

I

OF THE

PRISM

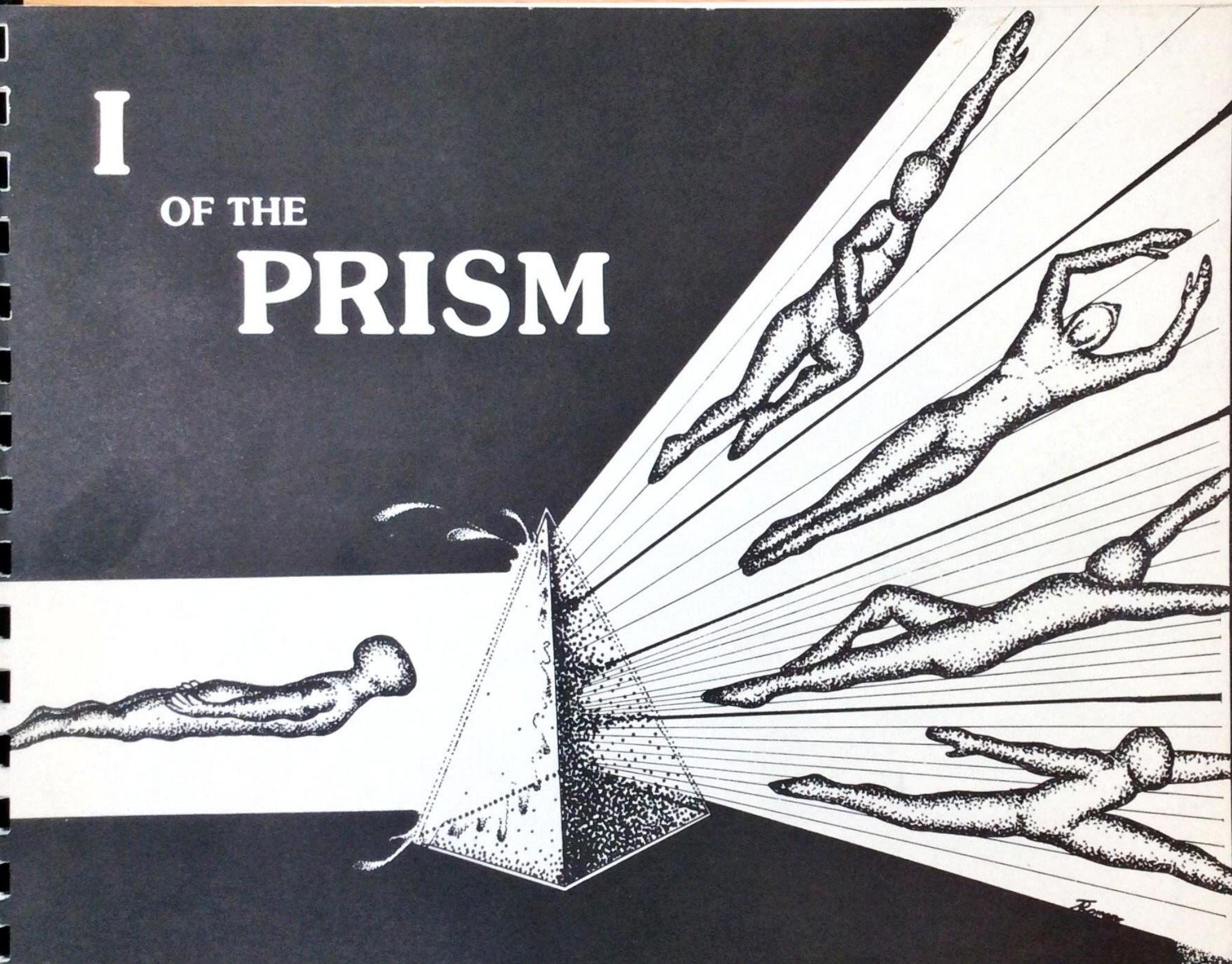


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Bullseye '89

I OF THE PRISM

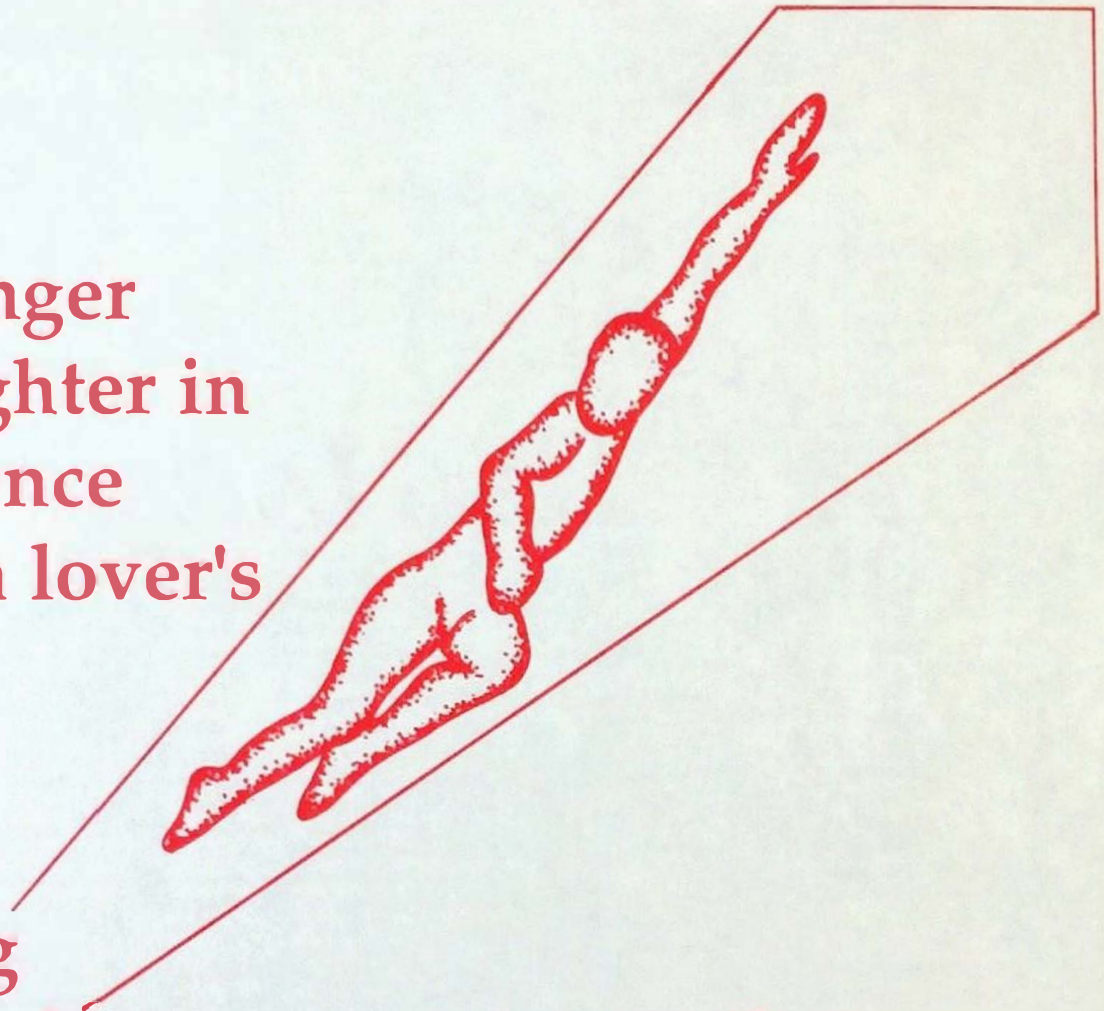
Each of us is a composite of feelings and emotions much as white light is a composite of all colors. We sometimes seek to express these inner secrets and share them with others. As we enter the eye of the prism, each writer puts pen to paper and each artist sketches his first line. Our passion is diffused into the many colors and shades of our being, momentarily separating a moment of our lives or a glimpse of our soul to be shared with others.

Each writer and artist represented within these pages has entered the prism and shared "I" with you. May you find some of your own colors within these pages.

I AM RED.

RED IS . . .

fear turned to anger
a minute of laughter in
an hour of silence
the ferocity of a lover's
admiration
a tear-stained
love letter
the chill tickling
your spine during warm conversation
a ballpoint pen in a box of crayons
a footprint on my face





Michelle Triska



by Kit Crawford

Tell me,
Where can you sail
on an
Ice cream ocean?
Why
down to the
candy-cane carousel
just past
the Tapioca Trees
where
Puff The Magic Dragon
sips
languidly on his
cup of
autumn mist,
too fat to frolic,
and
He'll rise and stretch
eventually
and perhaps
light a cigarette
as the
candy coated sun
sets
mockingly
into the
last page
of a closing
book.

Clay Benton

I AM COY

Teenage - Itis
by Sherry Dawkins

You know . . .
when somedays nothing mom says is
right, even if it is
when your emotions swing
like the people on a flying trapeze
when anything you wear isn't as good
as hers, just because *you* have it on
when you want to crawl in a hole
and never come out
when Sally told Mark that you like Kevin
after she told you she wouldn't,
and you think you're going to die
when no matter what someone says,
you can take it wrong
when "he" walks down the hall
and doesn't even look your way
You know?

by Brian Frey

First move...
touching of hands,
meaningful glances,
soft words.
Who makes the first move?
a little afraid...
You first.
leaning closer,
drinking your beauty,
smelling your hair,
electric shocks wherever we touch.
moths flit across each other
like butterflies
Holding close
minds, bodies and souls meld
then draw apart
but never again completely

Patty Martinez

I AM ROMANTIC

by Kirk Lynn

Inside,

my heart is winter cabin warm,
with fires and steaming tea.
the bed, with blankets stored, is aching,
needing a much-more-than-me.

you are in snow, frozen,
palm prints pressed on my glass,
out and whipped by the wind.

you knock on the window, scream,
throw rocks,
and forever I'm asking you in.

The Moon Knew
by Barbara Burch

Leaves scattered across my sidewalk
And we walked, linked by arm,
Barely knowing each other,
Barely realizing the future.
You seemed mysterious,
Dangerous,
A thief of hearts.
Sparks flew from our goodnight kiss,
And the moon winked,
For it knew...
I would dream of you
On cold winter nights
Cuddled within covers.
I would feel again the warmth of your arms
And the tingle of your feathered kiss,
Your sweet whispers of promise
And that touch of tenderness.

And the moon knew...

By winter, I would have fallen in love with you

Tyna Cervantes

I AM PASSIONATE

by Debbie Paredes

body curved over curved body
his head drops—
hair falling forward—
cascades atop his lids
and the serene curve of his lips
shoulders surrendering to the sounds
adagio hands—
stroking the body—
caress the neck
chest pulsating against pulsating frame
allegro hands—
striking each strand—
clutch every chord
notes crashing together
come to a measure
measures meshing
until they are
music.
He strums me his song.

and I wonder if
his calloused fingertips
can feel my acappella soul
when we are dancing



Amor e Luz
😊

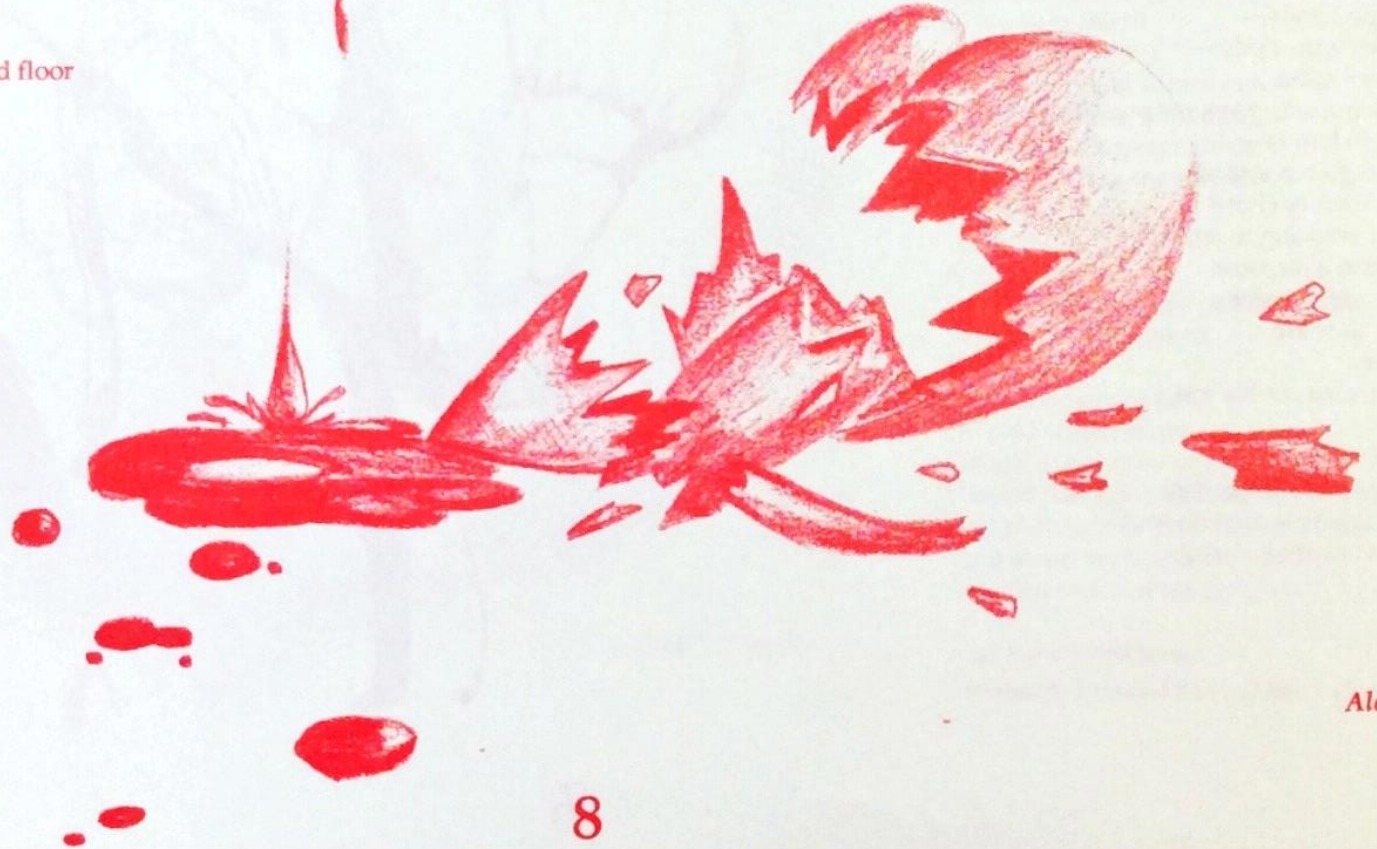
I AM HEARTBROKEN

Shattered
by Amy Albro

Like a glass hurled across the room
My heart is violently shattered
Into a million pieces
It can't be swept away.
Every time I go to pick up the glass,
It cuts me
Just like every time I think about you,
I feel splintery pain.
The blood trickles onto the floor
Glimmering as it flows onto the glass
The blood flowing out of my veins
Glistens as it falls
Drop by drop
Onto the bathroom floor
The razor-sharp blade
Falls from my hand
Resting on the stone-cold floor
My grave is made.

An Intrusion of the Heart
by Michelle Royer

My life is a series of
Beginnings and endings
Inscribed in
A best-seller
Chapter seven severed my heart
A moment stolen from the past
Is now re-read
Tormenting me
A time to be forgotten
A page turned
Forever



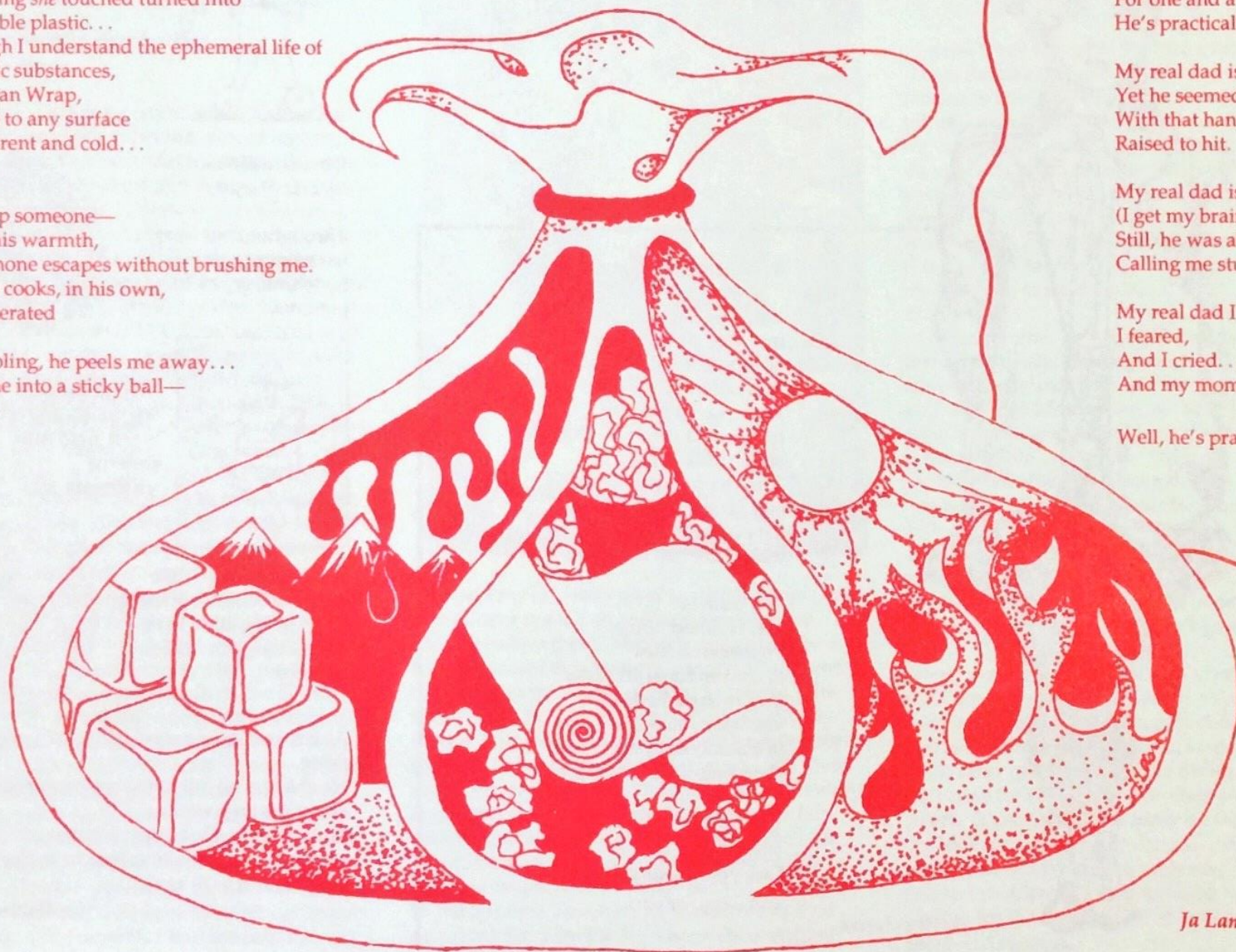
Alex Roman

Used
by Elizabeth Wright

I am Midas' stepmother.
Ever heard her story?
Everything *she* touched turned into
Disposable plastic. . .
Although I understand the ephemeral life of
Synthetic substances,
Like Saran Wrap,
I adhere to any surface
Transparent and cold. . .
So cold.

I envelop someone—
Seal in his warmth,
So that none escapes without brushing me.
Until he cooks, in his own,
Self-generated
Heat.
And cooling, he peels me away. . .
Wads me into a sticky ball—
Wasted.

I AM HURT



Practically My Dad
by Dawni Rios

Mom has a boyfriend.
Well. . .she's *had* a boyfriend
For one and a half years now.
He's practically my dad.

My real dad is short.
Yet he seemed so big
With that hand
Raised to hit.

My real dad is smart.
(I get my brains from him)
Still, he was always
Calling me stupid.

My real dad I hated,
I feared,
And I cried. . .
And my mom's boyfriend?

Well, he's practically my dad

Ja Lane



Ashley Garcia

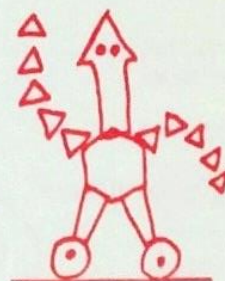
I AM DIFFERENT

by Marina Broitman

You laugh at me
mocking my morality and
beliefs of individuality.
You call me
weird, eccentric
because I don't fit in
with YOUR type
And as you laugh
you glance back
at your friends to
make sure that all agree.

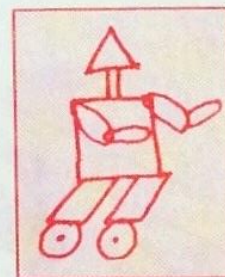
The truth is
you're afraid of me.
I upset your idea
of conventional attitudes.
You're so pathetic—
you hide yourself
in traditional opinion and
shopping-mall convictions.

You see my uniqueness
and you laugh at me.
I see your mediocrity
and I cry for you.



Circles and Squares
by Eric Murphy

Throughout our lives
we seem to move
in definite geometric
patterns.



No one deals in
originality and innovation.
In our rigid little
patterns
we meekly hide.

We pass through time
with our wheels spinning,
never going anywhere
or breaking our endless
patterns.

And then comes a rebel who changes every-
thing
He shatters all our petty misconceptions
about the way we live.
But all that really happens is that our little
patterns change their shapes from circles to
squares and back again.

Alex Hartmann

I AM COMFORTABLE

"Metamorphosis In Family Life"
by Laurel Sims

Since infancy, my rung on the family ladder had been established. My father was placed highest, and my mother, brother and I were placed consecutively. Together, we four formed our own separate family unit. Father and I were always allies in the family wars, and he was my island of moral support in a sea of low self esteem. I loved my mother dearly, but it seemed that I could never capture her heart away from my brother, Tommy. I am not sure if it is fair for me to resent the love showered on my brother, for in a mother's eyes, Tommy was the perfect son. He made only A's in school, held positions in several clubs, and was in the best marching band in the state of Texas; in other words, this young man was destined for greatness! I did love my brother very much, but I was envious almost to the point of dislike. My mixed feelings, the desire to love and be loved intermingled with a dash of jealousy, characterized my childhood.

All at once, these feelings from earlier years dissipated; however, replacements were quickly received. My former family structure began to wilt the day that Tommy was accepted to Rice University. After his early endorsement into the college of his choice, life grew more intense on the Sims' homefront. My emotions swirled with anticipation for his departure. As that fateful summer lessened, I began to envision "Life Without Tommy." In my own future, I saw a larger bedroom, my own bathroom, and a really swell ten-speed. Soon I would have the security of knowing that Tommy was not watching my every move. This meant that he could no longer bribe away my allowance for past misdemeanors. I do have some tender memories of Tom. For example, I find the time he



smushed my cat while playing with the new electric garage door opener an endearing recollection.

As my elation grew, Mother's depression intensified. She acted as if Tommy was consumed with terminal cancer instead of going to college. Her sudden affection for black became evident. My mother began to call Tom from work every hour on the hour only to make sure that he was still there, and every day she would bring him a tear-strained, and rather corny Hallmark. If you ask me, her behavior became rather embarrassing when she burst into tears in the shoe department of Foleys. Soon she began to utter things such as, "This may be the last time Tommy gets to eat my meatloaf surprise." For Tom's sake, I hope that meatloaf

surprise is not served in the Rice cafeteria.

Black Sunday had arrived, and it was time for Mother to give her only begotten son to a campus full of young hellions and hoydens. During our trip to Houston, the hours ticked away like minutes. In a flurry of freshmen, dorm rooms, and stereo speakers, I realized that my return home would be without my brother, and that I would have nobody to feet fight with in the backseat. By this time, Mother's tears were exhausted, and my elation was a tad deflated. It was definitely time to leave.

Our trip home, by way of Galveston, was like a three day funeral. Tommy received a total of nineteen postcards from us during his first weekend of college life. During our little side trip, my usually level-headed and logical father even seemed a little down. Our fun in the sun was cut short by our shared desires to return home.

At home, things were better because I was able to take refuge at the homes of friends and not be subjected to the crying and the condolence calls paid on the house by grieving friends. At least I was well fed on the charity gifts of casseroles and homemade soups brought to us by worried neighbors.

These previous events are now several months old, and I am now used to the fact that Tommy is only gone for a while. Life as an only child is not really that easy either. Without Tom, I am required to stay home more often, do all of the dishes, and take all the blame for eating all of the cherry-chocolate ice cream. Sometimes I habitually set the table for four, or I look for his car in the driveway forgetting that he is no longer part of my daily life. However, my greatest problem is trying to find a way to prepare Mother for the resurrection of Tom sometime around Christmas.

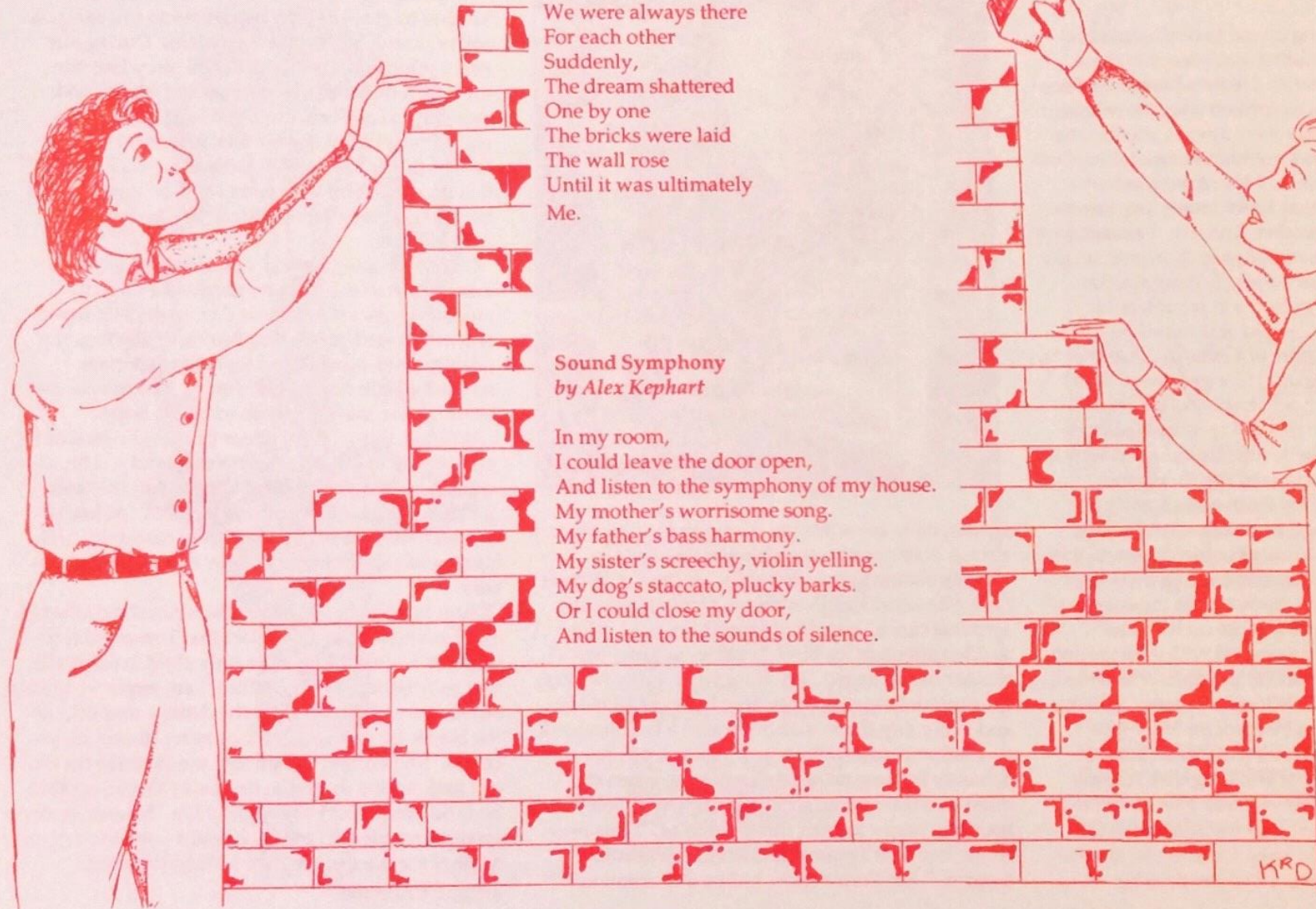
I AM INDEPENDENT

you and I
by Michelle Royer

You and I.
An open friendship
Full of good and bad
Nothing was too hard for this duo
You and I.
We were always there
For each other
Suddenly,
The dream shattered
One by one
The bricks were laid
The wall rose
Until it was ultimately
Me.

Sound Symphony
by Alex Kephart

In my room,
I could leave the door open,
And listen to the symphony of my house.
My mother's worrisome song.
My father's bass harmony.
My sister's screechy, violin yelling.
My dog's staccato, plucky barks.
Or I could close my door,
And listen to the sounds of silence.

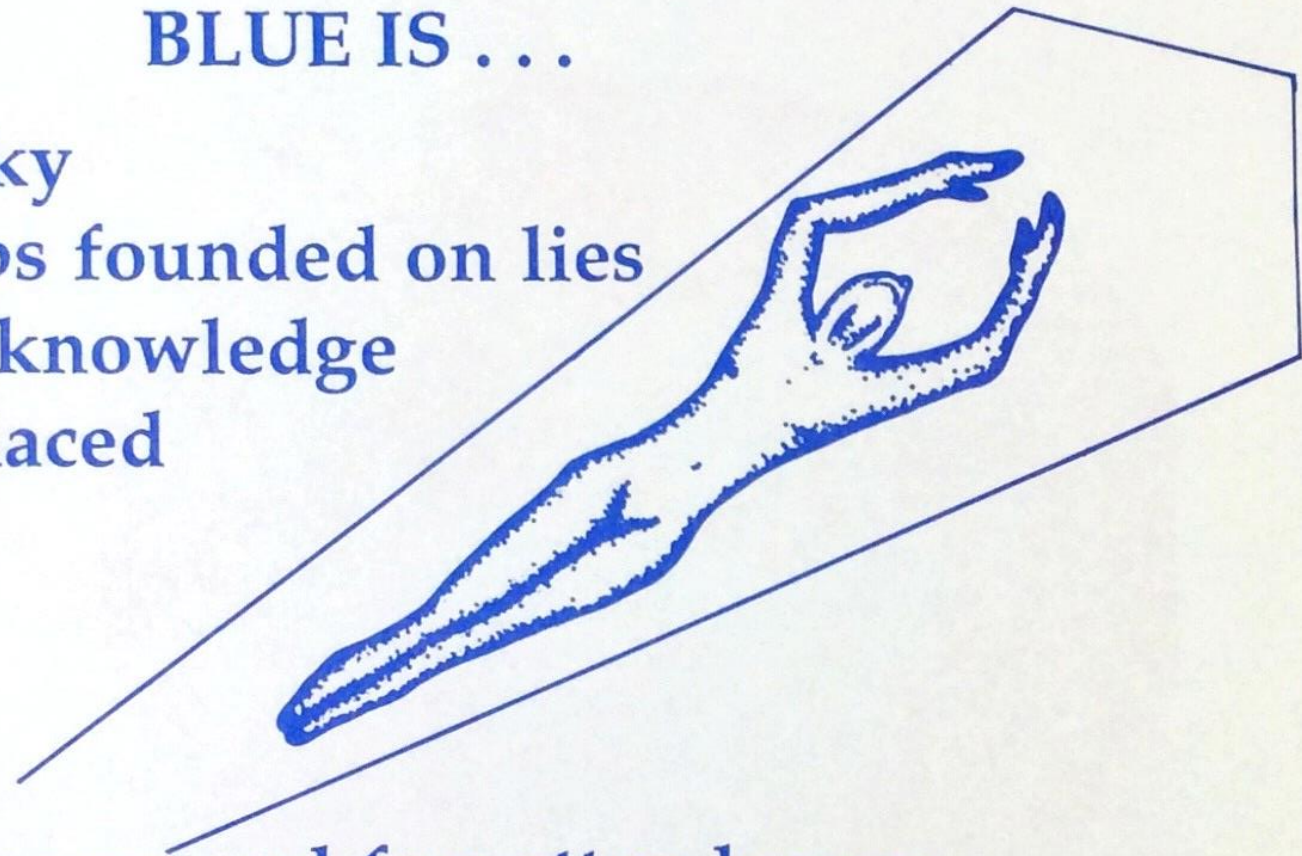


Kerry Duggan

I KNOW BLUE.

BLUE IS . . .

a starless sky
relationships founded on lies
the loss of knowledge
and misplaced
respect



unrealized dreams and forgotten hopes
a melancholy Christmas
a lover's carress on a rainy night
an outstretched hand in a world of clenched
fists



Michelle Won

I KNOW HYPOCRISY



Kerry Duggan

by Gabrielle Marcus

There was a man
who could do stuff with cameras
like take pictures
and he thought poverty
was a really good subject
'cause it had
good emotional value
and also
looked good in black and white
which was his medium.
So he went to a big city
and took pictures
of various bystanders
who begged for stuff
like money
for food
like canned peas
for want
of a life.
And the man
developed his film
in black and white
which was his medium
and sold the beggars
or the pictures of the beggars
to a big museum
which liked them very much
'cause they had good
emotional value.
And the man bought a
big blue house
and a
red car
and a brown dog
and a wife
'cause he was rich.
And the beggars went
to the museum
but couldn't get in
'cause the guard said
they were dirty
and besides,
they couldn't afford
the price of admission.

by Gabrielle Marcus

"Providence takes its cue from men,"*
who guide unsteadily,
unconsciously,
dancing on stepping stones their gods,
who,
tortured by stereotypes,
welcome
the water.

With pressure from the unconvinced,
the nudge of expectations,
pedestals holding gods are bound to tilt.
One thrust of rebels
—truth seekers and nonbelievers step
aside—

and a god lies broken,
overthrown,
on holy water
and sacred dust?

That we choose to define our gods
reserves us the right to end their reign;
once rejected,
let them sleep;
they've had their time,
and welcome oblivion.

*Brave New World, by Aldous Huxley; p. 160

I KNOW STUPIDITY



Weapon *by Sean T. O'Sullivan*

The steel, fine-sharpened
A blade of death
For men who found
No glory in peace.
They found it in death
And killing
Of others of like mind.
No mind
Men of action, not words.

The lead
Fired rapidly, blindly
At all
Who advance in their charge.
They must
Protect the ideals
In an era
When the world can die
In moments.

The soldier, a hero
Of people
Possessing of power.
A man
Who leaves home to fight
Other men's
Battles. A pawn in
A game.
Not human. A number.

The soldier is
A fool.

I KNOW COMPASSION

A Moment of Silence by Erin Amendola

"Hey, Jimmy, how are you doing this morning?" Well, I'm kinda tired, but I'm sure it will get worse as the day goes along."

It seems that each morning when I come to school, Jimmy, the janitor, is up in the band hall to welcome my brother and me. Everyone in band loves him. He is always so cheerful and he

always has a smile for everyone. I really don't remember when I first met him. My brother, Chip, talks to him all the time. Jimmy knows Chip by name so I suppose they have known each other for quite a while. It's funny how when I started school I really didn't even notice the janitors. To me, they were just these old Hispanic guys, dressed in blue uniforms, who kinda just walked around school and cleaned the bathrooms.

Jimmy has definitely changed my view on that matter. Most kids around school don't think that the janitors do anything. Well, they are wrong. The other day in English class we were talking about school pride. The teacher asked us to close our eyes and visualize a beautiful building with clean, shiny walls and floors, with lots of flowers around the sides of the buildings, and green, green grass circling the area. This school was named "Pride High."

We, then, opened our eyes and looked around. We were asked why our school didn't resemble Pride High. The entire class paused and looked around at each other until one kid said, "Well, our janitors don't do anything!" After she said that, the whole class fell into agreement. I thought about that and it seems as though that answer only shows how little kids know about school pride.

The janitors do everything. They are there to pick up the candy wrappers, the cigarette butts, paper bags, crumpled-up sheets of paper, and other debris. They even have to retrieve stolen and destroyed books which had been left by some

"pride-filled" students. While the kids are here learning and winning school competitions, they leave their rude comments, selfish attitudes, and their trash for the janitors.

Jimmy has made me realize many things about school pride. For example,

a few days ago I lost an important band competition. Well, Jimmy walked up to me yesterday. . . "Hey, listen. I was in the parking lot emptying the trash when I found this special thing by the dumpster." He smiled as he looked down at his hand. "I know how much that band competition meant to you, so I shined this up just for you." He then slowly opened his hand. It was a slightly rusty, but beautiful, medal. It was for orchestra competition, but it was very special to me, anyway.

"Thank you Jimmy, this is great! It will be my special good luck charm." Jimmy nodded his head as if to say "you're welcome." As he slowly walked away to dispose of an empty soda can, he looked up to me and smiled. Then he grabbed his mops and brooms and walked away.

That night, I had to go back to school for a rehearsal for the Senior Strings concert. Once again, when I walked upstairs for rehearsal the first person I saw was Jimmy. "Hey, Jimmy, how's your day been?" Jimmy replied "Oh, hi. Well I'm kinda tired, but I'll be all right! I was amazed that he put in such a

"I know how much that band competition meant to you, so I shined this up just for you."

"There was an ambulance in the parking lot, and the sign of fear filled the air."

long day. "Don't you go home soon, Jimmy? I mean it's almost 7:30."

"Oh, no. I have to still clean the courtyard, the trash cans, clean the cigarette butts out of the grass, and I still have to clean the "700" wing. I have to clean the spray paint off the inside of the door, clean the bathroom, and clean the mark off the bathroom walls. I even have to clean the ceiling in one of the classrooms. It seems some kids made a game of throwing pencils into the ceiling."

I then realized I was late for rehearsal, so I said a quick good-bye to Jimmy, grabbed my horn and ran on stage. I was a little late for rehearsal, but I guess that's okay. When I got on stage everyone was still warming up. The practice went slowly, and it was rather boring.

The only reason I really wanted to be in this concert were because I had nothing better to do, it's something to list on a music application, and we receive a patch of honor for participating. When the conductor told us that brass and percussion could leave early, we were overjoyed! Rudy, Holly, and I sped out as quickly as possible. As we approached the front door, Steve (Rudy's friend) swung the door open and yelled for us to come out quickly. As he opened the door, the vision of yellow, blue, and red lights shone through. The sound of confusion and chaos protruded through the door. When I walked out, I got a chill up and down my spine.

Doctors and police surrounded the area. There was an ambulance in the parking lot, and the sign of fear filled the air. As I looked around the building, there was a large huddle. They were writing down all this data and then transferring it to a metal clipboard.

My throat became dry and my eyes started watering. I ran up to Steve. "Steve, what's going on? What's happening?" Steve looked at me, and then he put his hands in his pockets and looked down at his shoes. When he

lifted his head I saw his eyes were red with anger and tears were rolling down his face.

"J - Jimmy, Jimmy's dead. He died of a heart attack about five minutes ago." He started crying and lifted his hand, pointing over to the huddle of doctors. "I can't believe what I'm hearing - it's not true! Jimmy's my friend. He can't be dead." My heart started pounding, and I began to feel very sick.

Rudy reached out to put his hand on my shoulder, but I pulled away from him and ran toward the circle of doctors, which was slowly dying away. As I ran up, some of the doctors moved out of the way just enough so I could see. There he was. I put my head down and started crying. Just then, Rudy put his hand on my shoulder. I could feel that he was trembling.

"Why, Rudy, Why?" I cried.

His eyes started watering, and he shrugged his shoulders. "Come on. I'll take you home," he said. On the way home, he calmed me down for the most part. He told me not to worry, and that the school would probably have a moment of silence in his honor. I smiled, thinking how nice that would be.

The next morning during third period I got everyone quiet for the morning announcements (most mornings the kids don't bother to listen.) When the announcements came on, they just congratulated all the first place winners on the academic team, then the top place winners in the Latin competition, and then announced that, once again, our basketball team won by a landslide. Then there was a pause, and the lady said, "We are very proud of our top achievers. They show true school pride. Those are our morning announcements. Thank you."

And that was it! That's all they said! They said *nothing* about Jimmy. *Nothing!* Here was a man that kept this school clean and clear, a man who made this school look good. He made it look better than it actually deserved. Here was a man who put all his time, energy, and his heart into a school that didn't even have enough pride to give him the respect of a moment of silence in his honor.

And today they ask me to write a paper on school pride.



by Jenny McLain

I was driving home
that cold lonely Sunday night.
God, I guess it was
about 6:30
not thinking about anything
or
maybe I was thinking about everything.
I'm not sure
that part seems insignificant
now.
I was driving
dangerously
not fast or anything
but I'd catch myself
staring blankly at the road
not really paying
attention,
until a red light stopped
me.
Green told me to go
and I glanced
around.
In a truck
slowly moving towards me,
I saw a woman
laughing
with the full
love of life.
I turned towards
her driver.
He was sitting
there
sullenly, no
smile, no
laughter, nothing.
And it was
at that
point
that I realized that
if I

stay with
you
I would always be the
one
laughing
and you would always be the
one
resenting
that I laughed on
my own.
I drove home
in silence,
staring blankly
at the
road.

I KNOW SACRIFICE



Ja Lane &

I KNOW LONELINESS



I, The Wine Glass *By Saja Sokol*

Painstakingly crafted, exceedingly breakable,
The crystal wine glass am I.
Had I not sat untouched
Upon my lonely shelf so long,
I might not have been so eager
For someone to remove me
And lift me to their lips
To taste the sweet wine I held;
But I was anxious to be sampled. . .
Too anxious, too impatient
To be too careful
About those I quenched the thirsts of.
Thus, the hands I dreamt of
Delicately cupping me
Have left fingerprints and smudges,
The lips that pressed against my own
Have revealed the many teeth
Which hide behind them,
And the wine I aged so long
To be sipped by only the finest connoisseur,
Has been gulped by a mere drunkard
Who cannot differentiate between
A fine vintage and a cheap glass of ale.
Since I have been returned to my shelf,
I've felt even lonelier than before. . .
For now I am empty.

David Roman

I KNOW EMPTINESS

Happiness by Karin Riley

the elusive yet ultimate
goal of every action and thought
pursued extensively; seldom found
discovered most often where it is
not sought
barely gained before it is again
out of reach
beckoning mirage; masterful illusion
found beyond money and the
material world
love opens the door, and also slams it
tight, locked
a glutton which can feed on hope and
devour it all
until only a crude vision of bleak
reality remains
laughter and tears
acted out with false smiles when
it is gone.
empty receptacle of a lifetime's search

The Candle by Amy Albro

As I watch the rain
Streak down the window
It reminds me of the tears
Rolling down her porcelain cheeks.
Thunder brings back
The memories of our bitter fights
Mighty bolts of lightning
Light up the sky
Like fireworks.
The flame of my candle
Flickers
As the wind blows outside.
How she loved those candles!
I'd come home at times
To find thousands of candles lit.
Like our love for each other,
The flame slowly
Melts away the wax.
Now, only a burnt wick remains.
A loud clap of thunder
Brings me back
To reality.
The rain is still
Streaking down the window.
I wonder if tears
Are still rolling off
Her porcelain cheeks.



Alex Roman

I KNOW THINGS ARE SELDOM THE WAY THEY SEEM TO BE . . .

Pained Remembrance *by Marina Broitman*

I still remember that night last summer, even though it's been almost a year now. It was past midnight and the moon had risen to her dutiful watch in the still sky. I drove him home.

I had hoped for so much that night and I felt anxious as he held my hand. I could feel the urgency in his grasp when he invited me in . . .

We were two friends attempting a new intimacy; we embraced awkwardly. We suppressed nervous giggles as we held each other close, discovering each other's bodies while sharing the night.

We kissed again, still not familiar with the touch of each other's lips. He spoke softly to me and I sighed my contentment. I finally felt comfortable in his arms.

Then he let go, and I knew subconsciously that our moment was over. I felt dirty as I watch him walk around the room, waiting for me to leave and speaking casually as if nothing had happened. I left him at his front door without even a goodnight kiss.

I drove home feeling lonely and used. I had wanted so much more to happen; I had pictured a joining of our souls for eternity, but it was just momentary passion. We experienced a romance with no beginning or end, just an abrupt and incomplete middle, and that wasn't good enough for me!

I was emotionally drained when I left his doorstep. "Never again!" I cried to myself. "I won't do this again!" I promised myself then to never raise my expectation for love so high and never again to search for love in someone's urgent grasp.

I still promise that to myself, each time I am disappointed by a look I think I see in someone's eyes. I swear I will never forget that summer night, even though I know couldn't forget it if I tried. That night I warned myself, "Forget romance—romance is dead!" and in vain, I still search for romance. I'll keep crying "Never again!" but I'll keep searching for eternity in a glance, or a grasp.

Reality *by Sarah Schubert*

She walks down halls,
permeated by the scent of crayons
safety;

Into a room
overheated as always before
warmth;

She sits on plastic chairs,
just right for fifth graders
memories.

A bell rings,
time for recess
innocence;

Finally, she walks outside,
into the chilling air
fear;

And tears flow slowly,
freezing on her cheeks
realization;

Days of praise, spelling bees,
and playgrounds are gone
life.



Ashley Garcia

SILENT SCREAMS



Silent Screams by David Roman

On a humid and cold night, a chilling drizzle fell. A thin blanket of gentle fog moved slowly, covering the ground as it advanced. Jackson, a town in Southern Mississippi, lay silent. At the end a row of old, shady streets, stood the Jackson Penitentiary. In an empty field of fence and barbed wire, it appeared condemned by the rest of the world. In this penitentiary all of the prisoners slept but one man, John Mapple. He had raped and killed nine women. This was to be John Mapple's last night before his execution.

The high walls of his narrow cell trickled with drops of water, produced by the combination of intense body heat and the night's stale humidity. While trying to get his last night's sleep before his electric-chair execution, his soul echoed the howling of the dead and the shrieks of the damned spirits of hell. In a fetal position and trembling in his tiny bed, he cried, "Oh please God, let me wake up; let this be just a horrible nightmare. I don't want to die!" His cries for help were useless, for God's warm presence was no longer with him. The cold feeling of the evil dead shredded his flesh with their vicious talons. Frightened, he turned quickly, expecting to see Satan's evil grin. Instead, he heard a giggle, "I can wait." Around his entire cell, the thick black air suffocated him, allowing only enough air to torture him for his sins. Whimpering and sweaty, he cried himself to sleep.

At 4:30 a.m. the metal door down the long, steel hall opened. A ray of light invaded the steamy darkness, awakening the condemned sinner to an eternal hell. He saw the shadows of two guards marching down the hall as though in slow motion. When the guards opened the cell door, the squeaking of the metal sent shivers through his cold, sweaty body. As the guards escorted John to his fate, the loud, synchronized tapping of their feet on the polished concrete floor maddened John's heart pound, almost to the point of explosion. He looked pale and nauseous; he could barely walk. The

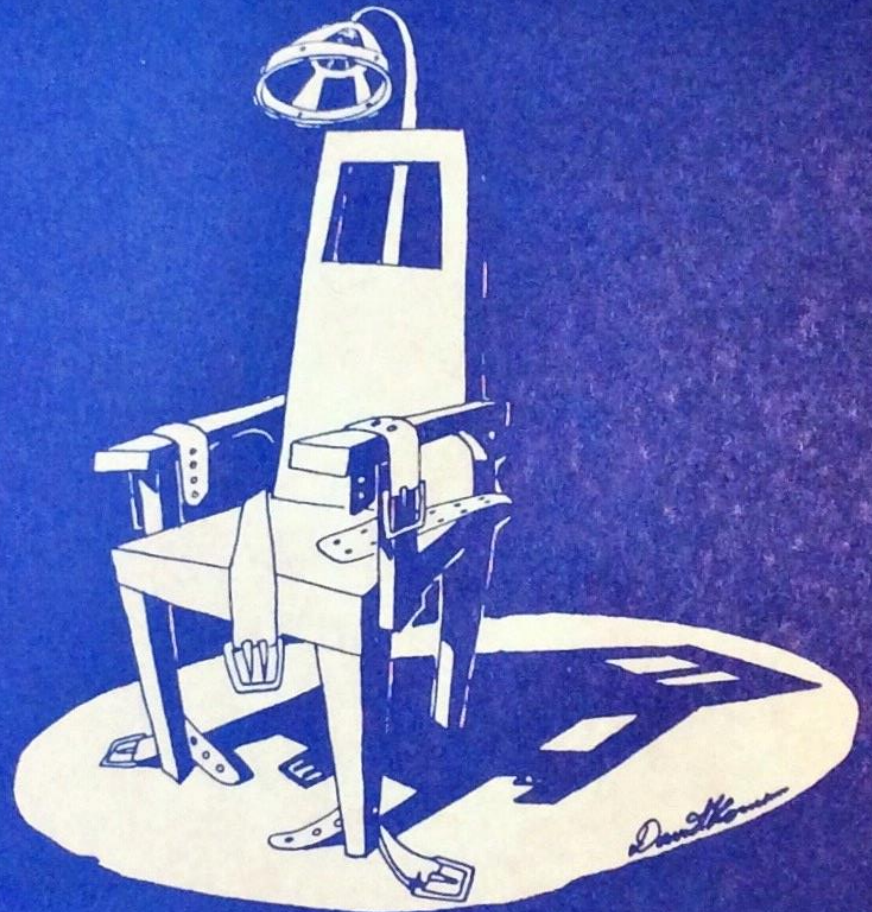
guards knew there was no reason to kill this sinner. He had lost the will to live. He knew his soul already belonged to the Black Angel.

As they entered a dim room, a priest read from a Bible, yet John heard no sound coming from his moving lips. John was led up to a dark wooden stage. An electric chair was illuminated by a spotlight overhead. Although another spotlight aimed toward him blinded his eyes, he could feel the presence of an audience waiting to witness his unnatural death. The two guards suddenly slammed the sinner into his throne. The impatient chair snapped him out of his trance. Now he could hear his lungs gasping furiously for oxygen, his heart beating painfully, and the squeak of leather straps as they squeezed the circulation from his arms and legs. Suddenly, he could hear the priest reading, the audience whispering, and his irregular breathing, all at the same time. He heard only loud confusion. As they tightened the crown of wires to his head, tears rolled down his defeated eyes. He began to remember his childhood.

He remembered the happy, sunny days when his mother and father had given him never-ending love. He remembered his first puppy. He thought about the ice cream truck and playing tag during recess in the second grade. He recalled the singing of the scarlet cardinals, the gentle petals of sweet smelling flowers, and the crisp blue sky. Once they taped his eyes, images of hell and dark shadows of tortured faces filled his thoughts with despair and abandonment.

The executioners suddenly hit the switch, sending John's body into a frantic vibration. The hungry chair drained the life from his body. The veins on his forehead and arms began to protrude as if about to erupt. His teeth clenched, trying to defy death. A foamy, bubbly lather of saliva started to emerge from his mouth. Tears of despair suddenly turned to tears of blood. Blood trickled down his face from his taped eyes, from his ears and nose. After a minute or so, the electricity from the chair was shut off. The lights of the room came on. When the witnesses, reporters, and photographers began to exit the room, the steam of John's bodily fluids floated

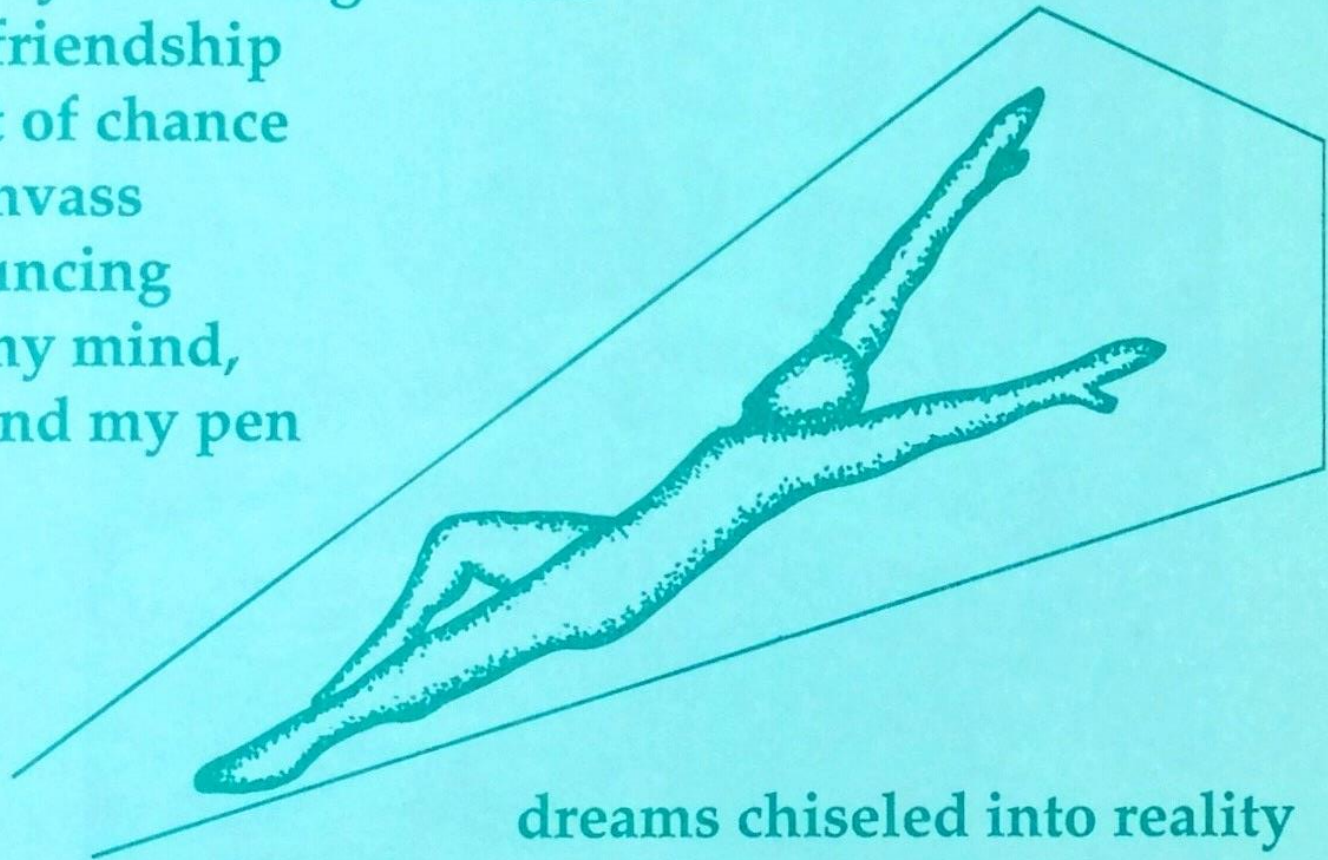
from his open mouth to the ceiling. The stench of death lingered in the air. The guards unstrapped John's body from the chair, silently placing it in a black vinyl body-bag. They carried the carcass from the empty room. The electric chair was left dormant, waiting to consume the soul of its next victim and satisfy its hunger.



I DREAM OF GREEN.

GREEN IS . . .

a newborn's eyes waiting to focus
the birth of friendship
created out of chance
a waiting canvass
thought bouncing
between my mind,
my soul, and my pen



dreams chiseled into reality
cheating at Solitaire



David Roman

I DREAM OF REALISTIC FANTASIES

by Brian Frey

I am but a meek intruder
becoming engulfed
by the scene

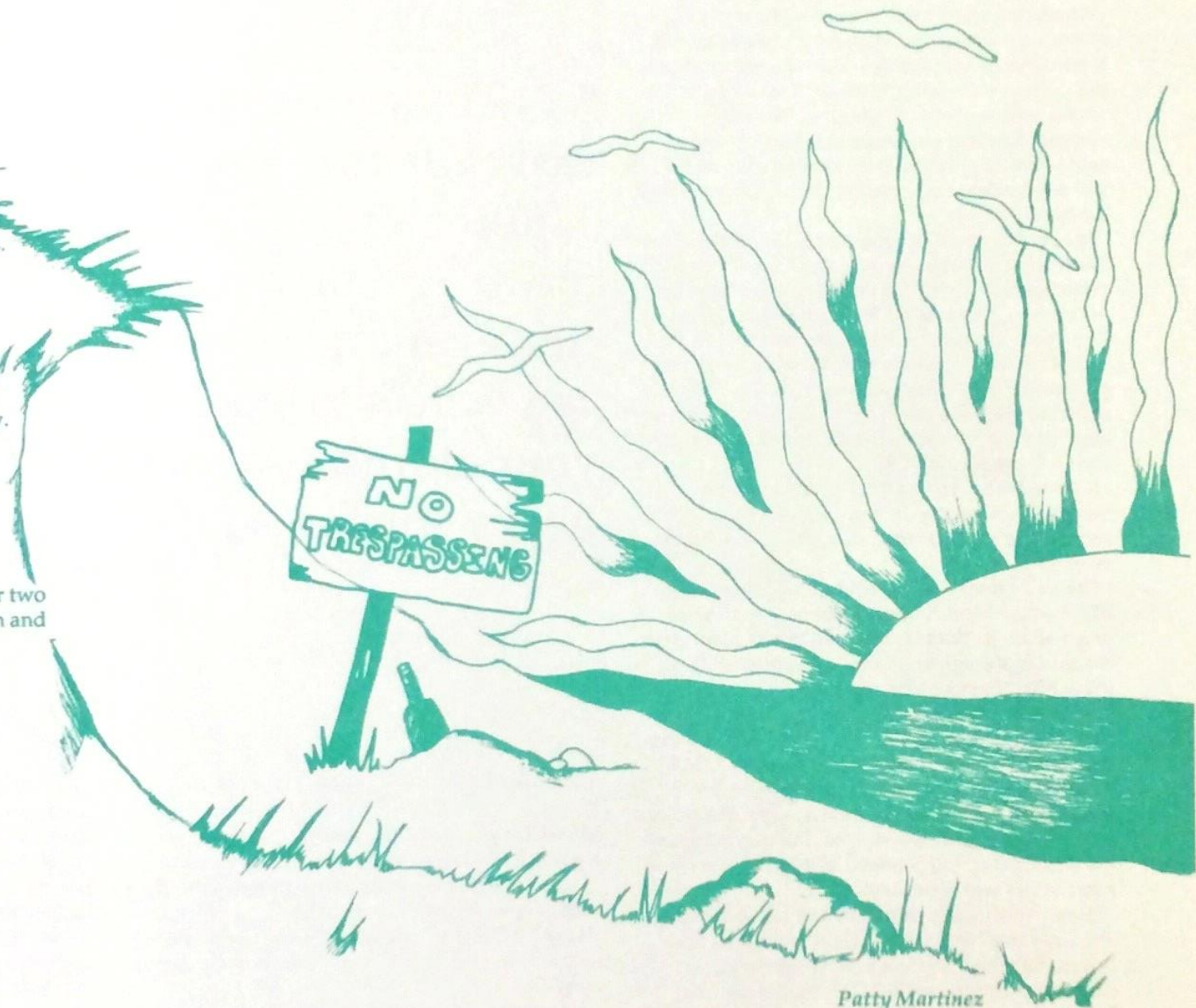
I had watched the dunes
From a distance
Once I enter,
I become a part
Playing with Mother Nature
In her purest form.

A dead sign stares up at me
"No Trespassing Private Property" it gasps.
How could anyone hope to hold Her
For more than an instant?
I look at my own tracks
Holes in the earth
collapsing
and sliding
Even walking can shatter her fragile beauty.

The sand—her body
solid yet ever shifting
The water—her mind
ever changing but constant
The wind—her soul
intangible though driving the other two
Their meeting is a symphony of destruction and
rebirth
Chaotic harmony
Living poetry.

Inspired,
I write in the dune,
"My words disappear
in shifting sands of time."
And mark my work
With a tired, green bottle.

Topping the dune,
I see civilization.
Without words,
I thank Her for the inspiration
And return to the world of man.



Patty Martinez

Wonderful, more rain! We just had a really big storm not too long ago, stayed for a whole month! It was a nasty one: heavy winds, thunder, lightning. . . boy, was there lightning! That's how it ended, with a stroke of lightning. The wind stopped blowing, rain stopped falling, thunder stopped rolling—all with that stroke of lightning. It was right outside my window, too, hit a tree in my backyard.

I guess you could say that storm changed the tree. There were reporters all over the place after it happened to get information on the "transformed tree" as one newspaper said. But they've gone now. Everybody's forgotten about that tree, that is, except for the neighborhood girls who used to have picnics under it. They came out right after the rain ended to see what the lightning had hit. It seems that "icky, nasty storm" as they called it, disrupted their favorite picnic spot.

It started off as just another storm, but when it left, there was something different about it. You could sense it in the air, its fragrance. It had lost its icy edge.

The storm itself seemed kind of moody, restless, like it wanted something. It had a look, an air of anger about it. But the continual flowing motion of the clouds, the rippling, brewing nature, all this made him, the storm, beautiful.

He drifted to a standstill above the neighborhood, looking for some to talk to while he waited for the moment he would unleash upon the city. That's when he saw her. She was a small, shy tree with darkish bark. Erin was her name, a Mountain Laurel in my backyard. (From what I'd known of her, she was kind of self centered, always conscious of what others said about her).

There was a clap of thunder as he asked her name. She answered him in the hushed rustling of her leaves. Upon her reply, a light breeze began to blow. Rain began to fall, lightly at first, getting harder with the increase of the wind. It had a mel-

"... Tomorrows forecast calls for rain. Thunderstorms will move into the area this evening, so you can expect to start your morning with heavy showers..."

ody all its own. They swayed softly in the wind, dancing to the music of the rain all night long.

The next day, Erin awoke to the gossip of the elder trees. They were talking about her.

"I can't believe it!" one said. "She's always been such a dear, sweet child. How could she do such a thing?"

"Why would she do such a thing?" asked another. At this, Erin spoke up, for she knew not what she

had done. "Do what? What did I do?"

Her words startled the gossiping old trees into a stunned silence, for nobody had realized she was awake. But, after a few moments, a grandmotherly Elm spoke.

"Why, nothing my dear. You haven't done anything, have you?"

"No! What would I have done?" she answered.

"Why, have an affair, of course!" burst an obnoxious Oak that Erin disliked very much.

Taken aback, she said slowly, "An affair," as if concentrating on the words would help her to better understand them.

"Yes! Yes, child!" burst the Oak again, "With the Storm."

"Oh, with the Storm. An affair with the storm," murmured Erin. "But all we did was dance, how could that be having an affair?" she said, a little louder.

"Dance?" they asked all at once. "All you did was dance?"

"Yes," came the simple reply.

"Doesn't sound a bit like the Storm I knew," chimed the Oak, and, upon realizing her great blunder, she shook her leaves loudly-hoping no one would remind her of her embarrassing error later on.

Erin looked at her, quite puzzled. Everyone was silent a moment, then the grandmotherly Elm once again started the conversation.

"You see, dear," she began, pausing a minute to decide how she should say what must come next. "Storm used to be quite a . . . a . . ." Here she stopped, for she was at a loss for something to say that wouldn't offend the young sapling. She looked at Erin, with an apologetic look on her face, for Erin still seemed to be confused.

A few minutes passed before Erin realized what her old friend was trying to say. Then, suddenly, a look of surprise and anger came over her.

"Oh! But he's not like that! How could you suggest such a thing?" she cried.

Quietly, they all shook their heads, as the Elm once again broke the silence.

"Maybe he's changed Erin. Just be careful, dear."

she said, trying to comfort the much troubled Mountain Laurel.

At this, Erin sighed. The boisterous Oak then quickly changed the subject, feeling very uncomfortable herself after her last outburst. From then on nobody mentioned the Storm.

That night he came to her, and requested a dance. At first, she was hesitant, reflection on the day's discussion, but accepted, and again they danced all night.

This went on for almost a month. Each night, he would come to her and request a dance. She would accept, and they would dance all night. The only words spoken were those asking for the dance, and the one accepting. They fell in love. Over the weeks, the rain's music became more passionate, grew warm and tender. It had lost the wrath that first spurred it on, its bitter, unfeeling edge.

One night, Storm came early, for he had a talk with Mother Nature.

"You must move on immediately," she told him.

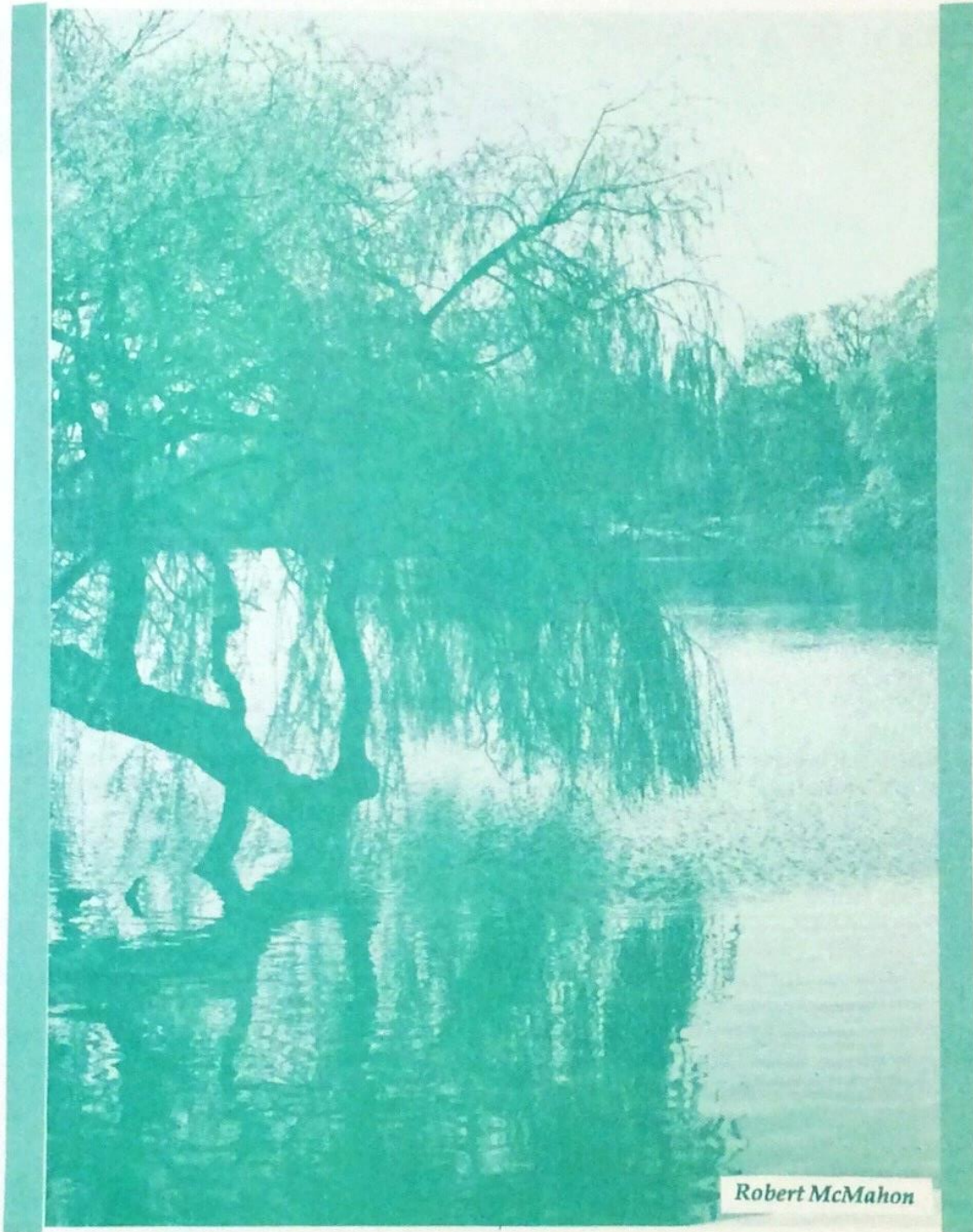
"Your rain is causing much trouble for the city."

Storm protested, saying that he had found true love and could never leave her. Knowing that what he spoke was true, that he had indeed found true love, she let them have one last night together.

On that night he told her, expecting her to hate him. But the only words she spoke were, "Dance with me." And so they danced.

Their long, beautiful dance brought tears to Mother Nature as she watched them. They swayed together in the wind, dancing to the song of the rain. The only way Erin had to comfort herself was to stretch her limbs upward, catching the tears he shed over having to leave her.

As Mother Nature watched them that night, she felt badly, for she knew Erin would not fare as well as Storm. He had an outlet for his pain, where Erin had none. In the final moments of the rain's song, she sent down a bolt of lightning that touched Erin's heart and transformed her into a Weeping Willow — that she might fare better if she could cry away her pain.



Robert McMahon

I DREAM OF A MOMENT

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE by David Friedman

It was 9:00 p.m. Thursday, December 12th, the night before my driver's test, and I was trying my hardest not to go insane.

For the past semester, I had taken Driver's Ed. from Mr. Floyd, a senile old man whose last encounter with a car of any form was probably in the late 50's.

The last month of training was spent in a horrifying confusion of agony and despair that led me to the conclusion that I was unprepared. My thoughts were interrupted by the telephone ringing.

"Hello?"

"Hey Daniel." - It was my best friend Nathan.

"What's up?" I asked.

"Not much. Did you hear about Clyde?"

"No, what happened? Wasn't he supposed to take the driver's test today?"

"Yeah, uhhh, he sort of messed up. Hospital visiting hour is at three."

"What happened?" I asked once again.

"He pushed the gas instead of the brake and slammed into the back of a school bus."

A shriek found its way up my windpipe and the phone found its way to the floor. This is what I had to look forward to, crashing into the back of busses.

I picked up the receiver, said good-bye, and hung up before any protest could be heard.

That night, I dreamed of the Indy Five-Hundred.



Just at that moment, a deranged looking man stumbled into the room, hair uncombed, tie untied, face half-shaven. In his right hand, he was carrying an open brief case that was scattering papers about the floor. Dad grabbed a cup of coffee, kissed mother good-bye and signaled for me to follow.

I slid reverently into my dad's shiny new Porsche 911, the car I was to use for my test after school. We were off.

At the school intersection, there was a stationary milk truck. My dad, apparently, did not see it.

I began to gibber wildly, pointing at the milk truck and at the brake pedal at the same time. Dad, looking out the left window vaguely remarked about a \$50 bill set aside for the United Way Fund that he recently lost. (Then noticing the milk truck, he launched a corner in order to avoid it). Somehow we wound up perfectly in the school parking lot.

"O.K., I'll pick you up after school and take you to the DPS."

I only nodded because I was doubled over, trying to catch my breath.

The morning bell rang. In first period, I was still asleep, so I felt nothing except for exhaustion.

The knock grew louder on my door.

"Go away; I'm entitled to some sleep."

Suddenly, the door to my room swung open and a hideous, six-legged, drooling, disgusting, green, slimy creature flew into my room.

"Hi, Mom, I'm too tired to go to school, and I'm feeling kind of sick anyways."

The creature that was my mom whipped out a twelve foot long spiked thermometer. I told her that I felt better already.

After preparing for school, I went downstairs to the kitchen to get some breakfast.

As I was eating my ritual, morning pop-tart, I turned on the news.

"The news at this hour: There has been a 49 car pile up on the Northeastern part of Route 207 this morning. . ."

I turned off the news.

During second period, I began to notice that I was breaking into a cold sweat, and my whole right arm began to tremble spasmodically. By third period I realized that I could take it no longer.

I would commit suicide at lunch.

After ten minutes of waiting in the hot food line, I had my meal: orange thing on a bun with a side dish of yellowish-brown stuff and a carton of something vaguely resembling milk. I sat down in the middle of the cafeteria to eat.

As bad as cafeteria food is, it still didn't kill me. Moments later the normal people around me with their stable lives, looked upon me with a mixture of curiosity and pity as I tried repeatedly to stab myself with a plastic knife. Still, no luck. As a last resort, I walked up to the school bully, Billy John Jack, and stole his lunch tray. But he only thanked me and pledged eternal friendship.

I walked from the cafeteria, head held low.

During fourth, fifth, and sixth periods I managed to lose control of virtually all parts of my body.

Hands trembled, arms and legs shivered, stomach quivered. I was in a continuous cold sweat that made my clammy hands feel like a soft snail.

And then, the bell of death rang.

My father, just like he said he would, picked me up in front of school and drove me to the Department of Public Safety. I was seated next to several other temporary-licence hopefuls. We all had the same look on our faces, a look of total fear.

Finally, my name was called. I got into the driver's side of my dad's shiny, new Porsche and was followed by the DPS officer. I could tell just by looking at this man that his mother's name was Helga and that she probably wore combat boots.

He turned to me and in a thick German accent said, "Drive."

Parallel parking seemed to be an impossible task as I was asked to park between two posts that seemed only a foot apart. I was then taken down four-way streets, one-way streets, streets with stop signs, and streets with yield signs. I swerved slightly at one point to avoid three children standing in the middle of the road. The officer grinned maliciously.

It seemed that for everything I did, he wrote something down on the scoresheet.

Finally the maze led back to the DPS building where I stopped and awaited my verdict.

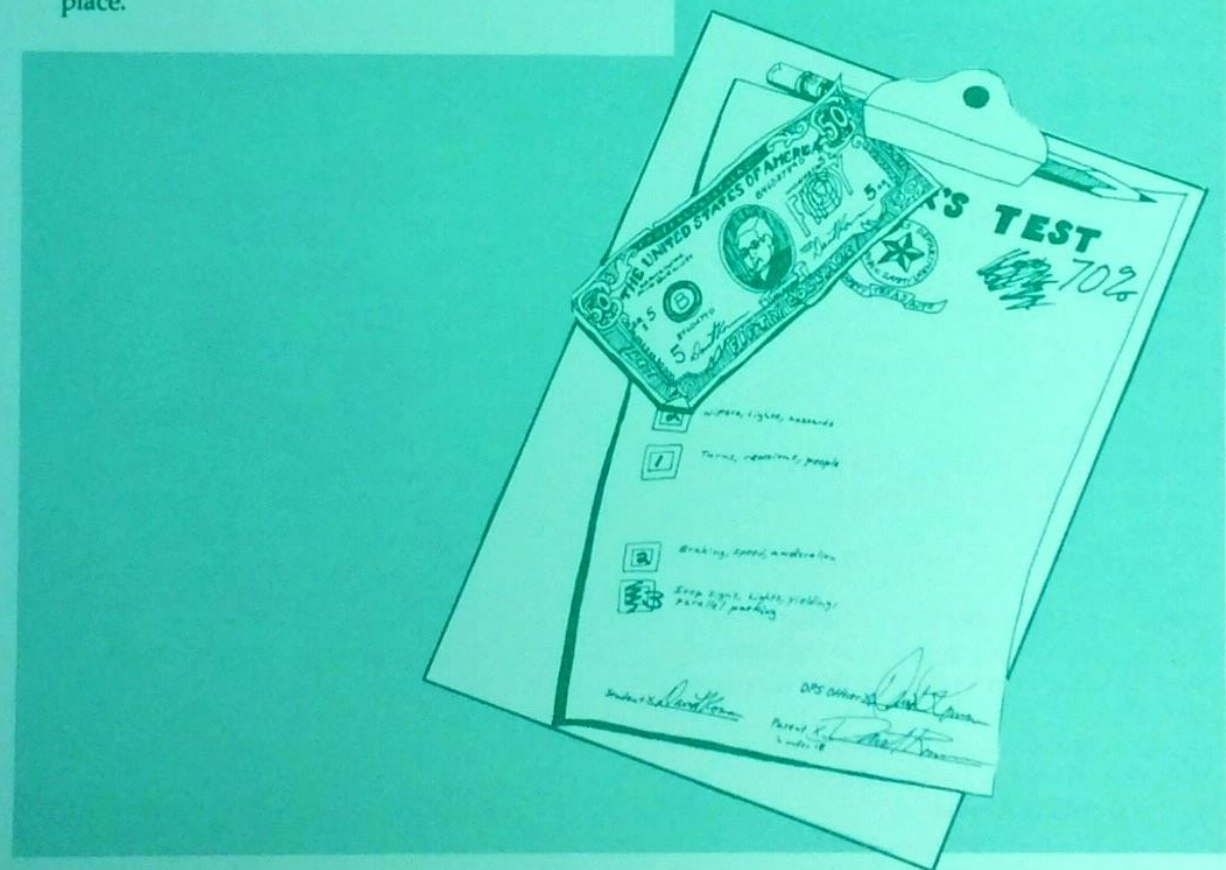
After a moment, he handed me the piece of paper. Down at the bottom of the page, the number 69 was circled.

In a fit of anger, I slammed the dashboard with my fist.

Just at that moment, the sun visor above me dropped and a single \$50 bill floated helplessly downwards until it landed between me and the officer.

I looked at him. He looked at me.

"Well, you didn't do that badly at parallel parking," he said placing his left hand on the money while scratching out the 69 and scrawling a 70 in its place.



I DREAM OF UGLINESS

L.A.
by Saja Sokol

Los Angeles.
Charming as sin;
The epitome of angles brings the demons
out of most.
This sprawling showcase of paper doll castles,
Laced by spider webs of poverty, is engulfed
By beaches of smooth grain and sharp glass,
Puffy clouds of angel's hair that sliver the eager
touch,
Encircling freeways with no real exits,
And hovering skyscrapers that scratch the
porcelain sky.
All in this city that is slowly sinking
Into the sea of human degradation.

Here it is understood
That commitment is purely casual,
Smiles are only armor to shield the truth,
And love is just a synonym for getting
what you want;
Nothing more, but so much less. . .

People are merely
Stick-thin bodies suffering from gluttonous vanity,
Youths with troubles who unite to make them
worse,
Fallen stars that have been burnt up by the fickle
atmosphere,
Artists who climb their way to the top
Only to claw their way to the bottom,
And families, sleeping through their American
dream,
Only to find it a nightmare.
All "show " animals for this circus town,
Where your highest goals
Are only as tall as your money stands.



Kerry Duggan

by Emily Forland

at first
there is only
the overwhelming anticipation.
the din of
rising
and falling voices
reaches a lull
as the crowd goes quiet.
the hush is electric.
only the feeling of an all-consuming excitement
lingers.
and then, suddenly
blackness prevails.
we are captives of the dark.
the bright lights announce their presence,
magically transforming the moment
into an intimate
fantastical dream.
dancing shadows
waver on the stage
in front of us,
as the familiar notes
make our acquaintance,

I DREAM OF POSSIBILITIES

"bringing on the night"
as the rippling melody
spills into the air creating a unity
amongst its prisoners.
the prisoners
dance and sway
guided by the rhythm
which
intoxicates them,
joining them all
with the magician
in an unspoken bond.
together
they sing
of matters of importance
igniting in themselves
a hope
and a purpose.
for at that moment
there is the possibility
that maybe
the issues can be
overcome
and that perhaps the dream,
in truth,
is a reality.

I DREAM WHEN I AM AWAKE

Emerald Night

by Erin Searcy

I stir quickly to keep from nodding off
It terrors me to think of sleep,
I hear the dogs bark and howl outside
And the door cannot have enough
bolts and locks and barriers.

I hear the wind whip around the sill
it calls to me, a temptation lights
and I step to the window
pulling the curtains back.

The emerald night reveals itself.

Its depth holds many nightmares
that children cannot conceive.

I see those who are painful,
who bring wrath upon the little ones they bore.

I hear those who are spiteful,
changing their words to suit their lying minds.

I feel those who are weak,
who lean upon us all for their strength and support.

The doors are locked and
keep that dreaded night out,
but they cannot keep me in.

The emerald night, with all its sorrow
holds many travelers,
many pupils of the stars.

The deep green of this night
has a lure that I bite.

I unlatch the sill and slide the glass
and decide what I must do.

Without a look back,
I step out into the emerald night
that has never existed in my dreams.

I am not asleep.



Ja Lane

by Beth Mize

I remember one day you and I stole
all the roses from my neighbor's yard
innocent to the ways
of anger and possession.

We picked each blossom and dropped them
gently in our baskets and when
it overflowed we simply carried
them in our small hands.

We plucked each petal from
its stem and savored the velvety
softness between our fingers
then scattered them
along the sidewalk.

Raising our imaginary satin gowns
we then waltzed down our
rose petal lane—
you and I, in our royalty.

Our rose petal lane is now slightly
muddy and a bit trampled and,
though we are no longer childre,
we still seem to insist on
plucking life from its stem
and tossing it thoughtlessly
beneath our feet.

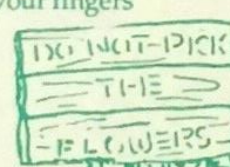
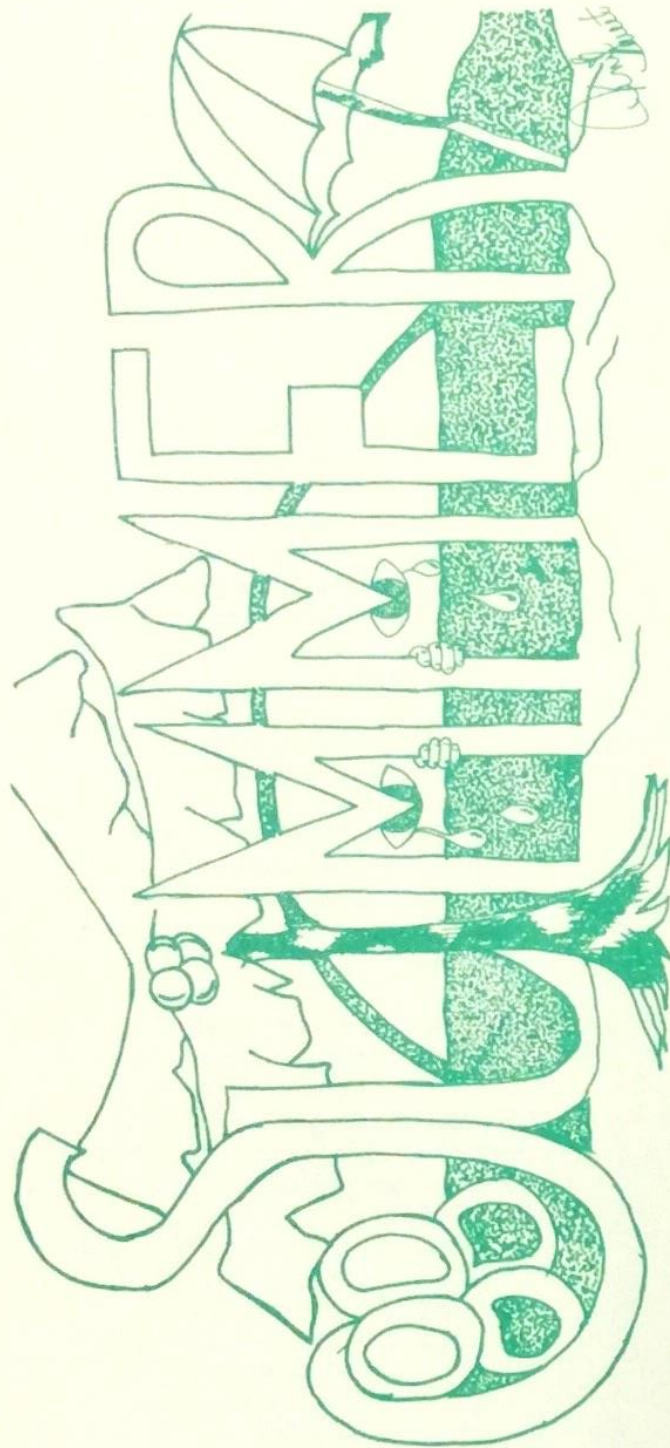
I DREAM OF YESTERYEAR

Summer '88
By Kit Crawford

How do you say
Good-bye
to a summer?
Do you
christen a ship with champagne
and wish it a bon voyage?
or
merely
tuck it snugly into bed
never
to flutter its eyes open
again.
it's not as if it would have
the decency to say
good-bye
like a man dying,
or a sunset
or anything else
brought to the expected end.
You just
wake up
one morning
and
it's gone.
Slipped
though your fingers
put back somewhere
in a small
pocket of eternity
or
maybe
(and just maybe)
it's
looking back
laughing at you
because it
sneaked away
without your notice.

by Eve Lyons

pig tails and freckles
she walks into the yard
innocently following a bright yellow blossom
she walks over to it,
takes in its beauty; its elegance
and then she takes in its lovely fragrance
she cannot read the announcement:
"DO NOT PICK THE FLOWERS"
she was not harming
nor was she corrupting
but an angry man
hollers her away
frightened; the child scamper off
forever thinking
it is a sin
to stop and smell the flowers.



AND I DREAM OF WORDS TO SHARE MY DREAMS

Wild Words
by Allison Newton

Words twist and fly
Through my brain
Like macaroni
And dive off
My tongue
Into a sea
Of scowling faces



Closed to
WORDS
that tickle toes
and slide down eye lashes
play hopscotch on freckles
ski off nose-jumps
skate across fingernails
scale rib cages
hide in bellybuttons
and swing on split ends
because they fear
Heaven forbid
such words
could be catching!

When?
by Heather Aussiker

I was watching the moon, late one night,
Its light spilled into my room.
As I sat, a question did come up to me,
Requesting to borrow a broom.

"A broom?" I asked, "But whatever for?"
The question shrugged, and then smiled,
"Because," he said, carefully choosing his words,
"I must put my thoughts in a pile."

Thoughts about what, I wanted to know,
But ask him this I would not.
I got him a broom to fulfill his request,
And then told me, he did, what I sought.

"Thoughts about time," he started to tell,
"For you see, I'm the question of When.
I need an answer, desperately soon,
Racking my brain, I have been!"

"I'm hoping the broom," he went on with a breath,
"Will put my thought into line.
I'll review and rethink all the ideas,
Until it's the answer I find."

"Well, keep the broom as long as you'd like, and
Good Luck," I said, waving good-bye.
I watched him go off, into the night,
Soon fading past less than a fly.

I went to my window some time ago,
And thought about ol' troubled When,
To my surprise, my broom I did find,
With a note that simply said — Then.



Robert McMahan

Writers Blocked
by Kirk Lynn

A writer without words is like a duck who has had its wings clipped, neither gets anywhere but there is a lot of flapping around.

I'm going to leave my name out of this because it embarrasses me, —I can't finish a story. It is not an amazing problem really, I just get so far and then my interest falls like a clipped duck. Most people handle problems of this nature by talking to a friend or doctor or they simply write bad stories. (Melville chose the latter.) I myself choose to go to B.B. That's a group for stumped writers who need the help of others to continue. It stands for Baffled Bards.

I felt kind of silly going in. The room was set up for some Sad and Lost Knights of the Round Table meeting, minus the table. I was facing about 32 other clueless fools and we were sitting in those folding chairs that squawk with every move. The entire crowd was completely awkward. We wore the wrong clothes and had forgotten to comb our hair. I began in that depressed cynical tone to imagine that we were all really just beatniks, no-talent groupies who just wanted to be. Who among us would ever be any good at writing?

"Welcome to tonight's B.B. meeting," said a blonde headed woman with a slight lisp. "By looking at your forms we have separated the group into two smaller groups, the writers and the beatniks. you are the ones who show more talent, the writers group. If you feel at anytime that you should be with the no account groupies, that room is across the hall."

Half the group rose and walked across the hall.

"Now without further delay we will continue," she continued, "starting with you, state your name and problem."

She was pointing at a guy two seats to the right of me, who I noticed immediately was an old buddy from my eighth grade composition class. Horrible writer, always wrote about wanting to steal fruit and give it to his girlfriend.

"My name is John Inkster, I'm a little nervous about this meeting. It's my first one. I'm having trouble writing a good story. My latest work is a novel about a guy wanting to steal purses and give them to his wife."

The lady smiled kindly and said, "A plot twist may shed new light on the subject, consider divorce."

Twitching, the next man offered a poem about love for his parakeet but he was tempted to sell it for \$100.00. It seemed like some foul joke.

When it came to me, I said exactly this, "My name is Kraig and I cannot think of an ending to suit a story about my Mother and the good times we've had. No ending seems normal."

Unerring in her passive smile of pity, she almost whispered, "You sound Oedipal, killing your father should allow your ending to flow."

I left. I don't know whether they thought to join the groupies or to murder my Dad.

The meeting taught me this: A writer is a sad thing when He doesn't know what to do. Of all the lost souls in the world, a writer's is the hardest to find.

My Dad is still alive.

I SHARE PURPLE.

PURPLE IS . . .

the star in a unicorn's eye
knowledge passed from wisdom to
innocence
strong roots of the family tree
the words hiding in my pen
the infinite exhaustion with the task yet
unfinished

by *Barbara Burch*

I am purple

I am a potential for warmth
Hiding beneath imagination
A child's cloak enclosing innocence.

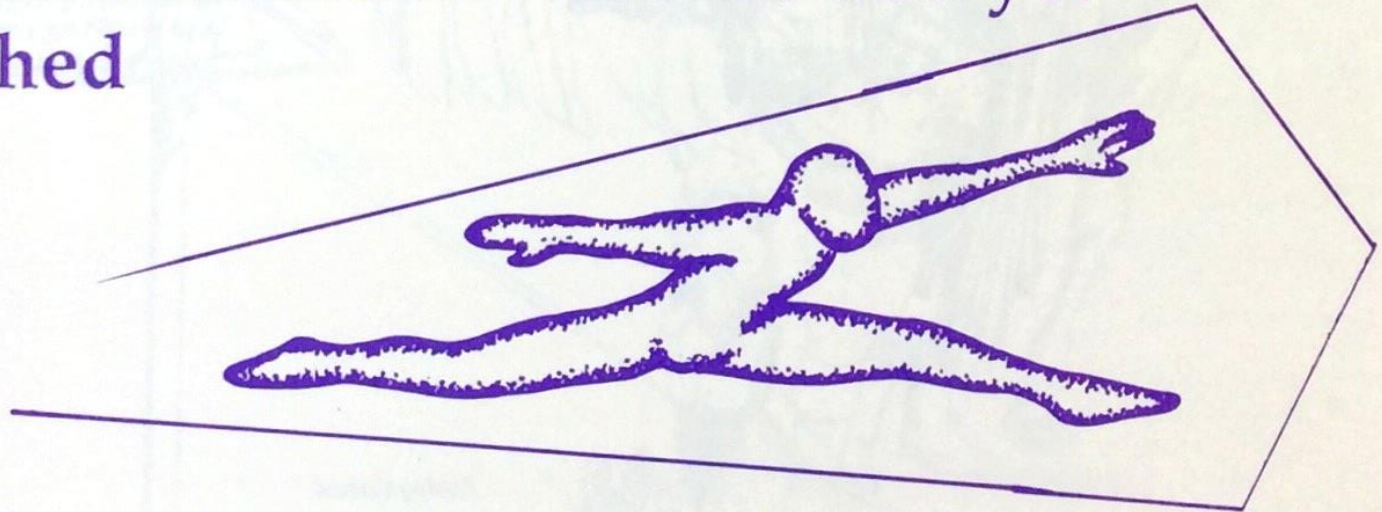
I am unknown

I am a stance of mystery
A mirage of sparkly depth
I elude definition

I am inspiration

I am a velvety night of moonlit passion
A dance within spectral brilliance
A jewel of neverending dreams

I am purple
And I am alone.





I SHARE MY SOUL

Caretaker of the Otherworld
by Sean T. O'Sullivan

My job amongst the Caretakers of Reality
Is the Protection of Immateriality,
Sheltering unicorns and elves from the night,
Offering leprechauns hospitality,
Keeping the last few dragons under lock and key
For future heroes' quests.
But by far, the part of my job that's best
Is keeping swords hidden in far-off lakes,
Keeping the tombs of kings who did not die,
Re-teaching horses to fly,
Remembering tragic lovers of ages past,
And protecting a magic hawthorn tree
Under which a Wizard dwells.

Ashley Garcia

I SHARE MY ANGER

by Roxanne Stiteler

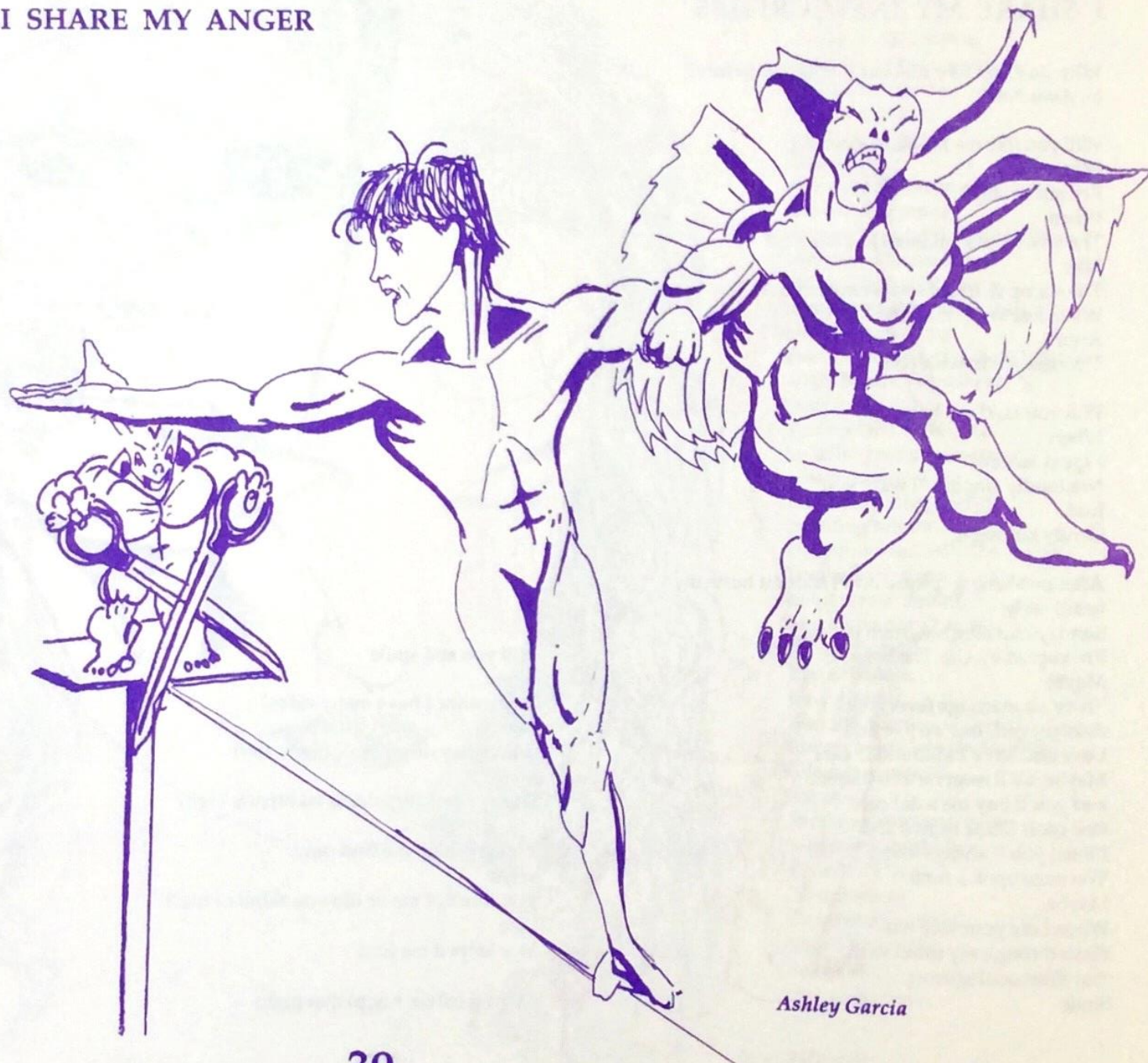
I am the tightrope walker-
balancing
on death and destruction,
my morbid audience
below me.

Blood flows-
seeping from the cut
you mercilessly bestowed
on my soul.

Your trusting eyes lied.
You never cared.
You hurt me, deeply.

Betrayal.
Now I can never find love-
my love is dead.
The audience cheers.

I am losing my balance.



Ashley Garcia

I SHARE MY INSECURITIES

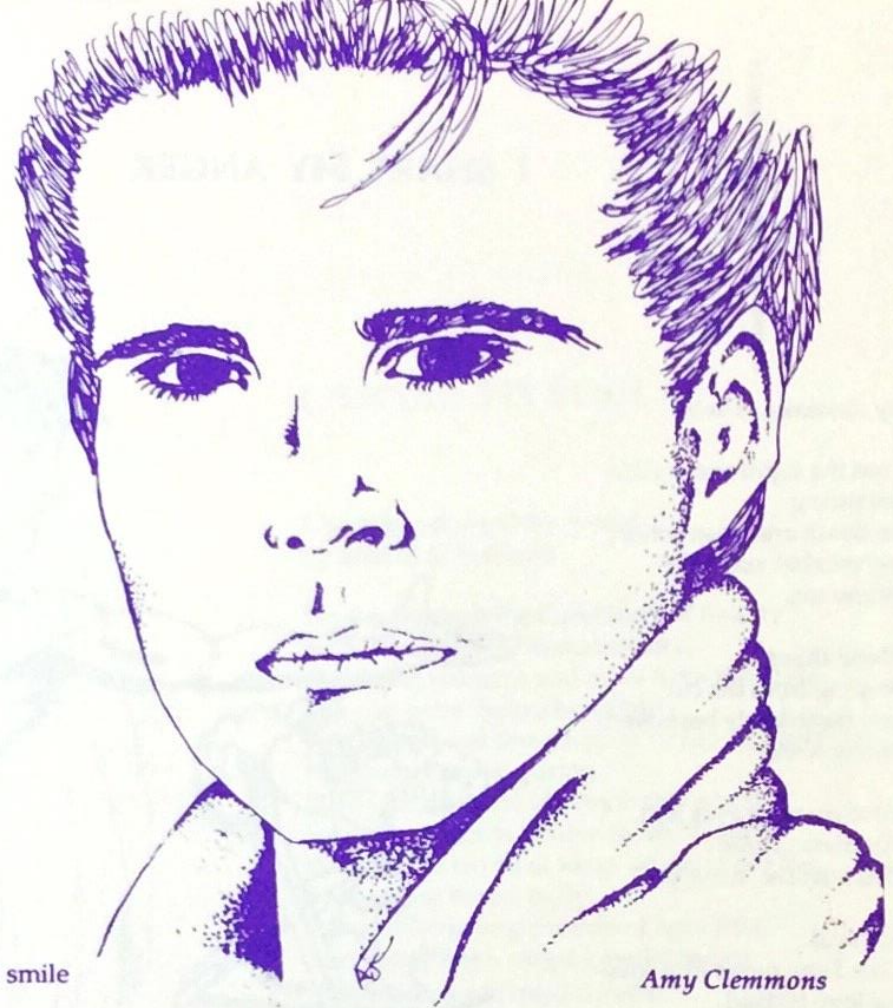
Why do I feel like this has happened before?

by Amy Petri

Will you like me Monday morning
When
I'm not so silly?
When
The weekend's wildness has worn off
Like
The stamp (Girl Senior) on my hand.
When lies to my mother
Aren't
The reason I'm with you.

Will you hold my hand
When
I speak to you?
Not loudly singing "I want you"
Just
Gently hinting it.

After awakening (please don't shout it hurts my
head) early
Sunday morning's sermon is
Preempted by US: The Saga.
Maybe
There's a marriage (everyone
discouraged) but we live and
Love and have 2 kids and 2 cars
Maybe we'll meet on a city street
and you'll buy me a delicate
(too cool) Drink or two and
I'll tell you I always loved
You once upon a time
Maybe
When I die your face will
Flash through my mind with
that slow, soul-stirring
Smile



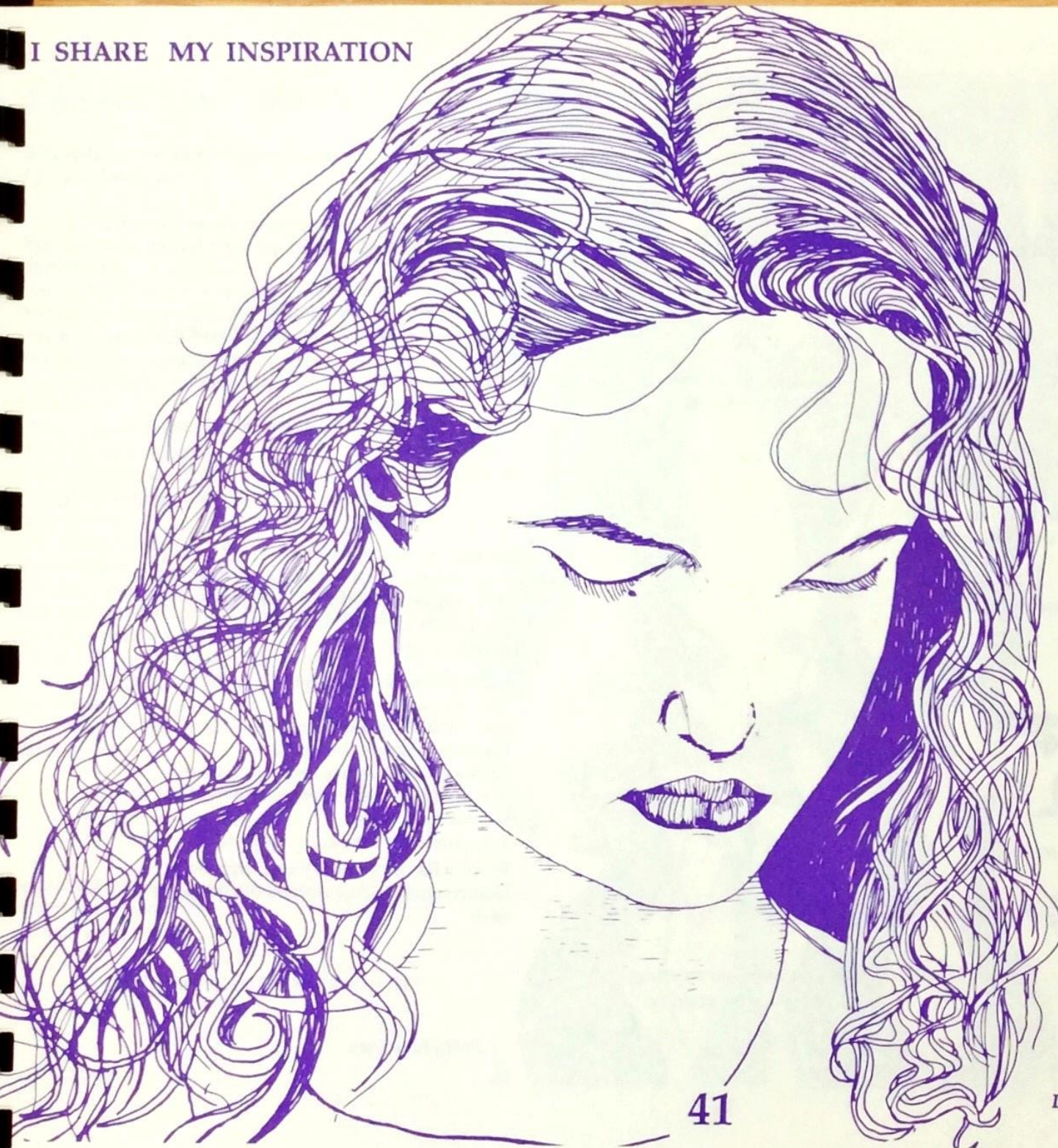
Amy Clemmons

Will you still smile
When
You realize I have many sides?
My
School day disguise (kittenly shy)
My
Friday night flightiness (skittishly high)

Will you help me find out
What
You think of me or (do you think of me?)
Like
You helped me find
My
Earring (silver hoop) that night

Will you please hurry and (softly)
Sever
Our small section of connection.

I need another
Fatality
To bring me back to
Reality



*"This one's happy—for you" or
"They said I couldn't do it"*

By Jenny McLain

I never minded eating
cheap chocolate ice-cream
out of the container
but you took me
to Haagen-Dazs
letting me
pick out any flavor
and treating me to
whipped cream and hot fudge.
I was used to silence
but you let me laugh
in my loud obnoxious way
and listened to my
theories on a Middle-East religion
while holding steadfastly to
your own faith.
You opened up to me
by telling me you weren't
always open.
I had been stung before
by biting humor
but you teased without malice.
I craved affection
but it was different
when you didn't reach
for my hand.
The closeness,
the intimacy
was still there.
I wasn't sure who I was with
when you picked
me up.
But I met someone new
when you tenderly
kissed my lips.
And the boy
I tortured in school
became the man
I can't stop
thinking about.

I SHARE MY LOVE

The sand wasn't as soft as I thought it would be...

Crushed shells unmercifully poke our feet
As we walk the deserted shoreline
To reach our destination
Dinner for two
At the exotic Kalypso
Candlelit tables in front of a wall of glass
Facing the open sea
Dancing close to the rich, silvery measures
The hands are soon twelve and twelve
A full moon outside to light our stroll home
Kicking shoes off
Rolling up clothes
Hand-in-hand we walk down the beach
Wind whips our hair
Tears at our clothes
Water splashes up our legs
Salt stinging our skin
Green and blue pairs cast upwards
Staring into the starry expanse
Deep breaths of fresh air
Pondering thoughts
Brimming with sensuousness...

Is this really happening to me?
Or is it just a dream?
Quick, pinch me... No wait
If it is, I don't want it to end

Facet of the Diamond
by Jennifer Adams

God bless our marriage...
Together for eternity.

Silence so loud
It is deafening
Sea and sky so beautiful
Question beyond comprehension
I wonder where one begins and the other ends?
It is beautiful, just like you

We need no words to express the vibrant
stirring
In mind and body

Stairs leading up to our room
Beckon our love to awake
Slow steps approach the moonlit chamber
Stopping on the threshold: he plucks a rose
The gift and symbol of our love
Strong and true.

We commence our beginning
Our first night
Soft, tantalizing touches
My lover's arms envelope me
Kisses sweet as honey rain down on me
Warm night, cool breeze sweeps over our
sweltering bodies
Two bands entwined
Worn with complete joy and happiness
Golden circles filled with three diamonds, each

Patty Martinez

I SHARE NEW VISIONS

An Abstract tale on a Strange Theme
by Dani Amendola

Yesterday was quite the interesting day...
The sun came up and froze the Earth with a cold
dark light.
People began to run in terror,
but slower than a walk, or a crawl
this frightened mob moved.
Fire shot from a point in the sky where nothing was,
no dark, no light, no machines,
no life.

The fire came down in a—ray of sorts
and burned the ground.
And as everyone ran and panic filled the air,
a laugh of deep and sinister quality filled the minds
of the weak.

The weak and frightened
grew weaker and died.
The dark grew darker and the fire grew hotter
and that menacing laugh blew their minds
and all seemed lost, but then. . .

then something rather strange occurred,
one little girl, simple and poor yet sweet
with the love
and innocence that only the hearts of chil-
dren still have,

went to the fire,
and touched it and said:
"I'm sorry, please stop hurting."

And suddenly there was nothing,
then there was everything.
And all was normal again. —Yes. . .

Yesterday was quite the interesting day.



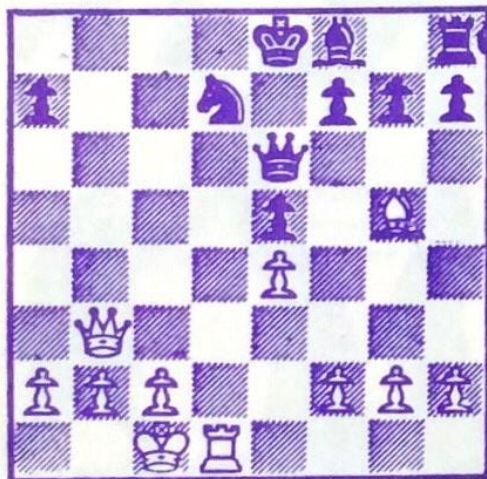
Dani Amendola

I SHARE OLD TRADITIONS

The Duellist by Eric Murphy

All around the city, large crowds pushed and jostled, trying, as city folk will, to arrive at their destination in good time. Above their heads rose the stately beauty of Cormarta, a city renowned for its prosperity and sheer wealth. Among the throngs were people of every description; the elves from the forests of Andri, the dwarves from Mount Dragonne, the little folk, halflings, from the Korn Hills, and a disproportionate number of humans.

Melikor, a man renowned for his skill with a blade, strode easily through these crowds and down the streets, his eyes never deviating from his immediate path. He was unremarkable as appearances go, being of indeterminate age and wearing his brown hair cropped short and his clothing nondescript. His only noticeable features were his shining, grey eyes, deep and devoid of most human feeling; and his sword, which he wore as if it were a part of his own body. His manner, however, cried out as being quite out of the ordinary. He carried himself with the confidence of a giant among men, not deigning to notice those around him. His walk was not quite human, but more a panther-like glide. His

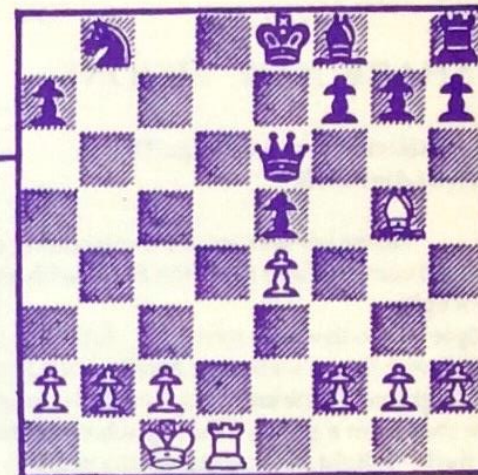


profession was barely condoned as legal while providing him with the respect of all. He was a duellist, a legal assassin, and he was the best.

As he moved, the crowds seemed to melt away before him allowing easy passage. None but the foolhardy or insane would willingly face him on the field of honor. He moved with singleminded intent, never stopping or turning from his path, just as he always did.

Suddenly a shadow blocked his path, forcing him to stop, something he had not had to do for some time. With deliberate and calculated slowness, Melikor raised his eyes to meet those of the man in front of him. Staring calmly back at him were the eyes of a young man not more than eighteen turnings in age. He too wore a sword, and his manner showed that he knew how to use it. Melikor observed silently that the stranger's attitude was much like his own in his youth.

"Stranger," said Melikor in his deep voice, "I suggest that you move out of my path." Slowly, Melikor's hand moved to cover the hilt of his sword. This movement alone would have been enough to cause most men to run in fear, but the younger man remained smiling, even as the excited crowds began moving back, forming a great circle around the two men.



"Sir," returned his opponent, "I wish to meet you in fair combat." Still smiling, he continued, "Any time you wish and on your terms." His hand moved to cover his sword.

"Certainly, Master," said Melikor, intrigued by the challenge. "As you wish." Bowing, he drew his long sword from its scabbard with a steely rustle. The young swordsman pulled free his blade and took a defensive position.

With a quickness of motion more like the striking of a serpent than the movement of a sword, Melikor slashed at his opponent. Most men would have been cloven from neck to waist by such an attack, but the stranger's steel moved even quicker to intercept the stroke and reverse it. Already Melikor could tell that this would be more than a casual fight, it would be a fight for his life.

For nearly an hour, that two swordsmen pressed each other, neither giving ground and neither able to gain an advantage. Both men bled from a dozen wounds inflicted by the other and more were being received with every passing moment. At any given time, one would be pressing the attack. His blade would slide through the other's defenses and taste blood once again. Then, a moment

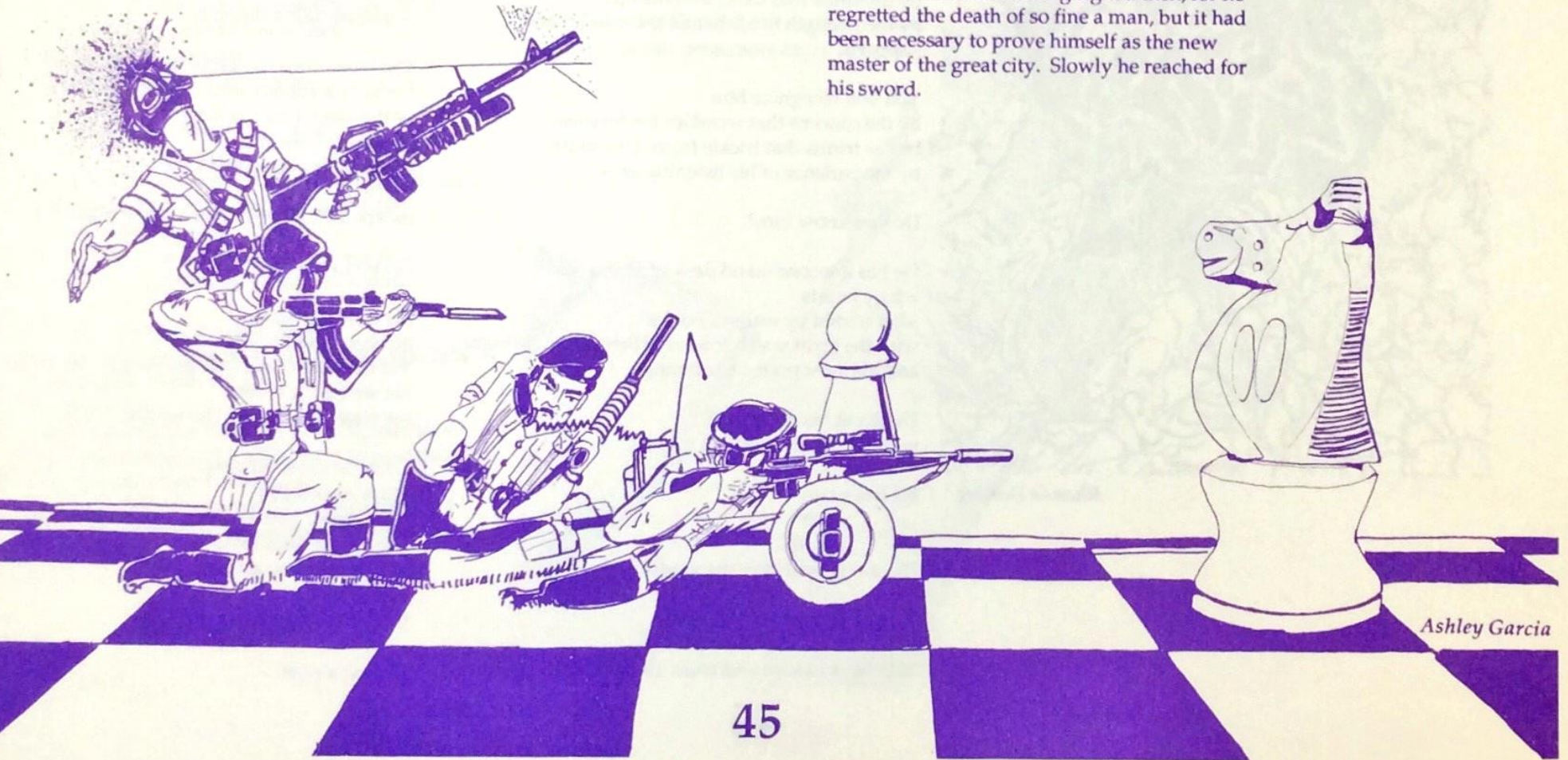
later, it would be the other whose blade found a target. Suddenly, the young swordsman faltered and was forced to hastily retreat from the flurry of Melikor's blows. Seeing his chance, Melikor dove to the attack, driving the stranger further back. With out warning and with uncanny quickness, the stranger twisted away from Melikor's wild blows and found an opening in his defenses. Finally, his blade found it's mark, driving upward into the lung of the duellist.

Faltering, the duellist slumped to the cobbles, his breath gurgling in his throat and a pink froth on his lips. Those slate-grey eyes looked up at the man who had bested him and his lips moved in a painful attempt to speak. Agony contorted his features as he finally forced the words to come.

In a barest whisper, "If I am to die, then I would know the name of the man who was my better. What is you name sir?" he rasped.

"My name is Hahn of Colberg."

Melikor smiled slightly, confident that he had fought well, and quietly died there in the city of his birth. Hahn of Colberg sighed then, for he regretted the death of so fine a man, but it had been necessary to prove himself as the new master of the great city. Slowly he reached for his sword.



Ashley Garcia



Rhonda DeKing

I SHARE A PASSION TO CREATE

I know a poet.
by Jennifer Gremmel

Do you know him?

You can spot him
by the laughter bursting from his eyes
by the smile that dances on his lips
by the strength in his hands that guides and supports.

You will recognize him
by the concern that wrinkles his forehead
by the truths that trickle from his mouth
by the patience of his listening ears.

Do you know him?

He has a second-hand desk of steely oak
where he sits
surrounded by walls of books
with the great watch towers of Steinbeck, Salinger,
and his most prized Cummings.

He sits at his desk
with the whole world at his feet.

He has a task
a job
a duty.
He, alone, will save the world.

Do you know him?

"I believe in love and truth and God

these things I hold self-sacred."
This man writes only what he believes
and tries with tear-drop despair
to recreate
his own personal rose
—and he fails every time.

The rose is not the same to you and me.
Perhaps a velvety white petal is missing
or the stem a bit too long,
but to him, the rose is
nothing less than perfect beauty.
It is his,
escaped from within his pure white soul.

Do you know him?

He is not famous,
not even published.
Yet this makes him the greatest writer of all.
He writes for truth,
his way of changing the world.

I, too, have failed now.
I cannot possibly
recreate for you my rose,
this person that I know.
This man set so gently
upon this earth by
the Lord's own mighty hand.

I know a poet.

I SHARE THE MAGIC

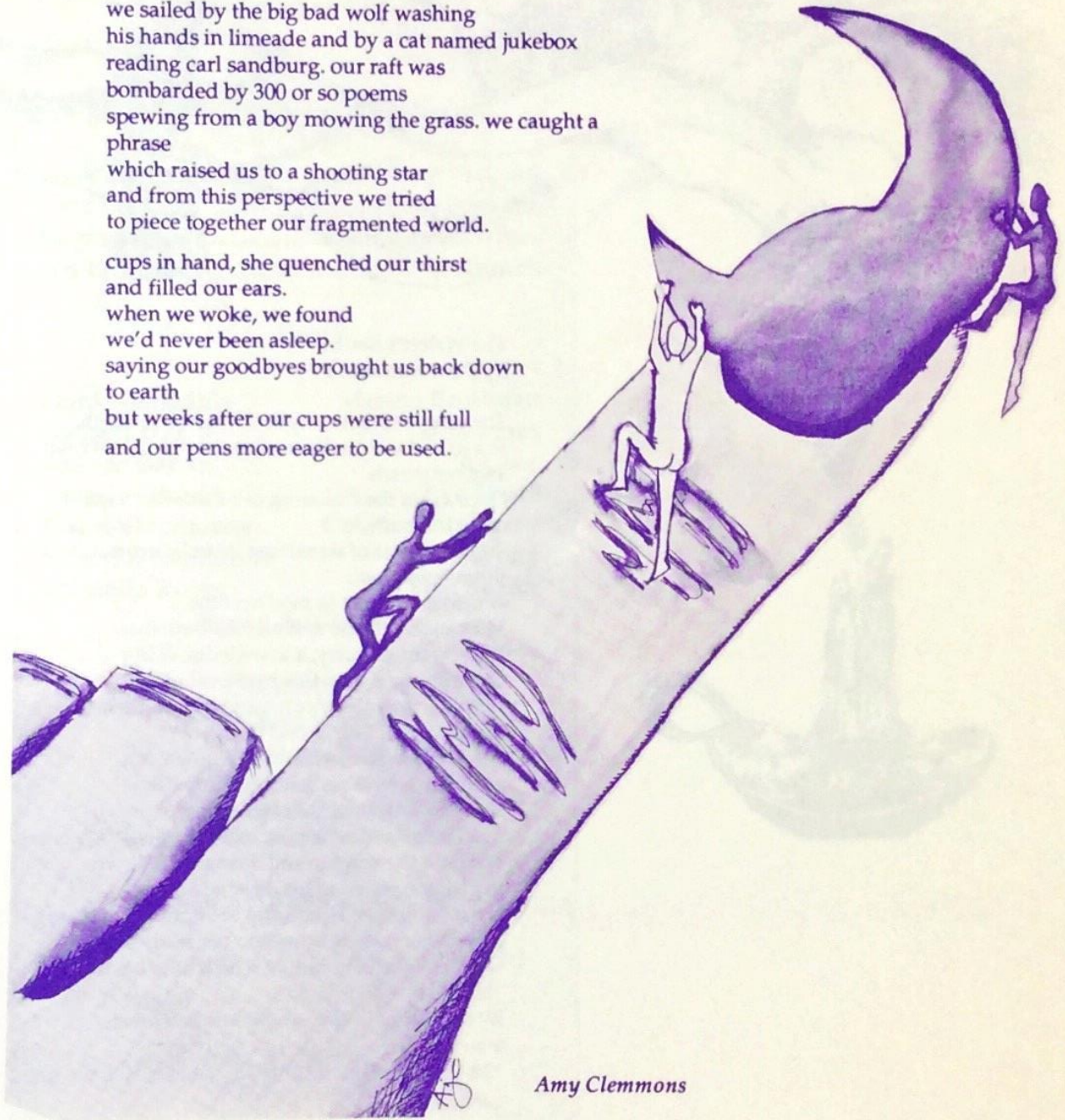
—on interviewing Naomi Nye
swinging from the fingernail moon;
an afternoon with a poet
by Stephanie Block, Emily Forland and
Karin Riley

we sat close around a small round table
covered with a cross-stitched cloth
sipping small glasses of limeade
in a warm afternoon sunshine
turned slightly chill.
chatting about mintbread, jukeboxes, and
the fabric of life,
our feet were touching the porch's pine floor
it is so much more than just a floor
it holds a quiet wisdom
as does everything in this place.
as we
were laughing about growing up
and other serious goals
our hands strove to catch the multi-colored ideas,
like smoke from lewis carroll's caterpillar,
that were drifting from her mouth.
pulling them back, we found our fists full;
we were swing from the fingernail moon.

the moon rocked back and forth
and we snuggled beneath cloudfeather blankets
in our cradle in the sky.
shooting stars
combined with the hum of a washing machine
lulled us to sleep and we dreamed of a cardamon
scented journey on a lullaby raft,
drifting down a limeade river, waves made by
the roars of a fire-breathing dragon rocked us on
our course.

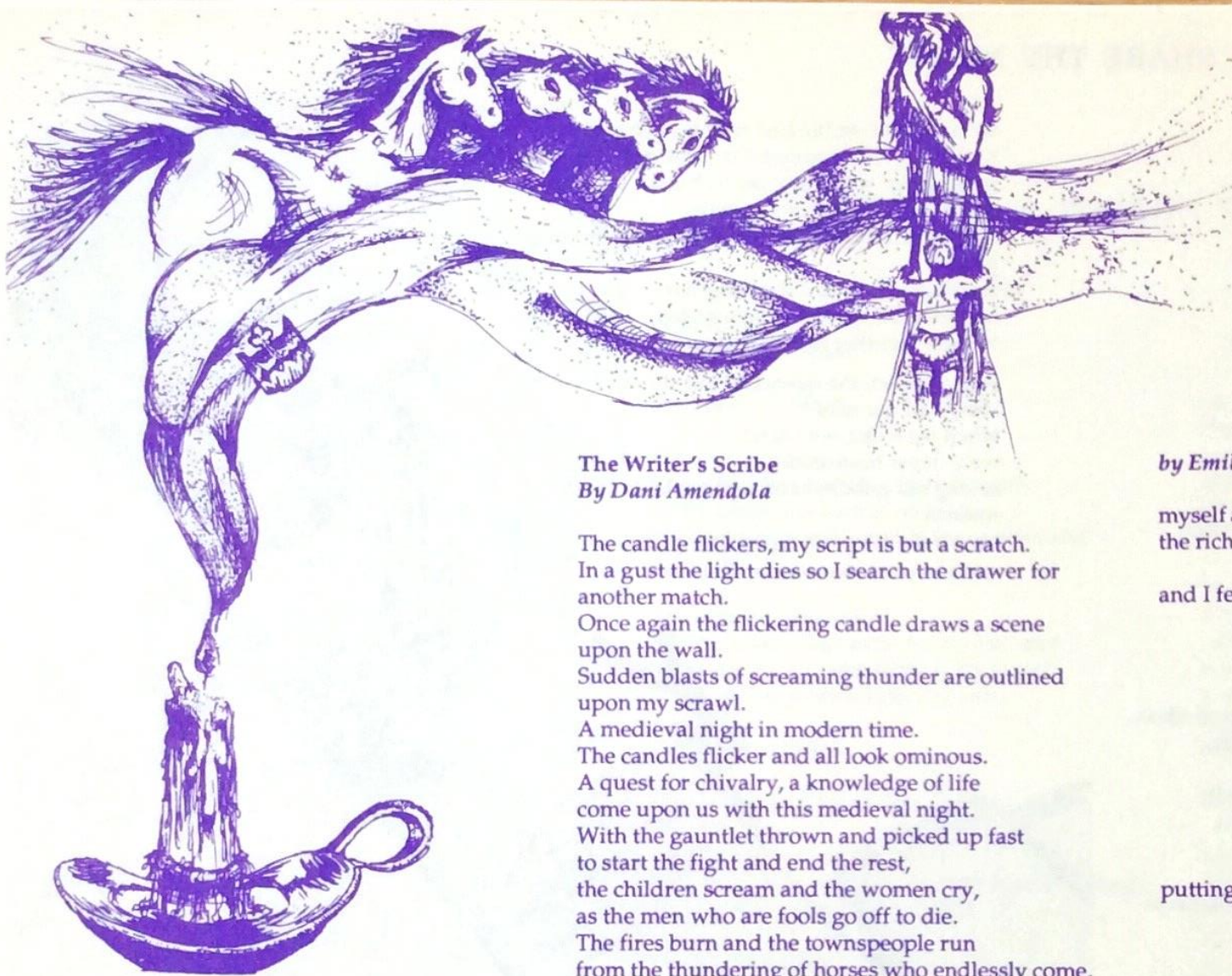
we sailed by the big bad wolf washing
his hands in limeade and by a cat named jukebox
reading carl sandburg. our raft was
bombarded by 300 or so poems
spewing from a boy mowing the grass. we caught a
phrase
which raised us to a shooting star
and from this perspective we tried
to piece together our fragmented world.

cups in hand, she quenched our thirst
and filled our ears.
when we woke, we found
we'd never been asleep.
saying our goodbyes brought us back down
to earth
but weeks after our cups were still full
and our pens more eager to be used.



Amy Clemmons

Tara Ballensky



The Writer's Scribe
By Dani Amendola

The candle flickers, my script is but a scratch.
In a gust the light dies so I search the drawer for
another match.
Once again the flickering candle draws a scene
upon the wall.
Sudden blasts of screaming thunder are outlined
upon my scrawl.
A medieval night in modern time.
The candles flicker and all look ominous.
A quest for chivalry, a knowledge of life
come upon us with this medieval night.
With the gauntlet thrown and picked up fast
to start the fight and end the rest,
the children scream and the women cry,
as the men who are fools go off to die.
The fires burn and the townspeople run
from the thundering of horses who endlessly come,
bringing the reign to end, bringing it down,
to give the just king his deserved crown,
but the thunder's gone and the lightning's dead,
And those poor babes who needlessly cried,
went out with my candle which once again died.

By the flicker of my candle I sit and create
a world of wonder, of love and hate.
The world is limited only to that to which the mind
can relate.

by Emily Forland

myself and other misconceptions
the richly painted sky
holds me as its prisoner
and I feel safe under the indigo warmth
of its cool
star-beaded blanket.
the moon
is an
eerie pale grey
taffeta
murmur,
a shadow of yesterday's
warm splendor.

putting down my paint brush,
i lie
back and enjoy the familiar rhythm
of shadows on
my late night wall
which conjure up such pictures.

closing my eyes, i dream
of warm breath
on evening air
and quiet
whispers
on my brush
in the distance.

Bullseye

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bullseye
by Amy Petri

As long as stars fill nighttime's skies
And thoughts provoke strong staring eyes,
As long as truth rules lover's sighs—

As long as all these things exist
I can't miss

As long as touch results in chills
And lust wins over weakening will,
As long as life says souls be filled—

As long as all these things exist
I can't miss