

ART APPRECIATION

by Sue Glasgow

Winterfest included many new faces this year. Some were familiar to Catherine, and some were not. She was continually amazed to discover people she had known for years Above were secretly Helpers. Peter had been the first, but as she looked around the Great Hall, she found at least two other people whom she had known Above.

Catherine emptied ice into a large bowl. Somehow she and Jamie had been volunteered to replenish the punch bowl, while Vincent and Father were in deep conversation across the room with Pascal, Mary and a stranger.

Catherine watched them a moment and asked Jamie. "What is the attraction over there? Vincent looks like he is hanging on every word."

Jamie poured in a bottle of ginger ale. "See the man in the gray jacket? That's Royce Sanderson, the portrait artist. Royce was a Helper five years ago, but he moved to Los Angeles. His portraits are famous on the West Coast."

The group parted enough to allow Catherine a glimpse of canvases and sketchbooks on a table beside the man. Sanderson lifted something from the stack, and Vincent peered eagerly over his shoulder. Catherine smiled at the look on his face.

"What is it they're looking at?"

"When Vincent heard Royce was coming, he asked him to bring some of his early work. Vincent wants to start a workshop in oil painting, and he thought Royce could give him some ideas. Frankly, I think Vincent just wanted the chance to see some Sanderson originals."

As they watched, Father removed another canvas from the collection and gazed at it intently.

Catherine smiled. "He must be good. Father and Vincent are both very impressed."

"He is. People say his work is almost photographic, but more flattering."

"What pieces did he bring with him?"

"I don't know. His carrying case is lying right there if you're curious. He has an inventory taped to the top."

Sipping at a cup of punch, Catherine moved over to the large empty case in the corner and glanced down the list of various early works. There were several sketchpads of still lifes, dated 1975 and 1976. Sanderson had itemized seven oil landscapes, and two more sketchpads, carefully dated. But then her eyes fell upon a small entry near the bottom:

PORTFOLIO AND CLASS FINAL

LIFE STUDY 322, SECTION 1, SPRING SEMESTER, 1976

RADCLIFFE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Catherine's eyes widened as she searched her memories and calculated that date.

Father had handed Vincent the canvas and was reaching for a portfolio at the bottom of the pile.

Suddenly, Catherine dropped her cup with a crash and her voice echoed through the chamber.

"Oh my God!"