

The Apple-ritual

by PACIFICO YAP

After the meal they share an apple,
the old grandfather and a little child.
The hour for sleep must wait
Until their ritual is through.

She picks up the fruit, as rosy as her face,
and gives it to him.
His knife removes the peeling in bright ribbons
and divides it into two.

With love he gives her a piece.

He counts 1-2-3.
And they eat happily.

The Wounded

by CORNELIS MALO

A BOY AT THE WINDOW:
his mind wanders somewhere
in a cruel world
that oppresses the soul.

A MOTHER WITH A FARAWAY LOOK:
so bitterly is her heart wounded
by the news that her only son
was killed.

The world is now but a smoky plain
where one by one the wanderers fall,
their blood sucked out by a specter
that is war.

We who stay at home
have no time for pity
for our eyes are always looking out
the window.
"Shall the specter
reach us?"

In this our world, people become smaller
haunted by the untamed specter,
as if life and war were but one.

A boy, a mother
stay at home: both victims of war.

Memory

by AGUSTIN P. MENDOZA

The early Christmas morning Mass was ended
But I remained inside the church on my knees
Remembering one Christmas
When mother and I heard Mass together.

How she used to explain things to me.
How she used to teach me . . .

With misty eyes, I tried to prolong
The poignant recollection of that Christmas long ago
When I was too happy, excited, starry-eyed,
Having all the candies and balloons that Mother gave.

New groups of people came in,
So I decided to leave.

I went out sad, but brave with hope,
As if I heard the voice of mother full of love.

Two Verses for Christmas

by ALFREDO AMORES

I. CHRISTMAS TREE

Oh! that I were a Christmas tree
And you the tinsels and cotton snows
Upon my green boughs.

II. THANKS FOR DECEMBER

Mother thanks you very much
Dear, dear December
For giving me to her.

Obsession

by DOMINADOR ALMIRANTE

A stranger am I
A hermit in a metropolis
With a desire gnawing me,
Which shall stay a desire
Until I unravel life: a labyrinth,
a mystery,
a dance.

Spring Comes

by PAL JOEY

Lately Love was dead in my heart.
The memory of withered flower
brought drought into my world.
I was all alone then,
sighing sighs of grief then,
bewailing my fate when
you came.
Rains come again now.
Flowers bloom afresh now.
All's green anew now.
Spring is nigh.