

1973

We Sat Opposite Each Other...

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Recommended Citation

Hasenauer, Vicki (1973) "We Sat Opposite Each Other..." *The Angle*: Vol. 1973: Iss. 1, Article 11.
Available at: <http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1973/iss1/11>

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Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"We sat opposite each other, the old Maid and I. Her bony hands shook so she could not hold her one card steady. I stared at the chipped paper face of a dog as it wiggled in her grasp."

Cover Page Footnote

Appeared in the issue: 1973.

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We sat opposite each other, the old Maid and I. Her bony hands shook so she could not hold her one card steady. I stared at the chipped paper face of a dog as it wiggled in her grasp.

She peered intently at the two worn cards in my hand. She must be careful not to pick the wrong card. "Take your time," I said softly, with the ironic impatience that is youth.

Her wrinkled, leatherlike face became (if indeed it were possible) even more lined as she smiled the half-toothed, half-gummed smile of the ancient. "I'll not pick the wrong one," she cackled.

I looked past her at an old china clock. It kept poor time, but even then she had been thinking for fifteen minutes. I wondered if the theories of "wise old age" and "do not act on impulse" would be proven true or false. It had been so awfully quiet that I started when she wheezed, "Ah ha! I've got it this time! I'll take the one on the left."

I smiled — she drew the "old maid".

— Vickie Hasenauer