

TOMPKINS AWARD WINNER--"CANTATA"

(Ed. Note--The following is the first prize winner selected in the recent Tompkins Award literary contest.)

A CANTATA FOR THE CRYING ANGELS

Verse in the form of a musical expression by Malcolm Forest *pen name* dramatis personae:

A TEACHER of Divinity at a school of engineering
LOVERS
SCULPTOR
WARRIOR
LEADER OF THE CHORUS
CHORUS
JUDGE HOGSETT
WORKER

My mind trumpets of scarlet Spring
and to the world I make this offering..

Act 1

TEACHER:

The sky which I see is too fantastical;
the valves of stars and its gauges
mark so precisely the firmament's
tooling.
Zones of nebulae are patterned in
the fashion of blueprints,
but each centered by a hectic flare
of triumph.
Surely, these angels are no mere
artisans;
there is great order there,
and also a serenity that comes in the
vision of eternal power...
And we have fear of such a greatness.

LOVERS:

We'd drive through the zodiac
in a brand-new Cadillac
under the torrid moon;
and then dance to a rumba
in a crazy place like Bogata
and not wait for the night's last tune.
And poker chips will fall like stars,
roulette wheels will spin our years,
we'll not drown in a sea as deep as
fears.
And if we're parted, to kiss your lips
I'll travel that sea in a thousand
ships.

but if he did, he too would catch the
fire.

It was like fishing from the sky.
Kings came to help him,
and soldiers,
and scientists,
merchants of every clime.
But the kite did not come,
it created circles of burning wonder
in the heavens.

It upset the order of angels.
Geraniums snapped at dogs,
stones got up and walked into the
river,
cattle devoured their young.
Such was the happening of that hor-
rible event.

CHORUS:

The kings toppled off their private
privies
and fell down their bluffs,
impaled on the spears of their own
crowns
or suffocated in the wealthy white
stuff
of their imperious gowns.

TEACHER:

O lamentation night!
Satan has become heretical
to his own role;
The shrieks above terrify
his poor infernal soul.
To lower Hades he has gone
where the Higher Hell men go;
reads on the beach, takes in a show,
plays canasta through the dawn.
He is waiting for things to cool off
up there,
to return later to his noble chair.

CHORUS:

We are the elements of wonder and
fear,
the wind that prophesies the coming
year;
We are the chemistry of the city's
mood,
the storm that darkens the shudder-
ing wood.
We are the hand that encloses the
mind,
that pastes the lips of human kind.
O don't you hear the thunder of
planes?

the cape of the monument was thrown
back to reveal:

CHORUS:

The statue of the general hung dead;
hung from the cord of a rope,
and his eyes were out of his head.

(Noisy laughter and hooting)

HOGSETT:

This is a mistake!
Police, arrest all suspects of this
distortion!
Round up all blindmen and fish...
Arrest! Arrest! Find the maker of
this abortion!

LOVERS:

We are the lovers,
where shall we go?
We cry in the rocks,
we kiss in the snow.
We run in the rubble, hand in hand,
trip over corpses strewn through the
land.

When shall light show us ease?
O Aphrodite! Where is peace?

HOGSETT:

I think it would be advantageous
to commit this trial quickly.
The more accused tried,
the less the menace.
But first, let us have a little diver-
tissement.

CHORUS:

Madame Ovary
has a long-playing record with
people laughing,
and when she feels blue
she turns on the phonograph
and laughs too.

J. Christ
will be crucified on television
this evening at eight;
there will be a midnight show
for those who were late.

These days
the sky hangs green shades
with impending doom: H
we rush from reality's apartment
with no lilacs in the room

To search
for escape
to take our mind away
and we listen to a beer ad
when the sun shall turn to clay.

and kissing a Jewess' hand in 1936.
TEACHER:
Perhaps I shall be prouder in Para-
dise.

HOGSETT:

Next.

WORKER:

I don't know what's happening.
All I know is that one day while I was
working
it was time to punch out for lunch.
I stood in line and when it came my
turn
I forgot my number.
The policeman asked me my name...
I forgot that too!

I went into the washroom,
looked at my face and tried to re-
member.

But I can't! But I can't!

HOGSETT:

Guilty.

Where are the lovers?

LEADER:

He was taken away
and is lost in endless mountains of
ashes.

HOGSETT:

And she?

LEADER:

She joined the women's military ser-
vice;
and like valkyries, sang their songs,
marched with them.
Then one day she shot the C.O. for
stealing her curlers.

HOGSETT:

Step up, Mr. Sculptor.

SCULPTOR:

None of us are guilty
because all of us are guilty.
But I exclude you, sir,
for you are just the essence of evil.
Remove that hypocritical coat of
justice you wear today.

(Gasps of horror from the Chorus)

A vest designed in pornographic po-
sitions, fetid marigolds:
pockets stuffed with bribery's dirty
kleenex.

HOGSETT:

Sh. Sh. The jury can hear!

SCULPTOR:

Can they really?
I wouldn't believe it!

The end will be glorious,
one big success of death
and a mass requiem...
O day of warth!

SCULPTOR:

The rain finally dwindles,
First the ladies come out of the
forest,
flick of fan and sip of tea,
then the gentlemen, with lutes and
flutes
and dapper poetry.

And just beyond the latticed pavilion
and heart-shaped hedges, a rainbow
ascends.
Linnets in poplars twitter
and a cantata for the crying angels
here ends.

What's Going On?

Pan-Hellenic Council and Inter-
Fraternity Council have recently se-
lected their officers for the coming
year. Jackie Murphy and Malcolm
Vance will be installed as presidents
of their respective groups.

Mackenzie Union will hold their
annual awards banquet at 6:30 p.m.
on Friday, May 28, in the Main Din-
ing Room, Student Center.

Arden Krug, chairman of the MU
activities council, will present the
awards including keys to members
of the activities council and Board
of Education, and lapel pins and
certificates to other members who
were active in MU affairs during the
year. Several special awards will be
presented.

Sports Shorts..

Wayne's golfmen end their season
Friday against Western Michigan at
Kalamazoo. The Tartars' lifetime
record against the Cowboys is 6-13.

I've carved these lovers out of marble,
wrought the form, the essence from a quarried rock.
And if they are true lovers they will match
the lovers in that world of forms.
In that pure and crystal place,
exquisite with the knowledge of its truth.
Every absolute is there, the spirit of all ideas,
even those we have not yet thought.
How like a formal garden of Watteau it is,
those elegant ladies and men,
floating serenely on barges
amidst the music of water and lute.
A bit stiff with their powdered wigs and all,
but noble in their quiet laughter
and exchange of thoughts.
They will remain there no matter what we do.

WARRIOR:

Craft for the hour,
power for the minute,
a shooting star for the second.
Just an extra war, perhaps, no more.
Outflanking in a pastoral landscape,
struggle in the stream,
approaching death under a willow.
An ecstasy of strategy over maps of geography,
and with multicolored pins
tell men where to go.
I shall finally arrive on a white horse
to face the brief violence
then at twilight, return home.
That is what I like best...
to flog the soldier disobedient,
to kiss the shoulders of warriors of zest.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS:

In miles of green fields,
aeons of buttercups,
under a sky bigger than we can comprehend,
a boy ran with a kite
fluttering very high in the day.
It gained such height that a star
caught on,
and the kite turned aflame!
The boy cried.
He tried to pull it down,

The theology of our new sky
shadows the sun that remains.
Like launces, in leaping silver, they
cross the sky
and plunder to cut the heart of heaven
until the rains run dry.

Evil angels awake from their sleep,
the seraphim fan their burning wings
and bleat like sheep.

All Hell is in the dominion of celestial care,
and the blood-flecked vultures there
nest, aware.

We are the elements of wonder and fear,
the place is now, the time is here.

Act 2

SCULPTOR:

The lords and ladies of the floral court
saw a slight rain touch the river.
They held out their gloves
and felt the drops.
The walked into the forest
and waited for the drizzle to pass,
watching silver fall upon the water,
creating epicures of delicious sound.

LEADER OF THE CHORUS:

In our bright city,
there was a statue to be unveiled
of one of our historical general heroes.

A parade of musicians marched by,
the conductor twirling his baton,
unwary of his half-open fly.

Then Judge Hogsett took the stage;
He devoured an hour to explain
that we should give pity to the blind
and visit the local aquarium.

In raging tongue
exclaimed that we expand peacefully
with troops
into heathen lands
and disseminate our culture and business.

Then, with the roll of anxious drum

who is tapping at the window?
What's in the other room?
There's something down the basement
carving out my tomb.

Madame Ovary
smokes a well-thought of cigarette
with a pillow at her head,
but when escape is over
she's afraid to go to bed.

HOGSETT:

Let the justice begin.

TEACHER:

No, I do not wish to be a martyr.
Rather, just install an image of me
in a small stained glass window.
I should like to hold a poppy
or perhaps preach under a raisin tree,
warding off Lucifer and the like.

HOGSETT:

You are not here to receive gifts...
you are on trial!

TEACHERS:

O, I thought this was reward for the
worldly life.
I'm sorry.

Locking the fuse box of mechanic parables,
I thus lay my thoughts before you.
It is not so much the adverse wars
that stun me,
but the general atmosphere that men
in our time produce.
Like jackals and tters,
they sit on haunches outside the door,
licking their muzzles
waiting for bloody scraps.
They tear at each others throat for accomplishment.

They are no wiser than lions,
but wilder in their vulgarity.
They stalk the churchyard,
they urinate on the pews.
Money is their meat
and they pay their dues.

HOGSETT:

You are guilty as charged.
Speaking for the Bird Watchers Club,
an atheist front,
wearing green earmuffs on Whitsuntide,

and it is a monument of truth.
I hung the statue and it mocks the
gorgeous corruption,
the colossal decadence,
with trillion dollar wars
and wild elephants, technicolored in
garbage oils.
Here we are...
Here it is!

CHORUS:

Sh...Sh.. We can hear!

WARRIOR:

A shooting star for the second,
power for the minute,
craft for the hour,
grandeur for the day,
eternity for the year.

I am sick of those old chess games,
to point a military footnote.

Give me armaments, give me flags;
martyrs, gold flags!

My heart quickens,
the coward sickens.
The cannon lights,
the earth gyrates!

What bombs will burst in my honor,
what superior men shall die?

Blood up to my navel
I stand in a river of gore;
My brain throbs infernal,
my soul is slaked by war.

CHORUS:

"Dies Irae"

We go on a pilgrimage
in powered cars
to pay homage
to monied stars...
Big hotels in Hell,
where the rich drink muscatel.
O how we worship the great success,
the accomplishment!
Progress, progress, where to?

Flying and flaming kite,
atomics of power,
exploding diamond in flight!

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4 p.m. Symphony at Four
5 p.m. Design in Drama
5:30 p.m. U.N. Story
5:45 p.m. News
6 p.m. Dinner Melodies
6:45 p.m. U.N. Today
7 p.m. Slavic 281
7:45 p.m. Dutch Light Music
8 p.m. Evening Symphony
9 p.m. News

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