

# THEY THAT ARE SHEEP

An Oration

by  
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THEY THAT ARE SHEEP  
An Oration

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The author, with this oration, won Tenn. Intercollegiate Contest for Women, 1961 and "Superior" in Magnolia College Invitation Meet, 1961. Copyright 1961 by the WETMORE DECLAMATION BUREAU, Sioux City, Iowa.

Several months ago I was walking in the woods near my home. As I rounded a turn in the path, I saw two ponds, separated from each other by a small ridge. Though they were only inches apart in distance, they were miles apart in appearance. One pond was crystal clear and sparkling, the other, dark and stagnant. In the first pond, the water was so clear I could see the clean brown sand on the bottom. The other pond reminded me of the dank tarn of Ober in one of Poe's poems. The water looked dull and greasy, covered over by a thin coating of green slime. As I stood and looked from one pool to the other, I saw, in the middle of the clear pool, an ugly brown toad; in the other pond floated one of the most beautiful flowers I had ever seen. It was dainty and very pale pink, a truly exquisite blossom. I stood and mused for some time over the irony connected with these two ponds. Out of beauty came ugliness and out of ugliness came beauty. I turned and walked slowly out of the woods.

In actuality the contrast and the conflict manifested in these two pools is not at all unusual. Examples of this can be found in all of nature, in man himself, in society--all show examples of this concept which at first seemed so strange. The prettiest flowers often grow where the setting is the ugliest, and some of nature's most perfect scenes can be marred by one unattractive feature. Men have begun at the bottom of the ladder of life and have climbed to the top. Other men have started at the top and fallen to the ground. Nations with an origin of chaos and revolution have grown into stable, world leaders. Countries have also built crumbling governments on foundations that were solid as stone. The principle which can be learned from these two pools is that nothing is inherently good or evil, beneficial or worthless. The destiny of each thing is directed by that thing itself. No person or nation is bound by or chained to the past. Omar Khayyam once said that "I myself am heaven or hell." The fate of each person and each civilization rests in the hands of today--not tomorrow, not yesterday. We are all the masters of our destiny, we create our own heavens or hells.

The problems which face America cannot be solved by standing only on the foundation of the past or by gazing into the dawn of the future. Now we must face and solve the problems of our time. These problems are numerous but, more important, they are unique to this day. The challenges we must face are new and demand creative thinking in their victory. The problems which confront us are different and call for new ideas in their solution. Creativity must be the keyword for our generation.

**--- END OF FREE PREVIEW ---**