

ALLITERATION

One wonderful, white woman went walking one wet morning.

Two terrible terrors told terrible tales.

Three thick thumbs thought thirty thoughts.

Four fond forks fought fiercely for a ford.

Five falling flippers felt feebly foolish.

Six smelly socks sought to see the sea.

Seven sizzling sausages sang silly songs.

Eight egotistical eggs thought they were egg-heads at economics.

Nine nincompoops knew nothing about navigation.

Ten tiddlywinks taught ten toilets textiles.

Maya Hatton, IIG

THE WRECKERS

I live on the coast of Cornwall. The year is 1820.
I live near Kyance Cove where the rocks hidden under

the water are treacherous. Every minute of the day, the waves pound against the rocks, roaring and heaving.

It is worse at night. Sometimes it is difficult to get to sleep because of the roaring of the waves.

Since I was born I have known nothing but getting up, going to school and after that I go to collect driftwood that has been washed up on the rocky beach. The reason for this large amount of driftwood is that nearly every week, or more often, there is a wreck. Boats do not see the rocks close to the land. Then the bottom of the boat scrapes on the jagged rocks.

I only found out the reason why the boats came so far towards the land recently. I discovered this by a lot of detective work and eaves dropping. After one particular wreck I heard lots of whisperings and I noticed how my mother had silk to sew with and



New Computer Room

Photograph J.B.L.

men had tobacco on which usually you have to pay a large amount of importing duty. I realised that nobody where we lived could afford to buy these luxuries. It was good fun because it meant that on my birthday my mother and father gave me a gigantic bar of fresh French chocolate. When I enquired how they got this delicacy they gave me the reply, "What you don't know won't hurt you!"

That night as I ascended the stairs to my bedroom, I pondered over the expensive goods, trying to work out from where the villagers had obtained them. As I lay in bed that night, tossing and turning, the clock struck ten, eleven and—just before twelve—I awoke completely, with a start. I had heard something; the wind was howling and the waves were crashing against the rocks. Then I heard it again—the unmistakable sound of splintering wood, a creaking sound, the sound of a ship being smashed against the vicious rocks. Then I heard some faint shouts. Ten minutes later I heard footsteps and horses' hooves going past our house and one pair of footsteps came into our house and climbed the stairs. I knew it was my father by the sound of his heavy boots. He tiptoed into my parents' bedroom and I heard him put down a bag. I knew that this must have something to do with the goods . . .

The next morning I went downstairs and the parlour door was shut. I could hear muffled voices, my mother and father. I crept closer. My father was speaking.

"When I met Rev. Mench and Bill and Fred we walked down the road and up the cliff path. At the top we met Mr. Bley and young Tom. They had already started the fire to lure vessels on to the rocks.

"Minutes later we saw a ship, it was a French sailing ship. Seconds later we heard a crash and a splintering. Then we ran down the goat's path quickly to the rocky beach below. We could hear cries of distress but all we wanted to know was whether there was any barrels or caskets being washed ashore and sure enough there was!" I stepped back from the door, ran down the hall and pulled open our front door. There with a sack of cloth was Rev. Mench.

Alice Tatham, IIG

THE SCHOOL

Looking old and proud
The school stands
Like a castle on a hill.
Facing towards a coloured sea.
Seagulls flying above.
As the waves hit the shore
The wind blowing hard and strong
While the school stands enormous
And splendid, looking old and proud.

Masrina Damit, IIK

A LIMERICK

There was a young girl called Sue
Who always came down with the flu.
When ever she spoke
It came out in a croak
and she coughed until she was blue!

Charlotte Ede, II

THE TRAGEDY

I knocked on the door of his small squashed house,
Not wanting to tell him of the loss of him lame cat,
I plucked up the courage and lifted the heavy
horse head for the second time,
An old man opened the door—with caution
there he stood,
In his threadbare trousers and warm jumper,
He walked slowly into the sitting room
dependent upon his walking stick,
And sat down in his favourite chair where the
aroma of tobacco enveloped him.

Revealing the tragedy of his tabby,
His hurt eyes drowned in tears,
While clutching his head in his clammy hands,
He began to cry like a flowing river.
He started to look at his fireplace where the flames
leapt up and licked the charred wood.
The tears were running down his cheeks
like water falling from a fountain,
But I pretended not to notice,
As he looked at me with empty eyes,
I knew his life now was empty and meaningless.

Rebecca Roberts, VS

WITCHES

Witches come in all shapes and sizes.
Fat ones, thin ones (all wear disguises).
They wear tall hats and long black cloaks.
They keep black cats and toads that croak.
On moonlit nights you'll see them fly.
On their broomsticks across the sky.
Their faces glow all green and warty.
They'll come to eat you if you're naughty.
Around the cauldron see them huddle.
Making mischief, bad luck and trouble.
In go cats' tongues, nightshade and pepper,
Dragons' tails, vipers and skin of a leper.
All through the night they're cackling and screaming,
While all normal people are peacefully dreaming.
Morning brings an end to their revels.
So back to their lairs go the witches and devils.

Katie Taylor, IH



Design by NICOLA SLATER, LVI

FIRE

It started slowly, as though it had time
To spare, in low gear, slightly, cautiously.
Hesitantly it crept, silently, unrestrained.
It was as though it was fatigued.
But willing to go on, to persevere.

Suddenly, the great dragon was let loose.
Like a wild savage, out of control.
It was ungovernable like a violent creature,
A tameless destroyer let loose,
Raging, roaring, gnashing, a frenzied tempest.

It was inexhaustible, an uncontrollable animal,
Bursting up in a ferocious fury.
Devastating everything in its path,
Having no mercy, like an untamed horse.
Hypnotising whatever lies in the way.

The furnace of scorching heat seems endless.
It sees no end to its infinite path of destruction.
Just leaving turmoil, upheaval behind it.
Eventually the once berserk beast
Dies, unwillingly, muffled, to a slow death.

Sarah Harvey, IIIF

SUSPICION

I had always felt that Mrs. Bollington rather dominated her small, shy, mild-mannered husband. I think I must have got the idea from the fact that I always saw him putting out the washing to dry, on the line in the back garden, whilst his wife stood, arms on hips, staring at him from the patio. It was always like that, he working, while she sternly watched him.

They were both slim, but Mrs. Bollington had a kind of harshness about her, almost a brutality. She had small, round spectacles and a thin-lined mouth; her husband always wore the same expression of defeat.

The reason that I know this is that I am a greying, lonely old lady, who spends her days staring out of the window—something I had always sworn I would never become. But enough about me, and on to the point. The fact was that all of a sudden, with no warning at all, Mrs. Bollington disappeared. I no longer saw her watching her husband, or walking to the shops: nothing. It was as if she had been blown off the face of the earth.

The only sign that something might not have been quite right was that I had heard them having a rather indiscreet argument about, what sounded to me, a washing-line, or something of the sort. What made this unusual—because everyone knows, all couples argue from time to time, was that any disagreement that the two ever had was always promptly ended with a shout from Mrs. Bollington. But this argument went on and

on; I should think in all it continued for about three hours. But I can't be sure, as it continued into the night, and I fell asleep.

The next morning was the start of my noticing the absence of Mr. Bollington's wife. This did not, at first, strike me as alarming, but I started getting worried when the washing-line came down.

It was two days after the argument. I saw Mr. Bollington come out with a screwdriver and mechanically dig out the nails from the trees at either end of the line. He slowly coiled the wire round his hand and then walked back into the house. I felt that this marked the end of something but I didn't know what. And the strange occurrences didn't stop there. Two days after this, new curtains were put up. The white ones which had previously hung there were replaced by dark green drapes. Now this did make me wonder, because the old ones had been up for only a few months.

And then a series of deliveries were made; some by furnishing companies, some by carpet manufacturers, and I saw Mr. Bollington walk into the house with several rolls of wallpaper. This happened over a time span of five days, and in that time I had concocted several theories about all of these strange happenings. Still Mrs. Bollington was nowhere to be seen, but somehow I had got used to it. Now, I know that sounds terrible but I have lived through the war, and somehow people accepted sudden disappearances.

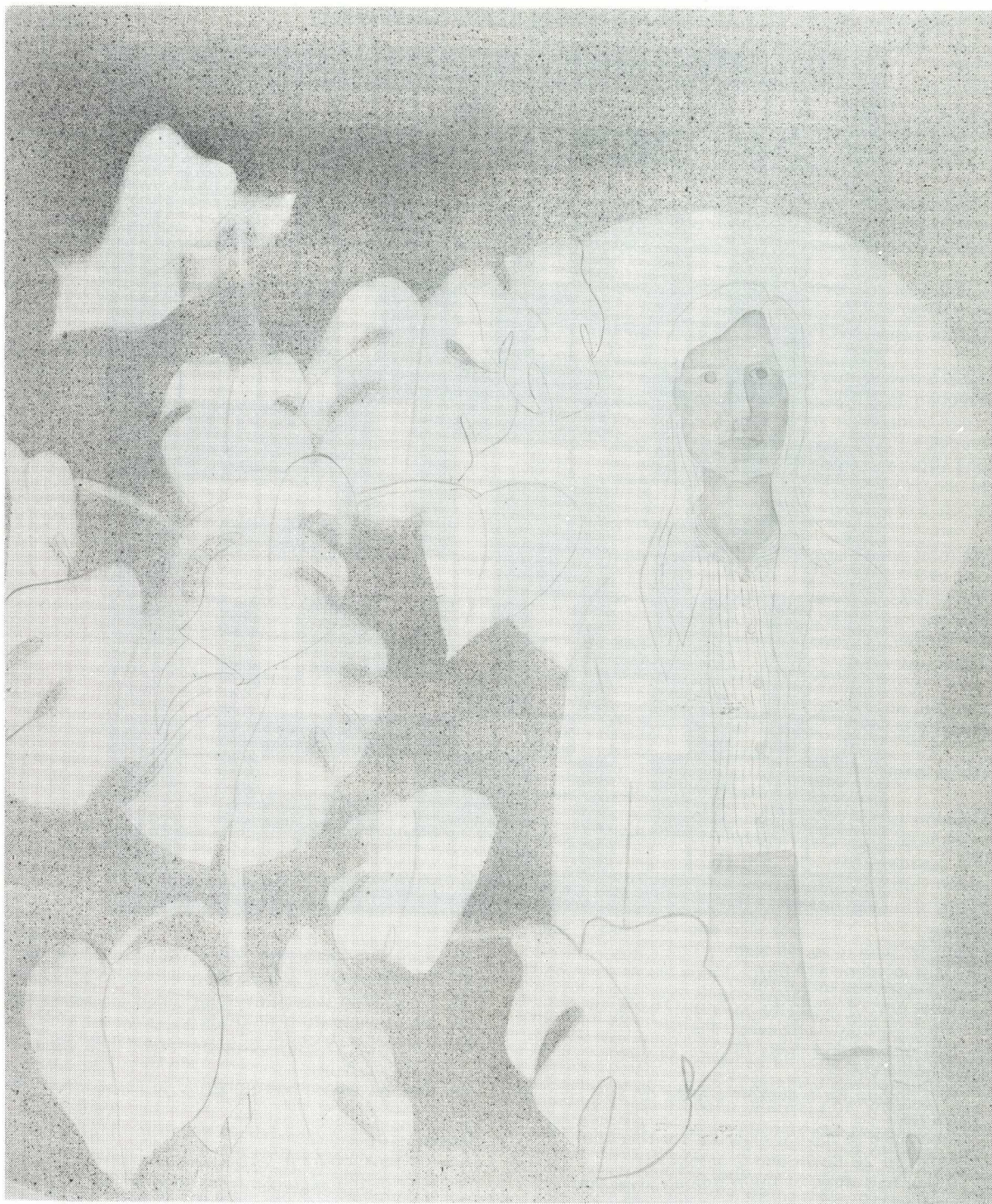
I don't know what happened to Mrs. Bollington: perhaps she left him; perhaps she'd had a heart attack. It was really none of my business, and to be quite frank with you, two months after it all, I have nearly forgotten; but I do have my suspicions . . .

Mr. Bollington sat in the armchair which was usually occupied by his wife, and thought.

He had at last got rid of every trace of blood. Why did she have to struggle so much? After each stab of the screwdriver, in her blind frenzy, she had stumbled from room to room, pouring blood wherever she went. She had made a bloody mess. But it was over now, and Mrs. Bollington's decomposing body lay slumped in the laundry cupboard with a white plastic wire around her neck.

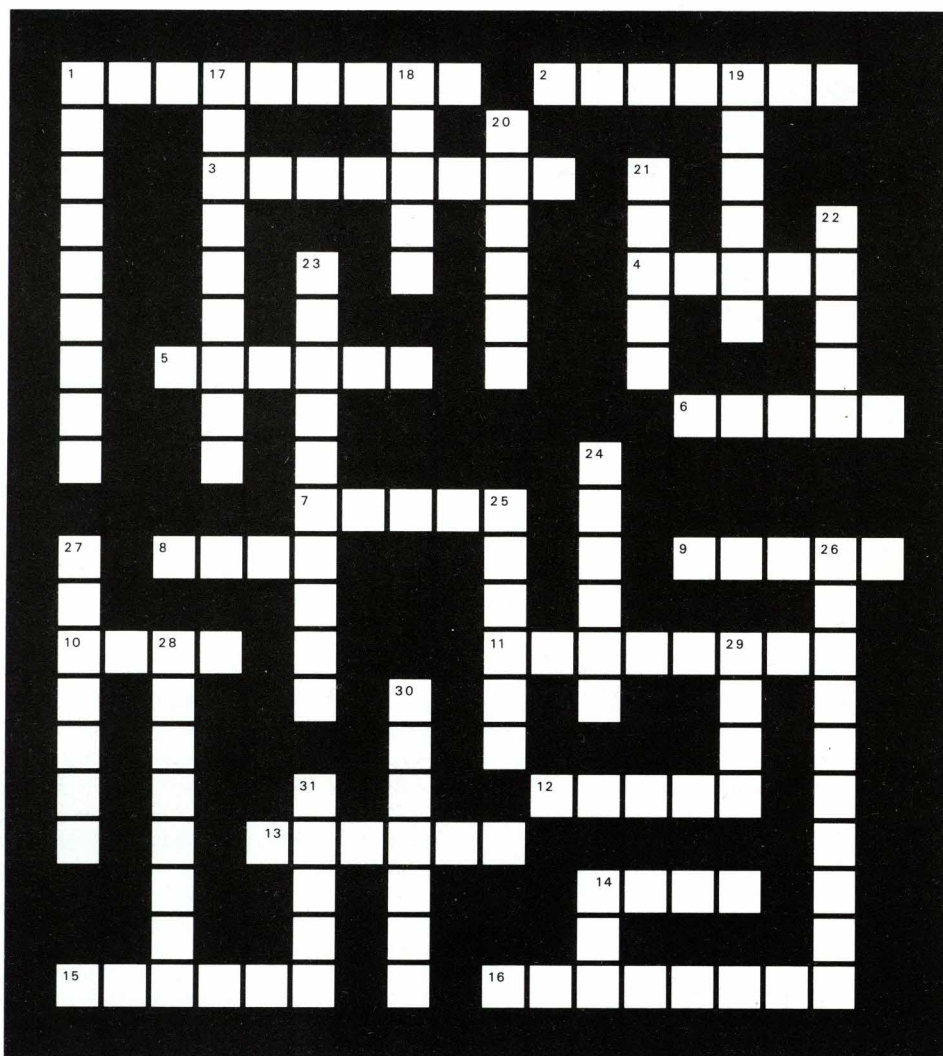
The brand new tumble dryer stood in its place of honour in the living room. It had been the first time he had stood up to her, but he had shown her, oh yes, he had shown her. He just hoped the woman next door didn't suspect anything. He didn't think so.

Beth Dumonteil, VS



Drawing by DAISY BALOGH, VS

CLASSICS CROSSWORD



CLUES

Across

1. A successful virtue (9)
2. Final part of wedding register (7) see 19 down
3. Most northerly of Seven Hills (8)
4. End of wedding dress (5) see 19 down
5. A godly virtue (6)
6. Bad ending for a dessert course (5) see 11 across
(You have to have a high I.Q. for this one!)
7. Between 29 down and 2 across (5)
8. If you had three of them Roman style you'd suffer (4)
9. A final procession (5)

10. A female seahorse? (4)
11. First part of 6 across (8)
12. Livia's son was pretty wet when retreating (5)
13. An elementary school for boys (5)
14. This river journey could be fatal if one went back on it (4)
15. and 16. Death bed (6, 8)

Down

1. To have courage while suffering (9)
- 17 One of the sequinlie hills, anagram (9)
18. A friendly ring? (5)
19. See 4 across (6)

20. Wife (6)
21. There are several sections in a day (5)
22. World of the dead (5)
23. A teacher in 13 across (10)
24. Nero was the end for him (6)
25. It was sweet and probably helped 24 down (6)
26. Greek alternative to Roman boy's school (10)
27. Between Quirinal and Esquiline (7)
28. Public speaking (8)
29. Probably signed by a right-handed person (4) see 7 and 2 across
30. Emu rail (anag.) remembers the dead (7)
31. Funeral (5)

Solution on page 46

Tracie Bowes, IIIU

AT THE DENTIST

The chatter of the people in the waiting room,
Suddenly silence falls,

As I glance at the many anxious patients,
I wonder what fearful thoughts are passing
through their minds,

I expected to hear cries of pain from the surgery,
But suddenly I hear peals of laughter,
Perhaps it will not be so painful as I feared.

In the surgery there is a sickly smell of antiseptics.
I see the crane-like drill suspended above the
fur-lined chair,

The dazzling white light that shines brightly,
Frightening forceps and vicious probes and
hooks beside me.

But I am cheered by the welcoming smile of the
pretty young dental nurse.

Then the comforting sound of music as I slide into
the chair.

I feel the stiffness of the bib being placed around
my neck.

Now I am afraid!

I feel like running away but with nowhere to go.

The touch of cold fingers on my tender jaw,

The gentle prick of the needle in my gum,

The sour taste of the injection as the fluid flows in,

Now the high pitch whine in my head
as the drill revolves,

The awful smell of burning bore as the hot drill
drills away;

The foul taste of decay as the cavity grows,

The hissing and spluttering of the water tubes
in my mouth,

The sticky taste of the pink liquid in my mouth,

Silence breaks,

And now the dentist says, "All over!"

He removes the stiff bib from around my neck,
The nurse gently wipes my mouth with soft
tissues,
My heart feels light,
Why was I so afraid?

Helen Dugard, IVY

CHRISTMAS EVE

It was 6.00 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Suddenly the
doorbell rang. I ran to the door, knocking cards off the
shelf as I went. Of course, it was Grandma. She came
every year.

She unpacked her things one by one, as if to check
they were all intact. She was carrying her usual bag
full of presents looking like Father Christmas carrying
his sack.

I went to the window and looked out. I saw the black
night and the warm, welcoming lights of people's
homes shining out into the darkness. I thought of Mary,
all those years ago, calling at the inns and finding no
place to stay at. Then also I thought of the cattle and
oxen breathing their warm breath into the stable, of
Mary cradling the new-born baby who was to become
our Saviour.

Suddenly the call of my mother woke me from my
daydream. I ran to see what she wanted. "Can you
decorate the Yule log for me, please?" she said. I went
to the Christmas decorations box and took out the Yule
log. It was covered with candle wax. I scraped off the
old candle wax, put some tinsel on it and lit the candle.
It looked lovely, glittering in the Christmassy lounge.
Then I begged my mother to let us put the presents
around the Christmas tree. "Please," I said, "Oh please
let us."

"All right, but as long as you don't peep at the
labels," she said.

So Oliver, Alice and I took the wrapped-up presents
and set them around the tree neatly. We looked at them,
running our hands over the colourful wrapping and
shaking them to see what sort of sound they made.
Occasionally, Oliver would suddenly exclaim in a loud
voice, "Look, this one's for me!"

"Shh!" Alice and I would shout in loud whispers.
Then Alice would shout, "And this one's for me!" Of
course Alice and Oliver would then have a loud
argument about talking loudly; so the grown-ups could
tell that we were looking at the labels anyway.

When we had finished setting the presents around
the tree, we got up and examined the beautiful tree.
She was a grand queen, showing her beauty.

After a while, Daddy called us into the dining room
for tea. It was not just the normal sort of bread-and-
butter tea. It was the most wonderful tea of the year.
There were sausage rolls, mince pies, crisps, apple cut
into bite sized pieces, satsumas, cold meat: salami and
ham, all different sorts of cracker biscuits and

different varieties of cheese—from cheddar to stilton. There were all the wonderful things you could imagine to eat at Christmas. The room was lit by candles. We ate up the tea until there was not a crumb left. Then we looked at each other with glowing faces. We were ready to burst with food, happiness and excitement.

After tea, we went upstairs to change into our night clothes. We washed, feeling excited. For us, the quicker we went to bed, the more quickly tomorrow would come.

I hung up my stocking, remembering being a little child, not knowing what a stocking was. I climbed into my snug bed and lay down, my face burning with warmth from the candles and the fire, and slowly drifted off to sleep, with good and lovely thoughts running through my dreams,

Emma Briant, IH

A NEW DAY BEGINS

Early in the morning the old, tall building, shrouded in mist, emerges to dominate the scene.

Thick, strong walls, wind-beaten from the sea, have stood the test of time.

Worn stairs from the feet of pupils of past and present and now my feet as well.

The shrill sound of a bell, laughter, chatter and noise.

I come away from my dorm window as another school day begins.

Eleanor Clarke, IIK

CHRISTMAS EVE

The raging fire roared up the chimney, rising up into the cold, dark sky. Gentle, beautifully-formed snowflakes came flooding down, landing gently upon the roof. It all seemed so beautiful and magical. It was dark, so very dark outside. We curled up in bed, so warm and snug, and our stockings were hung up on the end.

Dad was reading us all a story, a very lovely story, about a young couple just about to get married. Mary and Joseph, I think they were called. They had a baby son named Jesus. Wise men and shepherds brought gifts for the little baby. Angels were singing, calling him a king. We then prayed, said good-night, then settled down to sleep. I lay in bed thinking, thinking of what a wonderful day it had been, yet so busy, decorating the Christmas tree, wrapping up presents and making cards. Then I thought of Santa and the day ahead. I could hardly wait. My excitement was too strong. How was I ever going to be able to get to sleep? I was going to explode. My feelings were uncontrollable.

Sian Harvey, IH

WISHES

If I had one wish that was guaranteed to come true, this is what I would wish for . . .

Nowadays the world is full of terrible things like crime and people taking drugs. The natural world is being destroyed because of chemical agents. Countries in the world are having wars for stupid reasons, things like people's skin colours and people wanting different governments. In these wars many innocent people die. Take the IRA for example. This is happening today. What have they accomplished? Nothing except for many brutal murders. It's things like these which make me angry. If we destroy the rainforests, we will not only destroy thousands of species of creatures, but we will also be destroying ourselves, because we need the oxygen they give and the medicine that they provide.

Why do people do these things? You might think that this is all very shocking and young people and children all say to themselves, when I grow up I will never pollute the environment, or I will never smoke, or I will never drink any alcohol, but unfortunately they do. How many times have you just walked along and thrown rubbish on the floor?—probably many times. We do things we do not realise.

Now is the 'Modern Age' and most people are well off now. We have many modern things to make our lives easier which we take for granted. In the 'olden days' people wrote with complicated pens or feathers, and a calculator was first the size of a room and when it was made pocket size it cost hundreds of pounds. Jobs were often just for men and it was expected that a woman should stay in the house and work, cook, and look after the children. Today people have calculators and pens and watches and things like that which would be bought only by rich people in those days. As for jobs and responsibilities, men and women are now equal in most countries and women also go to work and men also do things which were considered a 'woman's duty'. We take all these things for granted.

I'm sure that if I had a wish I would not use it directly for myself, but would use it for this generation and many years to come. My wish would be that the world would always be at peace, with no wars, no one killing, no destruction, and no one taking drugs or drinking alcohol, etc. This is because no one is really doing anything about this world. If something is not going to be done about this, man will destroy himself with his own hand . . .

Yaganeh Teymoor, IH

NIGHTMARE

There was a full moon that night. The wind crashed into the trees, which rocked back and forth, shaking their creaking branches. I pulled my billowing jacket back hard over my shoulders as the wind was trying

to take it off. I swept my hair off my face with one hand and pushed the key in the lock with the other. I turned the round brass handle and the wind flung the door open, dragging me stumbling in behind it.

The house was very peaceful apart from the Grandfather clock ticking lazily. I sighed. I pulled my boots off my feet wearily and massaged my cold pink toes back to life. I went across to the window and looked out. Outside the trees were still wavering in the wind, but I could not hear the creaking. I folded my arms and felt very snug being inside, and out of the howling wind. The moon drew my eyes towards it and I gazed at its stillness. The cool moon stood calmly, as if asleep, and unaware of my stare. The grey clouds crept stealthily up to the moon and covered it with a thick woolly blanket. I shivered. I walked to the fireplace and stacked up the wood and lit the fire.

I switched on the kettle in the kitchen. My cat slowly lifted her eyelids so that she could just squint at me with her green eyes. She stretched out a long paw sleepily and closed her eyes again. I went and sat in a cosy armchair by the fire, which was now ablaze with a warming orange glow. My breathing slowed down and my eyelids grew heavy with the thoughts rushing through my brain. I tried to keep myself awake, but in vain. With a final sigh I surrendered and fell soundly asleep . . .

There was a full moon that night. The wind crashed into the trees, which rocked back and forth, shaking their creaking branches. I pulled my billowing jacket back hard over my shoulders as the wind was trying to take it off. I swept my hair back off my face with one hand and pushed the key in the lock with the other. I turned the round brass handle and the wind flung the door open, dragging me stumbling in behind it.

I pulled my boots off and went to look outside the window. My eyes watched the trees and the sky. It seemed very dark outside apart from the streetlamps. The moon; where was the moon? There was no moon. How strange! I comforted myself by thinking that it had been covered by the clouds. I went into the kitchen and switched the kettle on. My cat slowly lifted her eyelids so that she could squint at me with her yellow eyes. I returned to the sitting room and sat in the cosy armchair by the fire. I was just dropping off to sleep when a noise upstairs awoke me.

I climbed the stairs in anticipation, wondering who or what was up there. Taking a deep breath, I gritted my teeth and entered the main bedroom. Two men were arguing and they did not seem to notice me at the doorway. One of them reached behind him and slowly pulled out a black gun. Everything was happening in slow motion. I charged forwards, unaware of any danger, but not in time. The man's hand was clenched hard around the gun, his chin shaking, his eyes burning with hate. He pulled the

trigger three times; each time the other man jolted. Bang! Bang! Bang!

. . . the clock landed heavily on the floor and I woke up with a jump. My hands were gripped firmly on the arms of the chair and I was covered in sweat. My chin and my hands were shaking. I was terrified. I sat back into the chair and convinced myself that it had been a nightmare. Taking a deep breath to control my panting, I switched the television on and listened to the news.

"Twenty years ago, exactly, Mr. Neil Robertson was murdered brutally. He was shot three times in the chest. His wife found the body, in the bedroom of their newly-bought house . . ."

Anne Tissier, VS

THE SWIMMING RACE

Welcoming me is the crisp pool,
Its stillness like the darkest hour,
And its clearness as the clearest crystal.

I regard the reflections of faces eagerly awaiting,
As I approach the pool's side like a new born fawn.

Suddenly a slow silence ushers the spectators,
A shrill sounds and I find myself gliding,
Beneath the warmth of the water.

My ears surface,
But no sound is heard as the volume reaches
a point of no recognition.

Soon each painful, powerful, stroke,
Reaches my destiny and the cruel bite
Of cold air awakens my lost sense,
To the sound of congratulations.

Diala Salman, IIIU

CARING

Somebody cares a lot for you,
Whenever you go, whatever you do.
Cares if you're troubled, or ill or sad.
Somebody love your voice, your smile
The touch of your hand that makes life worth while

And some day perhaps as the years roll on
You'll look behind over the road we've gone.
Then you'll discover by and by
The someone caring so much was I.

A birthday filled with memories sweet
And thoughts of happy days to be,
The best of your fortune at your feet
In fact a really perfect day.
And now before my wish is done
I trust that on your future way
No clouds will ever hide the sun.

Carla Williams, IPV

STORMY WEATHER

I was sitting in my bed with my little teddy when the rain's pittering and pattering got louder. Then all at once there was a great flash of lightning and a drum roll of thunder. Poor old teddy and I were getting rather scared.

The rain was like a snare drum but much, much louder. The flashes and the crashes seemed as if they would never stop. I could hear the trees swishing and the wind howling through them.

The rain was beating at my window asking to come in. I got out of bed and went to my window. I drew back my curtains, but no-one was there, so I went back to bed.

Poor old teddy and I thought that only we could hear the whistling wind, the crashing thunder and the drumming rain and that only we could see the bright whiteness of the lightning. But no, we went downstairs into the kitchen and there we found the rest of our whole family eating biscuits and drinking hot cocoa; so we sat down to join them until gradually the storm faded away into the night.

Jenny Mathews, li

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON

Cauldron, cauldron heat the water,
Brew me broth like ye oughta.
Habble, babble witches' rabble,
Take thirteen letters from a game of scrabble.
Twelve fleshy tongues from stray dogs,
Eleven long legs of slimy frogs.
Ten succulent black crows' gizzards,
Nine heads cut from scaly lizards;
And eight snowflakes from December's blizzards.
Stir it once,
Stir it twice,
Add seven full-grown white mice;
And six juicy, running head lice.
Five jumping fleas from a mangy cat,
Four claws torn from a vampire bat.
Stir to the left,
Stir to the right,
Cauldron, cauldron brew me broth with all your might,
Add three old, rusty horse-shoe nails,
And two little girls' plaited pig-tails.
Make it tasty, make it hot;
Or else I'll smelt you,
You rotten old pot.

Shannon O'Neill, IH

THERE WAS A FULL MOON THAT NIGHT

There was a full moon that night. This was not an advantage to the raiding team. Their weapons were fitted with advanced night-sights and the sub-machine guns loaded using the "hand follows hand" principle, enabling them to be reloaded in complete darkness

if necessary. It did, however, increase the risk of their being detected by the terrorists.

The SAS raiding team approached the farm from the back. Their aim was to seize the explosives and capture the six members of the IRA, preferably without having to kill anyone. SAS operations are usually carried out by groups of four and operation Lincoln Imp was no exception. Chris Jones, who was leading the assault, asked himself for the eleventh time that night why on earth he had joined the SAS in the first place; there had to be a better way of spending a Thursday night than attacking a farmhouse in the middle of Lincolnshire.

When they were all in position, still undetected by the terrorists, they prepared their "flash bangs", a type of stun grenade. At a given moment windows were smashed on both sides of the house and flash-bangs hurled through, quickly followed by those who had thrown them. The terrorists, taken completely by surprise, and unable to react for several seconds owing to the effects of the flash-bangs, surrendered to the SAS.

It was a moment before anyone realized that they had captured only five men. Before they had time to wonder where the other was, a burst of automatic fire came from the doorway. Jones returned fire.

Everything was quiet. Five terrorists had been apprehended and two SAS men wounded. Jones, going through the pockets of the dead terrorist, found a picture of two children, the same age as his own. He got up and walked out; there had to be a better way of spending a Thursday night.

Entering his office on Monday morning, the Commander of 22 Regiment SAS found a letter from one of his Majors requesting "discharge as of right."

Three days later, in the evening, a man was sitting in "The Bull" having a quiet drink.

Chris Jones, formerly Major Jones, 22 Regiment, was trying to forget the events of the week before.

Emmeline Smith, VT

DESTRUCTION

Shortly before sunrise, I rose as always, went to the window and looked out over the courtyard where I saw my master by the well in the centre. Then, as I turned away, I heard him call my name. I ran to him, in the courtyard. He told me to fetch some water from the well to drink; and then to come and sit by him. I obeyed, and on coming back, I realised that he was beckoning to me to sit beside him, which was a great honour. I sat by him and watched him drink. After this he seemed refreshed, and I asked why he sent for me. He told me that his mistress was disturbed because of the trembling of the earth; and she wished to go to the market to buy birds and fowl for a sacrifice to the

gods. Her told me I was to go with her and escort her to the market.

I went willingly with my mistress to the market place where we bought some fowls of the air. She was still restless and she told me herself that it was the trembling ground that worried her. When we returned she made the sacrifice and became less restless and at peace with the gods.

The next day, the trembling of the earth was greater. My mistress made three sacrifices to the gods, and spent the day in the place of the shrine. I took beverages to the shrine myself to offer them to the gods, and hoped for a change. The hours of darkness seemed short; and when I woke, the sky was blue and everything was peaceful. I went to the cellars, to find an amphora of wine for my master to drink with his food. On my way back I noticed my mistress was no longer tense, as I saw her going to the shrine to give thanks. She called to me, and I went to her. We made the sacrifice together and she told me that I must take a message to her sister in Knossos, concerning my young master's name day; for which she was holding a party. She made sure that I realised that I would have to stay the dark hours at her sister's house.

It took me many hours of the sun to reach Knossos, and when I got there I ached all over, and was very glad of refreshment. I gave the message to a young slave boy, and went straight to the slaves' quarters where I talked and joked with the slaves, especially a young boy called Creon who told some good jokes.

Next day when I awoke, I set off immediately to the magazines to get some of the best Knossos wine for my master. I then bid farewell to the people of the house and started across the mountains back to Amnisos. The wine was heavy, and I was not going as fast as I could have been. This tired me, so I sat down on the jagged rocks. I must have fallen asleep for a while, for I was woken by a loud rumbling sound.

Suddenly, the sky exploded, it went black and rocks began to fall from the heavens. I felt them on my skin, burning. I fell to the ground, ash falling all around and felt my way along the path before me, with increasing pain at every step. I must have crawled into a cave for rocks ceased to hit me though the pain had not gone away. I must have fallen into a deep slumber, for the next thing I knew I could see out of the shelter. The burning had ceased to fall, and the ash, through still falling, did not come in such great quantity. I managed to pull myself out of the cave in a daze, and began to walk back to Knossos. It was not far, but when I got there I found it difficult to recognize. The House of Labrys was deserted; only wet rocks to show that a city had ever existed. I walked through the ruins, tears running down my cheeks, and tried to understand. Why was the Bull god angry? What had we done?

Everything was wet; nothing stirred. I sat down on a piece of rock and wept bitterly. I thought of my mistress's sister who had given me such a warm welcome—dead. What was I to do? I decided that I must find her house, perhaps try to find a memorial of the dead inhabitants.

I pulled the rubble from the path and began to walk again. I passed through streets, familiar yet unfamiliar and made my way towards the house. I put the wine that I was still carrying into a wedge between the rocks and walked on what was left of the house that she had lived in. I began to feel very tense and alone in this quiet place and I sat down on a piece of ashlar fallen from the wall. I could hear my heart beating and my feet were throbbing. I felt as though I was being watched and I was confused. I looked for signs of life but I could see no movement. Rising, I started back the way I had come. All I wanted to do now was to go back to Amnisos, I had seen enough.

When I arrived I saw the destruction before me and prayed to the gods to end my life. There was nothing left for me. The house where I had lived and worked for so long was in ruins; my master and mistress dead. I pulled the rubble away from beneath the lintel and pushed my way through the old courtyard. I went and sat where the old pool used to be and looked despairingly around. I then saw the remains of the shrine. I walked slowly over and earnestly prayed to the gods for advice. I stayed until the dark hours but inspiration did not come. It seemed the gods were angry and did not want to help. I arose leaving the amphora of wine by the shrine and walked out into the courtyard. I felt sick and my head was spinning. I could see visions of my master and mistress. What was happening to me? I lay down on the ground and went to sleep. When I awoke I realised what I must do. Standing slowly I looked from Amnisos towards the mountains and the unknown.

Joanna Terry, IILK

A DESERTED BEACH

As the crab scuttles across the beach, the waves crash into the shore. The beach is deserted except for the wildlife, and the sea splashes onto the shoreline. The sun beats onto the white golden sand. With a cry the birds swoop down towards the sea, looking for stranded fish or fish swimming near the surface.

A deserted boat, with a hole in the bottom, lies half submerged by sand. A lobsterpot lies discarded in the boat. The wood looks rotten and worn by sea and wind, and the paint is cracked by the sun. A starfish clings to the side of the boat, patiently waiting for the sea to take it to the ocean floor.

The waves are sea-horses and as they gallop towards the shore a lazy crab scuttles out of their way. The crab's shell reflects the sun's rays. The wave returns but this time the crab is out of harm's way.



H.R.H. in the Senior Reference Library

Evening Argus Photo

The rocks are near the worn steps winding their way upwards towards the uncrowded streets of the village. The rocks are black and dangerous, looking out towards the sea. The rock's crevices have small puddles of water and tiny fish swim in shoals.

As the rough grass sways in the wind, on the sand dunes, the birds fly down to rest after hunting for fish. The wary, green lizard moves in the grass as a fly moves past it. It races towards the fly and shoots out its tongue and gobbles its victim.

The sun still burns but it slowly sinks down towards the horizon. The waves are still beating the shore but now sound like a distant rhythm of drums.

As the sun sinks into the sea and slowly disappears from sight, the moon rises. The last sounds of the birds die down into a slight murmur every now and then.

As it is too dark to see anything I leave the deserted beach and head towards my deserted villa.

Madeline Farr, IIG

THE DAY WE WENT TO LONDON

The outing started as it should,
All was well, calm and good.
Even though the rain was falling,
There were smiles and joyful calling,
People laughing, having fun,
Didn't know what was to come.
Then we heard the danger warning,
The ending of a peaceful morning,
Listening to our walkmans playing,
Hearing what the news was saying,
"Trees have fallen blocking roads,
Lorries fallen dropping loads."
Very tired, it's getting dark,
Suddenly the driver parks,
At last a toilet has been found,
We all descend and reach the ground,
Then off we go, sprinting fast,
No one wanting to be last.
We're in the coach, it's nearly eight,
That means we are three hours late!
It's very cold and very dark,
Then again the driver parks,
And out we get at half past eight,
Where anxious friends and parents wait.

Victoria Robinson, IIIF

THE SPIDER

What is this thing I see in the bath?
It's back is black, and his head is too,
He has eight little legs,
They move so fast,
Oh, please little creature get out of my bath.

It crawls up the side,
and onto the rail, it's coming towards me,
Oh, please go away.

I scream and shout but it keeps on coming,
I don't like this creature,
Please someone remove it!

I try to hit him, but he runs away,
Back into my bath,
I want him to go,
But he just seems to stay!

I have an idea, I will drown him instead,
I turn on the tap and away he goes,
Turning and swirling away from me.

He is gone, but I miss him,
I killed him for nothing,
So, the next time I see one, I'll leave him alone!

Alexandra Woodhead, IVP

THE GREEN DIARY

It happened a long time ago, just after World War Two. I was only eleven, but I remember it as clear as crystal. It all began when we went to Edinburgh on holiday.

"Come on dear, hurry up," mum chirped. "We haven't got all day. You know how Aunt Jean likes people to be punctual." It was late afternoon and the sun was as hot as ever, so the last thing I wanted to do was spend two hours in the car. "Oh mum, do I have to come? Can't I stay here with Lucy, the maid?"

"Certainly not. Now come on." Soon mum got me in the car, and somehow we made it to Black Bird's Mansion.

I remember mum telling me a story of how the house had belonged to my great-grandmother, who was a brilliant maths teacher with sparkling green eyes, like mine, and how she had died in a fire on the west side of the house.

After that I got bored. I tried doing some maths homework but I couldn't keep my mind on it, so I put it in my blazer pocket—I was terrible at maths.

When we finally got there, I saw a lady standing on the front porch, in a blue cotton dress, with white daisies on it. Then she walked up to my mum and gave her a hug. "Why, Mary! It's been so long since I saw

you last. Do come in," and she took my mother's arm and practically dragged her in!

Before I went into the house, I went around the back, to the garden, and looked around. Near an apple tree I saw a stone sticking out. On it was written:

"Here lies our dearly beloved

R. S. Stemp

Who died in a fire, 1935-1976"

I looked at it for a while. Then I could have sworn I saw the stone move to one side—as if someone was trying to get out, but then I heard mum calling me so I ran back to the house, and soon forgot about it.

Mum and Aunt Jean were talking in the study so I went upstairs to unpack my things. As I opened my suitcase I suddenly saw my maths book on the table; then I felt a hot glow around me. It was strange for I was sure I left the book in my blazer pocket.

Later on, when I had finished unpacking, I decided to do some maths homework. I was half way down a sum when I felt that same hot glow I had felt earlier. I turned around and there stood a tall lady with long red hair and green eyes.

She reminded me of someone, but I couldn't quite finger point it. "Are you having trouble with your maths?" she asked.

"Well . . . yes . . . sort of."

"Well, let me help you out. Oh! I can see what you've done. You have put that number in the wrong place," and soon we were talking away and I completely forgot about the time. Then I heard my mother's footsteps. "Oh no!" I said, "I should be in bed. Wait a minute," and I went to get mum.

"Mum, mum, look I've made a new friend. Her name's . . . er . . . I didn't ask . . . oh well come and have a look anyway. She's really nice. She's helping me with my homework."

"But, dear, there's no-one else in the house except Aunt Jean, you and me." But I didn't hear as I was running down the hall. Mum caught up soon and we went in, but there was no-one there except a warm glow. "But she was here a minute ago."

"Dear, I think the tiredness is catching up with you. I've already told you there is no-one else in the house."

"But, mum, she was here a minute ago, I promise."

"No more buts. Come on, get into bed."

The next morning wasn't so nice. There was fog and mist covering the sky like a woolly blanket, and very soon I got bored, so I decided to do some home work again. After a while I felt a hot glow and the same lady with green eyes appeared. But this time she looked older which was strange since it was only a day since I saw her last time. During the time I stayed with my Aunt the green eyed lady came over and over again, getting older every time. Then one night she didn't come and that next day I had a high fever. But about 8.00 p.m. she came over with something in her hand.

"Hello, I've missed you. Sorry I didn't come yesterday, but I was looking for something." Then she gave me the thing that was in her hand. It was a green leather diary. It was beautiful and on the front in gold letters were the initials R. S. Stemp.

"Thank you," I said, but all she did was look at me with sadness in her eyes and walk out of the room. Suddenly I felt cold and burst out crying, so loudly that my mum came running up. "What's the matter?" Then she saw what was in my hands. "Where did you get that from?"

"She gave it to me," I whispered.

"Who dear . . . who?" I just stared at her and cried. Aunt Jean came up. "What's going . . ." Then she saw the diary in my hand. "Where did you get that from? We've been looking for that for years—ever since grandma died. Who gave it to you? Did you find it?"

"She did, the green-eyed lady."

"You mean the one that helped you with maths?"

"Yes, that's right. She came every night to help me. She had long copper hair but the ends were black and frizzled. Why?"

"But people said it was burnt with the house and grandma. Only she would have the diary . . . no-one else could . . ."

Karen Altabev, IIG

THE DAY I WENT TO LONDON

The day I went to London,
Is etched upon my mind,
The ravages of nature
with powerful force untwined.

Six hours it took to journey home
At slow and painful pace,
The storm had left its calling card
At each and every place.

We sang to keep our spirits up,
Me, Amy, Jo and Kate,
Our parents would be worried as
The hour was getting late.

The driver did his very best to keep
The coach from swaying,
But to our relief time passed,
With Capital Radio playing.

At last the sign post "Brighton"
Appeared out of the gloom.
The day we went to London
Was over none too soon.

Rachel Pratt, IIIF

AT ONE WITH MY HORSE

I mount my horse in great excitement,
His velvet coat resting against my legs.
A clicking of my tongue, then we are off.
I hear the sound of his hoofs against the ground.
They move in rhythm and take me into a trance.
All else seems dead.
A great peacefulness comes over me, I am at
peace with the world.
A passing car breaks my train of thought.
Now I am not alone.

Up a steep wooded hill I rise.
The intense greenness is almost unreal.
My horse tires, I dismount.
He begins to eat so I explore.
The wood is dark. The trees with their many branches
Seem to reach for me.
A fear comes over me.
A bird's singing seems to turn into a warning,
So I take my horse and descend the hill.
I feel safe upon his back.

Now nearing home again.
A sudden disappointment hits me,
But a warm fire beckons my cold toes.
My horse seems pleased at a warm stable.
I now feel satisfied with my day.

Josie Gander, IIU

VICE VERSA

The horse snorted noisily as it gradually came back to a walk. The gallop had been exhilarating but tiring, and as his rider dismounted to walk him home, the horse felt pleased to be on the homeward stretch. Melissa, however, was not so happy. She cursed under her breath and kicked at stones in her path.

"Stupid animal," she kept saying. "Why didn't you jump it? We could have won." With this she gave Triassic a hard tug on the bit. Triassic tried hard to interpret the meaning of this pain, but in the end he just decided he must be going too slow—so he trotted. This warranted a slap, "Don't! I'm trying to cool you down, you idiot!" and he sighed. The horse was pleased to arrive back at the stables—he knew his mistress in this mood by now.

Penny unlocked the door of the flat, with her key round her neck. She put the shopping on the table and began to unload it. Her mother would be home soon, and she laid the table in readiness. Then she went upstairs and flopped down on the bed with her magazine. It was nice to have the flat to herself for a while, and she began sketching the horse posters around her room. Just then she heard a click of the door and her mother came in.

"Penny?" she called. "Oh, there you are! Come down dear, and let's have some tea." They sat for a while, eating the cake a friend had made and talking about each other's day. "The office was in a real mess today—Sandra went haywire with the filing and Sue's off to Belgium tomorrow."

"I got an A for that prep about dolphins, Mummy," put in Penny.

"Well done—it was too hard for me!" and they both laughed.

Melissa swallowed the last of her supper and sat for a while as the butler cleared away the plates.

"I'm going to another show tomorrow, Crawford," she said. "Be sure to ask Charles to groom Triassic and Quatermass for tomorrow will you?"

"Very good ma'am."

Just then Melissa's uncle came in. "Ready to go? The carriage is waiting outside. This must be your first game of bridge!"

"Wrong—I played with the Whitsmiths that time we all went to Glenforth's Castle—remember?" she said airily.

Mr. Worth secretly thought how rude his niece was, but as she was an heiress he had to be agreeable.

"Silly me. No matter—let's go," and they processed from the huge marble dining room to the cold stone passages that lay ahead.

That night Penny's light was on till twelve. Her eyes grew heavy and her limbs tired, but she still was too absorbed in her work to notice. A picture of a fine arab with flowing mane and tail was emerging from the tip of her pencil. It was not the first and presently it joined the pile of countless other horses in many different positions. Satisfied that she had had a productive evening, Penny leant forward and turned out the bedside lamp with a contented sigh and, settling down deep into the covers, she began to dream of the day she would own a horse of her own.

"They're ready ma'am . . . I've done their tails real nice," said Chester.

"Good," replied his young mistress shortly from the depths of her sheets.

"I've polished their hooves 'til they gleam," added the ever-patient, long-suffering servant. "Come down when you're ready."

"I'll do that anyway. Now get lost and leave me in peace!" was the reply. Melissa was not feeling brilliant this morning. She had got to bed at past midnight and was beginning to feel it. As she passed the servants all lined up in attendance, they gave her a respectful bow. She glided past and into the breakfast room. Her Uncle Wilfred sat waiting for her with a pile of mail in his place, and he dutifully began to open each one.

"Oh, look! It's a letter from the records office—I thought we'd sorted out your adoption . . ." His face changed as he read the letter. It went from rosy red

to sickly green to a pallid white. Melissa watched with interest, then with foreboding.

"What is it?" she whispered.

"My dear—you are not . . . an heiress after all. The people were wrong—when my second cousin was dying he gave me a portrait of you . . . I mean of the real girl. You looked so similar, and having a mother of the same name—well—who wouldn't agree? I'm sorry Melissa—you can't stay here any more. I must seek out the true heiress now."

Melissa came down to earth like a cup being smashed. So she wasn't the "Lady Melissa" she thought she was; she didn't have the right to walk over people any more; she was just the plain Melissa Worth again. Her ego fell down a 3,000 foot crevice as slowly she realised the significance of the letter.

"Apparently it's someone called Penny West . . ."

"It was a cold night, but Penny was warm in her quilted bed.

"Oh really Chester! Don't fuss so—I'm not the Queen you know!" she said as her supper arrived and her pillows were shaken about. Penny was enjoying her new life at the Manor—her mother had now come to live there too, and had dropped her boring job. "I'm so happy here Chester," Penny sighed. "I've quite fallen in love with Triassic . . ."

On that same cold evening Melissa sat alone at the orphanage. She thought of her life the week before—and the same now. She thought of dear Triassic; dear, sweet, patient Triassic who now had a rider he could love . . . As she thought of all the wasted chances she had had, a tear slowly rolled down her cheek. It was not the first or last. Her only heartening thought was that maybe someone would come to the orphanage and choose her. She could start anew without all those superficial graces. And, one day, somebody did.

Susannah Hildyard, IIIU

SWIMMING

Waiting nervously at the edge of the pool.
Will the whistle ever blow?
Almost as hope is given up,
It blows; there is a second of apprehension
Then everybody dives.
I dive too, and the water
Surges up to meet me—
Splash! I'm under, it's peaceful,
Away from the screaming, shouting crowds,
I'm up again and swimming to win or lose.

Katrina Maddock, IIIU



Drawing by RACHEL MASTERS, VT

SITTING HERE

I sit at my window clammy with fear,
Someone might see me sitting here,
You see I'm disabled, unable to walk,
I also find it hard to talk.

But I have my friends,
All with problems alike,
We go on our outings,
We even have fights.

We have specially built wheelchairs
that go at a pace.
Please when you see me,
Don't turn your face.

You see I feel, I can be hurt,
I'm not someone who likes being treated
like dirt,
I can hate, I can even love,
I can say romantic things like
You are my turtle dove.

I try not to care what people say,
But they still hurt me anyway,
That's why I'm sitting here,
Afraid that the people outside will
stare and jeer.

Augustine Flint-Hartle, IVY

WEATHER

Inside our snug, warm house, I heard the wind raging and howling around me. I went to the window and watched the rain beating against it and I saw trees bent under the force of the wind. Then one, like an elastic band pulled too far back, snapped. Its leaves flew off in their millions.

Suddenly lightning cut the sky in half, sending eerie shadows about the room. I shuddered, cold shivers going down my spine. I looked out over the sea. The angry, grey waves rose up and smashed against the shoreline, sending up white froths of spray into the air. The dismal grey countryside lit up as another flash of lightning tore the sky and the branches of a gigantic tree swayed threateningly in the darkness. I trembled slightly. Black clouds hung over soggy wet fields and the thundering wind blew the leaves that lay sodden on the ground.

I jumped as a roll of thunder was released. Then the world was silent for a few seconds. Another flash of lightning and once again heavy drops of rain fell from the sky, slowly at first, then faster and faster till everything was once more soaked in the downpour. The wind started to roar like a lion in pain or anger and my heart skipped a beat as a sinister shadow came into view.

Along the coast I could see jagged rocks jutting out dangerously and a little boat ploughing towards them. I watched in horror as the boat, bouncing on the waves, got nearer and nearer until . . . CRUNCH! The boat hit the rocks and like a tin opener to tins, the rocks pierced the side of the boat until it sank out of view. I could hear the sirens of coastguards, police and ambulance as they arrived in boats and cars, battling against the storm. Thankfully the crew were rescued and I breathed a sigh of relief as they were lifted into a waiting ambulance.

As the rain poured steadily down I heard another roll of thunder followed by a flash of lightning. Suddenly a tree shuddered and with a loud splintering sound it crashed to the ground.

Marie York, IH

TO DRY THE TEARS

The swimming pool has become empty of noisy holiday-makers. I stand on the side of the swimming pool which is situated on top of a large block of flats, looking down at the small Japanese children with their yellow caps and huge, bulky rucksacks, running into the building of a small school, happily chatting to their friends. If I screw my eyes up tightly, I can see them seated in their desks. In my mind, I am peering into a classroom with my mother, seeing the children of eight or nine cramming their little childish black heads into huge, advanced volumes of Geography or Maths. Their pens are scribbling onto paper in extremely difficult Japanese characters, guided by chubby hands.

The sun is shining down, causing the undulating waves to sparkle in the pool. I splash my tanned legs in the coolness of the water. A gentle, warm breeze brushes through my hair. The lapping of the blue waves lulls me to sleep. In my mind, I wish I could trap the elusive feeling of contentment and peace, but the everlasting thought of joining the school hauls me into the world of tension.

I whistfully gaze at the small building of the school, overtowered by the block of flats where I live with my family. I can imagine the children standing in the school playground, all in a line, with the headmaster in the front of them, exercising to the sound of music. This is what every school in Japan would now be doing. How I longed for the day on which I would be part of one of the lines of children happily stretching their muscles with all the strength they had to please the headmaster!

Now, as I eat my lunch, I can visualise, at the school, four or five children running off to the kitchen and coming back, puffing with exhaustion, tugging a rather large trolley over to the side of the classroom, laden with food. The children quickly change into white aprons and hats and serve out soup and cutlets of fish

to the ravenous children, who are standing in an orderly fashion with their trays and chopsticks, awaiting with eagerness their simple yet satisfying, healthy and delicious meal.

I have such a strong feeling of anticipation and anxiety inside me. I am now dressed in the best clothes my wardrobe can offer, and my hand is safely tucked into the warm comforting hand of my mother. Yet, however much I try to hide it, there is something in me which is trying to escape. As I near the school, a sudden chill travels up my spine, but my determination to enter the school succeeds in suppressing the thought of turning back home.

The man in the office gets up from his chair. His hair is thin on top and he has a few teeth missing, but his skin is a healthy colour. Although he isn't very tall, he has solid shoulders and arms and is dressed in a rather scruffy black three-piece suit.

I have a moment's uneasiness, but somehow, I feel as if I will get along well with this headmaster. As he talks to my mother, I get the chance to look around the room with interest. There are cups and trophies balanced on a high shelf. Squinting, I try to read the words inscribed on each trophy, but my eyes fail to accomplish this. I then cast my eyes onto huge piles of paper strewn across a mahogany desk. A pen balances itself on top of this jumble of commotion. I then notice that on each page are written calculations. Small ticks accompany each sum. I then realise that this man must also be a teacher of mathematics. I visualize the thought of some of those pages with my writing written across them, my calculations, my name written across each page, and lastly the headmaster marking each page with the pen that lies across the top of the pile, now.

The Headmaster suddenly orders me to join the other children outside at play. I gingerly step outside the room, nervously looking around me. A sudden fear grips me as I notice a group of children playing in the corridor. I run past them, into the open air, to vanquish the feeling, and bump into a small group of girls about my age. Smiling, nervously, I ask them if I can join them in their play. Agreeing, immediately, they talk to me, asking about myself. Soon, the tension and fear which I had experienced before I joined this little group has completely disappeared. Curious faces crowd around me. Soon, everyone is asking me questions. I answer them, laughing, and join in the games they are playing.

A bell rings in the distance. Children happily run from the outside, beckoning me to join them at work. I shake my head, unhappily, realising that I may not have been accepted into the school. A tear gently swims down my cheek. Wiping it away, angrily, I leave the deserted playground and head towards the Headmaster's office with hope and fear.

Monday has come, at last! Strapping a huge rucksack crammed with books to my back and a yellow hat to my head, I run down the stairs of the block of flats and into the open with joy. Students run to me; everyone is so cheerful and happy. I skip up the steps of the school, glancing up at the swimming pool I used to spend my time in. I remember the days there, when I gazed down at the school with hopeful wishes that I might, one day, be part of it. And now I am! I am filled with gratification and the determination to do well.

Hana Grisdale, IVY

"MAULED AND RIPPED APART"

Fox-hunting . . . what does it make you think of? When someone says that to me, I think of a sleek fox, racing across the countryside with fear in its eyes, its heart pounding and determination. Then behind it is a pack of bloodthirsty hounds, worked up into a mad frenzy, and barking wildly. Again, behind them come the huntsmen, the red coats contrasted against the green countryside. They shout joyfully and the master blows his horn, letting loose a screeching sound!

The fox is fit and knows the country well. He hasn't eaten for two days and his energy level is low. Soon his pace drops but he is still determined because he knows his home is just beyond the next copse. Relieved, he turns the corner, only to find that his home has been barred. Horror-struck, he is frozen to the spot. He can hear the hounds catching up on him. He regains his senses and races off. Now he has lost all hope, he runs on but he has no determination, his eyes are now dull and he feels weak with hunger.

At last the hounds catch up on him and his body is mauled and ripped apart . . . The huntsmen go home triumphant, and what makes me most angry is that they don't even have a guilty conscience, for killing a beautiful, innocent animal. The fox has feeling too. We can't imagine what pain he endured as the hounds attacked him. Perhaps he had cubs to feed and look after; they're too young to fend for themselves so they too die of starvation.

Fox-hunting is despicable. It is one of the most inhumane ways of killing an animal. From previous evidence, it has been proved that foxes will do anything for freedom. They don't harm anything which isn't in the course of nature.

Many farmers argue that foxes steal chickens and lambs, etc. Again, after postmortems it has been proved that foxes usually take animals which have already died. So in some ways they are doing the farmer a favour by getting rid of corpses. If they are being condemned for obtaining food like this for

themselves and their families to survive, then we humans are hypocrites. We are saying that a fox, (which perhaps has not eaten for several days) is criminal and sentenced to death for killing another animal for its family to survive. Whereas it is socially accepted for a human (who has plenty of alternative foods) to kill an animal for the sake of it.

Fox-hunting is called a sport. I very much disagree with this statement. If one believes that, then he also believes that murder, badger-bating, cock-fights, bull-fighting and war are sports. The whole point of sport is that the opponents have equal advantage and it is a contest of skill. Fox-hunting is the opposite of this.

Why can't we leave nature to run its course? Why do we have to interfere? Given half the chance, foxes can keep their population down. Why don't we at least give the fox a chance before we start to judge it?

Alexandra Kellett, IIIF

PARACETAMOL

There's such a call for Aspirin,
Anadin and Disprin pills.
Over-reacting parents take them
When up to their necks in bills.

"Oh dear I've got a headache,
I am so deeply stressed.
The baby's bawling in its cot,
This migraine's such a pest!"

Said the child, "You are so stupid!
Did no one ever say?
That six or seven Paracetamols
Could wipe your life away!

Other than poisoning your liver,
There are many more facts to know.
What about how they are made?
All right, well here we go!

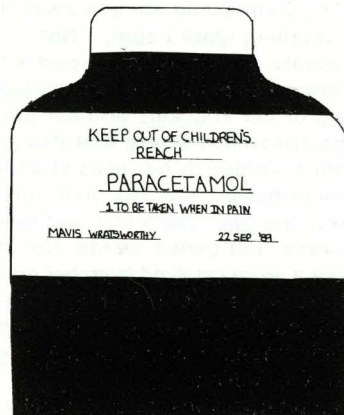
Firstly the Paracetamol crystals,
and the gelatin binder is sprayed,
Now there are med'cine filled granules.
And an outer shell of binder is made.

When these granules are compressed,
This binder acts as a glue.
Now you've a pain-freeing tablet,
To be sucked or swallowed but not chewed.

What happens when inside your stomach?
How's the med'cine set free?
Well as you know the tablet is strong,
And this strenth must be overcome,
so you see . . .

Before compression cellulose is added,
Which sucks moisture in through its wall.
Then the starch expands in the tablet
Causing the structure to fall.

Now, Mother dear, you've heard
The life and times of these pills.
The structure, composition and even more
You know it's dangerous and kills."



Ziggy Kennell, IIU

OLD WOMAN

Bend low old woman
And see your fate.
Lower and lower till you break.
If you reach the floor
Amongst the cream teas
Spilled over a pretty plate,
You will see your children
Running at your feet.
"Are you still here?" You hear them cry,
"We thought you had long gone."
My hands are not mine own,
But of another.
A stranger to me.

Run by old woman
Until you see yourself, as you were before.
Now a stranger to your eyes.
A pretty maid stares blankly, at your face,
All pale and smooth of grace.
Have you not met her in your path?

Sleep now old woman,
Rest at last.
What was that flash before your eyes?
A dream, a thought,
All forgotten.
Life at last.

Alexandra Reynolds, IVY

FAITHFUL FRIENDS

"Well?"

She looked imploringly at me with deep blue eyes. Her pretty, freckled face was filled with undisguised hope. I looked to where her hand lightly rested on my arm. I wanted to throw off that hand and relieve myself of its warm pressure. I wanted to throw her off!

"Will you . . . ?" she continued, her tone beseeching. I saw the desperation in her eyes.

Abruptly, I wrenched my arm away from her touch. With a scathing glare I spat, "No!"

Awkwardly, we stood facing each other as we had done many times before. Yet, little details like the slight withering of her knuckles and her protective stance made me constantly aware that this is different. The tears that brimmed in her eyes started to douse my fiery wall of hatred, but this time I prevailed. Far too often over the past years she had beguiled me with a wide smile and gentle words. Not this time.

Without a word I stalked from her presence, ignoring my own tears that were threatening to spill down my cheeks in scalding streams. Inside, I replaced the pain with acidic anger. It was the only disguise I had for my lacerated feelings.

Cold air bit my exposed face, a chilly contrast to the churning emotions I felt inside. The coming winter seemed an omen of our dead friendship—a friendship that had lasted for ten years. As I rushed back to the warm haven of my room, I wrapped myself in melancholy thoughts. They were mainly of her, but none was regretful, only that I trusted her in the first place.

For days, I brooded over the matter that I had vowed to forget. My anger was an irrational rage which clung to me like lichen to an old stone wall. Time seemed meaningless as I repeatedly thought of something I could say. There was nothing and nobody to talk to. I could only talk to her among my friends and she was no more.

She often came to me, in hope of a renewed friendship. There was nothing to do but to stand and listen helplessly before turning my back and walking away. Stubbornness allied with the horrific memories of that day to prevent me from forgiving her. The numerous counsels on forgiving and forgetting only caused a torrent of resentfulness to course through me.

Months stumbled past like a desolate trail of emptiness. She abandoned her effort to talk to me, but never pointedly ignored me. There was only a look of resignation. I felt it too.

It never occurred to me actually to confront my pain, only to hide it underneath hardening layers of anger. She had always told me to face the cause of my trouble. How could I face her?

Time passed . . .

I saw her today. Five years had gone and she still looked unchanged. Amid the bustle of Saturday morning pedestrian traffic, she stood confidently with brown hair flung over one shoulder. Her form was straightened in a familiar stance as she idly searched amid the crowds of shoppers. I felt an instinctive surge of pride for her rush through my deteriorating defences. Instead of rallying to suppress it, I stared intensely at her while an old war of conflicting sentiments raged inside me. A small voice continually echoed "Let it rest". Long-established hatred was difficult to dispel, but I knew it was time.

Cautiously I opened my mouth to call her. No sound emitted from my throat. I had not spoken of her name since that day. I did not need to. Her head slowly turned towards me and our gazes locked for a moment. Despite the distances, I could see her eyes were void with fear of rejection.

Spontaneously, a small smile crept across my face. She saw it appear and responded with a clear laugh of relief and happiness. It sounded to me like fresh water gurgling down a mountain stream. Her lips framed my name but my eyes warned her. No! Wait.

She froze into a Grecian statue. Briefly, she paused as if unsure. Then she reluctantly gave a nod of resignation.

As one, we moved off in separate directions. I did not look back. I did not dare to, for if I had, I would not be able to stand losing her again.

Memories of us standing together crowded my mind as I returned home. Nights of fervently whispered dreams and secrets, summer days licking half-melted ice-creams at the beach . . .

I remembered her as I flicked through an old address book. She was at the same university as me—the one we vowed to go to five years earlier. I wondered if she had ever told anyone what happened. Then, I banished the thought. She would never do that to me. Silently I thanked her for it.

With a rueful smile, I thought about phoning her. Wait awhile, the voice warned me. I crumpled the slip of paper in my hand and tossed it into the bin.

Kaythi Yin, VS

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD ON PAGE 32

ACROSS: 1. Fidelitas, 2. Iunctio, 3. Quirinal, 4. Recta, 5. Pietas, 6. Mensa, 7. Rarum, 8. Cena, 9. Pompa, 10. Mare, 11. Secundae, 12. Tiber, 13. Ludus, 14. Styx, 15. Lectus, 16. Funeris.

DOWN: 1. Fortitudo, 17. Esquiline, 18. Amica, 19. Tunica, 20. Matron, 21. Horae, 22. Hades, 23. Litterator, 24. Seneca, 25. Mulsum, 26. Paedagogos, 27. Viminal, 28. Rhetoric, 29. Dext, 30. Lemuria, 31. Funus.