



Winter 1955

Rescue

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Recommended Citation

Forester, Bryce (1955) "Rescue," *Calliope*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 1 , Article 12.
Available at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/calliope/vol3/iss1/12>

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brass rail and smiled. "You didn't do a very good job," he said pleasantly. "Polish it over again."

"You want some money for the Heart Fund?" the boy choked stepping up to the desk with the dime and two pennies.

"Yeah, let him go," said the judge. "Save enough for carfare, kid."

He walked out the door, jumped off the steps, and started up the long, deserted street. The sun behind the blanket of grey cloud looked like a dim flashlight wrapped in dirty gauze, and a cold gust of wind scuffled newspapers down the shadowy gutters. Water dripped from the overhanging eaves, the low moan of an auto horn sounded faraway, and across the street in a vacant lot a small boy was bouncing a ball against a windowless building. Now I will get something to eat, he thought confidently, and tomorrow I will get a job. But in the back of his mind was a thought he wanted to fight off, to forget: This new city, this Philadelphia on Sunday is like no other place on earth; it is so big, so very empty.

Rescue . . .

To the night belongs a fragile stillness;
It could be Death in miniature.
Life creeps forth in the delicate light
Of a trivial firefly.
Its insignificant gleam, when seen,
Becomes an exquisite lamp,
Soothing a lonely, frightened man
Charmed by its skipping, subtle grace,
Enraptured by its winking light.

. . . Bryce Forester