"She moves towards him and he holds her. Then they make love after all, but gently, as though consoling one another for everything that neither of them can help nor alter... Temporarily, they are more or less okay." That's good news, not easy optimism.

Fire-dwellers we all are and Margaret Laurence turned more and more of her time towards working for peace and nuclear disarmament. She saw the temptation to close our hearts and minds to the terror of the world we live in: "Although I would take issue with the early Church Fathers on many things," she said, "I would agree that despair is rightly placed as one of the deadly sins."

**The death of the individual is the end which we will all one day meet, but in the knowledge that our children and their children will live, that someone's children will go on... The individual is the leaf on the tree. The leaves fall but the tree endures... Now the tree itself is threatened. Our aim must be no less than human and caring justice, and peace... for all people that on earth do dwell.**

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**AL PURDY**

For Margaret

We argued about things whether one should seek experience or just let it happen to you (me the former and she the latter) and the merits of St. Paul as against his attitude to women (she admired him despite chauvinism) But what pitifully few things we remember about another person: me sitting at her typewriter at Elm Cottage in England and translating her short story "A Bird in the House" into a radio play directly from the book manuscript in just two or three days (produced by J. Frank Willis on C.B.C. his last production) and being so proud of my expertise Then going away to hunt books while my wife recuperated from an operation Returning to find the play finished Margaret had taken about three hours to turn my rough draft into a playable acting version fingers like fireflies on the typewriter and grinning at me delightedly while my "expertise" went down the drain And the huge cans of English ale she bought Jocelyn called "Al-size-ale" and the people coming over one night to sing the songs in "The Diviners" (for which I gave faint praise) And the books she admired Joyce Cary's "The Horse's Mouth" Alice Guinnes as Gilley Jimson a valkyrie riding the Thames on a garbage barge — how Graham Greene knew so much that she both loved and cursed him for anticipating her before she got there and marked up my copy of his essays These are the lost minutes of a person's life things real enough to be trivial and trivial enough to have some permanence because they recur and recur — with small differences of course — in all our lives and the poignance finally strikes home that poignance is ordinary Anyway how strange to be writing about her as if she were not here but somewhere else on earth — or not on earth given her religious convictions Just in case it does happen I'd like to be there when she meets St. Paul and watch his expression change from smugness to slight apprehension While she considers him as a minor character in a future celestial non-fiction novel And this silly irrelevance of mine is a refusal to think of her dead (only parenthetically DEAD) remembering how alive she lit up the rooms she occupied like flowers do sometimes and the sun always in a way visible only to friends and she had nothing else

**Lawrence to Laurence**

On my workroom wall a letter from D.H.L. that reads

"Dear M,

I send you by this post, registered M.S. an article I did on the Indians and the Bursum Bill" etc.

I think he used a steel nib pen and dipped it in ink when dry and you can see where the nib ran short and faded the words in his letter like "and the" above Reading DHL's handwriting hypnotizes me as Mabel Sterne and Walter Lippman and Scofield Thayer fit past and are dead and the New York World of the letter died long ago of malnutrition I read the letter and my hand reaches for ghost ink that isn't there just the way he did and stop to think about this poem I'm writing (how trivial): and from the other side of the letter I can see its continuation there visible thru the Taos N.M. notepaper: "from the other side" I say And this is what obsession does you read meanings into nothingness or perhaps into very little And remember a remark by Margaret Laurence "I expect to grow old raising cats and roses —" (but she didn't) What all this means is a patented method of jumping from Lawrence to Laurence and I mourn both from steel nib pen & ink to cats & roses Goodbye —