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*Cover Art and Photograph, as well as
internal photography by Christopher M*

First Class #27 brings back a few favorite names: Catlin, Every, Galing, Niditch, spiel; and tosses in a few new for a fine blend. Once again, I've given my reasons for selecting each piece in the "wordmakers" section in the back (in case you wonder...).

As for the cover art this time... I have a strange affection for the wasp, which is shared by nobody else I know, so I have no allies when it comes to wasp habitat preservation. In fact, the very dwelling pictured here was protected by me (it was hanging in front of my garage door after all) until a visiting relative trounced it upon noticing it while loading his bags to leave. Gut instinct, I suppose. During the wasp family's photo shoot, the whole brood gradually appeared... What began as one busy paper chewer suddenly became five. So take a look, you see two, but know that there—somewhere—are three others lurking in that small space. Little did I know. There are a few other wasp-condos hanging around the place in odd spots, which I consider my guests. One particularly dangerous spot is where one may naturally place one's fingers when pulling open a cruddy gate. I've never forgotten it was there, and I'm the only one opening the gate. I never use the gate after imbibing. Maybe I really like the wasp since they tend to make people feel uncomfortable, creeped-out, and sometimes violent. There's plenty else going on in this country to make me feel that way.... wasps are a pleasant diversion...

Again, I am pleased that your eyes are on these pages.

- Christopher M.

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