

When an Angel Comes to Visit



Austin W. Torney

When an Angel Comes to Visit

Associative memory is a precious storyteller of those times which once were, those which ever and yet become what we are. A park bench at Christmas reminded me of this tale of once upon a magical time...

Living in Oak Park, I was yet within the parish of St. Bernadine Catholic Grammar School in Forest Park, Illinois, across from the Atomic Fireball Factory.

I had been incarcerated here since the early to mid 50's. As the interminable hours wore on, I wrote the germs of some of the stories of today, to pass the time away. The clock on the wall hardly ever swept onward the time, but for when I wrote, the rest of the time it even seeming to run backwards. The school library was geared towards the lower grades, and so I always had some books from the town library. I usually sat in the back row so that none (nun) would not know what I was doing.



It was in the winter of '61, when I was in eighth grade. The school had two floors each of eight classrooms, two for each of the eight grades. It was large, but the church across the way was even larger, with the rectory and the convent added on behind.

The disastrous seventh grade experiment of separating the boys from the girls was over; however, the constitution of the mixed classes now were not quite the same as they'd been before.

What had the hand of fate newly brought before me in the form of Karen? Whenever she got up and spoke, I always put down my pen. *Thank God, finally someone normal, but exciting,* I thought.

An atomic fireball somehow rolled across the floor, and I caught her eye. Her vision glimmered and twinkled, giving me an eye for an eye.

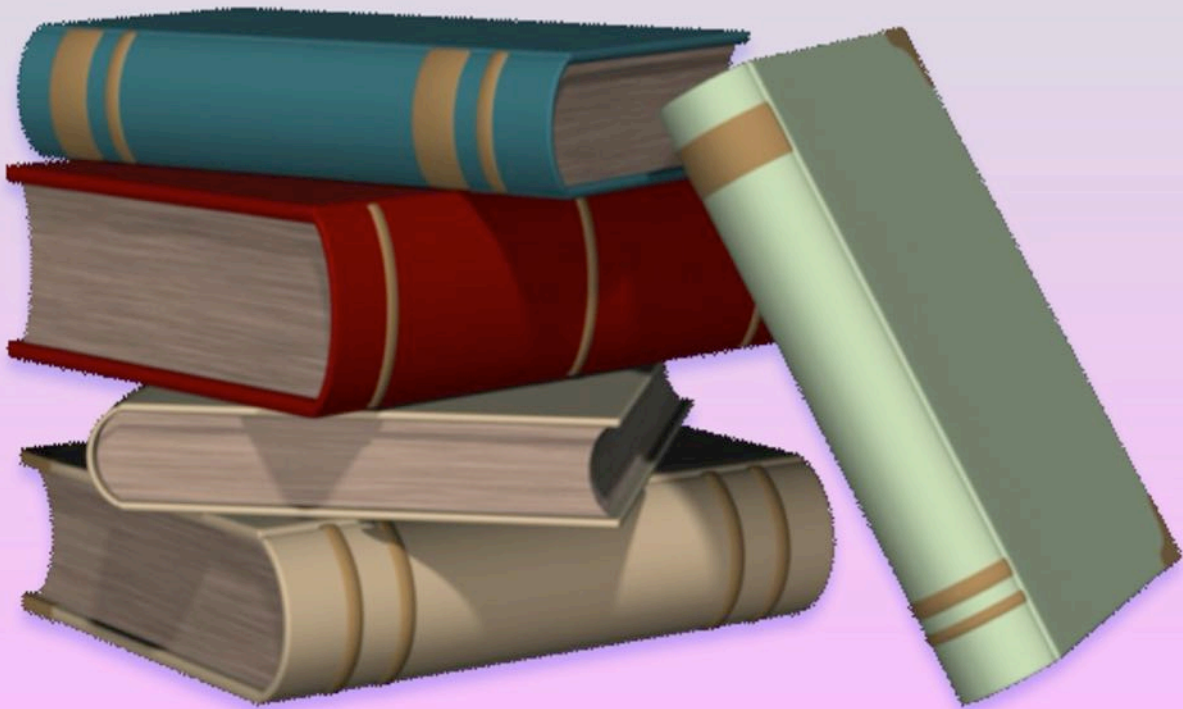
A while later, Frank Santoro, a reject sent back here once again from another school, was carrying a big stack of books across the room toward a shelf, when he pretended to slip or trip, and this sent the books flying in all directions.



The Good Old Days

Of course there were laughs galore, and he was really a funny guy, but in a few days he was gone. So it went, but there are too many of these tales to tell.

My seat was in the back of the room so I could study other things and also so I could sneak out the back door every now and again. Upon return, some kid would signal me back in when the nun was facing the blackboard.



School Daze



In the basement of the school there was a lunchroom and also an all purpose room, having a stage and basketball hoops, kind of an auditorium combined with a gym. On the weekend, and especially after church, it became a roller rink. I happened to be putting my skates on next to Karen and we said “hi” to each other. She had asked me to skate with her several times the week before, during the “Ladies Choice” and such we had whirled the floor hand in hand to the music.

She now showed me that there were nail or screw heads sticking up on the inside of her skates, a constant problem with these ancient rolling shoes. I went to the counter and got her another pair that were smooth. She smiled and put them on, and went out onto the floor as I finished securing the laces of my own finely selected pair from the 1800’s.

These were the times when cupid’s darts stuck into hearts, and sometimes they even stayed there, although many kids “went out” for but a week and then to nothing much soon returned. Lady Karen chose my hand once again and we glided and rolled, ever awatch of the four pillars, while our eyes met to look within, for it was too noisy to talk.



On Monday I moved my coat to a hook near hers, taking my sweet time, until she arrived. I asked for her hand and shook it, keeping it there while I put my other hand over hers, she doing the same with the one she had left. *This girl was alive.*

Of some things that I wrote were notes to be handed on to the receiving one, through and across the rows, this one recounting our rolling songs with which our feet and hearts had gone along.

She read it, and turned back and looked, her desk being up and across, near the front. She scotch taped a note in reply, so none could read it, echoing the joy of two as one in the new rink of life.

Her name was next on the list for cleaning the erasers, and so after she went, I was soon out the back door. If they noticed my empty seat, then maybe it was that I had to pee, but down the stairs I went, and on through the bottom floor, and out on to the front stoop of the three stone steps, at the entrance to the school. There she was, somewhere within the clouds of chalk dust and the snowflakes, banging the erasers on the stone.

Getting It Together

When once I was, my presence full beheld
Spirit, body, heart, and mind all in meld.
More than just the parts, I became the whole,
A human being living life unparalleled.



The dust cleared, and she emerged as an angel, like one sprung up from the snow. I chanced a hug out there in the cold air, and she kept it snug, hinting “you must be cold with no coat on.”



She then whispered, although no one was around “I liked what you wrote today. Also what you said in class about love, for I knew it was about me.”

“What dream brings you forth to me?”

“As you can see, I am reality.”

A boy waved me back to my seat, more than enough time having been spent outside. I remember it clearly, for I had held her dearly.

A snowball crashed against the slanted window, as Frank Santoro was probably mad, but somewhat glad from being thrown out of school. The showers gave us a a cheery feeling, even later dripping off the ceiling. *Human nature was a funny thing, I thought, it being so predictable. If only we knew what demons haunted the soul, but otherwise, it's such a surprise not knowing.*

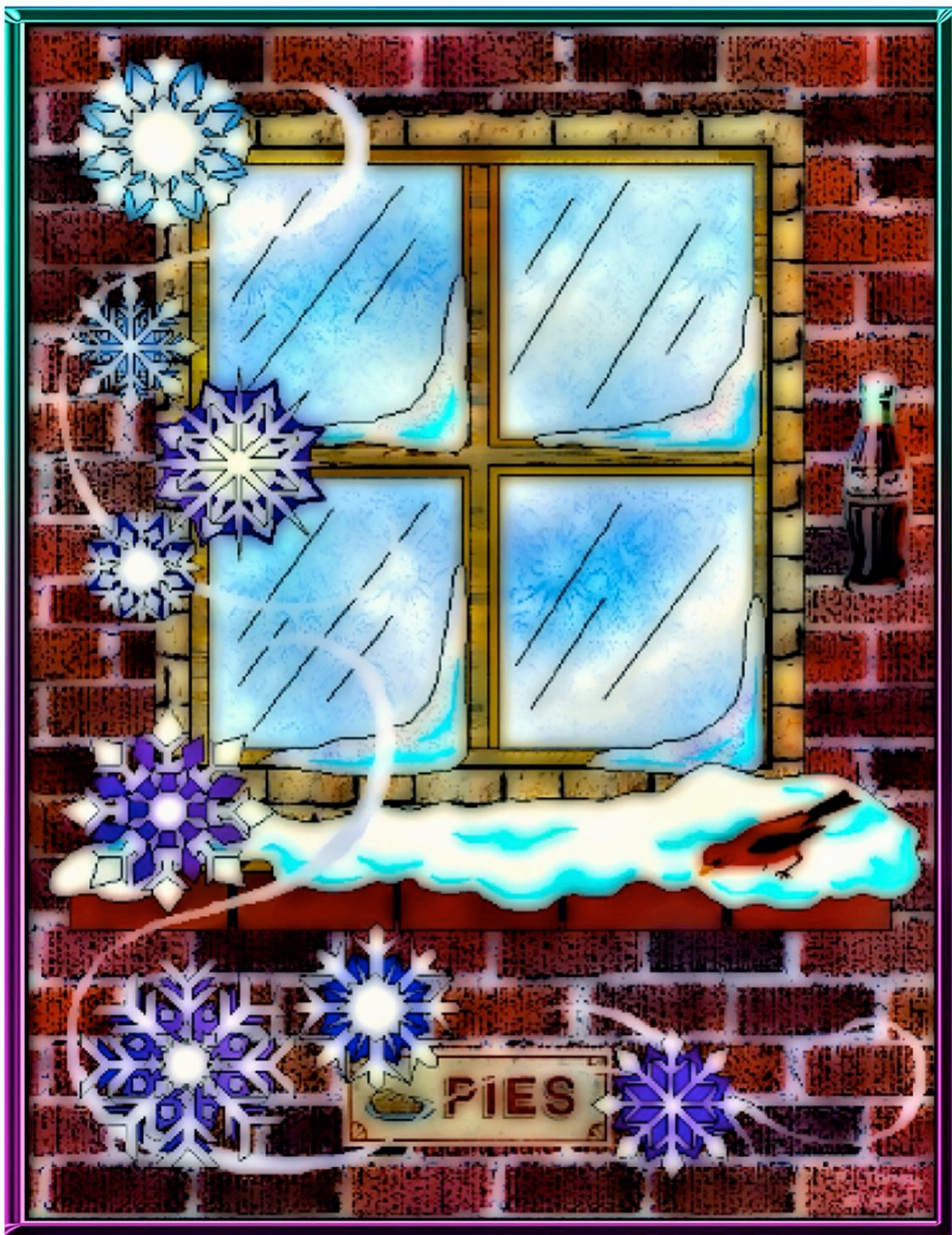
William Fox played his violin for the class, and it wasn't bad, as I thought *that this life was the best I ever had.* Emil Hunt showed his rock collection.

The class soon went Christmas caroling around the town one night, and there she was, singing next to me. We all crowded together from the cold, some closer than others.

We sang God's tunes under the moon of the Yule. Then the winter break, and many people went away, on vacation, she, too, and then as we return to class, it really became 1961.

Though apart, our love had grown, and we dared to hug a "welcome back" within the coatroom, after all had left. She'd traded seats with someone and was now but a row away, and so the notes flew better this way. I heard the stories of Christmas past, and knew that we'd last.

Frank Santoro was back; he was really an OK guy, with a lot of fun in him, but that didn't sit well with the Catholic clergy. When the nun was out of the classroom for a while, which for some reason was often enough, I found my self sitting at her desk, telling some jokes, Frank soon arriving and sitting upon the edge of it. We carried on about school and everything, even the theory of... and it was just one of those spur of the moment things that worked. I wish I could remember the by-play of the stories and skits...



I do remember that a few days later Frank took out some curtains or something and wrapped them around himself, along with a funny hat, and pretended to be the Monsignor, sitting in a chair upfront and handing out report cards, as he was due to do, ever and always hardly even looking at them, and telling everyone, even Frank, about how well they were doing, which of course had the last time brought on a lot of snickers.





Well, the Monsignor walked in right then and good old Frank was never seen or heard from again. Unlike Frank, at least I knew the limits and so I'd managed to remain on the good side of sin's non-evil twin: fun.

In our geography book, someone found a half-inch figure of a naked woman within a picture of the Amazon Jungle and its tribes, and so soon everyone was on the same page. We did not have geography for awhile, but then it resumed again with a blacked-out section on that picture. But still, many could not help smile when we read about hills and valleys thereabouts.

There were no art classes given, nor any formal physical education (just the playground, plus outdoor baseball or indoor basketball).

Tom Jameson, an excellent student, had stayed home from school for months, not even his mother knowing why, and ended up being run over by a train a few years later. One of our priests had just married our sixth grade nun, whom I had had at that time, they having run off together then. The Old Monsignor went to Heaven and was not replaced.

I went out into the hall for a yet another stroll one afternoon, meeting Karen out there. Then it just happened somehow, our first kiss, right next to a statue of the Virgin Mary. Did Our Lady smile at us for just a second?

Winter still held its icy grip, but I began walking Karen home, sometimes with Jim Fitzgerald and Mary Fabrini, the only other couple of note, and so the fun became multiplied. Karen's mother eyed me at times from the dim front window, through the closed curtains. I'd already known that boys were not welcome there and so I could never go in. Parting was sorrow, but that only made the minutes more precious; however, there was always roller and ice skating. From then on, we parted a few houses away from her home.

After the bell ending the lunch recess had been rung, we'd always end up next to Jim and Mary in a little nook of an indentation next to the convent, and so here we would bend the rules and then hurry in as the end of the line began to disappear. In school we learned history, math, religion, and English, but little science or biology, so these we had to remedy on our own.

Warm weather had arrived, on some days, and when Jim and Mary would duck behind a tree on the way home, Karen would lift her eyebrows, and so the time for hugs and kisses was often made, forty-seven years ago, in the shade of a large oak tree.

Spring had now fully sprung, and I'd told Karen about Maple Park, just across the border in Oak Park, where we boys and a few girls sometimes played touch football after school. In the next section of the park there was a park bench out to the side of right field, secluded by the leaves and branches overhanging from the maple trees. It has probably been the same for a hundred years. What stories it could tell if it could talk. It was where I'd warmed up my pitching arm for evening baseball games. My life was much freer than Karen's. Here we passed some longer and longer times of warming up after school, she supposedly rehearsing for a play when it was not even the day for it. Spring fever piled upon us, Mother Nature giving us her blessing.



That no one really knew to what lengths our relationship had gone in mind, body, heart and soul only made it all the more special and wonderful. Well, some kids knew, but they didn't KNOW. If only her mother had known that she'd crossed a busy street to get here... Well, we honor our parents, but sometimes we must humor them.

The baseball team was not of the school, but of kids from around the neighborhood. There was lanky Pat Hickey at first base, using a special glove, quick Bobby Walsh at second, rangy Lanny Neilsen at shortstop, staunch Norm Neilsen at third, chunky Tim Anderson catching, and two of our three pitchers in the outfield, like Jeff Anderson and me, plus two other alternates, including sometimes the crippled Billy Caraher who who would catch the ball with with his good arm and then take the glove off and throw the ball with that same arm.

I was playing center-field one evening, we just having enough players that day, as I noted, upon seeing our empty dugout when we were out in the field. Jeff was pitching a good game.



There's not always a lot to do in center field, although I loved it out there, for it required a wide range, and I was a runner who had a knack for getting to the ball and catching it, for, when we were just in the park any old time, Pat Hickey would hit ball after ball for me and his brother, Dennis, to catch. While pitching a game was all action, center field was a meditative retreat. All this, of course, was back in the days when baseball was actually a game, as Ken Burns has noted.

I saw that a girl had come to sit on our dug-out bench. Who was it that could be both so bold and wonderful? You know who. Just about then, a screaming line drive suddenly came bouncing into center field, but it was right at me. I picked it up and unleashed a throw to home on the fly.

It sailed right on into the backstop, for this is how pitching-outfielders in love throw. It took a lucky bounce right back to the catcher and they caught someone in a run-down, putting him out.

"What kind of throw was that?" asked Tim the catcher afterwards.

"She throws me," I said, pointing to Karen.

“Well, it worked out even better. The guy thought he could make it home.”

I headed toward the dugout, looking at Karen. “What are you doing out on a school night?” I wondered aloud as I got there.

“My mother had to go to my aunt’s.”

“And here you are.”

“In the flesh.”

After the game, we walked two blocks to one of the first McDonalds, for our first “date”. Dusk began to fall and she crept back home in the silent dark.

Was she really here? I asked myself.

Recess was outdoors now, the school boys playing sixteen-inch softball across the street from the church in a big parking lot. Baseball gloves were not needed for this size ball. Sometimes freight trains would go by, making a lot of noise. There was also the building of a large expressway that would pass thirty feet below the main roads. It took a large swath out of the neighborhoods over there and was a very large project, three hundred feet wide. Some girls led by you-know-who came to watch us play and it was to be an eventual awakening for some of the guys.

These were the wonder years, when the lilacs of love had bloomed for the first time, and so one is never the same again. The years yet come and go, but these first flowers remain ever fresh as a daisy in the hallowed corridors of the mind's memory.

*Love's first emotion rose from the Lilac,
For it blooms when Nature is first aroused;
It is love's youngest dream to us come back,
Where it will ne'er again remain unspoused.*

Karen could not usually escape on weekends, she not only not allowed, but ever needing to care for the younger siblings, all seven of them, and so these were a long two days filled with more baseball and playing poker and all that boys do, like sleeping out in tents and lighting firecrackers.

School plodded on, but for her love and friendship, all of us crusaders for Christ ever dutiful although rather restless as June began. It was just too nice out to be stuck in school. What would the summer bring? Without school, recess, the after school rendezvous, and Karen's other infrequent escapes, where would that leave us?



It occurred to me that we need not go to school on some days. Back then, the school didn't call your house when you were out.

*Oh for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.*
(John Greenleaf Whittier)

Everyone had been playing with yo-yo's, day in and day out for a few months, for that was the craze. There was a contest every few weeks in the school basement. We did "walk the dog", "rock the cradle", hundred of "loops the loops" and more.

The neighbor kid, Jimmy Nelson, had a tree house that I had often been in. He smoked some cigarettes up there and within a few years the willow tree and the tree house would go up in flames.

Karen called me up just before her bedtime, as usual, and we made a somewhat risky plan for the next day.



After breakfast, I went out the back door, as always, but stopped in my tent and grabbed some sleeping bags, and then climbed up into the tree house next door. I lazed around a while in the haze of a day that was not all that rare in June, (the honeyed moon having just risen the night before), waiting for my sweetheart to appear. I smoked some cigarettes that had been lying about, noting the curved roof that had once been some kind of beach umbrella. It was all very much like a pipe dream. She, the ever adventurous one, would manage to get here while there were still some schoolgoers on the streets, and so no one would be the wiser. Then in here we would stay all of the day.

My heart leapt as I saw the ladder jiggle and heard the footfalls rising. Halfway up, she whispered my name, which was my middle name "Patrick" in those days, for there were already two "Austin's" in my household when I was born. The tree itself shielded her climb in case Mrs. Nelson was looking.



As you can imagine, the soft airs waved the curtains and the balm breezed and breathed over and upon us as we kissed and snuggled and told love stories through that long afternoon in June. A few days later we were back up there.

The last week of grammar school was soon upon us and then the last day was at hand. I had been on patrol-boy duty all week, the street near the school, guiding the little ones across this last street to the church and school. I wore the white belt that also went diagonally across the chest and over the shoulder.





There were no school buses for Catholic schools, and there are still none even now, so everyone had to walk to school, even if it was ten degrees below zero. The school bell rang to start the day as the last batch of latecomers waited to cross. Then I would roll up the patrol belt in a certain way and secure it with a rubber band into a small tidy package.

A truck suddenly veered into another lane on the busier street of this corner and caused a lady's car to come off the road, heading straight toward us. I spread out my hands, as if that would protect the little ones and stop the car. A telephone pole stopped the car. Fortunately she wasn't going very fast, but there were no seat belts in those days, and so she must have bumped her head, as it was bleeding, she half sliding out of the car when the door burst open. I told the kids to wait and I went over to care for her, situating her back into the seat and tilting it back so she could relax until the ambulance came. I was a bit late to school, as I had to tell the police the story of what had happened.

St. Bernardine
Grammar School



At school, although a party had begun, the faces were somewhat sad and somber at the prospect of the end of the eight years there. Plus, the Oak Parkers would go on to their town's high school and the Forest Parkers to theirs, many making sure that the schools were the public types instead of the Catholic ones.

I was caught up in the scene and didn't mention the accident. Karen had been selected to give a speech, and it went over so well that very many tears came to my eyes. We didn't say a whole lot during the walk home, but we didn't have to, for we were joined at all points.

I went on vacation for a week with my family to a lake in Wisconsin and sent her a letter. We got back in time for an important baseball game the next Saturday at an away field. I pitched that day, and it went well enough, except for taking a line-drive in the shin. Jeff pitched the last two innings and sewed up the game that would advance us forward.

During the final inning, a dented car drove up, the one that had encountered the telephone pole. Karen and her mother walked toward the diamond.



What the Hell! I'm in trouble now, I thought. There was but a bandage where the blood had been and Karen's mother gave me an unexpected hug.

"Are you the one who truly loves my daughter?" she asked with a smile.

"I am he."

"It wasn't the accident, per say", she offered, "that brought me here, although it did knock some sense into me, but my daughter's eloquence all along persuading me of you."

"She's like that in school, too."

"She is a child beyond her times, but still a child like you."

"We grow together."

"That you have accomplished, and I... I have just been... too Catholic."

Karen interjected, "You were just looking out for me, mom."

"Anyway," her mother said, "Patrick, can you join us for dinner tonight? I need to get to know you. Karen says Shakespeare lives in your school desk, as well as many other books that you find time to read in school."

"Love is an ever-fixed mark."



“I agree. You will always show kindness to her?”

“I can do no other.”

“I like that, Patrick. You didn’t just say “yes, ma’am” or some standard phrase.”

Whew, I thought. This mom is sharp.

“How’s your injury?” I inquired.

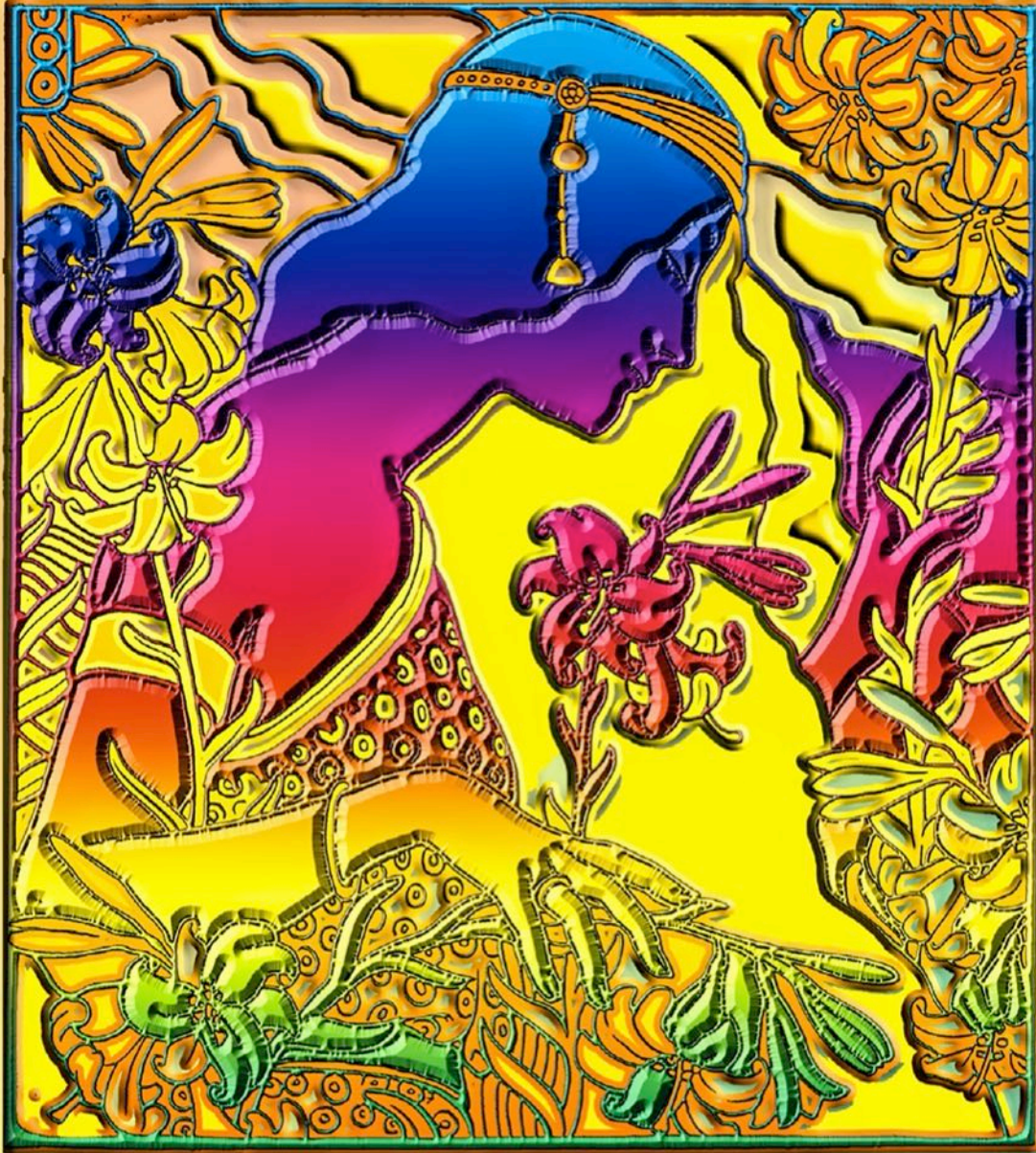
“I’ll be fine, but I have to admit that I was spying on you.”

Karen couldn’t resist, “God sent you crashing into a pole so you could meet Patrick.”

“He works in crazy ways,” her mother replied, purposely altering the quote.

Dinner went well, the little kids even knowing me as a patrol boy, and so we could now go out on real dates, at least as well as we could, walking to the movies or to the gigantic circular swimming pool in Forest Park and sharing a green river soda afterwards. And ever to the bench back we went as well.

The summer of love flew by and we entered our separate high schools, but whatever social lives we had in there were of no concern, for:



— The Beauty of Truth —

Life's hardships can be softened by beauty,
Its weaknesses can be strengthened by truth.
When roses blossom, like realizations,
Beauty itself blooms from the well of truth.

*Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.*

—from a Shakespeare love sonnet

A few months later, the world crashed when Karen's father's company transferred him and the family to California...

...nothing much mattered for a while. I was at the edge of doom...

...but her letters soon perked me up. She had plans to return next year and live with her aunt in Oak Park. The letters stopped around Christmas, and then this last one came from her mother:

*Heaven has recalled our angel;
She died in her sleep;
The doctor said that her heart was too large.
She lives within you now—*



*As an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height
be taken.*

*Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and
cheeks*

Within his bending sickle's compass come.

I had now gone well beyond the edge of
doom, but, strangely enough, there was beauty
there:

*As sadness brooded over the morrow,
I visited the deep well of sorrow.
There enshrined, inseparate, Beauty said,
"It's from me that sadness you borrow."*





When Seasons Pass

She grows a clutch of
blossoms to propose,

His zephyr blows
nature's page to disclose:

Spring, departing,
caresses the summer...

From their only kiss
blooms the lovely rose.





A Taste Of Memory



Austin D. Torney

Austin P. Torney, now 66, grew up in Illinois. He attended St. Bernadine's Catholic Grammar School for eight years, reaching the end of his mercilessly indoctrinated religious faith sometime in fifth grade.

In first grade, which was partly in the Ascension Catholic school, he didn't know quite what to make of the nun in her costume, calling her Mother Monkey, but he did happen to glimpse a girl's leg when she sat down much too quickly, but then promptly forgot about sexual inclinations until 6th grade, when he fell in love with his nun, Sister Theophilia. It was not that he was afraid to be impure for all these years; he just wasn't ready, having been born in December. However, a deep yearning arose for Theophilia, but, alas, she and Father Kramer soon quit the Church and ran off together. Austin was shocked, not even realizing that he'd had a chance with her. If he'd known, he would have surely walked her home from school or asked her out. Theo was replaced by a lay teacher, Mrs. MacShane, whom he'd had in 4th grade, the most fun teacher ever.

Unfortunately, she now rewarded the communion-goers with popsicles, and was reprimanded and eventually sent packing.

Austin, playing a lot of baseball, had forgotten about the female sex once again, for, in seventh grade, the boys were separated from the girls. Midway through, though, he reached puberty, catching up to the rest of the boys. So, then, it was that when a girl was rarely seen, the boys would go all the more wild. Austin made sure that he attended a public high school, even though the nuns had become rather scarce by now.

Austin began writing for real around the age of forty, a respite from working as an Information Engineer in the field of Computer Science, doing programming, an art, as it turned out. He calls himself a humanist, or a nontheist, when necessary, and is one who enjoys the liberal arts, but ever utilizes science, for it pervades every discipline. This unification of the arts and science is referred to as the Third Culture.

Austin recalls his religious years thusly...

A Taste of Memory

Upon arriving at St. Bernadine's Catholic grammar school each day, I would always stop at Bill and Betty's little store, which was just across the street, and buy two honey dipped donuts to eat in the classroom after mass; this was a privilege for those saintly students who had fasted and received Holy Communion. For me, as a 6th grade boy, it was the ultimate treat, considering that the staying-in-one-room school day provided little other diversion until lunchtime.

Oh, how delicious those donuts tasted to a growing boy who had starved since dinner the night before, fasting all night and then sitting through a seemingly never-ending mass during which special prayers were said for nearly everyone's grandparents and sick relatives. But, it was well worth the wait, for breakfast never tasted better than it did for us, the famished holy of holies.

Imagine, eating right there in school during class, without even having to sneak in the bites, such as one had to do with candy snacks later in the day during hunger attacks. And out there, cooling, on the window sill, in all its glory, was our free chocolate milk, there only for the deserving, the healthful drink that washed down the honeyed donut. All in all it was a morning feast truly fitting for us young Christian warriors.

To get milk, one needed only to have the foresight to sign up the day before, and, of course, to sit through a Latin mass, most of which time was spent either in looking over all the minute details of the person just ahead or in nudging someone's shoe or lunch box along the floor until it had quite disappeared. Of course, to kill even more time, one could pretend to climb the wall buttresses barehanded and to maneuver among the ceiling arches, sliding down the lamp wires and such—until rudely bumped back into reality by the nun sitting behind, the nun with eagle eyes that could detect the slightest lack of attention.

Or one also could look and see which of the girls had forgotten their veils by the sorry napkin and handkerchief assortment draped upon their heads. Yes, a mass was a long and difficult time to suffer through, especially the endless periods of kneeling, but it was the tasty dreams of milk and honey donuts that carried me through, and now and then I'd catch a whiff from my donut bag of the breakfast, which everyone knew meant breaking-the-fast.

I also had, from Bill and Betty's store, some of those penny candy sheets, the long narrow ones with about thirty rows of three dots of candy across—the kind of candy that you could never seem to cleanly remove, and so you always had to ingest some of the paper lining as well.

And, too, some brand new packages of the latest baseball card series. I would slowly and secretly open them later in class, at some boring moment, which came often, and hope against hope for a Mickey Mantle card, which everyone knew appeared but rarely.

Me, I was a real collector, using my own allowance to buy the cards, not like some other kids whose mothers gave them enough money to buy an entire box of baseball card packs.

Yes, all this, plus more could be had from Bill and Betty's store. It almost made going to school worthwhile. Bill and Betty were both quite old, and I can see now, looking back, why they were often crabby and impatient with all the little angels and near saints who would crowd into the store each morning to lay their pennies on the counter. But, to me then, it was a kind of rare freedom to roam the store.

Old Bill never said or heard very much, wearing a hearing aid and often pretending that he was deaf, but old Betty—she would always ask us what we were doing in the back of the store and yell at us to stop loitering and to either buy something or go to school. Looking longingly at the popsicles, I would move on, always remembering the time when they cost only four cents instead of five, still upset at the price increase that broke my budget.

Once there was a time when our teacher would bribe us each with a free popsicle just for going to communion, but the principal soon put a stop to that, after seeing the entire sixth grade class dining on popsicles day after day, probably reasoning that holiness was not something that could be bought. Yes, those were the days of luxury.

Since our new sixth grade teacher was a lay teacher, not a nun, we had many such adventures. I remember, one time, when she marched the entire class over to my house on Sunday morning because I had missed choir and mass—since I had slept in my backyard tent with my friend and had stayed up all night and now needed my sleep. Luckily, we saw them coming and so we went in the back door of the house and right on out the front door, and we never stopped running for blocks, although it was hard to run and laugh at the same time.

Then, one week, while buying my communion breakfast, I noted that old Bill was missing behind the counter, having been replaced there by his young granddaughter, Patricia; so I asked where he might be.

“Sick,” she told me, “very sick.” But, in a week or so, old Bill was back, although he was moving much slower than before, and so I started secretly staring at him. Some months later, a sign was put up in the door, saying that the store would be closed for a week, and within a few days I heard that old Bill had died, and we students, of course, lit numerous votive candles for him in church, obtaining at the same time the pleasure of playing with fire. We prayed for his salvation and were of course very penitent and remorseful for ever having caused him any trouble in his last days. Taking no chances, I, as always, invoked an Act of Contrition so as to wipe clean my slate by gaining a plenary indulgence, which, amazingly, was said to work even for murderers.

After a week without donuts I was a nervous wreck, and often had severe withdrawal pains after mass during breakfast time, but survived somehow on some Hostess cupcakes and some imitation donuts that my mother bought at the supermarket, but these donuts just weren't the same. The store reopened as scheduled, old Betty running it alone.

As I prepared for school that morning, I brought extra money for an special treat—some of those wax bottles that contained, as now I see it, mere colored water, but, then, as I thought as a boy, some sort of elixir of the gods. I bought donuts, too, and I swear, to this day, that there has never been a better donut made, probably because, back then, the neighborhood bakeries made them fresh at 4 AM without preservatives.

Fifty some years have passed between this and then, and through those years my tastes have somehow strayed away from donuts, to more exotic foods, even to fruits and vegetables, and so it was that I had long forgotten about the old school store until just recently, when I found myself at Dunkin' Donuts ordering a freshly baked honey dipped donut. As I bit into one, the taste of my grammar school memories came rushing back, all of them apparently contained right there inside of that donut, and I have so written them down just as they came to me.