

me, it just means Or if you don't want to just say so, say no, I wouldn't mind so much. But don't run from me. You make me feel like a snake."

"I think you're going to be someone special, Ken. Goodnight." A shy smile. "Just one more Goodnight." A touch. "Goodnight."

"Goodnight."

They reached the steps of the dorm. Ken put his hands on his hips. Maybe she wouldn't run.

"Goodnight, Ken."

"Goodnight."

She went up two of the steps then hesitated, turned. "Ken, it was good for awhile."

"Yes. It was very good."

They both turned then. Ken heard her shoes clip up the steps and the large door open and close. He walked then quickly away and didn't slow his pace till he reached the bridge. He stopped for a moment, then walked to where they had been. He put his hands on the railing. There was still a warmth where she had leaned. He moved his hand over the spot of warmth. There was a pebble on the rail and he absently flicked it off. It hit the water and the air carried its second of sound and the sound faded, but something lasted past its sound, some small innuendo in the titillated silence bore witness to a pebble having been dropped in a pool of water.

Hail--and Farewell

by Tija Spitsberg

English, Jr.

THE WIND tossed my hair into my eyes. The breeze felt cool, but what was left of the afternoon sun penetrated into the skin, and made my face feel warm. The lake was still clear. *In another week it'll be crawling with that horrible sea-weed*, I thought.

The crystal blue of the lake darkened further out, deepening to an almost-black at the horizon. Earlier in the afternoon the sun seemed to have left a scattering of diamonds over the surface. Now, it sent a mere column of light into its center. The shade crept over me. I shivered. Everything was quiet. The piers were empty. The laughter, the voices—now piercing, now subdued—gone, leaving the streets empty. No traffic, no squealing tires.

I became conscious of the quiet, and it seemed out of place—it seemed to be prophetic, like the calm before a storm.

A lone figure was outlined against the sky on a nearby pier. Tall, lanky, and familiar. It looked like Nick Meyers. As I got up, the spring cold cut through my sweater, and the wind whipped my hair savagely at my face. I hunched my shoulders, to guard against the biting wind, as I advanced toward him. "Nick!" I shouted, shattering the stillness in the air, and signaling a greeting with my arm.

He stretched, his hand shielding the glare of the sun, and, recognizing me, he yelled back: "Hello, Franny!"

My feet clapped across the white-washed boards as I ran. The wind choked my breathless greeting. "Hi, Nick!"

"Franny, I thought everyone had left; God, it's good to see you, before you leave for the summer."

His warm greeting brought a broad grin to my face.

"It's great seeing you too, Nick . . . I haven't had a chance to tell you . . . I'm not coming back next fall."

His face clouded over in surprise. "Oh . . . how come?"

"Well, they're raising the out-of-state tuition, and I guess I can just as well go to school at home. I'll miss it, though . . . My God, I'll miss it. The lake . . . people . . . everything."

He stood there, his hands resting carelessly at his hips. "Yeah, well look, we'll miss *you*. How in the hell will Janie and I manage the Friday afternoons at the "Rat", huh?"

I smiled but then thought to myself: *No, you won't really miss me. You'll still have the lake, the campus . . . and the "Rat" . . . and someone to take my place.* I realized I would be swallowed by time. I felt I was being passed by. I

couldn't stand the thought of everything, *anything*, going on without me. Realizing how infantile, how egoistic I was being, I tried to snap out of it. *It's really starting to hit me.* But I wasn't accepting it. I was still reacting to everything as if I were coming back. The orange of the sun was blinding my eyes, so that I had to squint to see. "Well, good-bye, Nick. . . . See you. . . . Think I'll go over to the union and take a last look."

The pale-green leaves on the trees were still new. They formed a latticework around the branches, allowing the light which wound through to play its afternoon game of hide-and-seek. I walked on through the quiet. The union terrace looked abandoned. The bright lawn furniture was cluttered with paper cups and coffee mugs. Several tables were clustered together, with more than their share of chairs clustered about. It suggested sudden departure, as if a discussion had been left suspended in mid-air.

I walked into the dimly lit "Rat". The Rathskeller, fashioned after a German tavern, had always suggested something legitimately evil to me. Always dimly lit, it let one never see anything but dark outlines. Sometimes a lone figure, leafing through a book, sometimes a mass of darkness, bent over in discussion. Always there were voices, accompanied by the beating rhythm of the juke-box. The "Rat" was always in motion. People came and went. Some would scan the room and, not spotting anyone they knew, turn around reluctantly to leave. Others, glimpsing a familiar face, would rush into the room signaling a greeting.

Today the "Rat" was static. A girl sat by a corner table, drawing cigarette smoke through her nose. She watched the blue haze curl its way through the air and then disappear into the distance. At another table sat an elderly man, big and robust, dressed in a red blazer, white bermudas, and matching knee-socks. He looked like Santa Claus, out of place.

Without the people, the room seemed smaller. I remembered other Friday afternoons when we had met at the "Rat", exhausted, but pleased that the end of the week had come.

"Hey, Jane, looks like you slept through your three o'clock!"

Jane sank into the chair, slapping a pile of books on the table. "Whew, I'm beat!" She brushed a black lock of hair out of her face and hunted around in her bag. "Maybe a cup of coffee will wake me up." She shoved through the crowd toward the snack-bar. Someone had dropped a dime into the juke-box, and it blared with rhythmic thumping, matching the tempo of the crowd.

Jane moved back through the crowd, avoiding the backs threatening to upset her coffee. "Would I ever give anything to see the "Rat" empty. . . . Just *me* in it. . . . I get so damn irritated at all the noise and the heat from so many people. Franny, grab that chair over there, before someone else gets to it . . . there comes Nick."

I had agreed with Jane at the time, and now I reflected upon the irony of the comment. My plane didn't leave until the next morning, and with everyone gone, I realized that the noise, the confusion, the *people* had drawn us there. There was no point in sticking around. *I don't want to sit around nurturing old memories. I'll have enough to remember once I get home.*

I got up to leave and, without bothering to take in a last glance, hurried out the door. I squinted to adjust to the light. The rhythmic tapping of my sandals seemed to call more attention to the quiet. I walked faster. The light still was too bright. A tall, loose-jointed figure was ambling toward me, still a block away. I began to run. The scenery flew by me in ambiguous globs of green. I couldn't fight down the burning in my eyes, and my view blurred. *I don't want to leave, but dammit, I don't want to cry about it either.* Stubbornly I fought the tears. *I won't think about not coming back; I'll think about packing. Get the trunk out of storage in the basement. . . .*

Then Nick grabbed my arm and spun me around. "Hey, Franny! Cool it. What're yuh out for, the sprints?"

I had to. I slapped him, reaching up at full arm's length, just as hard as I could. He released me and stepped back,

rubbing the point of his jaw. "B-b-but Franny. . . ."

Instead of crying, I laughed—but my eyes still burned. "I'm sorry, Nick. I didn't mean it—but I did. I'm sorry. . . . Please, let me alone? For now?" Thank God he did. He walked off toward the Union, shaking his head.

I began to walk again. *Get the trunk out of storage in the basement, ask the friendly manager of the food store for cardboard boxes. . . .* Gradually the scene came back into focus. *Poor, dear, dense Nick. Eventually he'll understand. Or will he?*

Everything was still and calm. The sun had disappeared; the afternoon began to darken, to darken. I shuddered at the cold, at the dark. If I could have, I would have broken into an abandoned run. But my legs were made of cold granite. *Get the trunk out of storage in the. . . .*

Martins

by Paul Kratoska

English, Jr.

The martins grow restless.
They wheel about the sky,
Gliding, and float
The rising breeze
In silent grace.

Still, the sky is summer's.

The sparrows wait,
Patient in the knowledge
That leaves soon will fall,
The nights will cool,
The sky will turn to autumn,
And the wires will once again
Belong to sparrows.