

5-1-2014

## Landscape

Terry Whiteside

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.collin.edu/forces>

---

### Recommended Citation

Whiteside, Terry (2014) "Landscape," *Forces*: Vol. 2014 , Article 20.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.collin.edu/forces/vol2014/iss1/20>

This Photograph is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Collin. It has been accepted for inclusion in Forces by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Collin. For more information, please contact [mtomlin@collin.edu](mailto:mtomlin@collin.edu).



**LANDSCAPE** TERRY WHITE

**Forgiven**

ANITA VAN OUWERKERK

**HELEN PEERED INTO THE DARKENED** chapel of

Materna's Funeral Home. Turning to the attendant she said, "Thank you. Everything is ready. I suppose the minister will be here in a minute or two. I think I'll just sit in here and wait. Thank you."

Inside the chapel, she moved to one of the three walls covered with flowers. Picking up a tag, she mused, "Who would have guessed Tom would have so many lovely flowers. These are from Thoma Lynn's company. This one is from the English Department at Texas A&M University, Rhona's co-workers." She shook her head. The flowers were from all over the country - most from people who never met Tom.

"Few visited him these past ten years. After his stroke, not even his nephews visited, but here are flowers from them as well."

She slumped into a nearby chair. Suddenly the dying flowers triggered a wave of nausea and brought back memories of her father's funeral. The artistically arranged displays of yellow chrysanthemums, red roses, blue and orange birds-of-paradise now seemed gaudy. She stared at the silver casket. "Why there's a fortune here. Why do we do this? Tom can't enjoy it. Why?"

Behind her, light streamed in as the outside door opened. Helen turned to see the silhouette of large woman against the bright afternoon light.

"The body isn't to be viewed by the public for another hour," she murmured. The woman moved toward her, so Helen pushed herself up and walked to meet the shadowed figure. When the woman's face was clear, she stopped. "Willie? Wilhelmina?" She choked.

"Helen, I'm so sorry."