Spring 6-6-1984

Perception

Cele Bona
College of DuPage

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First Place Winner

PERCEPTION

By Cele Bona

I rest my fingers on the dusty screen, look out. Grandma chased by a bear, she told me that story. She was little, running under pine trees in the North Woods. She tore her yellow pinafore on thorns and was punished for the tear, sent to the hay mow for supper. My old grandmother who smelled like a rusty pump pinned that story into the hem of my green skirt one October night.

I saw her frightened face, her small feet flying over brown pine needles to her aunt who shook her, told her not to make up stories. Always before, seeing the pins marching between her lips, steely hairs growing on her chin, I thought she was always old.

Second Place Winner

A SHIFT IN TENSE

By David D. Richard

Someday a man on a mission to collect stardust and rainbows shall gaze from beyond the sky at a brilliant blue orb set in the velvet of space, at a country majestic from sea to shining — yet see how easily crushed beneath the close-fisted clouds and think of a small house in a small town poised on the Great Lakes' very fingertip and know the buttons have been pushed and the atoms have screamed their primordial scream and only the hiss of the radio — active remains and realize:

There was no place like home.