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Prairie Monument

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politician's bullets.

But I wasn't.

They won.

They destroyed my Grand Plan. . . They made me a failure. (Getting a bit stopped up with hay fever.)

If I just hadn't been so stubborn. . . If I'd of just played politics. . . If I had just compromised, I could have. . . No. NO! What's right is right, and graft and corruption is not right. . . and truth, and justice (deep breath—five beats) don't always win. . .

I tried. I tried so hard, Papa. I wanted you to be proud of me, and I've been nothing but a failure. (She starts rubbing her skin.) This dry skin disease will drive me to total distraction. And the hay fever is getting me all stopped up. My lungs feel heavy and hurt.

Sometimes I just wish I could die. I'm 'bout out of money. . . completely out of friends. (Angry.) I did so much for so many, it seems like someone

could do something for me for a change. (Pause as she sits down and replaces her lap robe.)

No. . . I guess that's not the whole truth. Most of what I did for others was mostly for me. For my satisfaction. I wonder if that's good or bad to feel that way. . . I just don't know, God. I just don't know.

I sure came into this world of public life a lot different than I'm leaving it.

No power.

No money.

No family.

No friends.

(Tearfully.) All alone.

Fifty-five years old and . . . all alone.

Fifty-five years old and . . . a failure. . . forgotten.

I (She grabs her chest with both hands.) Oh, Jesus! Oh, Jesus. . . Papa. . . Papa. . . (A wail.) Mama? ■

Prairie Monument

BY NORMAN ARRINGTON

Dark monolith of a strong man's passage
marks slow turning of dim stars

Gnarled timbers engrave splintered visions
of bone and vein
pierced by memory of rain

A scorpion pauses
between iron bedstead and shadow fragment
cast by waning moon

In the yard
wind rattles a rusting pan ■