**From My Room**

**ANONYMOUS**

When I was a young child, I loved to look out my bedroom window at the parking lot next door. I lived in a gray two-family house in the center of town and the parking lot was in back of all the stores. From my room on the second floor I thought I could see the whole world, since it seemed that everyone came to Woolworth's or the First National during the day. I loved looking out, especially because no one knew I was there. Leaning on my windowsill, I felt a little special, watching what cars people drove or how many bags they carried. Seeing so many people was exciting.

Something strange always happened, though, once the people started to go home and the stores closed for the day. The parking lot would slowly quiet down. As the cars left, I realized that everyone was going home to eat supper. I felt a bit sad as I saw the last cars leave. They usually belonged to the people who worked in the stores. Once the yellow car under my window left, I knew the day was over. The man who sold shoes at Filene's was always the last one to go home.

By then, the quiet was bigger than any quiet I had heard. It seemed to grow, and as it did, I felt like a different person. I was part of another world, a larger one with no people or cars. I was suddenly aware of the pine trees and the grass that grew in front of the parking lot, by the entrance. Most of all, I was aware of a huge silent sky covering everything. I felt a sense of something which would always be there, a quiet over the world, including me. I was only an observer of the parking-lot life with all the people, but this silent world had a place for me, a natural place. I felt no different from the grass or trees, or even the clouds or birds. I felt that someone knew I was there.

**Northern Woods**

**LINDA**

When I was between six and eight years old, my family took vacations in Ontario, Canada, despite the fact that my mother said we didn't have the money. She said, however, that it was worth the expense if my father could relax and get himself together. I don't know if it helped my father, for the worst days were to come—but it helped me, a rather serious, worried child. I felt a great release and acceptance in the Northern woods and I have to call it a spiritual experience because it held me in the moment so totally that I let go of all past and future worries.

When I meditate today, I still try to bring back the memory of the haven I found as a seven-year-old child. This haven was a quiet place around the bend of the lake about a quarter of a mile from the cottages. A huge boulder was perched on a mossy carpet beneath the pine trees. This hard rock beckoned me to sit. I could see from that location the ripples that the wind created over the water. I felt the warm rays of sunshine coming through an opening in the pine trees. I heard the continual lapping of the waves hitting the shore. I watched the waves swirl around another boulder in the water. This simple common experience renewed me.

It demanded nothing of me except that I come and sit quietly and breathe. It helped me to bear the feeling of aloneness. I felt helped by this rock, this place—no less or more than what was around me.

It was good to feel eternity in my bones and that no matter what happened in my family, there was a bigger world to sustain and hold me.

I went there often, in many states of mind. I still go to that rocky place in my memory. I always felt it was the experience of God.
So, where were you, huh?
I mean it
I want to know
what you were doing
while I was in high school

I've got a right to know,
don't you think?
or is the information locked away
with the truth about Lee Harvey Oswald
and the appearance of the Blessed Mother at Fatima

seriously,
do you expect me to believe
you kept yourself from me
for my own good?

Specifically,
I want to know how you could permit
Sister Mary Evelyn
to tell Trish Mulligan's mother
not to let her hang around with me
did it occur to you to say something to the good sister,
push her on the path so to speak?

And what about that all-girls Catholic school?
couldn't you have rigged it so that someone else
won the scholarship?
it's a well-known fact that girls like me
need well-rounded educations
that include boys

Speaking of boys
it's time you told me why my first boyfriend was thirty-four
couldn't you have stopped me,
pulled me aside and said something like,
"I don't think he's the one, kiddo; trust me"
I didn't hear you say anything
Am I right?

Another thing
how could you let Grammy move in with us?
I mean you are omniscient
and you knew she didn't like me
but into my house she came
chipping away at my childhood
belief in love

I also want to know why you put me into that family
without even a road map
you know I had nothing in common

with those strange people called
mom, dad, brother, sister

last
but not least
(and I know this may seem trite)
I have to know
why Loretta was chosen prom queen
instead of me
you must have known she didn't deserve it
just because her date's best friend played in the band
and they got to do the voting

What I really want to know, you see,
is why others got, and I didn't

I hope I haven't overstepped my bounds
in asking this crucial question

Yours very sincerely,
Eleanor Jane Miller