother had crabbed at her to put the kid in a home somewhere, but somehow she couldn't do it.

"Mom," he'd say when he was big enough to see how things were with her, "Mom, when I get big—" and he'd stop to just think about getting big. "I'm going to buy you a pretty pink dress that's so long it'll sweep the sidewalk!" and his eyes would sparkle so with excitement.

"Ya gotta nice boy there, Mrs. Morrison," the neighbors said, and she'd been proud to have a son that wanted to look after her. She thought then, Fred maybe had given her something good after all, in spite of his meanness. She wondered now if Fred were still alive. One thing was sure, if he were he'd never let her know, not when Jubie was in this terrible
trouble. In a way though, she couldn't blame him. Who would want to own up to a son that killed some other kid! The thought of it made her stomach turn over.

“You said Jubie changed after you married this Al? Where is he now, Mrs. Morrison?” he interrupted her reverie with a soft question.

“Where is Al! Why the nasty kike just walked out one night and never came home! I don't know where he is,” she added sullenly. “But I'm glad he's gone. I never should let myself get mixed up with a dirty Jew in the first place!”

The man looked at her across his desk, and for a moment she met his gaze, then dropped her eyes to her fingers twisting nervously in her lap. Sure, she knew he was a Jew, and she decided right now was a good time to put him in his place, he'd been acting so snooty about her! After all, she wasn't the criminal!

“I don't like Jews,” she said flatly.

“I see.”

Now she had put him in his place she decided she could talk to him.

“Jubie was awful good when he was little,” she rummaged through her handbag for that picture of him.

“See,” she handed it to him, “there he is, when he was four years old, and look at that sweet smile!”

The man took the picture from her and looked at it thoughtfully for a moment. He remained silent as he returned it to her.

“Go on,” he murmured as he leaned back in his chair.

“Well,” she groped for words. “By the way,” she snickered “it was a funny thing about this picture. I didn't have the money to have one taken downtown, so I—” she closed her lips on what she had been about to say. He probably wouldn't think it was funny the way she'd gypped the photographer out of his money. Well, he hadn't lived on Humboldt Avenue, where you learned to take what you wanted, if no one was looking!

“I will say,” and she did, “I allus managed to get some of the extras for Jubie and me, even if I had to cheat to do it.” There, she'd let him know it meant more to her that she take care of her kid than be pussy-footed about how she did it.
"I was a good mother. Of course, when he started into school I couldn't keep track of him much. He got into lots of trouble, just like the other boys. The older kids taught him to steal candy, and cigarettes. Sometimes he'd bring home money."

Her listener thought Mrs. Morrison said this with a hint of pride, but he kept his thoughts to himself. "Didn't you question him about these things?"

"Question him! Cripes, I used to yell at him morning and night, trying to tell him he'd spend his life in jail if he didn't mend his ways. I was right too," she said smugly. "So for a couple of days, I guess, he'd quit snitching things, and then start in again. Mosta the kids around where we live got sticky fingers." She said this with an air of pointing out a necessary fact.

"Did you ever think of taking Jubie out of that neighborhood?"

"Now where would I get the money to move outa there! Humboldt Avenue was a good as I could afford. Besides, lotsa other boys live there, and they didn't—" she stopped, then finished lamely, "do what Jubie did."

"When did you begin going to the Welfare for help with Jubie, Mrs. Morrison?"

"Oh, that," she moved uncomfortably in her chair. So he had been talking to those people! "Well, like I told you, after Al and me got married, well, Jubie just got out of hand all the way."

"What do you mean by 'all the way'?” prompted the man, noting Mrs. Morrison's air of reluctance. "I suppose you mean police trouble," he assumed smoothly.

"Yeah."

"Are you aware of why Jubie had greater difficulties at that time?"

"Him?" Mrs. Morrison snorted with anger. "It was me had the troubles, Mister! Why, I had to go down to the precinct house just about every other night—he was always mixed up in something. I even begged them cops to keep him there, so I wouldn't have to run back and forth. But nyah!" Her expression of contempt for the local police made her face ugly to see, and her audience looked away.

"Couldn't Mr. Zimmerman help you with the boy?" he inquired finally.
“Ya,” she considered for a moment, “I guess you’d say he tried. He’d whale the daylights out of him right at first. But then it got so Jubie just didn’t come home nights, so he never got a chance at him.”

“See, it just shows you how he was starting to be,” she said flatly, as she shook her head. “I married this guy to get a better home for the both of us, and what does he do to show his thanks? I’ll tell ya, he just acts mean and sassy around the flat, till Al is fighting with him to leave; then Al starts yelling at me about getting rid of him.” She seemed to be contemplating some lost security before she said emphatically, “He shoulda been in reform school long ago.”

“Mrs. Morrison, how old was Jubie at this time?”

“Well, that was only—five years ago, I guess, and he’s twelve now, you know.”

Only twelve years old, she thought bitterly, and he’d killed someone already. Well, she’d known for a long time he would end up bad, but not like this! Stealing, well, he’d been doing that for a long time, and he hated cops, so he might someday done something to a cop, but to just up and hit Jamie with a rock he musta known would kill the kid—well, he must be wrong in the head was all she could figure!

“Mrs. Morrison, did you take Jubie’s side in these fights between your husband, your second husband that is, and your son?”

“I should say not!” she was indignant at that question. “What was there to take his side about? He was just bad—in trouble with the school nearly all the time. At first, they come to see me and asked me to send him more regular. That was fine, and I told ’em a thing or two! What could I do? I kicked him out in the morning and if he didn’t go to school I couldn’t help that, could I? I used to yell myself hoarse trying to make him go to school. Then I even took to going to the school people to see if they couldn’t do something with him. After all, that’s what they’re there for, isn’t it? I even talked to a man from the welfare, trying to get him to send Jubie—somewhere! Anywhere that he would be kept in line! I told them over and over, I sez, ‘if you don’t do something with that boy, find some place where he can’t get into trouble—’” She slapped her fist against her knee as she interrupted herself excitedly,” and there
you have it! I told them how it would be—and look!” She settled back against her chair, seemingly satisfied with her predictions and the outcome of them.

“When Jubie was little,” she went on, comfortably, “I took good care of him, but when he started school I kinda felt he was old enough to take care of himself. That was when the war started anyhow, and I was working in a factory. Made more in one day than I used to make in a week! Jubie had a real nice home, then. We ate good, and I bought some things for the flat. Why cripes, Jubie had it as nice as anyone in the block!”

“But you weren’t home much, were you?” he interrupted.

“Well, now, whadya think? I told ya I worked!” Jubie’s mother said loudly.

“Of course, Mrs. Morrison. Please don’t get so excited; just remember, I’m acting as a friend in this matter.” He smiled dryly at her muttered expression of disbelief.

“Was it during this time you met Mr. Zimmerman?”

“I already tolja when I met Al!”

“At a dance, wasn’t it?” He assumed a sympathetic air, as he asked if she got much chance to go out in the evenings.

“Of course not,” she answered. “While I was doing this war work in the factory, I used to go out—er—several times a week. Jubie was old enough to be left alone. After all, I was working real hard to fix up a home for Jubie and me, so I sure deserved to get some fun of an evening.”

“I see. Then during this period you feel Jubie had a nice home.”

“He had as nice a home as any kid in the block!” Mrs. Morrison said emphatically.

“But you weren’t there.”

“Look, Mister, I told you—”

“Yes, I know, you worked.”

“Well?”

He could see Jubie’s mother was tired of the interview. He sighed, looking at his report, and wondered if he could get a more complete picture.

“Say,” Mrs. Morrison demanded, “can’t I go home, yet? I been here all day, and I’m tired.”

He looked at her flabby face. Yes, she looked tired. She returned his gaze with a hard look, and stood up to leave.
“Would you like to see Jubie now?” a police matron opened the door to ask.

Jubie’s mother stood for a moment, undecided. A kind of hunger showed in her eyes, then left as quickly as it had leapt up.

A policeman brought Jubie into the room where his mother stood. The boy looked small between the burly policeman and the tall police matron, and his thin face was set in lines of despair. He glanced uncertainly at his mother, then down at the cap he twisted in his hands. The boy’s voice broke the stillness—“Ma, I—” He moved toward her. “Ma, I’m sorry—I didn’t mean—Ma, I’m sorry, I’m sorry—” His voice broke with emotion.

Jubie’s mother looked at him, her eyes cold and staring. Finally she spoke, “So you’re sorry, huh! Well, being sorry ain’t going to do no good now, I guess.”

Jubie’s outburst of emotion stilled at his mother’s words. His eyes blazed defiantly through the tears as he said, “Don’t worry about me, I can take care of myself!” He turned back to the matron and they started for the door.

“Well, Mister Smarty,” Mrs. Morrison called after them, “at least you’ll be where you won’t cause me no more trouble!”

The slam of the door almost drowned the sound of her voice.

She moved about the room, gathering together her coat and hunting her purse. At last, ready to leave, she turned to the psychiatrist.

“I do hope I bin some help to you,” she said with an attempt at dignified concern. “There really wasn’t much to tell though, was there?”

The psychiatrist kept his eyes lowered as he pretended a great busyness among his papers.

“Oh, you’d be surprised,” he sighed heavily, “at the information you’ve given us. You’d really be surprised!”

—Luella Leacock, H. Ec., Fr.
My Education

At four o'clock we filed into the Senior English Exam, to meet question number one, "What have you learned at Iowa State College?"

What have I learned at college? Well, only last week I learned that if a puffy omelet turns green it is due to a slight chemical reaction in which ferrous sulfide is formed and that it is formed more readily in omelets to which water has been added than in those containing tomato juice.

I have learned how to manage time efficiently. It takes fourteen minutes to walk to Beardshear, seventeen minutes to Home Economics, and forty-five minutes to check out a book at the library loan desk. If I allow seven hours for sleep, two hours for meals, seven hours a day in various labs, I have left eight hours a day in which to participate in two activities, show a vital interest in college and world affairs, create life-long friendships, write an occasional letter home, and study for eight hours of classes the next day.

I have learned the art of living with other people, and believe me, it is an art to live with three other girls in a 9 x 12 room.

I have been handed neatly formulated opinions on religion, music, and art; and I can repeat those formulas in brief, correctly punctuated paragraphs. I have these things to give the world—a jeweled pin, a degree, and a tired heart.

Norma Barkley, H. Ec., Sr.
A Guy You Can't Figure

THE BULL-HORN blares its raucous message, "Calking, F. H., Aviation Ordinance man third class, report to Lieutenant Langston's stateroom immediately."

You throw your wrench to the platform of the engine stand and, disgusted, wipe your hands. You curse as you climb over the edge and start down the stand's ladder. And you hate Langston's guts. What does he want you for this time? Another chewing-out—that's all he's good for. Lash your men with words, drive them, don't give them a chance to sit down and think—that's Langston's theory. Discipline and efficiency, efficiency and discipline—those words are his creed.

So maybe he has got more time in the forward area than anyone else in the squadron—you've been out here damn near as long as he has. And anyway, being out here doesn't give a man the right to become a louse. He doesn't have to be so damned fanatic about everything.

He wouldn't think of slipping his crew a bottle on Christmas—no! It's against regulations. Besides, you might lose the war if you had a couple of drinks—decreased efficiency, you know. You mutter your thoughts to the wind as you move slowly forward on the weather deck.

He's a phony, too—tries to make an impression when he figures you're so low that another tongue lashing would blow the whole works. Like the week before you left the States and Zoll's wife got sick. He needed some dough, but every guy in the crew was broke. So Langston loaned him three hundred bucks and tried to get him some leave. He knew damn well they weren't giving leave to anyone on their way out, so what could he lose? Big shot. Always thinking of the crew's welfare.

And the day Phillips got hit over Formosa. When you finally got back to the ship you heard that Langston went below and sat alongside Phil's rack in Sick Bay. He sat there all night until Phil died the next morning. And he looked like he was busted up 'cause Phil got it. The louse was probably worried 'cause
he'd have to get a new flight engineer. If that slug had come through a little nearer the nose it would have got Langston—you wish it had.

Him and his discipline—it helped Phillips a lot, didn't it?

You move into "Officer's Country" and you figure that Langston's probably sitting in his stateroom, gloating over that leave that's coming up. You'll be in Pearl in two days, and then he'll shove off for a juicy thirty days in the States. You remember his face when he told the crew about it, yesterday. One man in each plane crew will get thirty days leave in the States while the ship is in overhaul—the man who has the most time in the combat zone. It doesn't make any difference whether you're an officer or an enlisted man, he said—strictly by the record. What a joke—he knew damn well who was gonna get that leave. And all of a sudden your belly feels loose. You think of Margie—the baby is due in about two weeks—your baby. You'd give your soul for that thirty days. But you don't feel sorry for yourself because all you can do is hate—hate Langston and his discipline.

You stop in front of a stateroom and rap your knuckles on the metal bulkhead. A voice barks, "Come in!" You push the curtain aside and step in. Langston is sitting at the table studying service records. He swings around and points to another chair. You sit down. He looks at you and you wait for the blast of words.

"We'll be in Pearl in two days, Calkins."

"Yes, sir."

"I understand your wife is expecting a baby soon."

"Yes, sir—that's right." What's this louse going to do—stick the knife in and twist it too?

"The yeoman is typing up your leave papers now. Report to the squadron office and give him the necessary information on your leave address. That's all."

You stand up and move toward the passageway. You mumble something that sounds like, "Thank you, sir," and push the curtain aside. You walk toward the squadron office and you're thinking—it's a crazy world. And there's some guys you just can't figure.

L. V. Altz
THE NEON sign fizzled in the rain, sounding like an overdose of Bromo-seltzer when you are drunk. "Hamburgers," said the sign, and underneath it, just to make sure people knew that we serve hamburgers, Bud put up a sign, "Hamburgers, 15 cents."

The February rain gave no hint of letting up, a bus swished past the deep puddles on the avenue. . . I felt like having a cup of hot coffee. I poured two cups and took the other one back to Bud in the kitchen.

"Front's empty," I said.

"Yeh, it's the rain, relax." Bud was cutting up buns and squeezing meat into tiny little hamburger patties.

"Going to lose money." I felt like heckling the rebel. But he was a good Joe, came from Alabama, had a picturesque drawl and promised me a nickel wage-hike if I made good. He scowled, and I looked out at the rain and drank my coffee.

The door to my right opened with a jerk. A big figure in a blue overcoat came in. He looked up, and then a smile covered his chocolate-colored face.

"Hi there, Geof. You a working man?"

"Yep, Don, got to eat." I had known Don for quite a while His desk was next to mine in engineering drawing. Don took off his coat and sat by the counter.

"What'll you have?" I took out a green guest-check.

"Coffee and a hamburger."

"O. K." I walked over to the little kitchen window and shouted, "One."

"One to go," came the answer.

"No, just 'ONE',' I shouted, thinking that Bud had not heard well.

Bud came closer to the window, looked hard at me and said, "We don't feed niggers in here. He's taking it out."

I said nothing. There was no suitable reply. If he wrapped it up, I'd unwrap it and put it on the counter for Don. Damn Bud. I found a cup without left-over lip-stick on it and poured coffee.
"Cream?"
"Please."

Don took a drink. I wondered whether he had heard Bud. I hoped not. Then Don looked up and asked, "Do you have a rest-room here, Geof?"

"Why, sure. Through the kitchen and then turn to your left." I washed a couple of plates. If I were a bacterium I'd like to bathe in lukewarm water. Bacteria have it good, I thought, better than lots of folks... especially people like Don... Better put a bit more soap into the sink.

I heard Bud's voice from the kitchen. It was loud and irritated. "Employees only..." Wasn't he going to let Don use the rest-room? Why, the damned rebel. "Health department rules..."

I realized suddenly. "In Alabama," Bud had said one day, "the niggers are all right; they know their place. But these Northern sons-of-bitches don't know where they belong."

Don came through the doorway. He looked at me. The creases in his face, when he smiled, were replaced with deep wrinkles. "Apparently," he frowned, "you don't have a rest-room for..." and then he stopped short and shook his head... "customers."

I looked down at the floor. The floor looked very dirty. I felt like being sick into the soilax-green rinse water in the sink. "Yeh." That's all I said.

"About that hamburger..." Don's voice wasn't cross or irritated... "better put it into a paper bag when it's ready. I... I... want to take it out."

I nodded. I looked everywhere but at Don. I looked through the little window to the kitchen. Bud said, "Come 'ere!"

"You no-good God-damned Englishman." His eyes said more than his words. He need not have spoken at all. Then, as if he had not made his position quite clear, he asked, "You a nigger-lover?"

I didn't say a word. I looked him straight in the face and went back to cut pie. I had to do something to keep me from thinking... to keep me busy. The pie was near Don. I miscut three pieces, then I stopped.

"I... I... He's from the South." I was going to say that I was sorry, but it was easier to talk about Bud, to project the blame.
"That's O.K., Geof. It happens every day." Don smiled again, and his smile was disarming, sincere.

"One to GO!" Bud slammed a bag on the window-ledge. I took it over to the cash register, where Don was waiting and said, "twenty-one."

Don handed me a quarter. "How long are you going to work here?"

"If he doesn't fire me, I'll work till after Easter. Got to help pay spring quarter's tuition."

Don looked at me hard. He would have liked to see me quit. I would have liked to quit.

"Need the money, huh?" he asked.

"Yeah." I handed him four pennies. "Don't get too wet."

"The door slammed. Then Bud was standing beside me, his hands deep in his pockets. He scowled and shook his head. I saw a little bead of sweat on his forehead. I clenched my fists. I should have insisted that Don eat his hamburger in here. It was easy saying that now, now that Don had gone.

If Bud was going to say something I wish he'd get it said. He just looked at me. Then he started speaking slowly. Thank God he had his temper under control.

"Geof," he drawled, "have you ever tried to get half a jar of mustard off of a hamburger? That nigger-bastard won't ever come back in here." He laughed and slapped his knees. Then he got serious. "In Birmingham, they lynch people like you—nigger lovers. But you're O.K., Limey, you'll learn. You'll be a good American yet."

Martin Hoffman Fo., Jr.
Mrs. Norris and the T Model Ford

I'M GOING to tell you a story I saw once in my travels around. I'm telling it to you because I am an Arkansas man myself and don't hold much with Missouri men, and I want to show you why. I seen a lot of Missouri men in my travels around and I never seen one yet that wasn't ornery. They ain't only ornery but they don't know sic 'em to boot. I'll show you what I mean and maybe you'll believe me.

I was up in southern Missouri a few years ago just looking around and seeing the land. I was just going along the edge of the hills, hiking and taking my time, hiring out here and there and having a good time with my pay when I come to a town. I wasn't in any hurry and I got along all right. I'll give them hills one thing, come spring and they are pretty as can be, what with all the bluebells on the cutbanks and the new scrub oak leafing out. The laurels are always full of catbirds and Missouri gals that are cuter than spotted pups.

I would sleep on the ridges and in the haystacks and when I wanted to poke along, well, I would. I washed in the crick branches and didn't hurry none and there was always enough work to keep some money and tobacco in my overalls. There wasn't no hurry to get home; I wasn't married then, and never had to hurry.

It was a good life, like I said, until I walked up to a farm just south of a place folks call Protem. I was running low on eating tobacco, so when I saw this good-sized farm I figured to shut down for awhile and hire out as a hand.

It was a good clean farm with a barn bigger than you usual see on the edge of the hills, and I could see what looked like to me dandy dairy stock in the back timber. I said to myself, "Harry, where there's a farm as cozy as that, there's a good cook somewhere's around. Let's have a look," so I turned into the lane. I hadn't walked two rods up that lane when a pack of the biggest red-bone hounds I ever seen came busting down to meet me. I stood in my tracks, let me tell you, and they just
walked around me stiff-legged showing me the whites of their eyes. Well, I wasn’t getting any place doing that, so I hailed the house, kinda nervous.

“Anybody home?”

When I said that, the biggest dog of all sort of reached out and grabbed a mouthful of leg. Huh! I was shaking around trying to get my leg back and be peaceful and he was hanging on like he hadn’t et, and we were having a big time.

“Turn loose of my dog!” somebody yelled.

“Turn loose yourself,” I said, and looked up the lane. There was an old gaffer in patched overalls covered with axle grease. He had a mess of white hair that was flying ever whichway and he looked as nasty as a Missouri man can get.

“What are you doing on my land?” he says. “What do you want?”

I was getting mad. “I want to hire on as a hand,” I said. “Call off these damn dogs.” The old man chirped and dog spit out my leg and sat back to watch me in case I moved or something.

“Know anything about T Model Fords?” says the old gaffer.

Well, I ain’t one to brag, but I know more about T Model Fords than the man that wrote the book, and I told him so.

“Don’t want no big talk or sass,” says the old gaffer. “Just want to know if you can fix a T Model Ford. Can you put in gear bands?”

I allowed as how I could, so me and the old man and the fox hounds all went up the lane and back to the barn. By this time I was beginning to figure that the old man had all his button-holes all right, but not quite all his buttons. He acted crazier than a pet coon. He was talking about that damn Ford like it was his baby or something, and how tired it acted since the bands had wore out. We walked around back of the barn to where the Ford was and I looked it over.

“Can you fix it?” he said.

“You keep them damn dogs on the other side of that damn barn and I can fix it,” I said. That’s the only way you can handle a Missouri man. You got to show him he ain’t the only hard shell crawdad in the pond.

“Get me a chunk of old carpet and a crescent wrench and she’s as good as new.” Well, he did, and I took off my clean hickory shirt and pitched in. I cut new bands out of the old
sketch
carpet and fixed that Ford as easy as pie, and as good as new, like
I said. It tickled the old man just some, let me tell you, but he
never let on a bit. He probably thought as much of that Ford
as he did his dogs, and for a hill man that is considerable.

Well, we sat down right there and talked business and it was
easy to see that the old man was taken with me. By the time
our pipes had gone out I had dickered him into a job clearing
scrub; board, room, and twelve dollars a week. Yes, me and the
old man was as thick as sorghum, and just because I knew
something about T Model Fords.

We went up to the house where I met his missus and had
supper. I found out that his name was Billy Norris, that he had
ten head of fine milking cows and that his wife set the finest
table that I ever slid my feet under. She was a talking woman
with a big mole on her chin and was as much like old Billy
as old Billy was like them mean dogs of his. I never did get used
to them dogs; they was always watching me like I was something
good to eat.

It was a pretty good job of work, as jobs in Missouri go. I
had a good bunk in the barn and Billy kept the dogs away from
me. The work was hard but it was good work, and being a good
man with an axe I didn’t mind it a bit. It ain’t the first time I
cleared out scrub oak and osage orange. In spite of being crazy,
Billy Norris wasn’t such a bad boss, and like anybody knows,
the main thing when you’re a hand is the rations, and they
suited me just some.

I could have gone into Protem and had a time, but I figured
to save my pay and do all my romping and stomping when I
got back to Arkansas. So, come sundown and I would just sit
around by the barn and watch Billy Norris whipping up and
down the road in his Ford. No matter haw hard we worked in
the back timber all day, come sundown and old Billy would get
up from the table, go out and crank the Ford, and drive up and
down the road in front of the farm. That was a sight for you.
Billy and his T Model bouncing around in the ruts and rocks,
his white hair flying and a pack of red-bone fox hounds all
strung out behind him. He’d drive up the road a piece and turn
around and come raring back, the Ford putting, Billy yelling,
and all the fox hounds a belling. Crazy as bedbugs, ever one
of them. Old Billy was a salty dog with that Ford, though. If
he had a chance to drive on some of the hard roads I've seen in my travels around, he'd have killed himself this side of two days. He knew more ways to drive that car than a country boy knows to ride a mule.

Well, everthing went along as smooth as cream for quite a time. We were getting the back section cleared nice and the rations were as good as ever. Then one morning Missus Norris got an idea into her head like women will and me and the old man never knew peace from then on.

She was bound and determined she was going to learn to drive old Billy's T Model.

Well, you can see how this would hit the old man. He'd blow up a storm cloud ever time his wife would say something about it.

"Not on your tintype!" he'd yell. "That's my T Model and I'm the one to drive it. Shut up and leave me be!" But she wouldn't leave him be, or me neither. She was a set woman, as what woman ain't when she gets a notion. She gave us to know that if she didn't drive, we wouldn't eat. That sort of swung me over to her way of thinking. I didn't scheme to go hungry just because Billy Norris was crazy. I hadn't give two hoots either way but when she started talking about rations she was talking right to me, and I decided to do something about it.

Through the day I wouldn't give Billy no peace in the back timber, and at night the missus would take over. We was relayin' him, so to speak. No man can hold out long under something like that, so what with me whittling at him in the daytime and his wife whittling him in the evening, in about a week old Billy came around to our way of thinking. He allowed that his wife would learn to drive the T Model Ford.

Billy vowed he wouldn't touch the whole business with a ten foot pole, so it was up to me to learn her from the first. I should have known better. You know how women are. When I would crank and tell her to crack the gas so the engine would take hold in good shape, she would crack the spark lever instead. Damn near kick me into the next county ever time. After a couple of days of that I couldn't hardly heft my axe, but Missus Norris was as chipper as ever.

She never run over me after she knocked me down; I'll say that for her. She always pushed in on the reverse pedal first. I
never knew her to start right off in low; she always had to back up before she got it right. If she couldn’t pull levers or push pedals, she sure as hell couldn’t steer. Seemed like she got that farm by the tail and turned it everywhere but loose. **Hard** as it was on me and the old man, it was even harder on the farm. The third night she knocked off the corner of the cowshed and killed two chickens. A while later she tore off the left front fender against the ellum tree and sort of sashayed off through the gate into the piglot.

It finally got so the chickens were quit laying and the dogs stayed back of the barn and didn’t carry their tails up straight no more. Old Billy was drooping, too. Got so he didn’t argue and he let his pipe go out all the time. He acted like a horse that has been broke too hard and too old. I’d of felt sorry for him if he hadn’t been so mean and crazy. The old lady would go roaring around the barnyard busting things up and Billy Norris would sort of just sit on the back stoop and brood. I figured this couldn’t go on much longer, and it didn’t. It come to a head one night when both my arm and Billy was sorer than usual. It come to a head and I reckon it’s still to a head. I don’t know or care.

We finished supper this night and went out in back like we always did. Billy sat down on the back stoop and put his cold pipe in his mouth, not saying nothing. Like always, I got around in front of the Ford to crank and Missus Norris got up in the seat and grabbed the spark lever, and like always I got knocked flatter than a parson’s joke. This time when the old lady crammed down on the reverse pedal she pulled away down on the gas too, because she thought she was quite a driver by now. What with good gear bands and the gas down, that T Model went sailing by the back stoop like a scalded cat. She didn’t get far, though. There was a smash and a rattle and everything stopped. Missus Norris had hung the whole rear end of the T Model up on the grandaddy of all big lilac bushes. There ain’t nothing tougher than an old lilac, and that tough old stem was holding up the rear end of that Ford high and dry. There she set. Hind wheels up off the dirt and spinning like a five-dollar grindstone. Wouldn’t that jar you? Me and Billy was sitting there with our mouths open enough to catch flies. We started laughing like we were silly.
“Billy Norris, get me and this car out of this!” the missus yelled. Never heard a madder woman before or since.

I didn’t dare say nothing right there so I sneaked out down behind the barn where the dogs were and laughed myself sick. Whenever I had to stop for breath I could hear old Billy up on the back stoop screaming. I wasn’t even chuckling to what old Billy was doing. I never heard a man laugh so hard. I figured he would hurt himself. He screamed and he bellered, he roared and he whooped, and through it all I could hear the old woman giving him what the jaybird gave the owl.

“Billy Norris, get this car off this lilac bush! Get it off, I say! Do you hear me, you old fool?”

“Get it off yourself!” said Billy. “You’re the big old automobile driver in the family. Drive the damn thing off yourself. I don’t know nothing about driving Fords; you get it off!” And then he would start screaming again.

“Howl your head off, you blamed old fool, but get this car off here!”

“Don’t know nothing about T Models. You know all about T Models... you drive ‘em all around and think you’re so damn smart, woman. Well, drive it off that damn lilac bush. She’ll rot to rust before I’ll show you how.”

Missus Norris was so riled and mad that she couldn’t even talk; she just set there making a noise like a slow fuse. By this time I had come out from behind the barn and took a look. The old folks was just setting there glaring at each other. Then old Billy lit his pipe and I knew he was still the head coon...

All I hung around was another ten days or so. The rations was falling off worse ever day and the old folks wouldn’t talk. The Model was hung up on the big old lilac yet and grass was beginning to grow up through the spokes in the front wheels. Chickens was beginning to lay eggs in the front seat and the tires needed air. Like a couple of Missourians, old Billy and his wife just let her set, and that Ford wasn’t a bit more set than they was. The old man would set out on the back stoop with his pipe and fox hounds, and Missus Norris would set on the front stoop with her patchwork, and Ford just set.

Along about that time I figured that if I was going to have any truck with mules, I’d just as lief they were Arkansas mules, so one morning I packed my bundle and lit out. I walked down
through the lane, those damn dogs and I showed each other our teeth again, and I lit out for Arkansas.

I looked back once from the top of a ridge and I could see the T Model still setting there on top of the grandaddy lilac bush. I reckon it is yet.

That's what I mean when I say there ain't nobody ornerier than a Missouri man unless it's a Missouri man and his wife, and if there is, then I don't know.


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Winter Sun

The blood of death would not shock this sun.
The thin winter sun, bare trees, slim straight shadows.
A sun like a star at the moon of dark,
Yet strong enough to make my eyelashes silvery and fluttery when I look for its heart—
Behind the black edged buildings,
Beyond the pear-struck windows of the green-houses and the black net of trees is the introverted sun.
The silent sun.
The blood of death would not shock this sun.
The blood of life would not be heard.

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Lullaby

Sleep is the black, heavy-winged butterfly
Brushing its velvet powder in your brain.
Play hide and seek with his flutter
In the night's stain.

Dycie Jane Stough, H. Ec., Sr.