

Dear JCAA Reader,

Welcome to this, the second edition of the JCAA Annex. The Annex offers space omember contributions of written and graphic material offered for the interest, amusement, consideration, and education of the membership. The views expressed are solely those of the contributor.

Pumpkinstonebull

By Jerry Peters

Mike and Amy were walking on Dr. Dobson's farm. Dr. Dobson was a veterinarian.

"Do you think it'll take them long?"

"'Bout an hour," Amy replied to Mike. "We ought to have time to find something!"

The two kids were out looking for pumpkins on the large farm the doctor owned. Their dads had sent them to find some.

The dads were loading sections of a split-log fence that zig-zagged between Dr. Dobson's office and the parking lot in front. At the doctor's invitation, they were going to use the fence to decorate for a big harvest dinner their church was having.

"Just stay of out of the horse corral," Mike's dad had said.

"Okay," both had answered, and now, fifteen minutes later, they had started exploring, talking as they walked. They talked especially about Mike's fourth grade friends and Amy's friends and what they liked and

disliked about them, and all kinds of things.

"We got our pumpkins at a pick-your-own apple orchard last year," Amy said.

"So did we," Mike said. "They had all sizes of pumpkins there, too."

Mike began kicking a stone as they walked. They were on a pasture trail that had many bumps and ruts. It went back as far as they could see, next to fenced fields. They knew the pumpkins were on one of these fields.

Stone-kicking here was no easy task. When Mike kicked the stone it hopped and skipped and jumped in a jillion different zany directions before it stopped.

"Watch that stone when I kick it," Mike told Amy.

"Can I try it?" was Amy's reply.

"Sure," Mike answered..

And he let Amy break in on his stone-kicking game. She'd been dying to try. Soon they were walking and not paying much attention to where they were going. Stone-kicking had replaced pumpkin-seeking.

A little bit farther along the trail it was Mike's turn to kick. He was fully warmed up now, trying to really be good at what he did, and very confident. Mike gave the stone a solid, hard kick. They both ambled on and watched it flip, flop, turn and twist. Just at its top speed, the stone struck the flat side of another rock, bigger and unyielding. It ricocheted, and after flying through the air a good distance, came to rest on the other side of a wooden fence. It was in a

grazing area the two had come upon without even noticing.

"I'll get it," Mike said.

Amy responded, "Okay, I'll wait right here." While she had a minute, she glanced around.

As far as she could see some of these fenced in fields gave way to gentle, rolling slopes. Way over in front of a thick woods, opposite the direction of Mike, sheep were grazing.

About this same moment, the dads had finished their work and were relaxing, talking with Dr. Dobson, who had happened on the scene.

"Well, we'd better go over to the farm and get the kids..." Mike's dad, Ed, was saying.

"Where are they over there?" Dr. Dobson quickly asked.

"They're just out behind somewhere, looking for pumpkins," Ed answered.

"Did you tell them not to go near the horse corral?"

"Yes, he did," Jake, Amy's dad, replied. "Why?"

"I don't have any horses there now, but I've got a bull occupying it - came in yesterday. I removed all kinds of barbed wire from his nose and mouth -he ran into a fence chasing something, his owner told me. He's an ornery animal right now."

"Let's go check on them," Ed said to Jake.

"Okay, we'd better," Jake replied.

"I'll show you the way," Dr. Dobson spoke again.

Amy, meanwhile, was breaking out of a trance-like stare at the sheep she had spotted. They hadn't moved since she first saw them.

She turned to see what Mike was doing. She saw him just in the act of picking up the stone. It had flown some distance!

But out of the corner of her eye she saw something else, something Mike must have missed. Not far down the fence from him was a large black-brown bull. Amy had seen a bull before at her grandpa's farm. This bull, watching Mike closely, was restlessly twitching its tail, picking up its hooves, and digging them into the earth.

The bull was going to charge Mike! Amy knew it!

Amy thought, "Maybe I can distract that bull!"

She ran to the fence and went up and over it faster than a deer.

As soon as her feet hit the other side, she yanked off her sweatshirt. The bull was starting to run at Mike!

Amy hurried forward and waved the sweatshirt for all she was worth. Her waving it caught the bull's eye. He miraculously stopped, and now peered directly at Amy! He was only fifteen feet or so from Mike, not twenty-five from Amy. He was huge.

"Mike, get over the fence!" Amy hollered, as loud as she could.

Mike, now very startled, seeing the bull, jumped up, dropped his stone and broke for the fence. He was over it in a leap.

The bull, who had almost frozen in his tracks, now shuffled a bit

as he moved his massive frame to stare at Amy better. He snorted as he studied her.

Then came a voice.

"Drop the shirt and go for the fence, Amy!"

It was Dr. Dobson and the dads. They were in the corral, all three running toward the animal.

Amy followed orders, dropped her sweatshirt, took six quick giant steps and flew over the fence.

Moments afterward, all were standing outside the corral, talking. They shared relief and mused about rocks and bulls.

"Let's go after some of those pumpkins!" Dr. Dobson said to everybody.



The Big Game

By Dianne Gross

The month was November. The day was Friday. It was the end of high school football season and tonight was the big game. Being a senior at Regina High in Harper Woods, an all girls Catholic high school, everyone was up for tonight's game. Notre Dame, the all boys Catholic high school next door had made "All-Catholic". Denby High the Detroit high school in the vicinity had made All-City. They were squaring off at Tiger Stadium for the championship tonight.. Regina was gearing up to root for Notre Dame.

At breakfast, the radio was going on about the news of the day, as always in our kitchen in the morning.

Mother mentioned that the Angelillis were coming for dinner that night. So, I wondered how on earth will I get to the game. As I walked out of the house to the bus stop, I thought, "Oh well, I will talk with the girls to see who is going to go to the game and hitch a ride with one of them." "Wow," I thought, "what if Notre Dame wins the championship".

At school, we had the usual morning prayers and morning classes with complete silence in the halls. If you were caught talking it meant a detention after school. Detention was one hour in silence with your hands folded and nobody got out of it for any reason. Definitely, not something you want the night of the game.

Lunch was great with everyone talking about the game and the usual talk of boyfriends and even a little politics. It will be an election year next year. Sister Symphrose got on the mike and chastised us for the outlandish laughing and talking in the cafeteria, as usual everyday. It was her job to calm us for change of classes. I thought, "Just two more periods to go and it will be TGIF (Thank Goodness It's Friday). I don't need a detention today." Change of class took place as usual.

It was sixth period class, English, with Sister Xavier, a new and popular nun. She also was my art teacher and she was very nice. It was one o'clock, within ten minutes Sister Godwin, the principal, spoke on the Public Address System. She announced that President John F. Kennedy had been shot.

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We stared at each other in horror and dead silence. Sister had us kneel down and say a few prayers. During prayer, I prayed "Lord, please not this." President Kennedy was the first Catholic president and very popular among the girls at Regina. My first thoughts were who shall be president in case of his death. Then my brain screamed, "What are you thinking? Stop! Stop! Maybe he is not seriously injured and will be all right."

Sister called on me to recite. I didn't answer. She said, "Dianne are you all right?" In my mind, I was dreaming all of this, I will wake up and know it was a nightmare. She called again and I recited the lesson. It was happening.

The bell rang for seventh period, the last class of the day, study hall. Change of classes were silent with the look of fear on everyone's face. No one wanted a detention.

At class everyone fell apart expressing fear and anxiety. We wanted desperately to know anything. We heard from a radio on the public address system that a priest had been called to Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas. We assumed that he was getting the last rites of the Catholic faith, but also, were taught that it was not necessarily for person who was dying. The unknown was bordering on chaos. We heard that the priest came out of the hospital and said something. It was inaudible. Sister Godwin came on and said, "I am dismissing school and canceling detention". The bell rang. Everyone was distraught. Every time we thought, it was a nightmare. Those children, his gracious wife, and his close-knit Irish family were innermost in our thoughts. I left for the bus stop still dazed with disbelief. We were always told nothing like this could happen in this day and age with the Secret Service. Something happened and I wanted to know just what did happen. I wanted to get to a TV. The girls at the bus stop said

he was dead, but the disbelief lingered within me. Every time I thought it was a nightmare. If only someone could fix everything.

Getting off the bus, the somber late November cold and barren trees reflected the occasion. At home, I found my mother in front of the TV listening to Walter Cronkite.

I asked, "Is it true?" She said, "Yes, it's true." It started to sink within me, but the disbelief still loomed. I remembered something that I heard on the radio that morning, President Kennedy was going to Dallas to campaign. He and Mrs. Kennedy were going to the LBJ ranch for the weekend. It wasn't fully clicking with me.

Somehow, Mother got dinner ready and the Angelilli family came. Dad came home and said, "Have some decorum. The president is dead." It sunk a little deeper. The talk at dinner was of the Zapruder film and the swearing in of President Johnson. We were all waiting for Air Force One to land at Andrews Air Force base. Many senators and congressmen were waiting there. Condolences were coming from all over the world. Every American was taking it as a deep personal loss.

After dinner we viewed the Zapruder film taken during the motorcade in Dallas at the moment of the assassination. It was sinking deeper. Air Force One had landed. I

Nothing to Write

by Tom Boyer

There's nothing worse than nothing to write
But I'm not giving: I'll put up a fight
I'll sign up some chickens and maybe a rooster
It'll be all new; nothing you're used to

I'll call for auditions at the rear of the cranium
To pump energy, I'll have them speak in Albanian
They'll smolder a bit when I mention their pay
But hey! You can't launch good stuff then give it away

There's mumbling now; I fear losing the lead
Where's my fight? What? I have to concede?
That's outrageous, atrocious, and does me offend
Take your damn letters and call this an End!

called everyone to the black and white TV we had in the basement. We saw the casket coming off the plane. President Johnson told the country, with Lady Bird at his side, "I would give all that I have not to be standing here today." It was everyone's sentiment. The most crushing sight was a blood soaked Jacqueline Kennedy leaving Air Force One. It sunk deep. Our inner most fear had happened.

The big game was cancelled as was everything else that weekend. I never did go to the game or even remember who, eventually, won. I do remember that Friday on November 22, 1963, the night of the big game.

Jackson
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Twenty-three Years

by Fran Parker

There is a tree, an oak, just at the edge of the bluff,
An oak unlike any other.
When I first saw the tree there was a kite line
tangled in its lower western branches.
A tattered remnant of a kite hung there and danced, unresting, in the wind.
This reprise went on for six or seven years or more.
I wanted to free the branches (or the kite)
But I could not reach them - too far out over the edge of the bluff.

There is something else that marks this tree.
It is, in form, grotesque.
The western, southern, northern wind that pushed and pulled it in its youth
had a powerful influence in shaping it,
and there are bulky elbows in unexpected places
creating visual dissonance where grace might have been.

Unrestrained force brought still another change.
One summer, when we were not there,
A sudden storm came raging from the north
And Thor made this living sculpture the object of his scorn.
His charged bolt slashed the main trunk from crotch to earth,
And threw long shards of wood and strips of bark eastward for thirty feet.
The shock waves shook the apple-faced clock from the kitchen wall.

Thinking of years, this tree is not young.
And its eroding location tells me it will not live out a full oak-life.
Its toe-hold in the earth is tenuous at best.
The low rail fence that marks the edge of the eroding bluff
has been moved eastward several times
And the tree is now on the western water side of it,
Separated from others of its kind that live in more stable soil, for a while.
From the beach below, we can see a few exposed private roots.
The tree is not young.
The years pass quickly
The kite and line are gone; mostly forgotten.
The long wound, now bark-grey scar, is visible still. Where it touches the earth
there is a gap and I find acorns and sometimes beach stones there.

Somehow, this oak that I have known so long,
Grotesque in form,
Living on the edge of time and bluff,
Serves as a model or a botanical mentor, maybe,
and tutors me
in perseverance, self-knowledge and acceptance -
in recognizing beauty
In living Here and Now.