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Spectrum Contributors
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**SPECTRUM**

Northwestern College

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On the distant horizon, snow capped peaks seem to hold their heads up proudly as if to overlook the vast panorama at their feet. The mountains in the foreground are overspread by a massive forest of blue spruce. Even on the hill where I am standing, the spruce, pine, and aspen tower around me. The aspen leaves, which are just beginning to change to hues of yellow, orange, and red, rustle quietly, shivering in the wind. Birds flit from branch to branch, warble a few notes, and then fly off to other trees. A scurrying chipmunk foraging for hickory nuts tucks his findings in some hidden cache in preparation for winter. Fallen leaves, heather, and greenery cover the ground, providing a refuge for spiders, ants, beetles, and other insects. An occasional lady-bug climbs listlessly on a blade of grass or stem of clover. Small animals hide, camouflaged by the blending tones of brown, grey, and green; an innocent rabbit hops behind a shrub, a baby mouse darts under the protective roof of a mushroom, and a watchful robin stops to tug on a plump earthworm. The sunlight glancing through swaying branches creates a patchwork of shadow and light. Woodland scents mingle with currents of air surrounding me and allowing me to relish their sweet fragrances. And though I feel the refreshing air, the warm sun causes my skin to tingle. On either side of me, daisies, violets, clover blossoms, dandelions, and Rocky Mountain columbines nod their carefree heads. Wild strawberries have taken root, offering their tantalizing fruit to passers-by. Alone and at peace with myself, I begin to understand beauty and to be thankful for it.
REALIZATION

To walk in the woods
to gaze upon the majesty of
the mighty trees,
to feel the breeze...
Yes, Lord, I feel your presence.

To sit atop a hill
to gaze out over a lake,
and see the sun reflect the birds
in flight...
Yes, Lord the silent words.

To watch the sun go down
creates a feeling of relief,
one more day gone...
how soon will tomorrow come,
then another day done.

Yes, Lord, I feel your presence
and hear the silent words
that you present to us
through nature.

Connie Morrow
Several years ago all seven members of my family crawled into our station wagon to undertake a 2,000 mile pilgrimage to California. A couple of days later, after traveling more miles than I care to recall through a countryside of hot flat grassland and hot flat fields and still more hot flat grassland, with nothing more interesting to offer than some bored hot cattle, we were all more than ready to stretch our legs and do a little sightseeing.

The road had taken on a promising upward grade and that tiresome grassland, or, rather the grass in it, had disappeared as we neared our first stop—the fabled Grand Canyon. Because an author I had read in my impressionable youth had painted such ethereal, enchanted picture of the Grand Canyon, the Petrified Forest, and other points of, well, interest in the Southwest, my eagerness to glimpse this famous natural wonder had remained undaunted through the surrounding wasteland of sunbaked rock and dust. I am now convinced that author never set foot west of the Alleghenies.

My sisters and I scrambled out of the car as soon as it was parked and ran to the nearest lookout point, ready to drink in the marvelous vastness, the vaulted, awe-inspiring cathedrals of stone, the delicately subtle shadings in the rock walls punctuated by the simple grandeur of strong solitary trees. There were a lot of large dusty rocks with a few tired trees clinging to their sides. We had hoped to take long soothing draughts of the pristine sunlight—clear and sparkling as a mountain spring—that flooded the rock arches like light through a stained glass window, softening everything with a weighty serene beauty. The sun glared off the dull hard landscape; the only refreshing view in sight was the air-conditioned tourist center.
My mother, joining us at the guard rails, asked, "Where's that Colorado River I've heard so much about?"

We, too, had been searching for the mighty thundering Colorado that carved this magnificent natural sculpture—the inspiration of great poets, composers, orators, novelists, and other assorted fools.

"It must be that down there." My younger sister pointed to a barely discernable thread a long ways away at the bottom of the hole.

Mom raised her binoculars to her eyes, reporting what she saw, "It can't be. It's just a creek of some sort."

My sister took the binoculars from her. "It has to be. There isn't any other water down there."

"But that little bitty thing couldn't possibly be to blame for all this!" Mom insisted. She seemed quite put out.

Mom must've spent too much time listening to the neighbor lady who had been "moved to tears" when confronted with this stupendous sight. I was pretty close to tears myself. I have never seen such an enormous example of water erosion.

The Grand Canyon reminded me of a ravine that runs through a neighbor's pasture back home: every time there's a good rain, a closet full of rich, black Illinois topsoil washes out of it. That used to lead me to mutter strong words against that assinine farmer, but since seeing Arizona's Grand Hole in the Ground, I've decided it might be a good thing. The surrounding Illinois countryside beats Arizona's dry rocks by a country mile—plenty of leafy trees shade the velvet green slopes and numerous spring-fed creeks chuckle through the level valleys. In a few years enough dirt should go on down the river for the government to be willing to pay him a good price for his land—or the absence of it—and set up a federal park. Thus, this natural wonder would be preserved, the resulting tourist trade would enrich the economic backwaters of north-
western Illinois, and sightseers in the eastern portion of the country would have an equal opportunity to view an awe-inspiring case of erosion with, unlike the unfortunates out west, some beautiful scenery as well.

Two women who flew in a plane
Just happened to look out a pane
They swore they could see
The angels at tea
And really believed they were sane

Sue Brinkhuis
Mud walls and gray thatch formed the entire structure. Bleached by the sun, worn by multitudes of past showers, and desperately in need of new thatch, the roof showed signs of pauperism. The walls too spoke of poverty for they were eroded at the base and covered with blotches of a once beautiful coat of whitewash. The entire structure spoke of total destitution.

Nearing the mud construction, I noted a blue haze around the small entrance. The bars which spanned the small window openings on either side of the door revealed the dwellers' fears. Warped, cracked, weather beaten, and dangling askew on broken hinges, the shutters feebly tried to keep out the sun's burning heat.

A blue fog encompassed me as I neared the entrance to the small structure. The smell of burning cow manure, burning eucalyptus leaves, and cooking onions filled the air. The stench, which was powerful and overwhelming, attacked by nostrils. I was forced to stoop as I entered the building, for the doorway was proportionately small. Blackness addressed me from the front and then followed from the rear as the dweller closed the door. With eyes adjusting to the darkness, I saw on my left a flicker of light, which had escaped from the carbon coated chimney of a smoking kerosene lamp.

The inhabitant motioned me to sit down on the only piece of furniture in the single-roomed dwelling: an unstable wooden chair. To my right stood a black metallic trunk which held all of the owner's worldly possessions. Rust, which ate at the trunk's face, offered little hope for security. A bedroll lay to the right of the trunk. Torn and shredded, the straw mat and gray cotton cloth could not have provided the proper warmth needed for human existence. Only the delicacy with which
The bamboo poles, which supported the thatch roof, were covered with soot and threatened to collapse. Through means only known to nature, the building somehow remained erect.

Though drastically needed, the possibilities for a change were absent. The dweller's income had tragically died along with her will to survive. Her feelings toward the future were echoed by the yellowed calendar which hung on the wall, for it was eight years old. Like the dates on the calendar, which were blurred by a thin film of grease and dust, the dweller's hopes for the future had become opaque like smoke, and poverty's affliction was now the way of life.
"ADAM, WHERE ARE YOU?"

Where are you Adam, Adam, on it rang through sleeps and starts, a beat, a tuneless mirth among those sounding stars that used to hang the night as day might stretch to gather earth.

My back against the ground, I fall for miles each breath between the points of light grown weak.

A wish on stars yields knowing twinkles, smiles that dance a No or shoot a dying streak or dim a senseless time and endless space apart. Day breaks and fades by bits. Where now?

I search for Eve but find an eyeless face.

No walk in failing light? No Word allow?

Then give me words. Name me nothing new beyond your asking "Adam, where are you?"

Paul Borgman
Do you break out with hives when your roommate walks by? Does the sight of your roomie send chills down your spine? Are your eyes permanently bloodshot from lack of sleep due to the snores of your roommate? If you can answer yes to one of these questions, then you need help. The ideal solution would be for you to have a room of your own. The simplest way to accomplish that would be murder. The only drawback to this plan is that it could land you in a cell with twenty other cell-mates. This would definitely be worse. Instead, I have developed a simple plan that will cause your roommate to leave in three weeks and leave you with a room to yourself.

The first step in this process is to make a list of all your roommate's dislikes. The more thorough the job the more material you have to work with. For example, your roommate hates raisins, dislikes soupy soap and detests loud music. Whenever you go home bring back raisin cookies. Be sure to offer her the cookies everytime you have one. This will cause frustration and make the ulcers flare up. When your roomie is gone, add about an inch of water to her soap box. This will make the soap, pure soap which will frustrate her even more. Whenever you enter the room, turn your stereo on really loud. This will hinder any conversation that may develop and prevent your roomie from studying. Then she will seek shelter in the library or lounge. You now have the room temporarily to yourself. The first week should be devoted entirely to her dislikes. Overemphasize them if you have to, but don't be too obvious, or your roommate will catch on.

The second week should be a little more intense. You must begin to get on her nerves or she may forgive you. In order to do this you must become a
human pig and your room a pig pen. Don't bother to make your bed or empty the trash. Throw your dirty clothes right in the middle of the room. Refrain from vacuuming or dusting. If the smell isn't bad by Tuesday, stop using deodorant. On Wednesday, after you have been to the gym, leave your smelly sweats laying by her pillow. Food is also a good thing to leave laying around, especially banana peels and sardines. They will leave an unforgettable aroma. For good measure it may be wise to open some limburger cheese. The second week is the ideal time to begin snoring. When she accuses you of this trick, deny it emphatically. You must make her believe you were born this way and are not doing it on purpose. At the end of the second week your roommate should be wishing she had never met you.

The third week is the crucial week which will decide if you have a room to yourself or will be stuck for the rest of the year. At this time it is important not to go soft or feel sorry for your roommate. In fact you must make your roommate ashamed of you. This can be done by doing socially unacceptable things. For instance, pick your nose and say, "I'm _____'s roommate." Or scratch your armpit and say, "____ and I have so much in common."

By this time your roommate will probably have made several attempts to change rooms. You can help cut through the red tape by paying a visit to the RD. For best results, dress in a nerdy manner and discuss the gross national product in a nasal tone of voice. The whole idea is to bore her so badly, that she will gladly grant you a small favor in return for your departure.

When you have the necessary permission granted, don't wait to tell your ex-roomie, just throw all her belongings out in the hall. Tactics may vary from roommate to roommate, but this basic strategy should cure you of the most obnoxious roommate. The room is officially yours.
SOMETHING ABOUT THIS ISSUE'S WRITERS . . .

ALICE BERAN is a freshman from Riceville, Iowa. She hopes to become an author.

PAUL BORGMAN of Orange City teaches English and Creative Writing.

SUE BRINKHUIS, a sophomore from Little Rock, Iowa, is a tentative Humanities major.

CONNIE MORROW, a senior from Marble, Minnesota, is majoring in sociology while maintaining an interest in writing.

MARY VAN RHEENEN is a senior from Hawarden. She hopes for a career in writing.

DAVID VANDER AARDE, a junior who lived in India for a time, has recently transferred to Westmar.

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