

Leas Lit

**ORIGINAL WRITING
AND ART
BY RESIDENTS
OF MEDFORD LEAS**



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**MEET THE WRITERS AND ILLUSTRATORS
for Tea and Talk in the Holly Room**



THURSDAY, January 9, 2014

Come and exchange ideas about writing
with the authors of Leas Lit.
Hear how illustrators approach their work.

**CONVERSATION AND REFRESHMENTS at 3 pm
PROGRAM at 3:30**

Carol Suplee, Moderator
Presentations by
Ralph Berglund, Janet Jackson-Gould
Robert Hill, John Sommi

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REFLECTIONS OF A MARRIED COUPLE

The photographs on the dresser
show a couple in love
married six and a half decades ago
in a chapel half a continent to the west
They are a beautiful couple
(if you will allow
a little immodest self-acclaim)
in the bloom of young adulthood
looking forward to a lifetime together
as partners
in whatever lies ahead

After thousands of miles traveled
in both hemispheres
many households assembled
and redone
careers launched and modified
daughters raised, educated
and released to go their own ways,
the mirror
on the dresser
reflects different images
from those on the walls
No doubt about that
After all this time
Aging changes
It's only natch
But guess what
We still match!

Stanley E. Brush

TO LOVE'S MESSENGER

O gentle hand, alight on me,
Let your fingers sweep in an ever-widening arc,
Spreading outward and returning to meet again,
Leaving in their wake a feeling too delicious
to describe.

O loving hand, speak to me in your mute tongue
Of feelings exquisite and intimate –
Your message indifferent to ears and eyes,
For it seeks the quiet and the dark.

O comforting hand, quench my yearning
For what is unfulfilled in my life.
Apply your balm to my body and my spirit.
Restore my being and make me whole.

O sensuous hand, cover me with your caress.
Leave no spot untouched, for each has
its unique shade of feeling.
Let no garment dull the sweet sensation
Of tender fingertips endlessly exploring.

O wondrous hand, you are the messenger of love,
Charged with delivering the heart's most precious
gift,
The gift that answers the need, with us
from the day of our birth,
To feel another's touch.

Herb Heineman

TABLE FOR TWO

A tiny drop of coffee slipped down her chin. She drew her napkin up and the drop disappeared. She consciously ignored the table setting opposite her, even though her response to the waiter had been, "He'll be here shortly." She said it in such a way that even the lowliest menial in the kitchen should know whom she meant. On most occasions she would not have responded.

She looked out from her table, sitting next to a large window. Nearly half the windowpane was cut with the finest etched designs. Through the clear part of the glass she watched the taxis and a few private cars. The traffic moved slowly along the broad boulevard. She sipped her morning coffee while enjoying the grand view.

The etched glass, this beautiful piece of decorative art, always had a profound effect on her, no matter how often she sat at that particular table. As time passed, she became more preoccupied with its intricate patterns than with the view. Often the morning sunlight caused the etched glass to blaze prism-like, casting brilliant reds and blues found in the rarest stained glass on the wall and table. At these moments, her thoughts, more like meditations, were held tightly against any unwanted exterior revelations. He would understand.

The door opened frequently with the entrance and departure of other patrons. Every time the door opened, the volume of street sounds in the room increased. She heard the auto horns as high-pitched trumpet sounds as from a pipe organ. The dynamics of the other street

sounds, intermittently muffled and dominant, were the lower notes of a large and impressive musical instrument. These transformed street sounds supported her imaginary choir and lifted its song towards heaven. This choral introit led to her silent hymn of praise.

With a gracious smile the waiter refilled her cup. In the moment, she was overwhelmed with thanksgiving.

The homily for the day came to her in an inner male voice:

“The hundreds of people who have passed in front of you, those walking along the pavement, those riding in cars, those entering and leaving the café, all these people defy definition. And with each new person in sight, with each newborn child, that person, that child’s birth, becomes part of an inevitable evolution. We define humanity as a general principle, all lumped together. And yet, throughout all history, the individual person is a stranger to that generality. This is the true nature of Creation.”

Inasmuch as this inner voice moved her, she quickly relinquished the feeling and once again became aware of her surroundings. The traffic was becoming heavier and more people were entering the café. The sunlight on the etched glass was changing. She noticed the empty cup in front of her. It was time for her to go about the day’s activities. She gathered up her purse and cloak. The waiter glanced up at the clock set in the walnut wall panels behind him as if to check its accuracy with her departure. She whispered, “Good day.”

“Good day, Madame, it’s been our pleasure.”

On her departure, she greeted some of the people she knew, who, like herself, were daily patrons of the café. She made her exit and walked down the boulevard.

The waiter turned to the young apprentice standing with him behind the counter. “You’re the new man, just started today? Have you met Mr. G, the owner of the café?”

“Yeah,” he nodded in the direction of the woman who had just departed. “Mr. G told me about her.”

“I don’t know what Mr. G said about her, but remember, she sits at the same table each morning and make sure the table is always set for two. Give her all the coffee she wants, no charge. Mr. G frequently reminds me, we’re here to serve.”

Chris Darlington

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

I know a tremendous amount of useless information. I'd guess we all do. Mine is probably more useless than yours.

I know how to make pin curls and how to do the shag. As testament to my idle youth I know the titles of all the Nancy Drew books and the voice lead-ins to Our Gal Sunday and Your Hit Parade. I could tell you what a guimpe is. I'm an authority on such diverse trivia as the lineage of the British royal family and the early career of Bing Crosby.

All that information was gathered and retained, apparently forever, in the years when my brain was absorbent and fresh. I didn't work at the process. In fact, I probably couldn't have stifled it if I'd tried.

Then came a long period of time when I learned by doing: by performing important tasks.

By keeping myself, and others, fed, supported, cleansed and cared for. Looking back, I think that some of those skills came from my head but most of them came from lower down; my heart or, more likely, my gut.

Mentally, I could probably still make a fair stab at teaching school or nurturing my family. Physically, I couldn't. In fact, the reason I retired from pre-school was the problem of lowering myself to the floor for circle time and the awkward hopelessness of getting up.

And doesn't it seem ironic to you that, just when we begin to feel that we've settled the big issues, inner peace for instance, it's the little things, the safety pins

and the buttonholes, that drive us frantic? Do you do what I do? Do you shrug one time and swear the next?

My brain, once so pliant, has ossified like the sponge under my sink. I know that there's such a thing as pop culture. I'm aware that beautiful people with single names and twitter accounts command worldwide attention and huge fortunes but I don't seem to care. I thought I would but I don't. I thought I'd talk to my grandchildren about their icons, but instead I'd rather bore them with memories of Hepburn and Tracy while they pretend to listen and send their texts.

I've learned the minimum set of skills to get by in this new world. With help from the people around me and an occasional consult with a younger person, I can limp along. I can change channels, zap my coffee. I can stay connected. I can make calls on my cell phone but answering it is tougher. Well, to tell the truth, I can barely hear it wring.

Marcy Webster

MEINE ELTERN

MUTTI

She had red hair and green eyes. As a young girl she



studied singing, worked in a laboratory, assisted a dermatologist, and met my father at the opera.

She was a wonderful cook and gardener, raised two daughters lovingly, kept the entire family together, was famous for her “Mürbekuchen”

(butter cookies) and played delightfully with her grandchildren. She supported her husband when he

could no longer work as a physician, and worked as a waitress at parties nights and weekends, creating beautiful hors d’oeuvres, so that my sister and I could attend high school instead of having jobs.

In the 1930s and ’40s refugee women would do anything to survive. One of my aunts clerked at a liquor store and another wrote on skeletons for medical research. Another, a former professor’s wife, cleaned toilets. For the men it was much more difficult to adapt and change.

In the last nine years of her life she had Alzheimer's Disease. I hoped that she was not aware of it. She died at 90.

Now I am left to keep the family together and I have invited family and friends to celebrate my 90th birthday in 2014 in a private dining room at Medford Leas.

PAPPI

In my autograph album my father wrote, "As the first to write in this little book, as my first child you have only given me joy." He was an excellent physician who studied with Dr. Röntgen and Dr. Ehrlich. His sense of humor never left him even during rough times when the Nazis closed his practice and when he failed to pass the New York State Board Examination. He loved music (played the guitar), the theater and movies and, above all, his wife and daughters. I miss him to this day.



Lili Wronker

KALEIDOSCOPE

Making Magic
Out of colors and shapes.
Mixing, shaking,
New blending into old,
Old blending into new.
An endless variety
Of patterns.

Jean Nicholson

A PASSAGE TO CITIZENSHIP

I was fifteen years old and alone when I arrived in the United States on a German passport in 1937. My father had figured that under Nazi dominance Jewish boys like me might be forced into labor battalions. He wanted to make sure that his son would not experience such dangerous and degrading experiences, but he did not anticipate all the horrors that were to come. Once in America, I was lucky to be able to stay in Brooklyn with my aunt who had been a citizen for about fifteen years.

One of the goals I had set in my new country was to renounce my German citizenship and become an American citizen. However, according to the rules then in effect, I had to be in this great country for five years and be 21 years old or, with luck, I could marry an American citizen before the five years were up.

All I could do was to try to settle into my new life and wait. I started attending school, but at age 18 I quit school and went to work. My parents, meanwhile, arrived safely from Germany in 1940 and we were a family again.

Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and the US went to war against the Axis powers. As a new immigrant, I was unfamiliar with Hawaii – I had thought that Honolulu was a mythical city – but I soon learned differently.

I had to register as an enemy alien. Imagine my feelings! I wanted nothing to do with being a German and now, despite my abhorrence, I had to identify myself as a citizen of that hateful country. And I had to carry a card that identified me as an enemy of the US. I wanted to fight the Germans, and I tried to enlist in the US

Armed Forces. I was told that as an enemy alien I could not enlist. I could be drafted, but only into the Army and not into the Navy or the Marines. I was deeply disappointed.

So I worked and waited. Lo and behold, I received a notice to report to the draft board and was inducted into the army on my 21st birthday in 1943. This, of course, put my dream of applying for citizenship on hold. After training for five months in South Carolina and Texas, I was included in a transport of troops to Newport News, Virginia. From there, we were to be sent on our way to fight against the Germans.

Five enlisted men with German citizenship were in this group. We learned that it was a violation of the Geneva Convention for citizens of one country to fight against citizens of the same country. In other words, it was illegal for us to go to the front and fight against the Germans. The five of us managed to see our captain the evening before our departure and advised him of our problem. He nonchalantly informed us that this problem would be looked into when we arrived overseas. He took the easy way out.

After crossing the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea on converted Liberty Ships, we arrived in Italy and were stationed in a replacement depot (a converted racetrack) outside Naples. Because of our status as German citizens, we were held there for at least five months. There was some daily training, but it was very intermittent.

In order to keep busy during that time, I got myself a temporary job as assistant company clerk. In short order that became my permanent assignment. One extra

duty was to take charge of a platoon of German prisoners of war. I felt uncomfortable. I generated no spark of camaraderie. To me they were the enemy, who had inflicted great harm on my family and my people and were continuing to do so. I wanted nothing to do with them. I did not talk to these prisoners except to give them the necessary orders to do their assigned jobs.

Luckily it was only two weeks. They were supposed to take over the jobs that had been given to Italian civilians. However, the Italian people protested very strongly and the army gave in and sent the Germans back to the prisoners' camp.

Finally we received notice of action on our problem. President Roosevelt had ordered that any non-citizen serving in the armed forces was to be sworn in as a full US citizen. We were notified that a representative of the State Department would come around and take care of this matter. We were told to fill out some papers and to await further instructions. At last we were ordered to assemble. A tall gentleman entered the room, shook our hands and then administered the Oath of Allegiance. We were now citizens, but without proof of that fact. Imagine, having my US citizenship bestowed upon me at a racetrack in Naples, Italy!

The State Department gentleman informed us that we would get our papers along with our honorable discharge from the army. That made sense. Where would a fighting soldier keep such important papers? Nevertheless, I felt somewhat deprived by not being able to hold that document.

The war went on. Finally, Germany was defeated and we all expected to be shipped to the Japanese front.

But that part of the conflict came to an end before we left Italy. I came home aboard an aircraft carrier, modified to carry a multitude of troops. After our arrival in Fort Dix, it took five more days to process our records and to be discharged.

I received my honorable discharge together with my US citizenship certificate, as promised. It did not have my picture on it but it was my own precious document. I felt elated and fulfilled. I was looking forward to registering to vote. I also contemplated that, if I wanted to, I could now run for elective offices, be it in the US Congress, state office, or city post.

I finally felt like a whole person with a future in the United States of America!

Stefan Frank

CHERRY BLOSSOMS

The wind
had blown the blossoms
off the cherry trees
that lined the street.
The petals gathered
along the curb
in drifts – like snow,
except they were pink.
How sad I was
to see them go
I would have kept them
if I could.
Scooped them up
in double handfuls
to feel them cool
and smooth.
Tossed them into the air
to watch them flutter
to the earth again,
And wept.



Howard McKinney

*Submitted by Judy Kruger and Ceil McFadden.
"We loved his work."*

*Howard McKinney was a resident at Medford Leas for
about six years and died in the summer of 2013.*

KOOP

While serving as a Conscientious Objector during WWII, I volunteered to be a guinea pig for a study of the disease hepatitis. The project was conducted at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. Five of us volunteers contracted both serum and infectious hepatitis (the kinds transmitted, respectively, by blood and orally). Dr. C. Everett Koop, the future U.S. Surgeon General who was an intern at the time, persuaded us to let him do a biopsy of our livers at the end of the study to see if the cells had returned to normal. He said he did not want to do general anesthesia since there was a slight danger involved. If it was necessary, he would not hesitate to use it, but since we were volunteers, he did not want anything to go wrong. Koop promised that there would be no pain from the knife if he used local anesthesia. I agreed to let him operate using only the local.

They covered my right side with a blanket and I felt a very sharp pain. The pain was bad, but what was worse, I thought that the doctor had lied to me. After the operation, the nurse removed the blanket and exclaimed, "Oh, no, look what we did: we stuck him with a safety pin!" I felt much better when I heard that: Koop had not lied to me!

Neil Hartman

A PILGRIMAGE, PART II

In my essay about growing up in England (*Leas Lit*, June 2012) I wrote that my early childhood places in Germany were a story for another day. That day came in April 2013, thanks to my daughter Lisa's fellowship at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies.

It was unpleasantly cold in that old university city on the edge of the *Schwarzwald* (Black Forest). But a day-trip to the beautiful Titisee resort and a generous slice of *Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte* (cherry cake) helped move the season along.



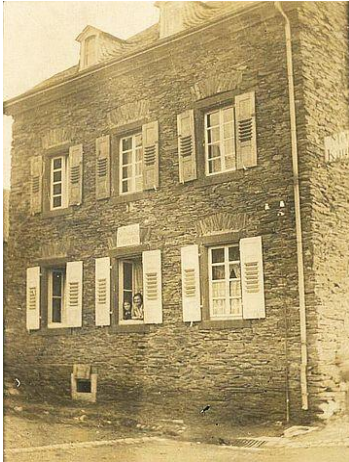
Real Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte is made with whipped pure heavy cream, cherries, Kirsch (cherry) liqueur, and chocolate cake.

Three days later we got down to business, starting with a four-hour train journey to Neuwied. Our goal was Irlich, a village at the confluence of the Wied and the Rhein (Rhine) rivers. Here was the childhood home of my mother, youngest of six surviving children of the village's kosher butcher. Lisa discovered in county archives that my maternal grandmother had actually had nine children. Until this discovery, I was ignorant of the

three who died in infancy. My mother must have known but never talked about them.

The *Metzgerei* (butcher's shop) in Irlich

Note sign attached to house level with second floor.



Flood scenes

Upper left : Dry.

Lower left: 1924. Water at first-floor windows.

Below: 1926. First floor completely under water.



The village is now incorporated in the city of Neu-wied, which has taken measures to contain the perennial spring floods with which my mother was so familiar. The entire side of the street on which my grandparents' house and shop stood has been replaced by a levee to keep out the floodwaters. The train station where I got off as a child is gone.

Memories of Irlich remain, among them my cousin Inge, three weeks younger than I, whom I routinely bullied to tears (she's safe in Australia now), and the experience of watching my uncle slaughter a lamb. The latter was an awesome spectacle for a seven-year-old, but not upsetting enough to dull my taste for its meat.

Prior to my trip in 2013, I had a 75-year-old mental image of the butcher's shop, amplified by even older photos and stories of my mother's legendary youthful



exploits, among them leading a horse into the living room. But decades of progress have erased whatever hope I had of seeing the old homestead preserved. The closest reminder was a house across the street whose stonework matched that of the old Metzgerei. Unexpectedly, two *Stolpersteine* (stumbling stones) were embedded in the sidewalk, one with *Oma's* (Grandma's) name and one with *Tante* (Aunt) Karola's.

(There are now tens of thousands of such brass-coated stones in Germany and other European countries, in front of the houses where victims of the Holocaust had lived.)

I never knew my maternal grandfather, who died when I was less than a year old. But dear Oma, a typical doting grandmother, still lives in my memory. Of Oma's large family, only she, my parents, Tante Karola, and

Karola's son Herbert failed to escape Germany before the war. All but Herbert were imprisoned in Terezín (German name Theresienstadt), Czechoslovakia, in 1942; Herbert's destination remains unknown.

My mother was first assigned to split mica, later to cook in the camp kitchen; my father did office work. These skills made my parents useful to the camp administration and contributed to their survival until the Soviet Army freed them three years later. Oma and Tante Karola were not deemed useful, so they were sent early on *nach den Osten* (east – to the death camps). My parents did not know which camp; neither, evidently, did any of the other family members who had spent the war years in England or the New World. But Lisa found out.

Outside Neuwied is the Jewish cemetery, in which my maternal grandfather Isak Kaufmann was buried in



1931. At the bottom of the headstone is a dedication to Oma, Valentine Kaufmann, but her body does not lie in the grave. The last line of that inscription, ordered by my mother's brother Max in New York, reads: "*starb im Sept. 1942 an unbekanntem Ort*" (died in Sept. 1942 in an un-

known place). The “unknown place,” Lisa discovered, was the Treblinka extermination camp. At reasonable cost and without any hesitation, the stonecutters honored our request to add both the place and the cause of death – *ermordet* (murdered). We decided furthermore to cross out the original error rather than try to obliterate it. My mother, who was infuriated by the seeming exoneration of her mother’s murderers, would have appreciated the correction. (The Stolperstein in Irlich incorrectly names Auschwitz as the place of Oma’s death.)

Two connecting train rides next morning brought us to Krefeld, my birth home as well as my father’s and brother’s. (Krefeld – then spelled Crefeld – was the departure city of a group of 17th century Quaker and Mennonite immigrants to America. Their colony, Germantown, eventually became part of Philadelphia. Frank Rizzo, mayor of Philadelphia 1972-1980, had a home at 8919 Crefeld Street in the Chestnut Hill section of the city.) Krefeld, in common with other childhood places revisited decades later, seemed to have shrunk in proportion to my growth from an eight-year-old to an adult. The four *Wälle*, once defensive walls and now boulevards, enclose an area easily covered on foot in an hour or so; I remembered it as the nucleus of my daily life as a child. In fact, my last address in Krefeld was right on the edge, at Südwall (South Wall) 11.

The railway station, just south of the corner of Ostwall and Südwall, was not damaged in the war. On one of its platforms, to the hiss of the majestic steam locomotive (I can still see it in my mind), we bade farewell to Tante Sofie and her family in 1938. Months later they would be settled in Cincinnati, Ohio, and we would be edging closer to *Kristallnacht*.

That fateful evening, November 9, we knew that our synagogue had been burned to the ground, but we were not prepared for the brown-shirted night visitors, with their swastika armbands, who burst into our home in the wee hours of the night, smashed our furniture, swept the contents of our china closet onto the floor, and turned on the gas before they left. My mother smelled the gas and turned it off before harm was done. Next day my father was arrested, but the local official, possibly moved by my father's paralyzed arm – a wound for which he earned an Iron Cross in World War I – sent him home instead of to the Dachau concentration camp. We spent the next three days with relatives in Cologne and made plans to abandon our home.

Ironically, of all the places I lived at during my first nine years, only that one, at Malmedystraße (now named Lewerentzstraße) 55, is still standing. Lisa and I were allowed in by the present resident, who listened to my story with polite interest but was evidently too young to be impressed by the awful history of her own house. In any case, the alterations incident to the establishment of a daycare center had obliterated most visual reminders. I can imagine that, had our roles been reversed, I'd have shown the same lack of understanding.

My other homes had been erased by bombs or bulldozers. Except for an overgrown yard where my father played soccer with me, the addresses themselves were the only reminders of my years there. We did not have access to the yard at Breitestraße 66, from which I had seen the airship *Hindenburg* in 1937 – doomed to destruction that very year – with the terrifying roar of its engines. (At age six I was easily terrified by loud sounds.) My two-room school on St. Antonstraße no longer exists

– only a group of Stolpersteine with the names of my schoolteacher’s family.

Matching other childhood memories with present locations was not easy. The interior of the post office, still on Ostwall, has been extensively remodeled and evoked no image of the time I lost sight of my father and panicked. I think I was five years old.

The season, early spring, precluded a blackberry-picking excursion to the *Stadtwald* (city park), once the destination of many a brambly family outing. As an irrelevant substitute, we had coffee and cake at both locations of the Heinemann (two n’s, like mine originally) confectionery. The owners are not related to us; we simply have the same, fairly ordinary name.

Not all historical facts are to be found in archives or structures. Where there are living witnesses, there’s a trove of unrecorded memories. So Lisa called my cousin Gus, once a sports fan and excellent athlete in his own right; with a childhood divided, like mine, into German, English, and American periods. He now lives in Jerusalem, where he has become ultra-orthodox, changed his name to Yakov, and disowned me for “marrying out.” He brushed off Lisa’s telephone call and refused to give her any information because he doesn’t acknowledge her as a relative. Thus has the iniquity of the father been visited upon the child. According to the Old Testament, Divine retribution carries to the third and fourth generations, so Gus aka Yakov won’t live to see the descendants of his wayward cousin restored to grace.

It’s a shame: Gus knows things I don’t. Herbert, murdered by the Nazis, was his brother; and his two older sisters, Therese and Erika, escaped to England.

To give credit where it's due, this pilgrimage, along with its English counterpart, was Lisa's project. Her knowledge of the German language has surpassed mine, so she did most of the talking with local people. My contribution was twofold: I knew which places I wanted her to see; and – so she said – I charmed the archivists, by my presence alone, into showing her the materials she asked for without going through tiresome formalities. Those materials, in turn, she shared with me, and I learned things I'd never known.

I was a month short of nine when I left the country of my birth, to be temporarily adopted by a compassionate new homeland. I was six months short of eighteen when I left England for the United States. Two sea crossings had cut my life into three discontinuous parts.

People hear me speak and wonder where I'm from, their guesses ranging as far afield as Ireland and Australia. I've never come up with an answer that's both short and true, so I often say "Pittsburgh." That's where I was married and my children were born, so my family at least is from Pittsburgh. But of course my accent doesn't sound like that of a Pittsburgher – or of someone from any other place. German, British, and American just don't add up to anything people easily recognize. On top of that, my friend in Berlin has told me I speak German with an *American* accent! Confusing? Look at it this way: My linguistic center of gravity is four-fifths of the way across the Atlantic Ocean and moving west, but it will never make landfall. In this country I'll always sound like an immigrant from someplace where English is spoken.

Only a German could think that I'm American.

Herb Heineman

THANKSGIVING FOR A WILD TURKEY

I'm a new resident of Rushmore and a bird-lover, so it's not surprising that the first thing I did when I arrived was to mount my bird feeder. It wasn't long before an assortment of finches, sparrows and cardinals found the bounty.

Imagine my surprise and delight a few days later as a mature tom turkey strutted out of the woods and across the grass. He was clearly on a mission, probably headed for another feeder around the corner. This charming glimpse reminded me of an extended encounter I had with a young tom about ten years ago. I was working at Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge then, but living on a horse farm in Tabernacle.

Tom turkey came to live at Bear's Meadow Farm in August. Unfortunately, the young wild turkey was not very wild.

Tom must have been raised by a family and become accustomed to humans, associating people with food. He had been hanging around a Medford neighborhood, leaving his calling card on decks and scratching cars when he tried to roost on them. The neighbors pleaded with Cedar Run Refuge to remove the big bird and so he came to live with our Clydesdales at Bear's Meadow Farm.

The magnificent, young bird stepped hesitantly from the carrier that August evening, glanced around and scurried into the trees that rim my pastures. Mentally wishing him good luck, I hoped he would find the flock that wanders occasionally through the woods.

But, next morning, there he was with the big horses (who ignored him), clucking and chortling his gather-

ing call as I approached with breakfast. Could you blame me for flinging him a handful of feed?

All through the fall Tom strutted around the farm, roosting at night on the barn roof and greeting me with gobbles in the morning. During the day he wandered the fields and woods, searching for acorns, seeds, buds and bugs. I began to despair that he would ever become truly wild.

Wild turkeys, native only to North America, were once on the verge of extinction. Protection and reintroduction of birds from more rural areas has made them abundant once again. Turkeys are polygamous, with one mature tom guarding a harem of up to 15 hens. When ready to lay, the hens drift away from the flock and scrape a nest on the ground in a protective tangle of shrubbery. Each hen lays 10-12 brown-marbled eggs and broods them for about 28 days. The poults are able to leave the nest after only two days, but sleep under their mother's wings for several weeks.

Once the poults are strong enough the hens and their young form small flocks, foraging together as they wander the woodlands. In winter, large mixed-gender flocks of up to 40 turkeys come together, flying up to roost in trees and wandering widely in search of food.

I was concerned that Tom was missing out on this extended family life. Hanging out with horses didn't quite fill the bill.

Thanksgiving morning dawned sunny and warm. As usual, Tom greeted me at the barn, but he seemed restless and gobbled continuously. "Does he know what happens to turkeys today?" I wondered. An hour later I heard a shout from my barn manager. "Come quick," she called, "Tom has friends over for Thanksgiving!"

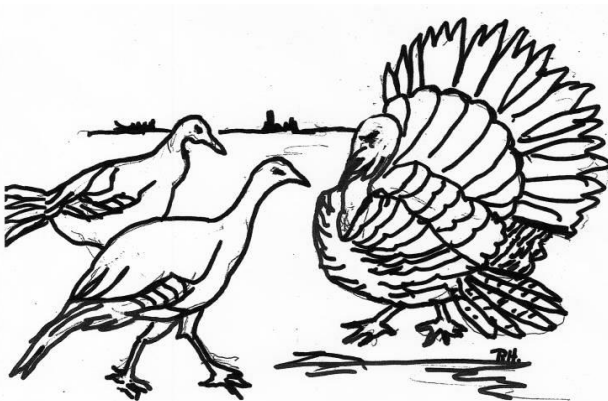
Sure enough, there in the far pasture was Tom with two young male wild turkeys. He preened and strutted, displaying his tom-hood by lowering and shaking his chestnut and cream striped wings and fanning his majestic, black-barred tail. His neck glowed red and the wattles on his face swelled and trembled. We silently cheered his show and hoped the other turkeys were suitably impressed.

After a while, Tom and his newfound friends ducked under the fence and strolled away along the tree line, searching companionably for food and crooning their gathering calls. Finally, they vanished into the woods

That was the last time we saw Tom. I was glad he'd returned to his natural world, but what a treat it was to be close enough to hear his quiet chortles and see his iridescent bronze feathers flash green, purple and gold in the sun.

So, Thanksgiving was a blessing for one wild turkey, and we gave heartfelt thanks as we settled in for our family dinner – of roast beef!

Janet Jackson-Gould



One November night
a full moon climbed our oak tree
branch by leafless branch.

Elizabeth W. Hicks

INDULGENCE

I was reading at the age of eighteen months
While my mother led me through potty training.
My family called me a prodigy,
And it wasn't for my reading.

At two and a half I learned my times tables
(Up to twelve times twelve),
And my father gave me a big red
Pedal fire engine. My family
Called me a prodigy for making
Speedy tight-curve "wheelies" in the dust.

At three and a half I learned
Algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus
(I threw in higher logic for fun) in four weeks,
And my father gave me a tricycle.
My family announced me a prodigy when
I won the "preemies" bike races.

At four and a half I published a paper entitled
"Frenchisms in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*,"
And my mother gave me a disassembled
Plastic see-through anatomical man.
I was called a prodigy when I assembled the
Internal organs of the plastic man in fifteen minutes,
And the whole man in twenty minutes.

At five and a half I postulated the theory that
The tenth dimension of space/time explained
The extent and inherent necessity of dark energy
in the Universe,
And my father gave me a deluxe set of checkers.
I was called a prodigy because I played and won
Six games of checkers with my grandfathers,
All six games played simultaneously at one sitting.

At six and a half I graduated cum laude from a
Private premiere high school, a snap, and
My father gave me a jumbo set of Lego Bricks.
My prodigy was praised because I built
A Lego Trojan horse from the inside.
No one missed me for two days.

At seven and a half I announced
I was going to run away, and
My mother smiled and
We went shopping for two new suitcases.
I spent a miserable day and night
In the local park, freezing.
I snuck home the next afternoon
With my two new empty suitcases.
My parents were overjoyed. Forever after,
I was their prodigious prodigal prodigy.

Chris Darlington



THE AWAKENING

Stan ran up the stairs, two at a time and into his bedroom. Placing his books on the desk, he took off his jacket and flung it on the bed. Unbuttoning his shirt, he pulled off his tie. He sat down and ran his hand through his black hair. Bending over, he removed the rubber bands that held up his knickers and pulled the pants legs down until they topped his ankles. Standing up, he looked into the mirror over his desk. Bright blue eyes set wide apart and a high forehead reflected back at him. Taking a comb out of his back pocket, he ran it through his hair. He removed the leather strap from around his books and pulled the homework assignment from his math book. Looking it over, he knew it could be done over the weekend. He left his room and walked down the hall to the kitchen. Rose sat at the table peeling potatoes for dinner. Her glasses had slipped down her nose and potato skins lay in her lap, caught in the folds of her apron. She looked up as he came in.

“Stan, take some milk, you know we’re eating early tonight, so when you finish, remember you have to set up the tables. It’s bridge night,” she said in her singsong Jamaican accent, “and don’t gulp down your milk.”

He opened the fridge and poured the milk into a glass and gulped it down anyway, not caring that she was watching him. He left the glass on the sink and went through the swinging doors into a large room furnished with deep leather chairs, couches and tall ornate lamps. It was his father’s dental waiting room, but tonight it would be filled with family and friends all playing bridge. Stan pulled three bridge tables from the end closet and set them up, placing chairs around each table. Stan was

done for now, his other chores would come after dinner.

He was in his room reading and listening to the radio when he heard the first of the bridge players coming up the stairs. He greeted his aunts, uncles and cousins. Coats and hats were put on the couches and they all took seats around the tables. His mother was talking to Aunt Jean about her trip to South America, and his father was in deep conversation with Cousin Milton about politics. His mother walked over to him and reminded him in a gentle voice to place bowls of candy on the tables and to be sure the ashtrays were empty and clean.

Most everyone was seated by the time he finished his duties around the tables. He heard the front door close and the slow plodding of someone coming up the stairs. Down the hall, he heard a shuffle with each step as if someone was dragging something along the floor. Stan backed away from the tables and stood against the wall. He knew that shuffle and it always scared him. Into the room came a heavysset man with thick glasses, dragging his clubfoot across the carpet.

“Good evening, Joe, I’m glad you could make it,” Stan’s father said as he shook his hand and helped him off with his coat.

“I would like to introduce Joe Kahn to all of you. He is one of the best lawyers in the DA’s office here in Brooklyn.”

After a round of hellos, the bridge games started. Stan took a deep breath and walked around the tables checking the candy dishes and ashtrays.

Joe Kahn looked up as he came to his table.

“Hello, Stan, and how is school?”

All Stan could see were those thick glasses reflecting the floor lamp.

“OK, Mr. Kahn,” Stan said as he hurried away.

Rose came out of the kitchen and started serving coffee and cake as the players took a break from the game.

“Folks, we have a surprise tonight. My good friend Joe Kahn is going to give us a demonstration in post-suggestion hypnosis, which I understand he is as good at as he is at lawyering. Joe, we’re all yours,” Stan’s father said with a chuckle.

“Thanks Doc, but first I need a volunteer.” Pointing his finger, he said, “How about you, Milton?”

“OK, why not?”

“First, Milton, tell me something you dislike intensely, a food perhaps.”

“I’d say strawberry shortcake.”

“That’s fine, Milton, now sit here in front of me.”

Joe Kahn reached into his vest pocket and took out a watch dangling on a chain and slowly began to move it back and forth just above Milton’s eyes. After a few minutes of this slow metronome-like motion, he said,

“Milton, you are very tired, so tired that your eyes are closing and arms have fallen asleep, now it’s your head and neck. You can’t move at all.”

Milton’s eyes closed and he seemed to collapse into his chair.

“Can you hear me, Milton?”

“Yes.”

“Good, you will listen to what I tell you. We will go back to playing bridge and when I say two no-trump, you will get up, put on your coat, go down to the corner bakery and buy a strawberry shortcake. You will bring it back here and immediately start eating it with gusto. Do you understand?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Good, when I count to three you will wake up and remember nothing. One-two-three!”

Milton sat up straight and looked around.

“When do you start our act, Joe?” he asked.

Laughter filled the room. With that, the bridge players returned to their tables and the games resumed. Stan still stood by the back wall watching all of this, especially Joe Kahn, with a sense of apprehension. He didn't find that any of this was funny. An ominous and chilling feeling suffused his body.

Suddenly Joe Kahn looked up from the bridge hand he was playing and in a deep voice said,

“Two no-trump!”

Milton jumped up from the table, put on his coat and with a deliberate gait walked out of the room and down the hall, saying nothing to anyone. Stan could hear the front door bang behind him. Everyone stopped playing. There seemed to be a silent waiting. Only Joe Kahn smiled as if quietly amused by all of us. It was only about 15 minutes later when Stan heard the front

door slam again, and into the room came Milton with a large cake box. He tossed his coat off, quickly opened the box, and started eating the cake hungrily with his hands. He stopped suddenly and looked around. Everyone was laughing, including Joe, at the spectacle he was making of himself as he stuffed whipped cream and strawberries into his mouth.

Joe came over and stood in front of Milton and said, "Milton you feel very tired now and you want to sleep, your whole body wants to sleep."

Again Milton slouched into his chair and he stopped eating the cake.

"Milton, when you wake up you will remember none of this including eating strawberry shortcake. When I count to three you will wake up. "1-2-3!"

Milton sat up in the chair and looked around the room. His eyes settled on the half-eaten cake and he looked at it with distaste. He jumped out of the chair and wiped his hands and face with a paper napkin.

"Well, Milton, now you can see how easy it was for me to make you enjoy something you so dislike, yes?"

Milton stared into the thick eyeglasses and the smiling face of Joe Kahn. He said nothing. He had no answer.

It was the end of the evening and the guests began to leave. Stan, with Rose's help, began to clear the tables, as his mother and father said good-by to everyone. There were "thank yous" all around for the evening's entertainment. As Stan folded the last of the tables and put them away in the closet, Joe Kahn shuffled over to where he was working and patted him on the head.

“Maybe next time you’ll be my volunteer, little man.”

He stared at Stan and smiled. Stan backed away and Joe began to laugh, his large body towering over him.

He could still hear the echo of that laughter as Joe Kahn shuffled down the hall to the front door with his scraping clubfoot. Even after the front door had closed and he was back in his room, those penetrating eyes and that shuffle seemed to follow him. He would never let anyone have that kind of power over his mind and body. He undressed, put on his pajamas and turned out the light as he got into bed. A shudder went through him as he lay waiting for sleep.

George Rubin

MORNING FOG ON THE BAY

None of Sandberg's little cat feet this morning.
Too much humidity and too cool a night.
The marshes are dimmed,
The mainland seems gone.

My deck chair, soaked, needs a towel.
It's still coming on; my hoodie helps.
It flowed in the windows all night.
The bedclothes need a towel as well.

Chilly and damp for my morning mug.
Cat Pearl eyes me, inside on her warming pad
Wondering about me sitting out here.
Where else would I be?

Ralph Berglund



SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA, 1958

STEREOTYPE

White Yankee architect down South supervising construction project. Middle-aged black woman comes to office and asks architect to modify stock house plans. Architect glad to assist.

Next morning at breakfast with local politicians and business owners:

“Hear you're working now for a N. . . ! You'll never get paid!”

“My client has already paid her bill in cash.”

Dead silence. Nothing more was said.

I was the architect.

HOW DO I VOTE?

White man enters office. Sheriff locks door, leans across desk and quietly explains how to register to vote.

“Take the main highway five miles north. There’s an isolated old farmhouse on the left side of the road. Drive up to the house, knock on the door. An elderly white woman will answer. Tell her you want to register to vote. She won’t say a word but will take you into the living room and hand you a pen and a piece of paper.

Write your name, your birthdate and where you were born, your current address and how long you’ve lived there. Sign the paper and put it on the desk. Don’t talk or ask any questions. Just leave. Go to the Court House, pay the poll tax and you’ll be registered to vote.

And *never* tell anyone about this conversation!”

Sheriff unlocks the door and white man leaves.

I was the white man.

Robert W. Hill

