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Do snapdragons have a fragrance? Here I am, perched on the patio of the Night Heron Bed & Breakfast, sipping coffee, listening as Publisher John Lehman is talking in an animated way about what we are working on together: the first issue of **Rosebud**. But, all I can think about for the moment is the real (or imaginary) perfume of the red, blue, and yellow snapdragons beside the path that leads up to the patio, where we are sitting under an over-sized umbrella in the warm October sun, at a table overlooking the bright fall foliage that arches above the steel grey waters of the Koshkonong River.

The serenity is mixed with pain, because suddenly, out of context, I am inexplicably remembering foolish things I did one October many years ago which caused a friend great unhappiness. Then, the coffee galvanizes me-and I pull myself out of Autumn memories, and back into the business at hand....

"There is a writer in each of us," John is explaining, "looking for a way to come out....We are full of feelings that need expression...full of stories that want to surface and be heard." He talks of the connection between writing and reading, between the storyteller and the listener, between those who are transmitting experience, and those who are sharing it by living it afresh through the metaphor of words on a page. He talks too about how we need to keep our judgments in check, how our fear of critical rejection often strangles our best ideas before they are born....

And how, you may be wondering, have John's ideas found form in **Rosebud**? In sifting through the many solid submissions that came to us for this first issue of **Rosebud**, it was often hard to choose. The pieces we chose were selected because each, in its own way, transported us, if only for a moment, into the heart of another's human experience.

It is a phenomenon with which most of us are familiar. There we are, reading or writing along, critical machineries fully intact, hoping for the best, but not seeing it yet. Then, unexpectedly, a door opens before us and we are through it without having seen the jambs in front of us, or the invisible hinges turning. In a flash we have been transported out of our chairs, and out of ourselves. We have leapt into a new skin, a time and space created by words-not knowing how we got there, sharing a moment of human reality that envelopes us, and becomes our own....

It is the search for those moments, and the search for ways to make those moments possible, that inspire this premiere issue of **Rosebud**, and the issues to come. It is the advice I imagine John to be giving me silently as we sit here, conspiring over coffee to get this issue to press:

"C'mon, it's O.K. You can do it. Step out of the cave. Feel the sun on your face. Lift that pencil. Smell the snapdragons. This is as important as anything you do... ."

Rod Clark, Editor