

the range of writing:

Eight Young Minnesota Writers

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The writing that follows was
selected from the entries of
Minnesota's eight NCTE Achievement
Award winners.

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IMPROMPTU COMMENT ON A SET TOPIC:

A "living" character is not necessarily true to life.

By Timothy G. Carlson
North High School, Minneapolis
Sponsor: Richard Jenks

The context in which the term "living" is used will necessarily, in itself, determine whether or not a character is true to life. In light of this, I must agree with the statement as it stands. The quotation marks about the word "living" allow for variation as to the interpretation of the word and, thus, as to the analysis of a character.

When "living" is defined as merely being alive in a story, or taking on the characteristics of life in the action of a tale, a "living" character may not be true to life at all. Pecos Bill, Paul Bunyan, John Henry and many other characters from folklore, though alive in their tales and adventures, were not always true to life. This type of "living" character is one that is purposely made to be humorous, unbelievable or heroic; and certainly not true to life.

In many of the plays, stories and novels of the authors from the schools of Realism, Local Color Writing, and similar groups displaying the "slice of life" approach to writing, the "living" character is one made to represent a real person and to act in the manner of an actual human being in a particular situation. Steinbeck in Sweet Thursday, Cannery Row, Grapes of Wrath and many of his other books miraculously recreated realistic "living" characters in the sense of making them appear as down-to-earth, believable people (if there is such a thing). The play Death of a Saleman by Arthur Miller sought to emphasise the true-to-life "living" character. The motion pictures industry is turning increasingly to the "realistic character" approach to its

materials.

The line drawn between those characters which are true to life and those which are not, however, is extremely thin. This will always be the case because, though there are the extreme cases either way, which few will argue about, the decision as to whether a character is realistic or is unbelievable lies in the judgement of the person reading the material. Obviously no one sees a literary work in the same manner as someone else and a character too unreal to one may be very down-to-earth to another. The entire process of establishing the validity of "living" characters is really irrelevant in most cases anyway. Many people I know or read about in the newspaper are certainly "living" characters; but true to life? The question which needs an answer to determine the meaning of a "living" character and of "true to life," is "What is life?" Perhaps when that is answered we may all be able to tell whether or not we, ourselves, have been acting realistically "true to life."

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ON NON-VIOLENT PROTEST

By Nancy Freeman
Burnsville High School
Sponsor: William A. Chalmers

Of the many current dilemmas with which we are beset, perhaps the most fashionable is that of communication. Self-styled prophets of doom bemoan our inability to effectively reach one another. Gaps are opening up everywhere -- the generation gap, the credibility gap, the equality gap (in the sexes as well as the race).

Married couples, businessmen, hippies, even total strangers participate in group "happenings" designed to reveal the inner man. Whether that inner man is sufficiently prepared to withstand such psychological probings is a question worthy of further study. Such considerations, however, are better left to a trained expert and so I will content myself with analyzing a more human aspect of the communication crisis, if I may call it such.

Obviously it would do no good for an individual to shed his pretenses (and defenses) if the society continues to act on the assumption that he is as false as the normal individual. Indeed, his attempts to be honest may be deeply resented by a people who feel the need to be abstruse. The honest man must tread lightly or he is likely to antagonize his goal of communication. Few ages have looked upon their critics with respect unless those critics have adhered to what society considers fundamental values.

It would seem reasonable to assume then that any significant degree of openness must be brought about gradually, in steps carefully designed to agree with existing patterns of thought as much as possible. Under this theory, happenings would not be the ideal way to approach the problem since they involve few directly and are controversial to many.

The basic premise of this article is that non-violent protest would be more likely to achieve the end result of communication. By non-violent protest is meant the training of the populace, directly and indirectly, at home and school, in the appreciation of others. Efforts in this direction are already employed by schools, but with little effectiveness. School children study the people of foreign lands with the idea that "we appear as strange to them as they to us." This does little to alleviate that strangeness or the attitude behind it. More emphasis should be placed on the basic rightness of any culture and the basic dignity of any individual, regardless of differences which may exist between us. Children must be taught (it is too late when they are grown) that we need not understand someone to accept him.

It is only through unequivocal acceptance that meaningful communication may take place; it is only through meaningful communication that misunderstanding may be eliminated. This is our task if we are to survive and prosper in the advanced world we know. All other difficulties hinge on this one. If we fail, there can be no second chance. If we succeed we shall have contributed more to mankind than any previous benefactors -- we shall have given mankind the hope of peace.

* * *

MAN IN HIS UNIVERSE

By Gary Hromadko
Albert Lea High School
Sponsor: Paul M. Goodnature

Man is affected in his intellectual, emotional, and spiritual beings by aspects of the Universe. Each must deal with different problems and in different ways than the other two, but all have the same basis on which to work; that basis is the limitedness of man's comprehension, and the small fund of knowledge with which he may operate.

Man, the intellectual, must wrestle with the apparent ordering of the Universe by natural laws. He tries to solve problems in the micro- and macro-cosmic scales, from the mysteries of high energy particle physics to questions concerning the propagation of light and the life cycles of galactic communities. It

is not surprising that conflict should arise in the study of the Universe; consider the problem of determining the physical nature of the System. Three major theories have been proposed regarding its origin and continued existence, all of which have positive and negative features depending upon one's interpretation of the limited amount of data currently available. Further, each theory leaves one or both of the questions: "What existed prior to the Universe?", if indeed anything, and "How old is the Universe?", open to speculation.

The emotional affect manifests itself in an inner conflict, one in which man is uplifted and depressed in succession by the very nature of his position in the Universe. This self recognizes the poetic Universe, and in this sense it may be constantly occupied. A beauty exists in the fact of belonging to such a system, in being able to observe the precision of motion and light, the contrast of power and delicacy, color and order in celestial communities and their bizarre counterparts in unstable super-novae. The ancients made a contribution to the overall emotional affect in the names they ascribed to certain of the more prominent features in the night sky - Antares in Scorpius, Rigel in Orion, the constellation Andromeda - each full of the myth which appeals to one's sense of adventure (both past and future) even though the original bases for the appellations have long since been contradicted by fact. Depression occurs when man realizes that he is such a small part of a total, wonderful, creation. The infinity of space, the apparent irrelevance of time, and the consistency of the entire System are obvious causes of an ailment whose cure is sought by the metaphysicians.

The god-makers, the transcendentalists, and all of the many and varied philosophical cliques have attempted to remedy the ailment, to satisfy the gnawing curiosity about the true nature of the Universe in all of its ramifications - truth, beauty, the meaning of existence. Man's inability to comprehend is a fundamental problem, just as those mentioned above, which the metaphysician seeks to eliminate or avoid. Whatever knowledge may have been gained concerning a particular concept is subject to possible dispulsion, as the ever present and omnipotent force in philosophy takes control of man's Universe - that force is faith in an ideal or belief.

The Universe, the unconquerable deep in which man - the philosopher, the poet, the discoverer - is constantly probing and extending himself. Throughout history this has been true, and so forever. Generations will pass like colored sand through an hourglass, and man will still be probing, pondering. The elements of the System are other systems - infinitely great and small. Neutrons, photons, mesons, planets, stars, galaxies. And among them all there exists a confusing system named man.

THREE POEMS

By Mary Johnson
Crosby-Ironton High School
Sponsor: Robert C. Nielsen

Hopelessness, her emptiness
Is within me,
Eating my soul,
Sucking my breath,
Making me as empty as her.
And in the rain
I am so lost and lonely
I can do nothing--not even cry,
Not even raise this blade to my wrist.

Shallow echoes in my head--
And then I hear
The mournful,
Low and desolate
Wail of the whistle as the freight train
Moves through the rain
The simple longing throws me,
Sobbing, in depths of depression.
The human condition is misery.

The edges of the dawn cracked
And splinters of the newborn sun
Pierced the gray morning.
A breeze rattled in the branches
Of trees shellacked
By layers of brittle ice.
My tears fell freezing
And I was helpless
To stop them as the bitter wind
Tore me apart--the caress
Of a madman.

Lonely, so lonely in the howling morning
That I fell weeping in hills
Of cruel and crusted snow,
But I took a fierce and frightening
Pleasure in the numbing cold that kills
And lives to kill again.

I can no longer hear
The desparate cries of those
Around me. I depart.
My blood chills, clogs, and slows

On its journey to my heart.

Sleep, sleep,
And I fall deep and deeper still
Into that dark and quiet pit.
Falling slow, soon I know
I will be free, falling
Forever.

There was some reason
But, I - can't - remember
Quite.
Was it just the season,
Desolate November?
Darkness, so not urge me on.
I won't fight.
I know I'm gone.
Yet, there was something
I wanted before this.
It wasn't much.
There's something I will miss.
(The reassuring touch
Of Spring?)

No! No!
Don't push me.
I'll go.

Sinking---

Swallowed---

Dead, but I was thinking
And it somehow followed that-----

- - -

Bittersweet

The time was Spring.
We were young and alive.
We rode on the wing
Of the breeze that blew
so gently,
sweetly,
And fluttered, playing with our hair.

A flock of birds
Sang and whispered in the trees,
And as we watched
Suddenly they started and flew

up! Rushing,
Rising,
Then in the air, floating and gone.

My hand in yours
As the darkness settled over us.
The air was pure,
The new grass and damp earth
Cleared our minds
That had been smothered
By the long winter.
But, free now, we opened our eyes
To the green growing world
And to each other.

Another Spring,
And I remember you.
Bittersweet,
The memories are now.
I pause at the smell of lilacs,
The sight of birds flying
and the sound of their songs
in the swaying trees.
Voices in the darkness are laughing,
carefree.
My pain, too, is bittersweet.

* * *

DOES THE AMERICAN SCHOOL SYSTEM NEED CHANGING?

By Jan Karlik
Edina High School
Sponsor: Rolland J. Ring

George Gissing once wrote, "Education is a thing of which only the few are capable; teach as you will only a small percentage will profit by your most zealous energy." Unfortunately, some educators don't realize this. For several years, the American school system has been undergoing intense scrutiny. Some administrators seem to feel that in view of our changing society and increasing factual knowledge, the schools and teaching methods are outdated. Some believe that it is now necessary and desirable to change the structure of the school system and to innovate with new teaching techniques and equipment.

A number of programs have been tried in order to modernize the school system. Some rely heavily on expensive electronic gadgetry, such as individual electric typewriters and cathode ray tubes connected to a computer. Others are aimed at reorganization. Modular scheduling and the ungraded primary are

examples of structural revisions. All the programs involve expanded facilities and a considerable dollar outlay. Special classrooms and resource centers must be built. The school building itself must be designed to accommodate the students with free time.

The underlying purpose of many of the systems, including modular scheduling, is the motivation of the underachiever. It is assumed that the underachiever will learn more easily if he isn't held down in a normal classroom. However, when the system is tried, it is the underachiever who can't cope with the added freedom. Reluctant learners may have to be put in traditional one hour classes because of lack of self-discipline. In many schools with modular scheduling, there is an increasing tendency to schedule all the mods of all students, and thereby eliminate free time. Then the system leads to increased regimentation and the corresponding loss of flexibility for which it was designed.

The biggest deterrent to the new systems is not the trouble with scheduling but the lack of improvement in students' performance. In spite of the modernness of the new system, studies show that the teacher, not the equipment, has the most effect on students' scholastic achievement. A good teacher is able to hold the students' attention and explain the text understandably, whereas a poor teacher loses attention and respect because he doesn't know the material or can't get his points across. The quality of any school depends upon the quality of its teachers.

The school system shouldn't be changed unless an alteration can be shown to be beneficial. The traditional school system is not outdated just because it has been in use for some time. It is senseless to make a costly change resulting in no improvement in learning. The student who wants to learn will learn under any circumstances. The student who isn't interested in learning won't learn through any application of pressure or supplied motivation.

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I CRY IN THE DAYTIME

By Barbara Maki, Cloquet High School
Sponsor: Mrs. Ruth M. Anderson

Mother said he wouldn't last the moment she laid eyes on him. And he couldn't have lasted, not in our church, not in a million years. There wasn't a chance in the world for him. We had gone through so many pastors already; they had all left for greener pastures or died on us. We had been hopeless for such a long time--bankrupt in fact, both spiritually and financially. There were Sundays when hardly anyone came at all, except the one

or two obstinate families who would not let the old church die, and who came, Sunday after Sunday. And now Mr. Schwartz, only an old man, had come to shepherd and save our diseased and dying flock. He could have never saved us. Someone should have told him.

But he lasted a long time for an old man. We went downhill, but he never admitted it. "It'll work out," he used to say. "God will help us." But God never did, not even in the end. Mr. Schwartz died and the church wasn't saved. Not once did God step in to help.

In confirmation class, Mr. Schwartz would tell us--oh, maybe twice a day--"Turn the other cheek." And with his accent, he made it sound like the kind of sheik who lives in a desert and who wears long, flowing robes. We always laughed so hard at him. And he was comical in a sad sort of way. But there was a weary pathos in his impeccable black suit--shiny at the seams from wear. From the back, he appeared to be a thin-shouldered, anemic child, decked in mourning. But then you'd see his wispy, gray hair and his pathetic, concave chest, and he could be nothing but an old, old man. Sometimes there was a lone white hair on his chin where he had forgotten to shave. His eyes were very bad. Even with bifocals he had to squint. And squinting had left his face a maze of wrinkles; his eyes were hooded in paper-thin, transparent layers of skin, and only the sharp, quick movements deep within the puffy sockets gave any impression of life. The liveliness of his glance contrasted sharply with his shuffling step. I still see him sometimes, seeming to doze as he listened to the muted greetings proffered him. But he was always listening, and his eyes were always alive. You could see that if you looked closely. And his answers were very quick, in spite of his oldness.

I believe I saw his eyes in their entirety only a few times. That was when he was astonished. Then his eyes would open surprisingly wide, and the loose skin around his mouth would tighten with the O that his lips formed. I remember the time we told him about the flying saucers. They were to be for a snow-day party. He was so amazed--he had never heard of such things. And he would not understand. Finally, we showed him one; and then he said he understood, just to please us. It was so important for him to understand--and so very hard.

I don't know why it's so; but when someone is kind and helpless and believes in people and in God, you hurt that person, perhaps not intentionally, but you hurt him just the same. And we hurt Mr. Schwartz, all of us. Perhaps some of us hurt him more than others, but each wound, no matter how trivial, must have scarred him deeply inside. Though he was careful never to let us see his disappointments, each blow must have bowed his

shoulders a little more. When Bruce quit school at seventeen, Mr. Schwartz did not speak of how Bruce had shaken his faith. And when he overheard the ladies talking about Bruce's jail sentence, I doubt if anyone guessed the pain his poor heart must have endured over that lost impenitent youth. He only talked of how Bruce was hurting himself. Still, he was not the same afterwards. Defeat did not sit well on his fragile shoulders.

Even when we skipped church, he noticed, every time. The Sunday after, he would ask us why we had been absent, and we would give him one excuse or another. He never gave up chiding us for our little frailties. It was as though he had to worry about the small failures in order to be able to bear the bigger sins that he had to excuse and forgive. The time he had to straighten out the spat in the Women's Fellowship seemed to take away some of the pain he must have felt when the Stevensons were divorced. They had made such a wonderful pair, and they had almost saved their marriage. At first their two small children had kept them together. Their relationship, though had gone downhill until Mr. Schwartz. He had almost solved their problems. For a while, under his gentle counsel, they had been almost happy. But they had had to solve their real problem alone; Mr. Schwartz couldn't do that for them. And they were both so very very human. Thus in the end, as in all things, each had failed the other, and even though it was only in small ways, the little misunderstandings grew to enormous proportions in their eyes, and their marriage had ended in a final bitter quarrel. The divorce was a tremendous blow to Mr. Schwartz; he had given so much of himself--and he had failed. So, when he managed to calm the ruffled ladies in the Fellowship meeting, it was a sort of balm for him. Mrs. Niemi really became quite red and comical when Mrs. Kangas insisted on using the electric mixer. And Mr. Schwartz got so excited. Though it was only an argument about a large wooden potato masher, it was important to him. But not one of us could have seen how in the end, the crushing failures would erase all the small victories and how his heart would give way at last. But his faith came through; it must have. He couldn't have let that fail. His was such a pure, noble faith. God couldn't have let such a faith die.

Well, anyway, he died in the end from a cerebral hemorrhage. He must have worried a great deal about all of us. I was with him that night making up a confirmation class I had missed. That's the first and the last time I ever heard him swear. He was deeply absorbed in the lesson, and the phone rang, interrupting his train of thought. As he got up to answer the phone, a look of pain contorted his features, and his hand involuntarily reached up to push something heavy away from his chest. And then he swore, such a bothered, "Damn!" After I left, he died. They said it was a quick death.

At the funeral, the church was packed--the first time it had been full in many years. That day, we heard three sermons, each from a different minister. But I missed the thick German accent and the untidy wisps of hair which seemed to fringe upon the pulpit itself. That grey casket could not have kept such a frail soul. He must have gone very quickly to heaven.

But the church is still here. It's still bankrupt. And now we have a visiting pastor, a tall, ascetic-looking fellow in velvet-trimmed robes. He is strong--he doesn't bother over little things like a cross word or an excuse of going fishing. He seems to think that the little things take care of themselves. But they don't, and there is no one left to share the small hurt that comes with each of them. So now, we can only turn the other "sheek." It would have been important to him.

* * *

STORY

By Clay Oglesbee, Osseo High School
Sponsor: John W. Wheeler

April 14

Before I pull the trigger I'll write down a few things to tell why I did it. That's what you're supposed to do: I mean, write when you do it.

I don't want people to think I was sick or I was queer or like that. Listen, I know what smiling and crying are. Dancing! Dancing on a beach like Zorba. I know about that. I know how to splatter myself on life. How to rub my nose through its dry-field smell and kiss a girl. I like love and blue skies (without any clouds at all). I like to see kites and puppies rolling over on their big barely hairy bellies. I've sweat while I worked, though maybe not enough, if I'm honest. But I'm not some weak guy giving up because it's too sad or he's not good enough. The thing is that things get to me.

I know that life is good and bad. I don't cry all the time. I know people can love me. The reason I'm doing this is because there are things wrong with the world, to tell the truth. Like there are white people spitting on Negroes. And people are starving--15,000 every day. And people are killing each other, and that's not good, honestly, I don't like coffins.

All these social injustices tear me apart. All these people putting each other down--me, I don't like it. So, I'm doing this like a protest. Like maybe when I was 45 I was going to jump off a cliff because it's free and not dying in some bed.

But I can't wait, and things are lousy, in my opinion. That's why I'm doing it. Because they are, and not because my nose is big...

April 15

Whew! She loves me!

* * *

STORY

By Sam Stern, St. Louis Park High School
Sponsor: Mrs. Sharon Warner

Jonathon Wilcox Braddington stepped out of the elevator onto the fifty-third floor of the Empire State Building and turned right. He seemed unnaturally thin, as though he was suffering from some internal illness. Carrying an over-stuffed briefcase, he walked briskly to the end of the hall and paused to read the gold leaf on the door:

BRADDINGTON LUXURY TOURS
TOURS TO ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD WITH AN AIRPORT
GROUP TOURS ONLY

"Good morning, Mr. Braddington. You received a call earlier this morning from a Mrs. Carver in San Diego. She was rather upset but refused to talk to anybody but the 'boss man'. I left her telephone number on your desk."

"Thanks, Doris. I'll take care of it right away. It probably has something to do with that damn Olympic Airways that I hired to fly the San Diego group to Japan. Last I heard, they hadn't notified the group as to what time they were taking off. And here it is with only four days before they are scheduled to leave."

"Olympic? Isn't that a new client? Haven't heard of them before."

Looking at her, Braddington could not help but feel guilty. She had been with him since he had formed the company seven years previously. She had always been efficiency personified. He shuddered when he thought of how he was about to let her down.

"Mr. Braddington?!"

"Huh?"

"I said, isn't Olympic Airways a new carrier? I've never

heard of them."

"Yea, they're new. Uh, lower rates." He was mumbling.

"Is something wrong?"

"No, Dor. I'll be in my office. Send in my mail when it comes, and when Mike gets here send him in to see me."

Braddington entered the walnut stained, oak paneled room, walked over to the mahogany desk and picked up the paper on his desk. "Operator, get me area code 714, 829-2138. Make it a person-to-person call for Mrs. William Carver...Mr Jonathon Braddington...549-3344...Thank-you. I'll wait...Hello, Mrs. Carver?...Yes, I'm in New York...No, I haven't called Olympic yet but...Your schedule?...This morning by certified mail?...Good, good. Is there anything else I can do?...Yes, I received the money order. Thank-you, Mrs. Carver. It's been a pleasure doing business with you...Uh, huh...Good-bye, Mrs. Carver."

"Thank God," he whispered to himself while putting down the receiver. They had gotten the letters with the schedule. That was the last trip to have been sent a "schedule".

Braddington Luxury Tours had 15 tours "scheduled" to leave the country on Saturday, March 29. Braddington opened the briefcase and pulled out the list of tours that were supposed to leave in four days. He looked over the list noting the number of people and price being paid for each tour.

FROM	TO	#	@\$	=TOTAL
Baltimore, Md.	London, Paris, Rome	253	450	\$113,850
Boston, Mass.	Tokyo	251	425	\$106,675
Chicago, Ill.	Rome, Tel Aviv	250	400	\$100,000
Cincinnati, Ohio	London, Munich	250	400	\$100,000
Cleveland, Ohio	Rio de Janero	248	275	\$ 68,200
Denver, Col.	Copenhagen, Stockholm	252	300	\$ 75,600
Detroit, Mich.	Rio de Janero, Buenos Aires	248	325	\$ 80,600
Los Angeles, Cal.	London, Paris, Rome	255	450	\$114,750
Los Angeles, Cal.	Rome, Tel Aviv	252	400	\$100,800
Minneapolis, Minn.	Madrid, Malaga	251	250	\$ 62,750
New York, N.Y.	Copenhagen, Stockholm	249	300	\$ 74,700
New York, N.Y.	Paris	250	300	\$ 75,000
New York, N.Y.	London, Paris, Rome	253	450	\$113,850
San Diego, Cal	Tokyo	252	425	\$107,100
San Francisco	Tel Aviv	248	350	\$ 86,800

TOTALS 3762 \$1,380,675

There was a knock on the door and the second major controlling interest in Braddington Luxury Tours entered carrying the morning newspaper under one arm and a package bearing a "To Jon" label under the other. "For you," said Mike as he put the package down on the mahogany desk. "Brought all the way from Pango Pango. A genuine out-rigger canoe carved in coconut shell by a South Seas' blind man who is the sole support of his wife and six daughters."

"You always did have a flare for novelties. Welcome home. How was the trip?"

"Fabulous. Kathy loved it, only she was constantly worrying about the kids. Can't say that I blame her, though. It's nice to have kids to worry about every once in a while. Say, Jon. Just for kicks why don't you get married and--"

"Lay off, Mike. We've been through that enough times before."

"Okay, but you can't blame a guy for trying to get his partner settled down. How was the skiing in Switzerland?"

"Gorgeous. I plan on going there again next year. Oh, by the way I'm leaving town Friday. I've got some business to take care of in Stockholm."

"Funny you should mention Sweden. It was one of the things I had to talk to you about. Take a look at this." Jon took the paper from Mike. "Peru is threatening to break diplomatic relations with us if we enforce the Hickenlooper Amendment next month. If they do, that June tour to Lima for those Machu Pichu-bound archeologists is off. That's number one. Number two is that Sweden announced yesterday that it was rescinding its extradition agreement with the U.S.. Something which grew out of an incident involving a Vietnam war deserter. As a result, relations are quite shaky with Stockholm right now. Now, what was it that you wanted me in here for?"

"Just to see how the trip was. You've been gone for three weeks and I was gone for a week before you left. Thanks for the present. It's just what I've always wanted."

After Mike left, Braddington worked for an hour and a half before informing Doris that he was leaving for a doctor appointment ("No, Dor, nothing serious."). She informed him that the mail had not yet arrived and he left the office.

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Mrs. William Carver, as head of the San Diego Homemakers

Association, was first to arrive at Lindbergh's Field on the morning of Saturday, March 29. She turned to her husband with her hand extended. William Carver handed her the letter that they had received in the mail four days before. Mrs. Carver read it over quickly and said, "We go to gate 34B, Dear. The others should start arriving in about an hour."

They rented a push-cart for their luggage for fifty cents and walked down the yellow concourse to gate 34B. At the gate, passengers on Western flight #546 to Minneapolis were checking in and receiving their seating assignments. The bulletin board behind the ticket counter and the closed circuit television mounted overhead showed that flight 546 was scheduled to take off in forty-five minutes.

Mrs. Carver rechecked her letter with the schedule, then stormed up to the ticket counter dragging a somewhat confused Mr. Carver behind her. "My name is Mrs. William Carver. I'm head of the San Diego Homemakers Association, and I demand to know what is going on. I've got some 250 women coming in half an hour to check in their luggage at that gate. How do you people expect us to check in our baggage for Tokyo with these...

The man behind was no longer listening to Mrs. Carver. He had looked over the letter she had been waving in front of his nose and was now calling the airport manager. The manager arrived and took the letter that Mrs. Carver was waving in front of his nose at the same time she was jabbering some senseless gibberish about Tokyo and a Homemakers Association.

"Well?! Well?!" demanded Mrs. Carver.

"I'm sorry, Ma'am, but you've been duped."

"What are you talking about. What do you mean I've been duped?!"

"There is no such animal as Olympic Airways." Turning to the man behind the ticket counter, the manager said, "Have Airport Security put me in touch with New York. I think the answer lies in Braddington Luxury Tours."

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"That's right, officers. Jon Braddington handled all the details of the tours scheduled to leave today. That's the way it usually is. Jon takes spring and summer and I take fall and winter. Having just finished with the winter tours, I spent three weeks in the South Seas resting up. That must be when Jon redid all the scheduling, because everything was in order when I left."

Mike was holding a double scotch, turning it thoughtfully, Doris was sobbing and shaking her head in disbelief. There were two detectives and a police officer in the room. They began to question Doris about Braddington's activities since returning from Switzerland. Everything came out--the call from San Diego, the worried look on Braddington's face when Olympic Airways was mentioned, the doctor appointment, the flight to Stockholm--everything.

After much checking and intense investigation, the police managed to come up with the following information:

As was company policy, money orders, not checks, were due from the tour groups two weeks before their scheduled departure. Braddington had scheduled all the groups to leave on the same day. He had sent them fake flight information using fictitious airlines which supposedly had been chartered. When the money orders came in, he flew to Switzerland under the pretenses of a skiing trip and deposited the 15 money orders worth \$1,380,675 into a numbered Swiss account.

He purchased a ticket to Rio de Janero using a John Doe, but when the Swedish government rescinded its extradition agreement with the U.S. he cashed in the ticket and bought a one-way ticket to Stockholm using his real name. The next day, Tuesday, he went to the doctor and was given a thorough examination. It showed that the cancer which had been growing inside his body for the past year would allow him three more months of life.

Finally, on Friday, he boarded the plane for Stockholm where his only problem would be how to spend approximately \$460,225 a month for the next three months.