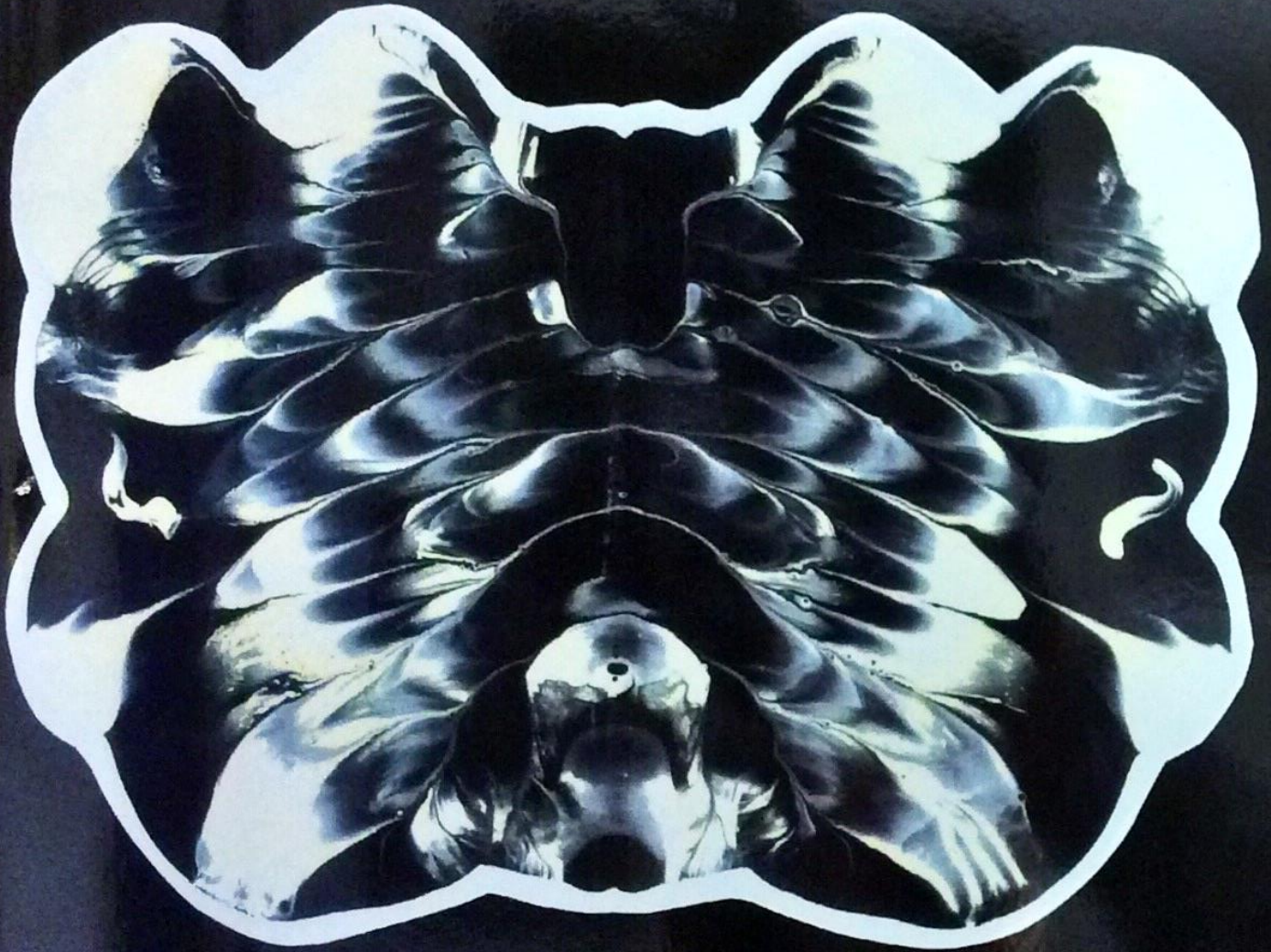


# BULLSEYE



Volume 12



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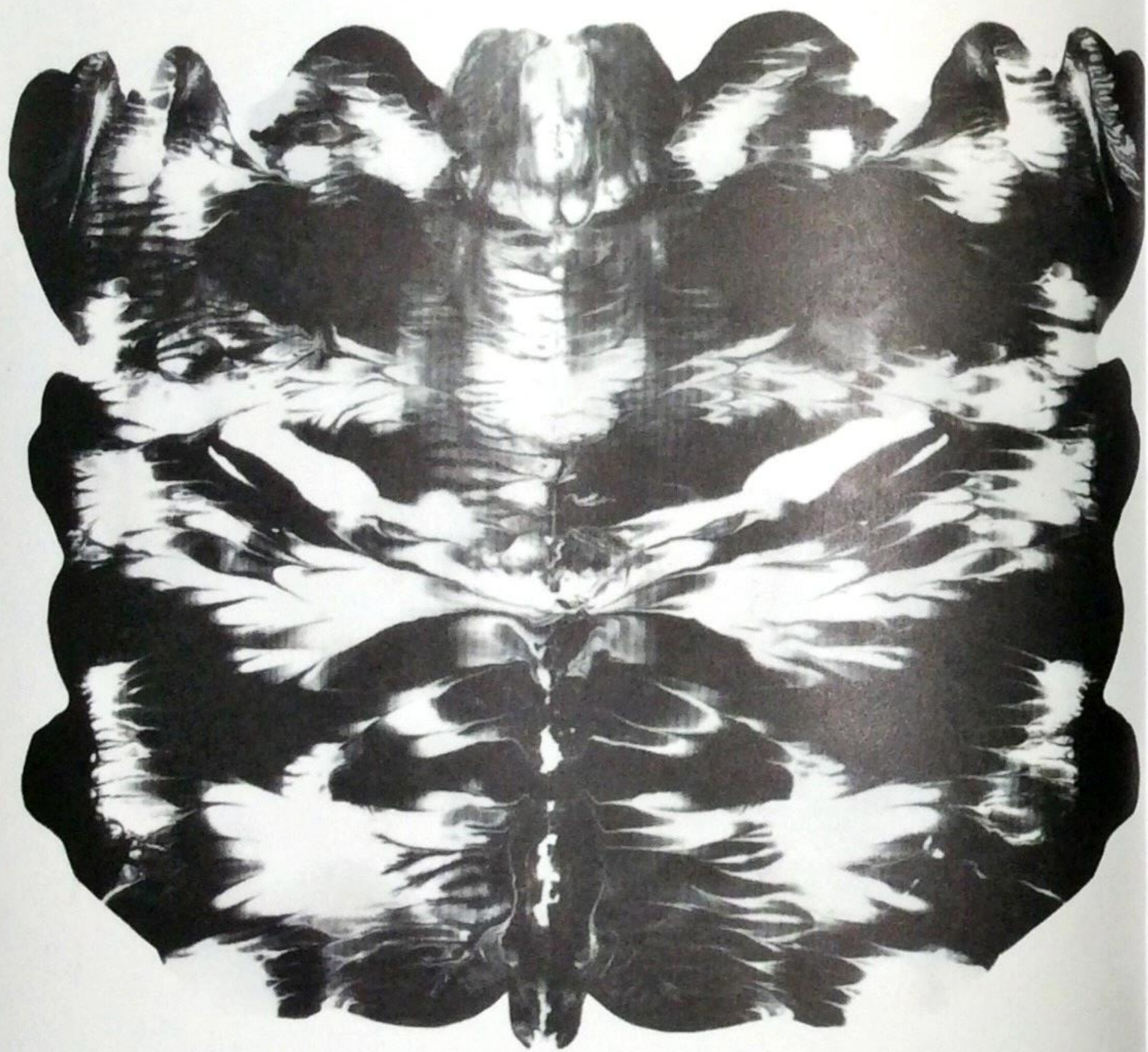
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**Bullseye 1996**  
Volume 12

The Creative Writing and Art Magazine  
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Douglas MacArthur High School  
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**INKBLOTS**  
tell the thinking man  
you're crazy  
you're sane

**INK**  
your personal perception  
of internal chaos  
internal peace  
tangible on the paper

**INK ON THE PAGES**  
coloring the world  
giving outlets  
to the suppressed turbulence  
of lost souls

**THE PAGES**  
the medium  
to abstract catastrophes  
ending the onslaught  
of the restless emotions

**THE BOOK**  
progress  
of chaos  
to order

**Bullseye 1996**

**-Staff**



**Eyes**

*Michelle Walker*

The creature glares at you with the murderous eyes of a tortured soul  
Violating your every thought and move with its wicked gaze  
How you long to run, to hide, to die  
But you stand immobilized by fear and amazement

These creatures of the night lurk far and wide, to the most remote realm of earth  
Piercing a world of contentment with lust and rage like a knife into smooth flesh  
Power is their motive... their goal  
Evil and sinister, they captivate you

There is no escape or mercy from their venomous fangs  
as they rape you of your innocence like a bound virgin  
And like a blood-starved vampire, they will devour your hopes and dreams with no remorse  
You stand defenseless to their acts of hate like a brainwashed automation  
As you stare helplessly into their empty eyes

(Dr. Bachmann) "... How is everyone doing? I hope we have searched our feelings and have become a little closer to ourselves since last session. Today, I would like to start by proposing a few questions. But before I do, would anyone like to tell me about your assignment last week? It was, if I am correct, to find an incident or situation in which you felt uncomfortable. Henry? Yes, come on, Henry, tell the group about your experience."

(Henry) "Well, I was at the grocery store a couple of days ago, and while I was in produce, I could tell that the potatoes were staring at me with their eyes. Immediately, I began to fix the part in my hair, but as I did, my shirt slid out of my pants and began to untuck itself. Now you probably think it was just an inch, but no, I felt like such a slob. So I tucked it back in extra tight. I even stuffed it down into my underwear so it had no possible chance of escaping. Still, I knew the potatoes had their eyes on me and I was humiliated. I could just feel the part in my hair becoming less distinct with the sweat that started pouring down my face. And to top this whole thing off, I glanced down only to see that the tongue of my sneakers had faded to the left, and thus crowded up on the side of my foot. I felt like crying. I didn't know what to do. Under my shoelaces were my socks, exposed to the other grocery shoppers. And before I knew it, even though you told us to try and control it, I began to sob. My eyes became watery and the sniffles attacked me. I felt so uncomfortable until a nice lady asked me if I was OK. I must have hugged her for ten minutes ..."

(Dr. Bachmann) "Ah yes, and you must have felt very uncomfortable with your clothes all a mess like that?"

(Henry) "A mess ... What do you mean a mess? Is my hair messed up? Just tell me. I can take it. I know it is. Oh! Gosh, there's something in my teeth too, right?! I brushed so hard this morning my gums bled. You can tell, right? Don't deny it! I know you can see the cuts in my gums. Excuse me, I must go to the restroom and fix myself up. I didn't mean to come looking like such a pig ..." (exits)

(Dr. Bachmann) "No! Henry, no, you look—" (Henry leaves the room) "Well, like I was saying, when a situation makes you feel uncomfortable the right thing to do is not to act with harsh measures. We all should ask ourselves, 'Why is this making me uncomfortable? What happened that made me feel this way?' And after answering these questions, we should try to understand the reasons and work to make ourselves feel happy. Each one of us is a unique individual and deserves to be happy. I know every one of you can do it. You'll be proud of yourselves when you do. Now, let's get into today's topic. (Henry re-enters) Henry! I'm so glad you

**From the Records of Dr. Bachmann ...**  
**(a live tape recording during a group therapy session)**  
*Jerry Fuentes*



## Dr. Bachmann ... (continued)

can join us again. I was just about to bring into discussion two questions I want each one of you to ask yourself for today's topic. The first one is, 'When do I feel lonely?' and second, 'How and what do I do to deal with the loneliness?' What I would like to do is go around the circle and get each one of you to respond. Who would like to start? Janet? Would you like to share your answers?"

(Janet) "I hate being alone. I get so scared. I don't even like to talk about it."

(Dr. Bachmann) "Well, can you give us an example of when this loneliness strikes you?"

(Janet) "Uh, well ... uh, when I'm about to leave work. I walk from Target's front door into the parking lot and then to my car. Now Target is pretty busy, especially when I get off for the day. Well, like I was saying, I proceed to my car, but before I actually reach it, I will walk about three times completely around the parking lot. I know that there are criminals out there ready to car-jack me the second I approach my vehicle. So in order to trick them, I act as if I don't know where I parked, in hopes that they will grow impatient and decide to go inside and get a slushie or something. Finally, I run to my car, open the door, then start the engine. I back out and drive to the nearest exit. I look both ways, look both ways again, and then for a third time. Sure, there are some spots when I could try to speed out onto the road, but even if the cars are 100 feet away, who knows, they could decide to speed up and crash into me. Then I'd die from my head being cracked open because the air bag hit my face too hard. So, I sit there and wait some more. But now other cars drive up behind me, and when they see that no cars are driving on the road, they begin to honk at me. But what they can't see is that the lights are about to change any second now, and the anxious drivers will zoom down the road. This is when my loneliness sets in. No one is there for me. I feel like I'm the only cautious driver out there. And still the people behind me honk, lots of people. I become frightened. I don't know what to do. I feel lonely. Yet, after hearing all those horns, I become angry and start to cuss. I jump out of the car, take both of my hands and flick the finger at each one of them saying, 'You think it's less filling do ya! Well you are wrong, it tastes great! So don't even go there. I know my beer just as well as the next guy!' Then I jump in the car, and without even looking, speed onto the road swerving to dodge a slow driver in a Ford—"

(Henry) "Hey, that was me. My eyebrows were tangled, and I could feel the metal part of my belt on my stomach because my shirt was untucked."

(Janet) "Anyway, that's my response, and I don't know what to



*Marcus Brooks*

do."

(Dr. Bachmann) "Before I say anything, I would like for everyone to share. What about you, Joey? You've been quiet today. Give us your response."

(Joey) "I never get lonely. I'm constantly at the mall, and if I ever do feel lonely, I walk into a department store, put my arm around a mannequin and compliment her hairdo."

(Henry) "I know when I feel lonely. It's when I'm at the video store, and I'm the only adult renting a video game."

(Joey) "Yeah, that's a good one, but when you feel lonely, go and mingle in the 'New Releases' section and secretly put the game behind the movie cover ..."

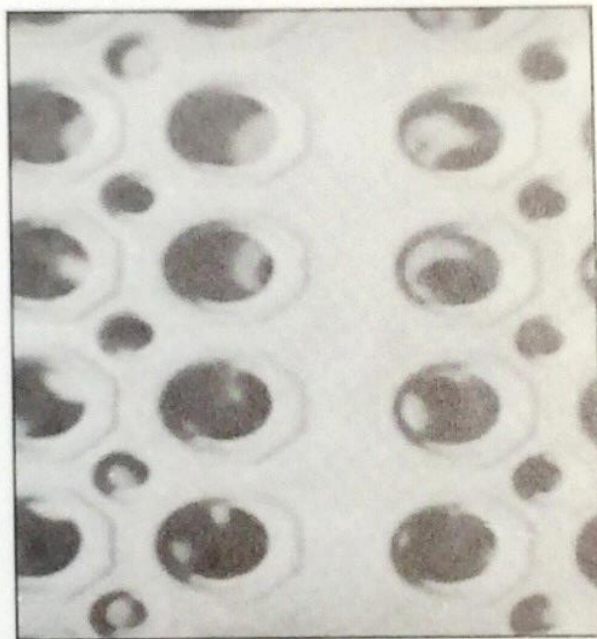
(Dr. Bachmann) "Andy, would you like to go? Will you share your response with the group?"

(Andy) "Well I don't know ... it's not the same as the others."

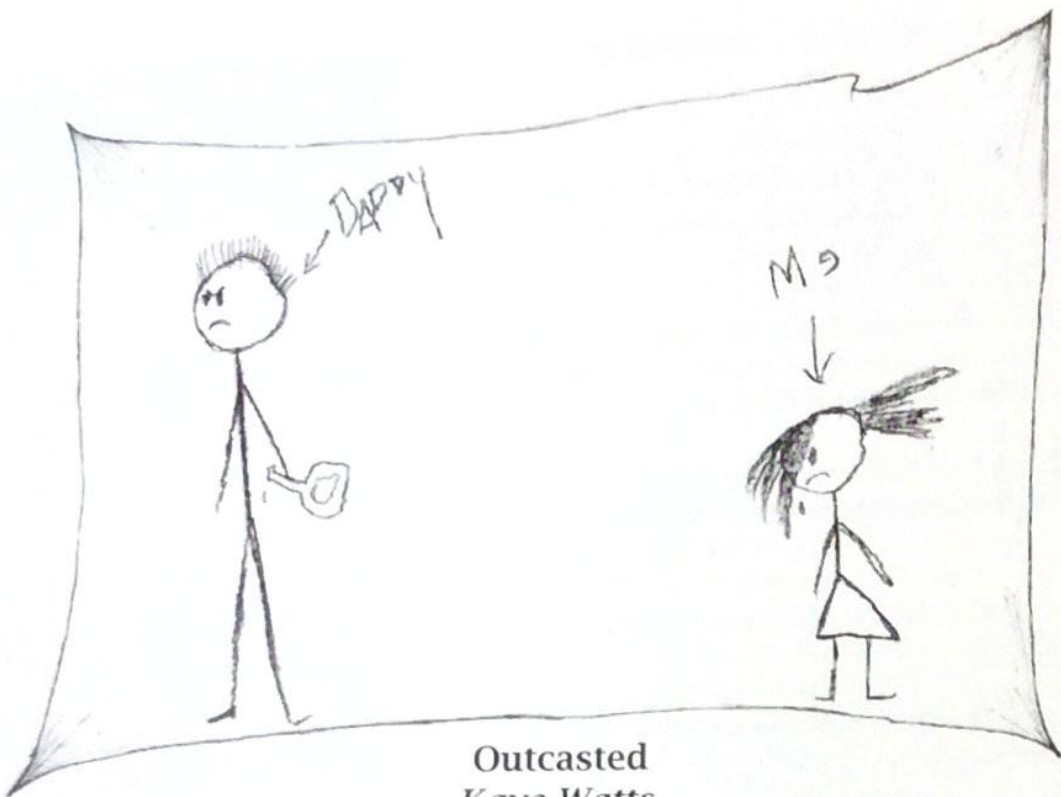
(Dr. Bachmann) "Oh! We'll have none of that talk here. We're a group; we can share anything and everything with each other."

(Andy) "OK, the loneliness occurs usually when I'm at my house by myself. I can be sitting on the couch or lying on my bed. And it's ... it's just I wish I had someone to talk to. So it's at these desperate times when I go to my closet, open the door, and grab Elmore. Elmore is my stuffed dinosaur. He is what they call a friend-a-saurus. So Elmore and I go to my bedroom and jump on my bed together. We see who can touch the ceiling with our heads. Then I see if Elmore can go through the ceiling with his head. After all this jumping, I take Elmore and squeeze all the friendship out of him. Then I talk to Elmore, tell him some of my problems, and ask him what I should do. But, he doesn't answer. So I ask him again, and he still doesn't reply. 'Elmore,' I say, 'Help me!' I become frustrated and begin to rip off Elmore's head, scattering his cotton all over my room. It is afterward, when I realize what I've done, that I grow lonely and desolate again ..."  
(wiping tears)

(Dr. Bachmann falls off his chair from an explosion of laughter. Janet's piercing chuckling fills the room. Joey laughs so hard spit flies from his mouth, landing on Dr. Bachmann, who is rolling on the floor. Henry tries not to, but his tickling laugh gets the best of him, and he immediately wets his pants while running around the room. Andy stands there very still, hearing and watching the people before him. One by one he rips off their heads and scatter the blood around the room, spelling 'E - L - M - O - R - E!')



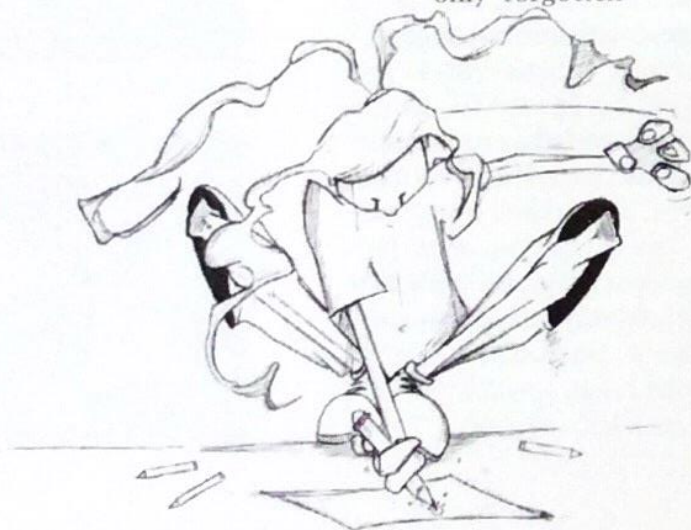
Marcus Brooks



**Outcasted**  
*Kaye Watts*

My anger is no match  
 for the fury in my heart  
 the tempest rages  
 against my eyes  
 burning my soul away  
 lightning strikes  
 setting my body on fire  
 as pictures of a life once led  
 lead faster and faster away  
 Confused I stand  
 against the rain  
 the pariah of love  
 I dream  
 harder and faster  
 thoughts running atop one another  
 stumbling  
 tumbling  
 through blackness  
 and through hell

The fires that rage  
 know no boundary  
 fueling my anger  
 and lighting the match  
 against the paper love you once gave  
 Meant all for nothing  
 and flitted away  
 against the storm raging  
 through veins  
 One step closer to  
 the depths of hell  
 One fall further from my  
 angelic being  
 Anger like whips  
 lashing out against  
 your unconscious being  
 Forgetting the forgetful  
 never to be forsaken  
 never to be forgiven  
 only forgotten



*Gabriel Constancio*

# Instant Zen

Jim Waltrip



"Honey, I think we need to talk."  
"Dad, please be quiet, I have to think. Will you let me think for a while please?"

"Of course, honey, go ahead."

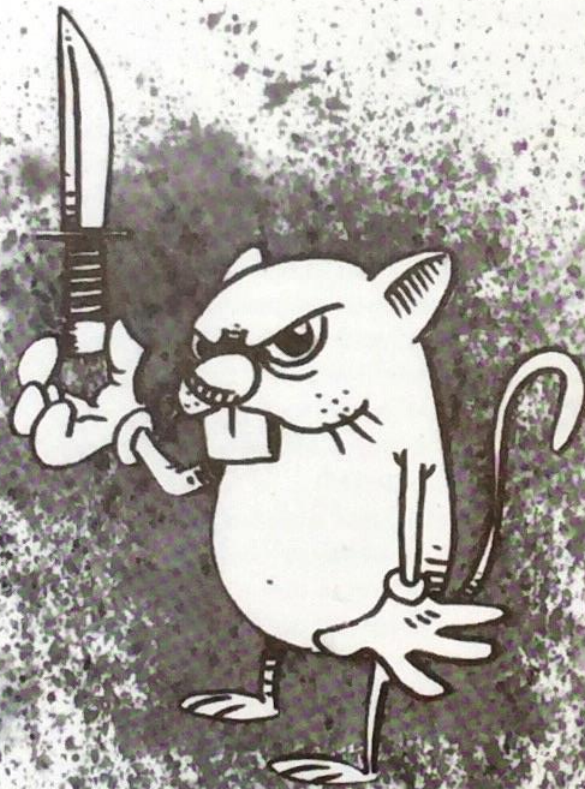
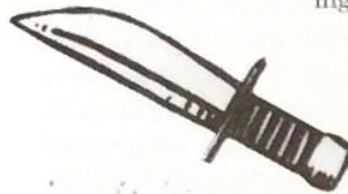
My dad, sitting over there in his favorite chair, was a great guy, always understanding, always loving. I remember when I was a little girl, about seven maybe, and I had always wanted a pony for my birthday. When the big day came, of course I didn't get what would have made me happier than any other little girl on earth, but it was okay. My dad explained to me why I couldn't have one, cried with me, and made me feel so loved and cherished that I didn't even need the pony any more. My dad was the real all-American father. Hunting (including a gun cabinet with assorted shells), fishing, and baseball were only three of his many passions.

I woke up this morning feeling well. After I got ready, I went downstairs to help mom cook breakfast. I startled her by coming up from behind and she dropped her butcher knife on the floor. It landed on the edge, and since our kitchen floor is made of ceramic tile, the knife dulled considerably. She asked if I would sharpen the knife for her on the automatic sharpener so she could finish chopping. Thrilled to use the sharpener for the first time, I got it out and plugged it in. It had three notches, each with a motorized sharpening stone: sharp, extra sharp, and razor sharp. I slapped the beautiful stainless blade into the razor slot and began to pull the knife slowly towards me, letting the machine do its work. The satisfying hum of the sharpener really started to get to me. I totally forgot about my mom as I became enthralled by the hypnotic power of the machine. Mom tapped me on the shoulder after a minute, and I was so deeply entranced that she completely frightened me. Instinctively, I whirled around like lightning, with the knife in my hand and a predatory grin on my face. My mom's horrified look took me by surprise, and I immediately dropped the knife on the counter. It was then I realized my



mom's arm was dripping with a beautiful red liquid glow. She ran to the sink, threw the water on, and began to wash her wound clean. I could do nothing but stare at the swirl of red in the sink as it ran down the drain.

I apologized again and again. Then I finished breakfast for mom while she wrapped paper towels around the small but deep gash on her forearm. I sat there chopping celery and thinking about the past few moments. The more I thought, the more I realized how hollow my "sorry's" felt and how invigorating it had felt to slice through human flesh. It was nothing like chopping celery. After breakfast, I told mom and



*AJ*  
Amy Johnson

## Instant Zen (continued)

dad that I felt a little ill and wanted to stay home from school. Not objecting, my dad left most of the medicine cabinet on my bedside table and tucked me back in. Ever so slightly I heard my parents drive off to work as I drifted back to the land of sleep. I awoke a few short hours later. Feeling a bit hungry, I trotted into the kitchen to look for a bite to eat. I made a sandwich from odds and ends in the fridge. Remembering that triangles are easier to eat than squares, I searched for a knife.

I pulled the knife drawer open and felt a tingling surge through my body from my hands all the way down to my toes. I picked up the knife and felt the soft wood of the handle. The beautiful, dark lacquered wood connected to a shiny shimmering blade. The cold steel was strangely comforting, but I noticed a small nick in the middle of the edge. Dismayed, I went over to the sharpener and once again began to pull the knife toward me in a rhythmic motion. I became swept away by the droning of the motor. Again and again and again, sharper and sharper and sharper, deadlier and deadlier and deadlier. My heart began to race. The motor enveloped my ears; the knife enveloped my eyes. At that point I lost consciousness. When I came to, I was still at the sharpener, but a different knife was in my hand. I looked over at the counter and saw that every knife in the kitchen lay next to me.

Suddenly I heard the door slam. At that instant I felt for the first time-- the hunger. From deep inside myself came an itch, a voracity like none I had ever felt. This need, this craving was the appetite to kill. It was almost sexual the way I craved the blood I knew I could so easily get. No victim is easier than an unsuspecting victim. As mom entered the kitchen, I turned around. "Honey," she said, "you look pale, and you're sweating. Do you have a fever? I think we should call the doctor."

"I'm OK, mom, just a little dizzy. Maybe you should go ahead and make that appointment."

She ran over to the phone, and with her back to me, began dialing. I took my weapons of choice: the large butcher knife for initial penetration and a small carving knife for the handiwork. As I neared her, the anticipation built up. I became overcome with waves of euphoria; and then I struck, butcher knife into the right kidney. It felt like the first big gulp of water after days in the desert. Her screams filled my ears like the music of a great symphony. Again and again and again, deeper and deeper and deeper, until she made no more than a whimper. Nothing much

was left of her back when I turned her over to view the look of horror I had created on her face. A work of art! I went to work with the carving knife, disemboweling her so that I could run my fingers through her entrails like a miser fondling his gold. When I had my fun with her and the kitchen needed mopping, my appetite was satiated—for the moment. Like some horrible addictive drug, I knew then that I could never get enough. I decided to wait for daddy.

Just as it was getting dark and the sun was sinking under the horizon, daddy slammed the front door. Walking through the living room and reciting his famous greeting, "Hello, hello everyone, I'm home," dad walked into the kitchen. There he saw his wife, the human pin cushion. I was sitting above her on the kitchen counter with a shotgun in each hand. The second he saw my raptorial stare, a slosh of yellow liquid exited his pant leg, and he fell to his knees. I motioned to two pair of World War II antique handcuffs that were on the seat of his favorite chair. He tried to mumble something, so I pulled a knife out of my mother, and with a wild look on my face, licked it clean. He immediately got the idea and cuffed himself to the chair.

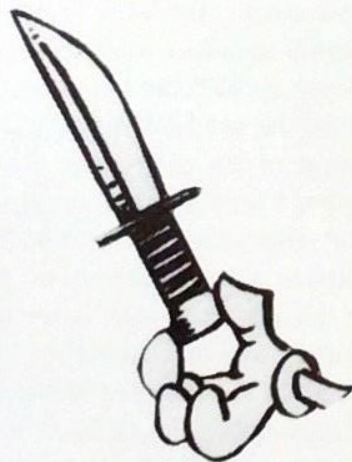
I was excited and I could hardly hold myself back. I was just trying to enjoy the anticipation. I wondered what it was like to start on a live subject. I'd never done that before. There was a lot I hadn't done before.

"Daddy?"

"Yes, honey?"

"I love you."

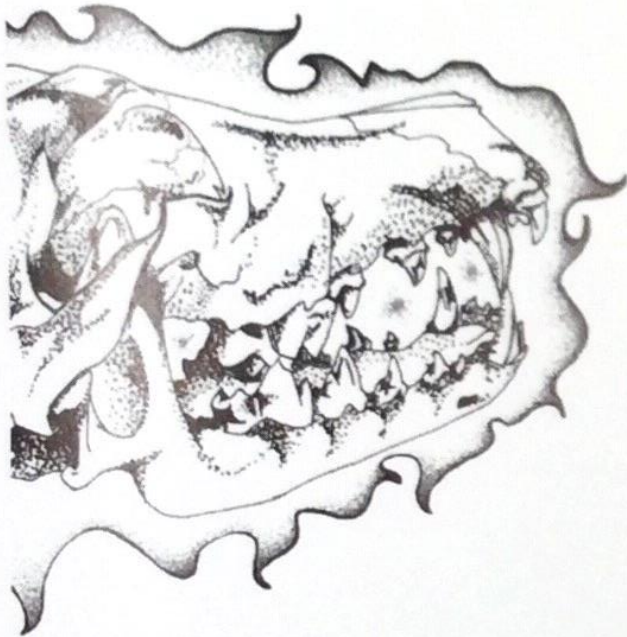
"I love you taaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!!!!!"



*Lari Whitford*

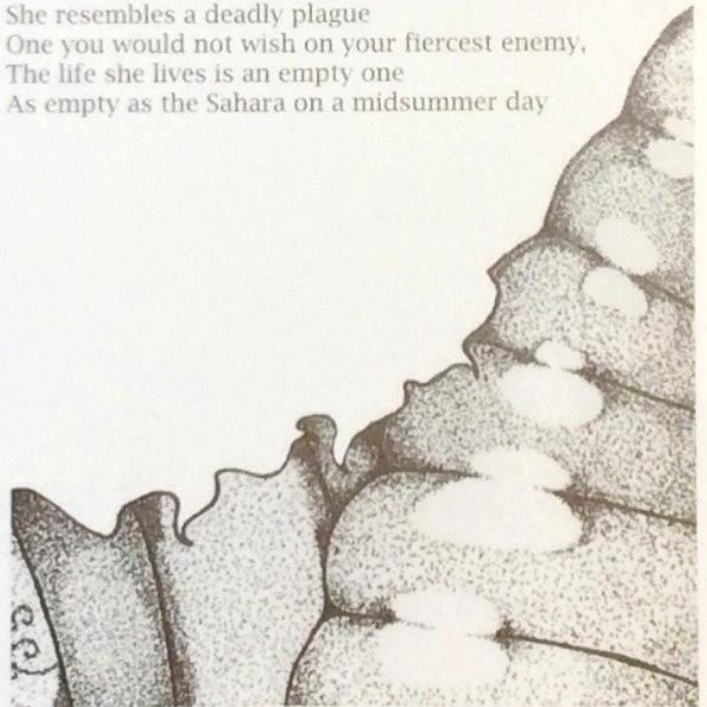
**Dark Angel**  
*Melisa Lujan*

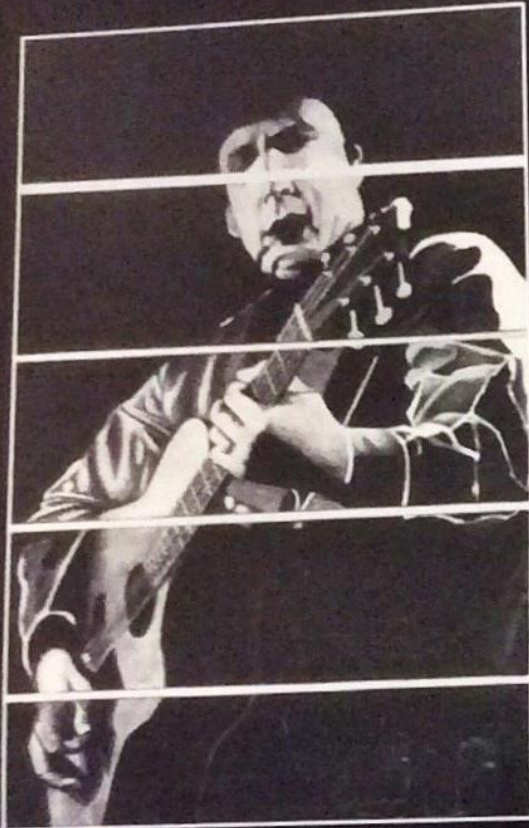
Carving through your mind  
Like a razor-sharp butcher knife  
Bleeding you of every pleasant emotion,  
Loneliness emanates from her  
Like a dog treading on the heels of its master,  
She is the epitome of darkness  
Lurking in the shadows



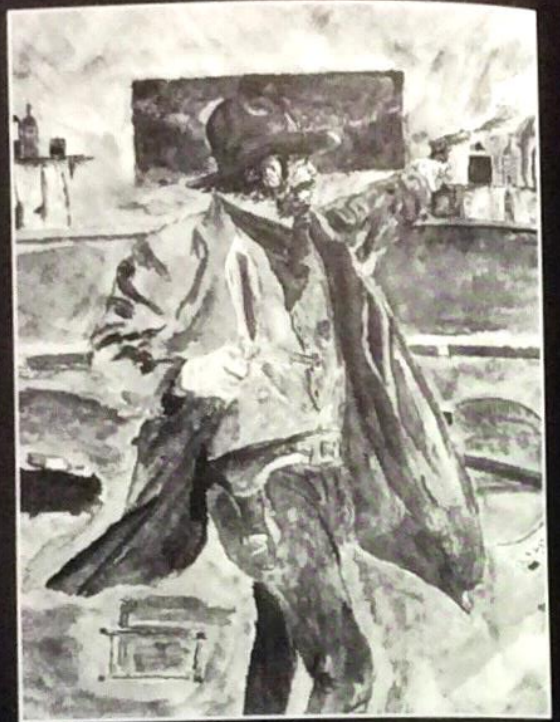
A slippery snake slithering along the ground  
Ready to swallow its victim,  
She conveys the icy hopelessness of winter  
Showing not even a glimmer of spring  
When executing chicanery,  
She displays silky smooth techniques  
At times her vision seems to pierce through you  
Like a lion staring down a helpless animal,  
Exhibiting no sign of weakness,  
She resembles a deadly plague  
One you would not wish on your fiercest enemy,  
The life she lives is an empty one  
As empty as the Sahara on a midsummer day

Evil eats at her soul  
Devouring all the kindness and sweetness  
Like a crocodile shredding its prey to pieces,  
Her only goal remains malignant,  
Leaving behind agony and despair,  
From now until forever,  
Wreaking vengeance on those who stand in her way.





*Ralph Lozano*



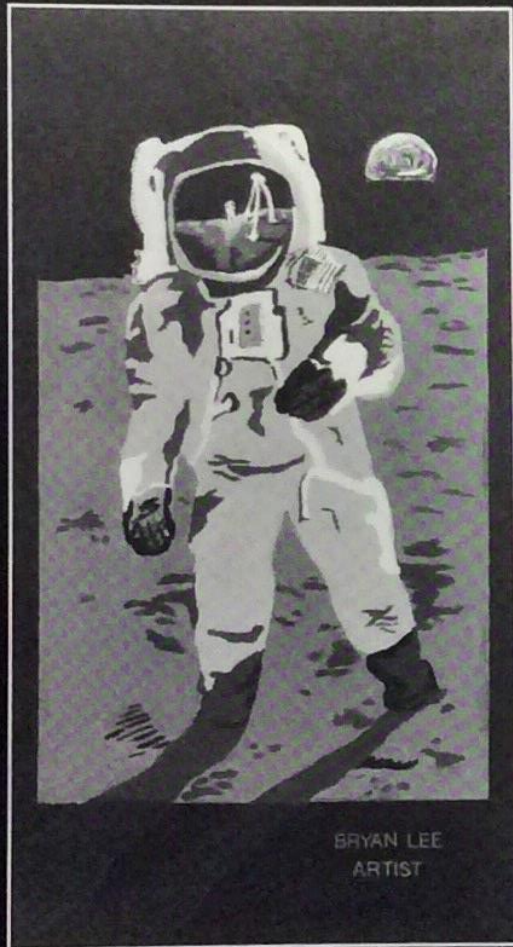
*Amanda Bruner*



*Nathan Bertoldo*



*Leslie Valdez*



*Bryan Lee*

5 minutes, 5 billion dead  
*George Potter*

stones  
appear to be mountains  
as they cover our streets  
a mount everest  
of human construction  
destruction  
our minds drift back  
to the bright light  
the sun had exploded before us  
yet it was still there  
to the trembling of the ground  
as the earth lurched  
on atlas's shoulders  
to the foul gas  
that still lingers  
as we view the world through our reflections on glass  
my friend doubles over  
painting the tiles with her breakfast  
my eyes travel to the appalling scene  
bodies  
lying in piles  
making the holocaust look pretty  
as this shifting mass of human pieces collapses  
one hits my reflection  
i jump back  
add to the art work on the floor  
the ground rushes to me  
darkness takes over  
one question in my mind  
why did we let this happen  
why

Marcus Brooks

**Progress**  
*Stephen Kinslow*

Majestic mountains peering through the fog,  
far away from cities, the chaos and the smog.  
(Progress)

Towering cliffs and enormous pine trees,  
better than the pollution and cities' disease.  
(Progress)

Such pristine beauty, an enormous clear blue lake,  
far away from billboards, the sight of which you hate.  
(All the result of Progress)

Now! In the west! The sun begins to set.  
Such radiant colors, a sight hard to forget.

Nature is lovely, Nature is pure,  
you've never been more content you're sure.

You stand atop a mountain peak and survey all that's below.

You look down and see the trees fall... then you know.

You watch the carnage with disgust, then disgust turns to fear.

"Is it really possible," you wonder, "are the HUMANS finally here?"

THEN YOUR FEAR TURNS TO SADNESS AS YOU REALIZE THAT YOU ARE  
POWERLESS TO STOP THE HUMANS. YOU WATCH THEM CORRUPT THE  
LAND, DESTROY YOUR HOME. YOU DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT THOUGH  
YOU KNOW IT MUST BE TRUE.

THE HUMANS ARE HERE TO STAY,  
AND YOU ARE OUT OF THE WAY.

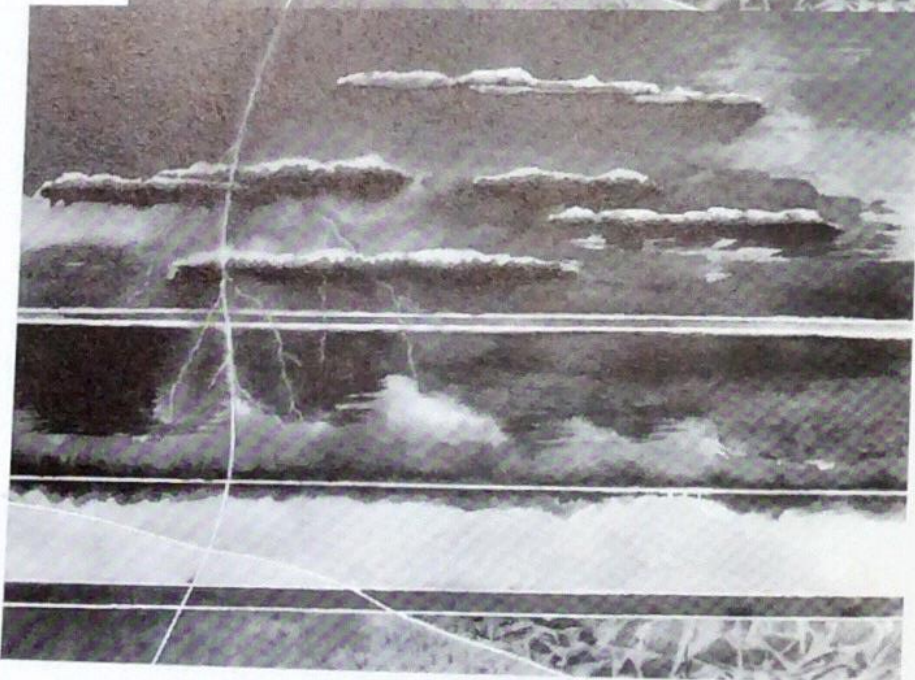
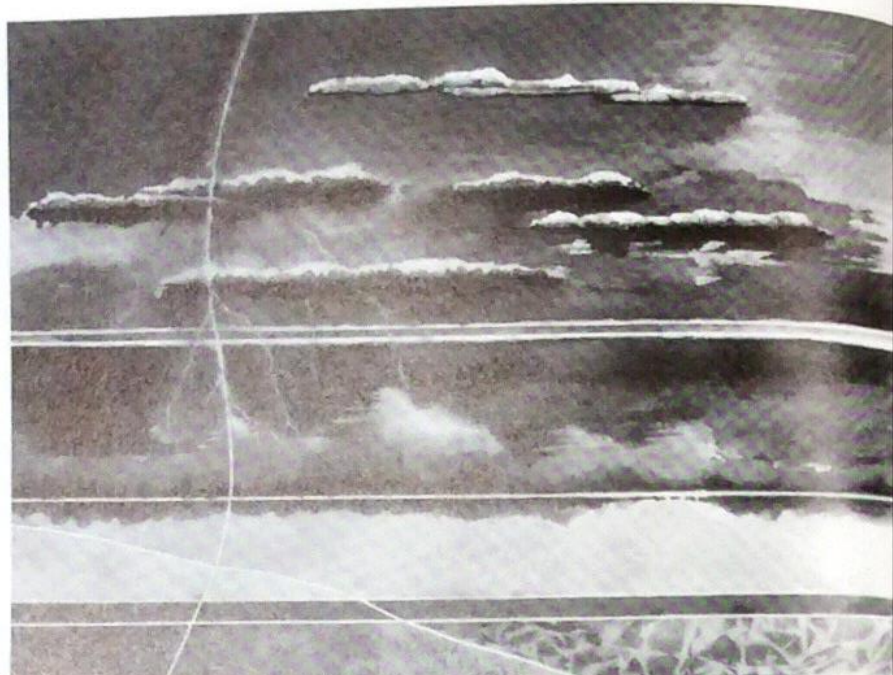
YOU WERE IN THE WAY OF PROGRESS!



Eric Uhlir

**black**  
*Kary Aycock*

she stares at the shiny black rain  
sheets of glittering darkness  
flooding the purple moon  
she watches the storm rob her light  
spraying murky shadows through raw sky  
smearing time behind the black mist  
one sweet whisper in the bitter wind  
living through aching blackness  
she dreams  
screams lies  
cries blood  
misty visions in a still wind  
the shadows rob her time  
sweet sordid sleep as  
lucid memories drown  
in her puddle of pain  
her shining moments swim away  
leaving no light  
gone is life  
she takes death.



*Jason Cardona*

**The Suicide**  
*Sam Banford*

i heard the warm wet drops  
slowly falling,  
one  
by  
one.

the pale sound  
transformed to red anvils,  
striking  
across the porcelain sink,  
swirling down to the drain.

the pale doll  
lay limp  
in her toy box.  
red bracelets  
adorned her wrists.

the broken doll  
sealed stiffly  
in her toy chest  
in the ground.



*Laura Nelson*

Just Another Day  
Nancy Bigelow

The sun shines through a rip  
in the threadbare curtains  
Onto the face of  
a sleeping little boy  
He awakens slowly, stretches,  
Blinks his eyes rapidly  
in the bright light  
A gunshot explodes  
far off in the distance  
It's just another day  
in the neighborhood  
He gets up and walks  
down the hall to the kitchen  
Bare feet slapping  
the cold white tiles  
He pours himself  
a cup of grape juice

Accidentally spills some  
down the side

and onto the counter  
He cleans up

the purple puddle thoughtfully

What does he want  
to do today?

He is tired of shrugging  
off the advances  
of dealers

And being threatened  
by one gang  
after another  
So he decides  
to stay home

The ancient walls  
of the house  
are slowly crumbling  
(It's all his family  
can afford)

Yet they still provide  
a sense of security

He enters the living room  
carrying his cup of juice  
Looks out the window  
And wishes he felt  
safe enough to go outside  
It's a beautiful day--  
not a cloud in the sky  
He turns on the tiny  
black and white television  
Flips through the channels a few times  
But all he can pick up  
is a Barney rerun  
He rationalizes that it's  
better than nothing  
At least watching the stupid dancing dinosaur  
Takes his mind away from reality  
for a little while

Suddenly, he hears  
something like thunder

(Funny, it doesn't look like rain)

The window shatters and he  
falls to the floor

Grape juice splatters  
on the dirty beige  
carpet

Mingling with the  
spreading pool  
of crimson

Another life taken  
before its time  
Few will mourn  
his death

The drive-by killer  
will never be caught  
And the story won't  
even make the news  
After all,

it's just another day  
in the neighborhood



Carolyn Chen

# Urban Macabre

Jay Whitecotton

The air is crisp and caressing, the sun brightly warm, and the birds sing in perpetual joy. This tiny generic country called Urbana is filled with all the business of a lazy Sunday morning, but nothing quells the cries of Armageddon throughout the Buffalo Grass.

In one tense moment, the garage doors open across the land of pastel houses. Each one is the same, bland in style and texture; all include lawns filled with many quivering green blades of Buffalo Grass.

Then the Giants walk briskly out of their castles. They push forward their instruments of evil across oil-stained driveways. All in step, they parade around in their designer shorts and hot-pink-collared shirts, proudly showing off their tools of torture in a mock war dance.

Hungrily, the Giants gaze upon their tiny green conquests. They watch as the dew glistens in the early sun -- the tears of the Buffalo Grass.

Songbirds tweet out the last rites as the Giants swing their flabby, massive arms to start the mayhem machines. Massive grumbles emit from the bellows of the lawn mowers while vicious neighborhood Chihuahuas fire back with their much-feared barking. The lawn, itself, seems to flow as waves of refugee toads and beetles flee in a race for survival. Yet, like a lemming, the Buffalo Grass stands to its roots with no measure of escape. Moved only by the morning winds, their light green bodies are chilled by the breath of Death. The impassive grins of the Giants reveal their ignorance of the slaughter that they will unleash from the fury of the lawn mowers.

Soon terror streaks through the Buffalo Grass ranks as the saw-like propellers cut down the first of many lives. Deformed, they lay at the feet of the Giants. The others plea their small silent screams for mercy, but the Giants show none. Blood boiling cries of anguished pain fill the air. The giants, with their bland, passive looks, press on. Torment! Blade after blade of grass is slit,

and strewn continuously into neat rows. Paths of total carnage make a concentration camp look like Disneyland.

The remaining have a torture far worse than immediate death. Thousands upon thousands of decaying grass parts are heaped on top of them, the ones who hold the knowledge that fate will also befall them. Many go blind and rush insanely into that first wave of slaughter.

After hours of chlorophyll shredding, the rumbles of the weapons from Hell become quiet. Though the aftermath of massacre still lingers in the air like a hazed fog, the Giants will rake, pile, and bag the mangled grass body parts. The fallen are not even buried in a respected funeral, but carried away and dumped in decaying brown clumps.

After the slaughter, the Giants return to the oil-stained driveways. They bring water, sponges, and polish to clean the largest of their urban machines in an after-death, urban, yuppie ritual. The Giants march all in step.

Later, when the cool Sunday morning changes to a hot afternoon, the blood of the Buffalo grass dries up, giving life to new generations. But sadly, these heirs will grow to die like their ancestors in another frenzied onslaught by the Giants and their machines.



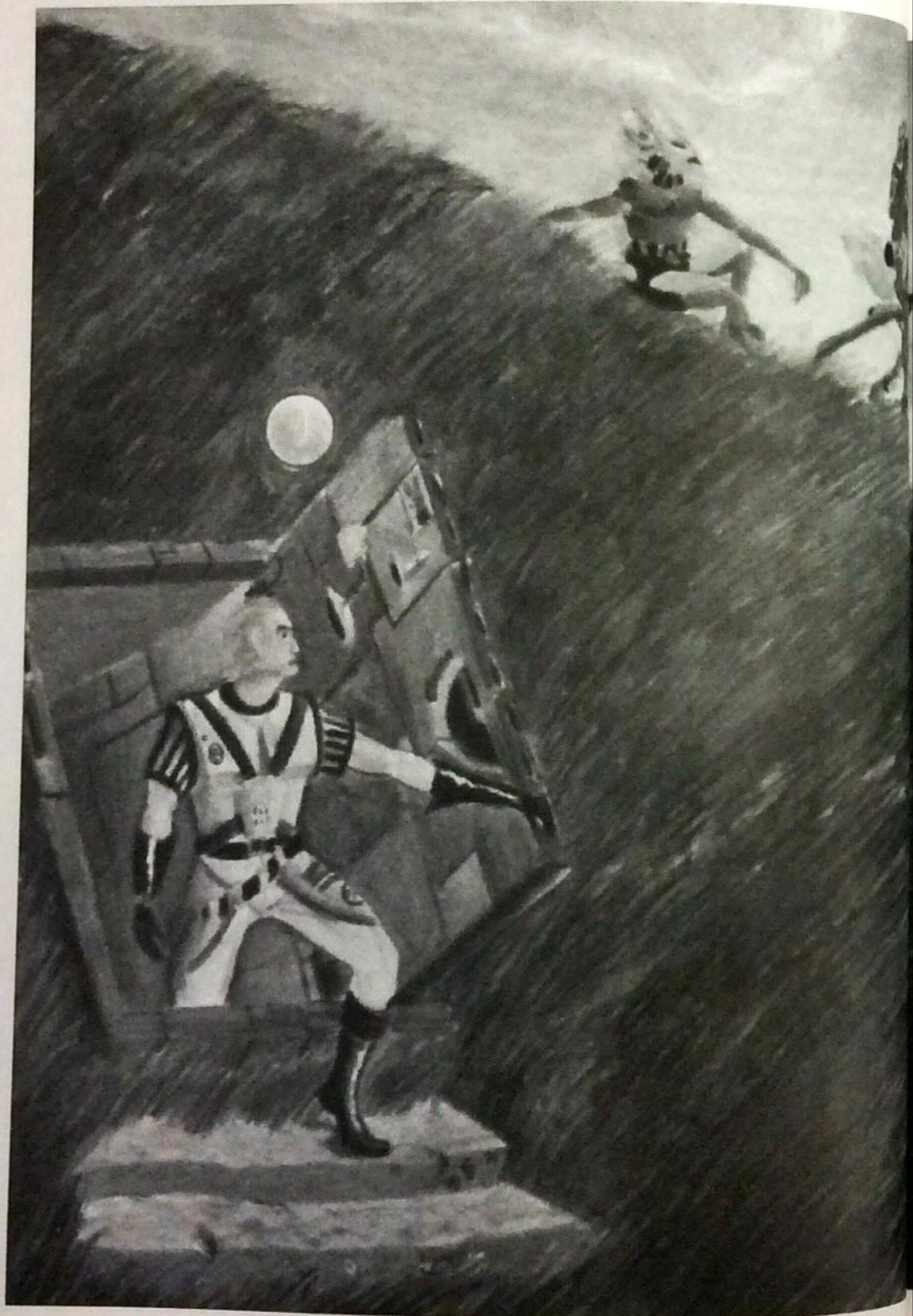
Elana Logsdon

Then I came to a plain,  
laminated terrain.  
Where the ground into layers  
was pressed.  
On the rust-colored land,  
camped a nomadic band,  
in tough leather hides  
they were dressed.

They were fleshy and plump,  
round faces, full rumps,  
but their bodies were  
as solid as clay.  
They laughed at the man,  
who breathed air from a can,  
but in gestures  
they bid me

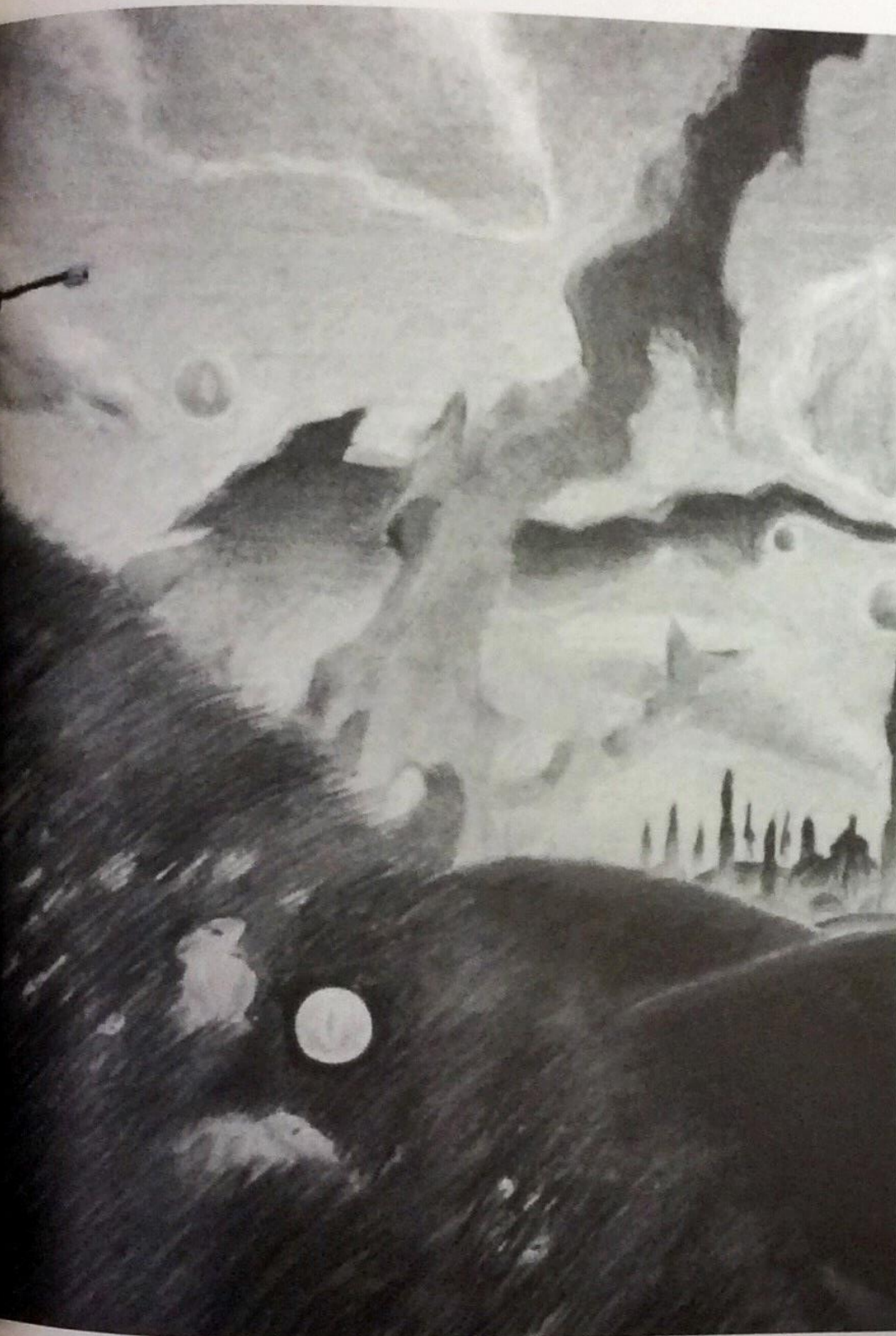
## Martian Saga *Christian Young*

I had come to the land  
of the pale ochre sand,  
Where God shines his eye  
diamond cold,  
Where the air,  
though it's thin,  
kicks a hell of a wind,  
which cut through tears  
in my clothes.  
In the Great Helas Bowl,  
bright yellow clouds roll.  
They swirl 'round  
a silver obelisk.  
Once a ship,  
now a tomb.  
For my crew,  
for me soon,  
Well, we were all aware  
of the risk.  
There's no reason to stay,  
rescue's two weeks away,  
and I've only three days  
worth of air.  
So I'll see what I can,  
of this desolate land.  
The direction I go,  
I don't care.  
Sure there's clouds in the sky,  
but the seas are bone dry,  
because nowhere on Mars  
does it rain.  
Hills and craters around,  
on the smooth desert ground,  
but most of the land  
is the same.



to stay.  
Corralled was a beast,  
for some future feast,  
and it seemed that it knew,  
of that fate.  
For as I came near,  
it bellowed with fear,  
and kicked till it

broke down the gate.  
It charged into the clan,  
and tore up a man,  
then turned to a girl  
near my side.  
While the tribesmen were stunned,  
I unholstered my gun,  
and burned a hole



through its hide.  
As the beast heaved and bled,  
moaning,  
dying,  
then dead,  
that girl that I saved  
came to me  
her face so serene.  
Her onyx eyes gleamed,  
like the moon on a  
glittering sea.  
She was a girl I had known,  
on the green fields of home.  
She was each girl  
from out of my past.  
The first girl I kissed,  
the one that I missed.  
The best,  
the others,  
the last.  
With childlike charm,  
she accepted my arm,  
for she understood,  
my desire.  
'Neath oilskin dome,  
we were all alone,  
and our nakedness shined  
in the fire.  
I thanked the stars,  
for this one night on Mars.  
For beauty  
so firm,  
and so fair.  
As we locked in embrace,  
Horror twisted my face.  
Damnation  
I ran out  
OF AIR!

*Eric Uhler*



*Ricarlos Caldwell*

Faces I cannot hear  
Voices I cannot see  
Confusion to the highest extent of my senses  
Voices in the midst of my hate  
Colors, scents  
Protagonist, antagonist  
Feeling, numbness  
Sight, sound  
Up, down  
I no longer know or care  
The confusion takes over  
Consistency falters  
As does my faith in romance  
Romance, ha  
That is an oxymoron  
Romance no longer exists  
It is a false existence  
One I have lived  
A life living a lie  
That is the true oxymoron  
For I am not living a lie  
I am the lie

Kevin Litzman



## Dans le Vent (In the Wind)

Faith Burton

*As I look back on that day, it all seemed to begin once the shrill ring of the telephone let loose. That cold February morning the ring of the phone seemed to crawl up and down my back, as if to warn me. Perhaps I shouldn't have picked up the telephone that day; but life, or in this case death, would have gone on without me.*

Ammonia filled my nose as I entered the hospital. The cleanliness of the hospital made me a little uneasy, as if they were hiding something underneath all those layers of shine. The hallways were painted a bright, cheery yellow. I laughed beneath my breath at the thought of who would be happy coming to a hospital. After all, this is where people witness and experience pain and suffering.

My heart skipped a beat as I saw a man covered with a white sheet, lying in the hallway. I remember the tears streaming down my face as I began to scream hysterically. I ran over to the man and tore off the cloth. "It's not him! Thank God, it's not him," I began to laugh. At that point a security guard grabbed me and tried to escort me out of the building. "My husband, I have to find my husband," I pleaded with him. After several minutes of explanation, this six foot tall, three-hundred pound man smiled weakly and led me down the cheerful hallway to the room.

Entering his room was like entering another dimension. The thick silence was only occasionally broken by the beeping of a heart monitor. The cheerful yellow hallway had been replaced by a gray womb and a closed window shedding the least bit of light. My husband lay in the center of

Anastasia Toom

the room, covered with a white sheet. As I stepped closer to the bed, the click of my heels on the floor echoed throughout the room. He lay almost motionless, the respirator mechanically lifting his chest. His face was covered with thick bandages. The tubes running in and out of his nose were the only openings in his facial mask. Looking at him, I felt as if my heart had been ripped from my chest. Lying on that bed was my life, my soul, and it was dying.

"Excuse me," the voice at the door startled me. It was the doctor dressed in an ordinary white lab coat with my husband's chart in hand. He began to explain my husband's condition. I tried to listen, but my mind kept slipping back to the bed in the center of the room. "He's brain dead, Mrs. McNeil. Without the machines, he would most certainly be dead." I turned my attention back to the doctor. He had yet to make eye contact with me. He continued to read mechanically from the chart and looked upon me as if I were part of the furniture. It seemed, through years of breaking bad news, his heart had just grown cold. "If you consent, we'd like to take him off life support and harvest his organs." This man, this uncaring, heartless man, was standing there telling me to kill my husband as if it were a normal every day thing. I turned away and walked toward the unlit bed. "I'll give you some time to think about it." The doctor then turned and walked out the door, leaving me with a knife in my heart.

I told myself over and over again that my husband knew I was there. He had no responses on the outside, but it

## Dans le Vent (continued)



was inside that counted. I sat by that bed, staring at my husband, for what seemed like days. I talked to my husband about the good old days and the good days to come. I wasn't talking to reassure him, but rather to reassure myself. I opened the blinds to let the sunshine in. I told myself that the warmth of the sun would most certainly awaken my husband out of his deep trance. Yet, he just lay there unmoving.

A nurse came in sometime; I don't remember exactly when. She told me I should get some fresh air, maybe walk outside a bit. I looked at her and then at my husband. Reluctantly, I took her advice. Walking down the cheery yellow halls again, I felt as if I had returned to my own dimension. Although I knew I needed fresh air, I didn't want to be around people. I quickly entered an elevator and headed for the roof.

Elevator music blared from the speakers above my head. A familiar tune began to play; its melodious tune was almost heart wrenching. The strings seemed to pick out every sad note and put them together in a way that would make anyone cry. Then the voice began to weave its enchantment. It was my husband's favorite song, "Dust in the Wind," by Kansas. As I listened to the refrain, tears poured from my eyes. All the years of listening to this song, I had never actually heard it. "All we are is dust in the wind," the song was saying. Life means something only for a time. Once we are gone, we are just dust, returning to the earth.

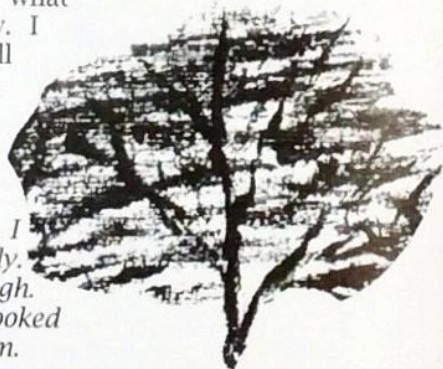
Suddenly the decision became clear to me. My husband was gone. All I was holding onto was dust, kept alive by a machine. All this time my husband knew what life was worth. (He knew when he was gone, he would be gone.) It wasn't fair to keep his body alive.

I stopped the elevator and got out. Feeling the adrenaline pumping, I ran down six flights of stairs. As I ran down the cheery yellow hallway, I became more convinced my decision was the right one. Entering his room, this time I did not feel as if I had entered another dimension. A great weight had been lifted from my shoulders, and in a moment, I would lift one from his.

I walked to his bed and kissed his bandaged mask. I said good-bye and thanked him for the great times we had shared. Walking over to the machine, I took one last deep breath. I pressed the power off and listened as the respirator stopped along with his heart monitor. He was dead and at peace.

Then a woman walked into the room. She saw what had happened and began screaming hysterically. I walked over to her and explained that it was all right; he was at peace. Her eyes filled with rage and her fists became clenched. She hit me with her fist, and I fell to the ground unconscious. When I woke up, I found myself in prison and awaiting trial.

*I know it was my fault, killing that poor man. I should have read the room numbers more carefully. The sad thing isn't that the wrong man is dead, though. The sad thing is that the right man is still alive, hooked up to a machine in an empty, lonely, hospital room.*





*Krissy Lucio*

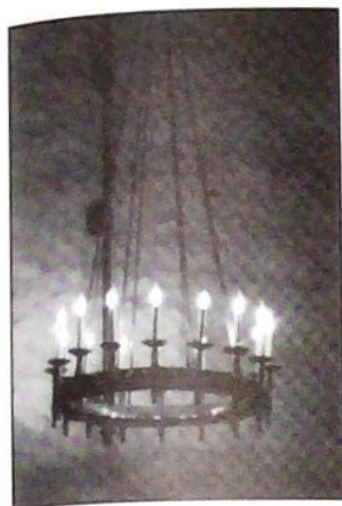
**White Blaze**  
*Russ Roddy*

I know death  
she is a friend  
I have seen her rise  
from wounds in the cold  
I am forced to live  
in her shadow  
It seems I will never be alone  
I have walked  
with her in the night  
We danced in the desert  
fluorescent moon  
set the world a white blaze  
she is black sunshine  
she is yellow rain  
I watched  
she set frost on the plains  
wither to sand  
where we slept  
in the night  
she promised to set me free  
of a dying world  
of people who think too much  
myself  
it's not my time  
someday  
I will go with her  
into the final night  
immortality  
is far too long for us

**Glass Box**  
*Joy Thompson*

Sense tells me  
tears won't fix it.  
Heart cries out  
to let me go.  
Life revealed  
that we must be strong  
mommy and daddy  
won't always be there.  
I wish for the wounds  
to heal themselves  
to leave me out of the pain.  
Perhaps I can't  
accept the limits  
running through time  
with abandon.  
Mind set immortal.  
Reality is  
I, a tiny living speck  
in a giant clear box  
plenty for me inside  
I want what's outside  
but the walls  
the boundaries  
stop me  
frustrate me  
teach me how to scream.  
I break out  
my glass wall,  
what appeared  
from the inside  
to be perfection  
suddenly overtakes  
my inner world  
in a torrent  
of vicious chaos.  
Frantically  
I rebuild  
piecing together the shards  
'till hands cut and bleeding  
I rest inside  
now in disarray.  
Sense has told me  
tears won't fix it.  
But frustrated,  
wounded,  
and fatigued,  
and relieved,  
they flow anyway.  
They flow anyway.

*Kara Starr*



# The Man at the Funeral

*Eric Haynes*

As the curtains flapped in the wind, one small beam of glowing, bright sunlight hit the mirror on the opposite side of the room and made it glow like a light bulb. (I wished I had closed the window the night before.) I had had a hard night; I needed the rest. (I hated this room, but it was all I could afford.) The curtains had horizontal stripes of alternating brown and gold with off-white, almost cream accents. The way they were hanging reminded me of home. Each window had one rod across the top. The stripes flowed to the floor and ended in a surge of ruffled lace, old and rather dingy looking. (If only I had some bleach.) I looked up and all around me to admire the old four poster bed with its dark, heavy wood that creaked with every move I made. A pure, white, almost virginal canopy draped the sides. I felt this room was all I would ever be: simple, cheap, and tacky. I eventually hoped to afford a house of my own. I wanted to live with my one true love and live forever and ever. (Sometimes, I sounded so sappy.) It was time to get myself on the move.

The bed creaked as I threw my legs over the side. My feet hit the floor, and the thud echoed through the building. The floor seemed to bend as I went to the window. (I hated the sun!) I quickly shut the window and pulled the curtains closed. I sat down at the mirror and wondered what I could do.

My makeup was smeared all over my face, and my hair looked like a rat's nest. (Why was my profession so strenuous?) The water felt good as I splashed it on my face. My makeup seemed to melt away into the flowered bowl. Going back to the mirror, I sat down on the wobbly stool; I prayed every day it would not break.

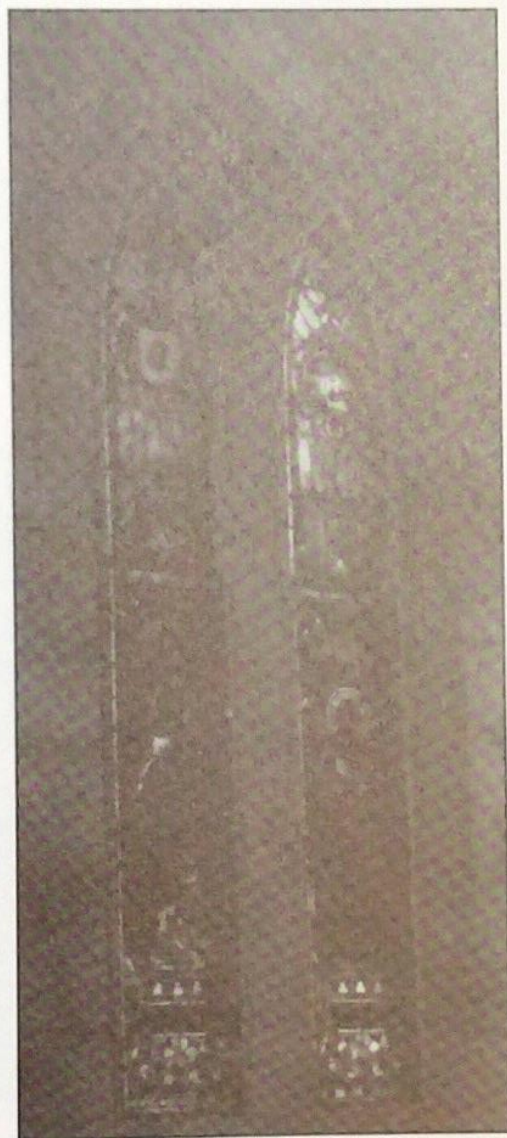
I turned around to see if the fire were still burning in the stove; of course, it wasn't. I relit the coals and placed my curling wand inside. (I hoped my hair didn't take too long since I had to be on the floor in two hours.) I started by picking up my mother's hair brush. (I would always cherish it: the silver handle, the delicate engraving, the way it fit just so into my hand.) I pulled my hair until it was straight. As I made large curls that twisted down the side of my face, I burned my cheek with the old curling wand. I knew that they made better ones, but money was scarce. (Women should not have to go through this sort of torture.) As I smeared the creamy makeup on my face, I blended it in with my fingers. I painted on my lips, my eyes, and paid special attention to my eye lids. If my eye shadow was not just so, my face would be ruined. (I must make my eyes look the same size; one is smaller than the other.) The face was the face of the Purple Princess, the woman loved by all the horny men. As I glanced across the room, I realized the torture was not over yet.

My girle was draped across one of the two wingback chairs which were covered in the same tacky material as

the drapes. I squeezed myself into that torture device and pulled the strings as tight as I could to give myself a "girlish" figure. I slid myself into my purple gown and purple stockings, and of course, purple lace-up boots. After I inserted some feathers into my hair, I wrapped a purple boa around my neck. I looked at the pocket watch one of the men had left in my room one night and saw that I had fifteen minutes to spare. I went back to the mirror to insure that I was ready to face the world. Everything seemed to be in order, except that I had not put on my rhinestones. (One day I wanted to move on up and buy some real diamonds.)

I stepped out into the hallway and heard the piano man plunking out the same old tunes. (I hated every song!) I stood at the top of the stairs until everyone had quieted down, and then I made my entrance. (I never went into a room without making a grand entrance.) I sashayed down the iron staircase into the smoky bar, filled with many drunken men. Moving in and out of the tables, I spoke to all the "well off" men. (I never entertained anyone who did not reward me for my generous offerings.)

A strange man walked into the bar, wearing clothes I had never seen before. (And believe me, I had seen most men's clothes.) He had on a top hat, an elegant jacket, ruffled shirt, sparkling shoes, and a cane with a gold handle. He looked so debonair. Sensing his wealth, I immediately went to greet him. I wrapped my boa around his shoul-





### The Man at the Funeral (continued)

*Joy Thompson*

ders before he could push it away. He glanced down at me and saw my desperate look. He smiled and told me to go find him an empty table. I rushed to the closest one, leaned up against it, and exposed my garter. By that time everyone was staring at our charade. He had me sit on the hard, wooden chair. I could feel my girdle pushing up on my breasts as if I were wearing a bustier. I remained seated and watched him stride over to the piano. He spoke to the man behind the ivory and took some music out of his coat pocket. (This was definitely a most unusual night at the bar.) As he came back to the table, I glanced over at the piano man. I smiled; he began to play.

The sounds created went straight to my heart. I could feel my brain pounding to remember where that song was from. The emotion of each note sank deeper and deeper into my soul until I was crying. The tears flowed like a raging river from somewhere far off in Africa. As the music began to swell, I began to sway in my chair. I closed my eyes and saw my parents' funeral and hundreds of people. I had dressed myself all in black with a veil over my face. I looked to my right, and there he was, the man who was sitting across from me at that very moment. It could not be him, but it was. I was joyous until I remembered the circumstances of our last meeting. Five years ago, my parents died and did not leave me a thing. They had made me

leave the estate because they did not approve of my life-style.

When I opened my eyes, the tears had stopped, but the piano man was still playing. The other people in the bar were staring at me as if they thought I could not cry. (They would never understand.) He leaned over to me and gave me one small kiss on my right cheek. He whispered his name in my ear and that he would take me away.

It seems like yesterday that he came into that old bar and rescued me. He told me on the way back to his home that my parents had commissioned him to write that song for them as a way to remember me. They said my leaving was the biggest sacrifice they had ever made and the only way to recapture the emotion of the event was by a song that had been rolling around in my father's head.

Jeffrey had been looking for me for five years. His only clue to finding me was his knowledge of my life-style. He had traveled to almost every bar within five-hundred miles of my parents' estate. Each time he would have the piece played, the only reaction he would get would be many shouts to leave the bar. He knew I would not recognize him unless I heard that song, and then I would be his.

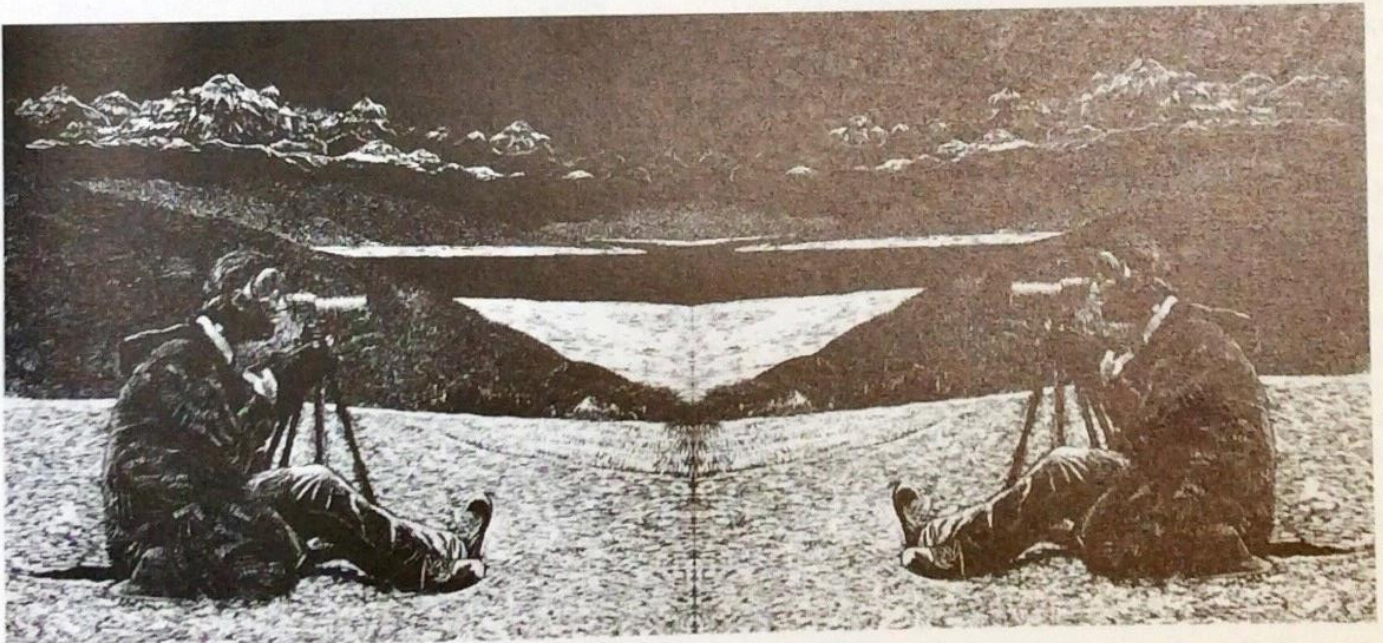
I do not think our children will ever understand the depths to which that music draws both of their parents. I only hope they understand that life is a choice.

memories conceived by a retina in the soul  
*Ron Duman*

take a look at my life, take a ride with me.  
take a ride on the big white cloud.

bring back the memories, bring out the green bicycle, and the old baseball cards. joe, babe, mickey . . .  
you can make it last forever . . . only you.  
take a trip with me and my mind on this journey, together with you, you can make it happen.  
take a look into the old oak tree, the names, the lives, the loves. all gone . . . all gone . . .  
take a look at his side, he isn't the liar, you are the disbeliever.  
suffer my desires for the ones lost.  
open wounds and pain of tears.  
broken latex, dull needles, unplanned, type o, code red, code red . . .  
mixed up thoughts in the emergency room. . . CLEAR. . .  
the mist has settled, take a look at her life shattered by pregnancy, take a look at his life destroyed by rival bullets,  
take a look . . . take a look . . .  
my spleen, broken skin . . . stop the bleeding, someone . . .  
AIDS runs through his body like fire . . .  
keep it in your heart, keep it in your soul, it lives, it breeds . . .  
faith . . .  
take a look around you, take a look into your own mirrored ball, do you see anything . . . do you like it or despise it?  
take a look . . . take a look . . . take a look at my life.

*Raymond Uhlir*



# We've Been Give

## Gerald Hooper

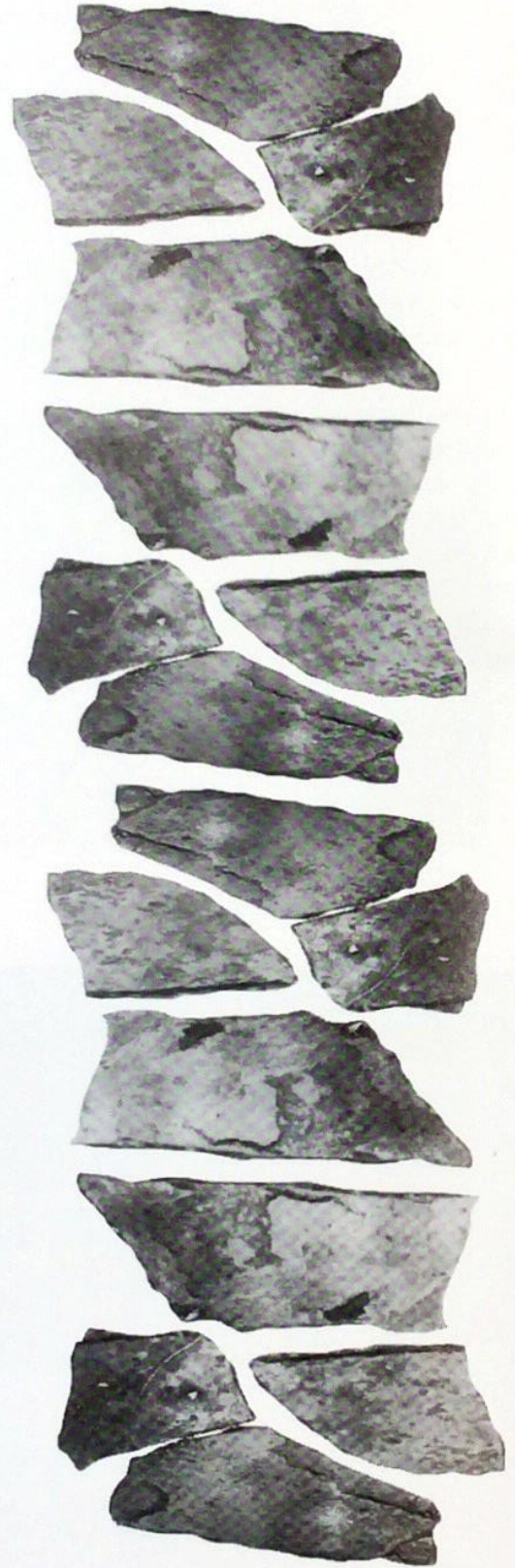
High school is a setup. It's a setup for all of us, and yet a different setup for each of us.

The only sure-thing about high school is that it helps determine what happens after high school. And in that way, it is a setup. Many of us are lost in the illusion that what is here now will be here later. The second part of that illusion is that the "later" is just two feet in front of our faces instead of one, two, or three years away.

Let's face it; the things we do now and the things we take an interest in are, for the most part, temporary. A Bronco and a "No Fear" sticker, a pat on the back for getting the keg, a big, fat joint, a fast car, a wild sex life, a goatee and long sideburns, a pocket-protector, owning all the sci-fi novels ever written, getting E's in conduct, obeying elders like they were gods, and never being tardy to a class will mean ABSOLUTELY NOTHING for most of us in four years.

Shouldn't we focus our lives on something else? When someone uses the word life, we all freak out. "Oh no, this guy wants me to think about changing. He wants me to wonder about the future and actually do something now that isn't going to give me immediate results! He wants me to think about something other than what I'm eating for lunch or where I'm partying this weekend. Make a plan? What, is he crazy?" Raise your hand if you've felt like that. Good.

For most of us, we don't know what we want. Therefore, some of us think that high school is unnecessary. We say to ourselves, "Hey, I want to get out of here and get on with my life." And all of us eventually do this. Some do it immediately and get on with their lives at McDonald's or Burger King. Not that those jobs aren't respectable, but nine times out of ten, if you are working there, no one will ever know your potential, not even you. Some of us we try as hard as we can and never get anything larger than minimum wage, but dropping out is not trying as hard as we can.



# a Second Chance

And then a large percentage of us have set our eyes on big trucks or big parties. We finish our senior year hoping for another four years in a place just like this but with no rules and plenty of booze. Guess what? One: school isn't free anymore. Two: the world doesn't have a faculty. You can't run 50 feet and find a counselor to help you find a job. Nobody is as willing to help as this faculty has been while you've been keeping your eyes set only two feet in front of you. Three: that perfect someone for you doesn't like unorganized, misdirected alcoholics.

And I guess high school in general is temporary. We all don't stay here forever. It's only four years. But, there are things that last forever, things and people and codes



*Krissy Lucio*

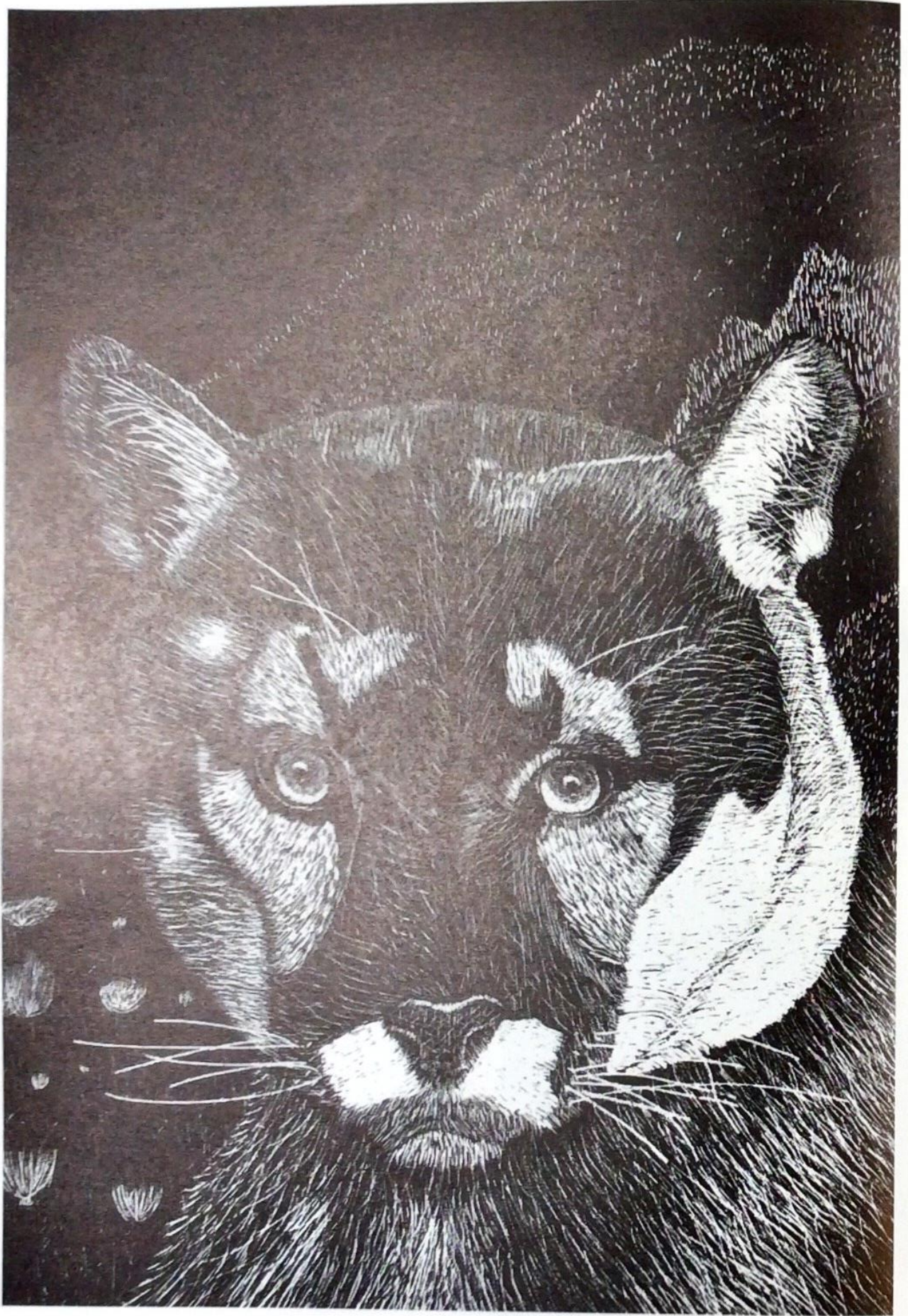
of life that are always with us.

Imagine you and your very best friend have just finished shopping at the mall and you've parked in one of the parking high-rises. It's dark out, and most of the cars have left. You and your best friend leave the mall and proceed to your car. You've parked on the third floor so you take the elevator up. The elevator rises and sets softly on the third floor. Just as the door opens, you are yanked out of the elevator by a violent hand that has appeared from outside on the third floor. The next thing you know, you're on your back, a gun is in your mouth, and your best friend is frozen in terror. The man says, "Okay, after I take all your money and all your bags, one of you will die. Who's it gonna be?" You close your flooded eyes and try to scream but can't find your voice. Opening your eyes, you see your very best friend step forward and stretch out his hands. Then he crumbles, dead. The man runs off.

No need to finish the story. Whoever that friend was, he gave you a second chance, a second chance to live your life to the fullest. Believe me, if anyone died for me, I'd thank him or her every day. I guess you could call that best friend a saviour. He saved our life, your life, my life. That's what defines a saviour: one who lets us live.

Let's say all of this really happened to me, and I went to school the next day and told everyone that it didn't happen, that it wasn't for real and that my best friend didn't even exist, much less had he saved my life. Would you think I was cool? Would you think I was giving my dead friend enough credit? It's unbelievable that I would be saved and then completely ignore it and not accept it. It would be pretty tacky, unacceptable, and disgusting to not give credit to my saviour and to let the truth remain a myth, not an absolute.

As high school students, what is our saviour? Who or what has given us a second chance? Who has taken the bullet for you so that you can live another day? What is consistent and ever present? What are the things in our lives that will be there today, tomorrow and forever? I encourage you to first find these things. If you don't have a constant, you need one. Secondly, hold on to your saviour. Remember that your saviour is not any of the things that are temporary. A sci-fi novel will not save your life and neither will a bottle of beer. What makes you live will never hurt or harm you. Your saviour gives life; he does not take it away.



*Greg Stanley*

**Pretender**  
*Monet Tacquard*

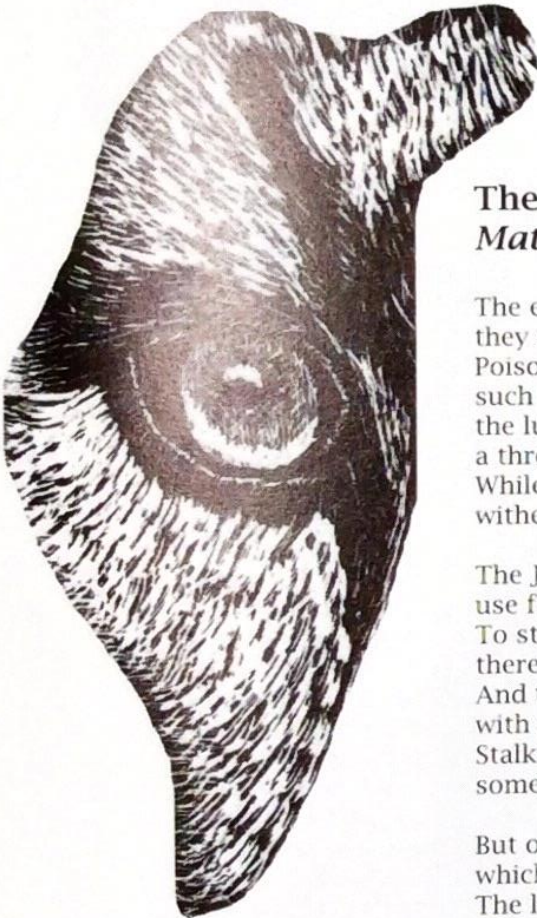
The eyes that you silently gaze  
upon a falling star  
show so little of what lies  
within what they think you are  
a hint of ice inside  
a placid look of care  
you prefer to firmly grasp  
the cross you choose to bear  
scream in the silence  
where no one can hear  
the cry of you awakened  
by the truth you hide and fear  
continue to drift on through your thoughts  
walk through the fire you burn  
while you spread your flame throughout  
this name that you have earned

**The Elements of Evil**  
*Matt Siller*

The elements of evil,  
they sing a wicked tune.  
Poison in the flower,  
such a pretty bloom.  
the lullaby they sing to us,  
a threatening, catchy rhyme.  
While hurt that we surpass to see,  
withers away our time.

The Joker's wicked wonders,  
use feelings we might neglect.  
To stack them up and rip them down,  
there's no way to protect.  
And the victim is drawn towards a panther,  
with a helpless sense of hope.  
Stalking, he approaches one step at a time,  
somehow he tries to cope.

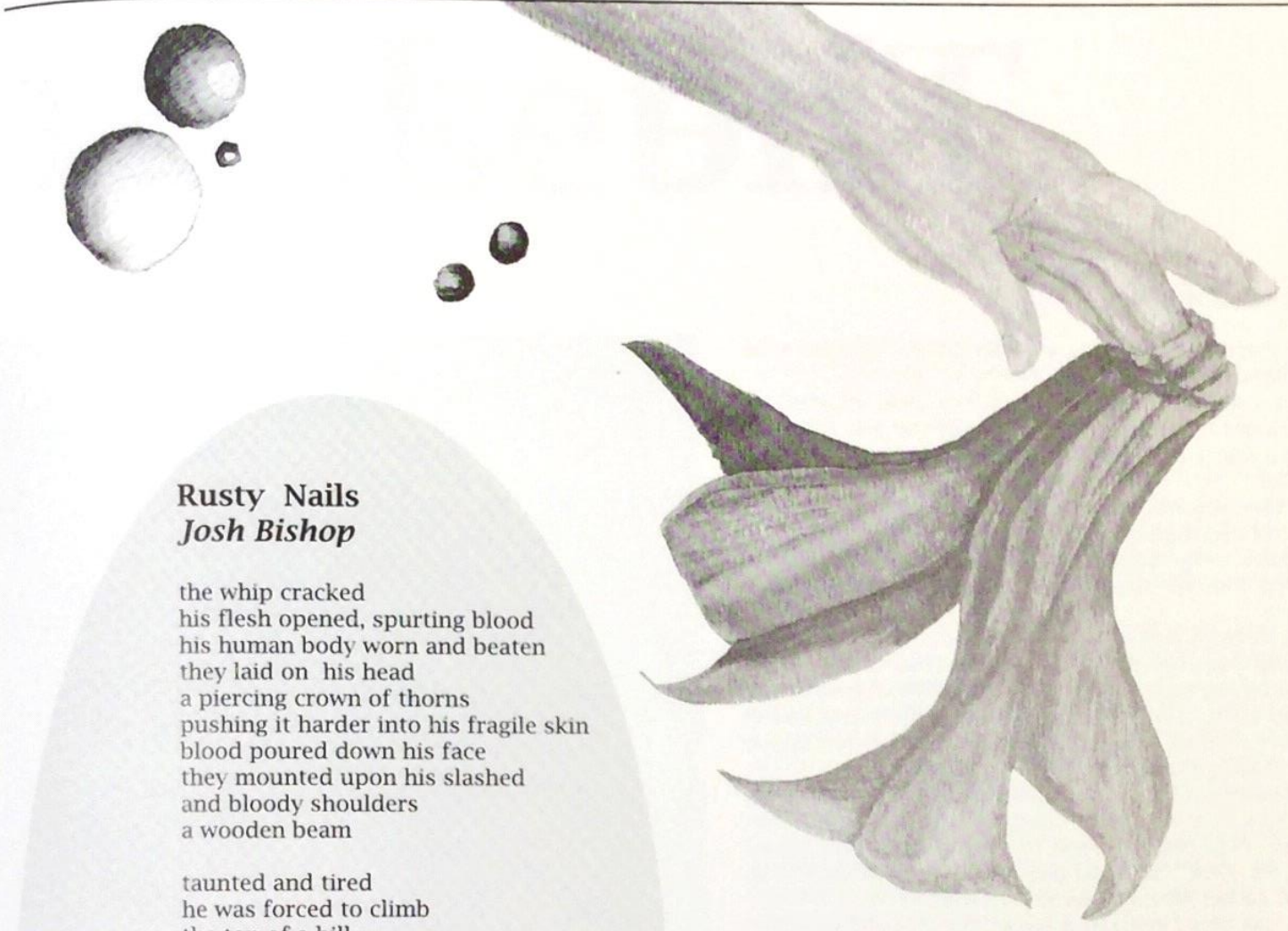
But outside the realm lies a light,  
which spreads like the web of a spider.  
The lost sense of hope that we must find,  
now shines a little brighter.  
As the light engulfs the darkness,  
and the good mends back together.  
Elements of evil that lurk around us,  
are lost in the glow forever!



Souls



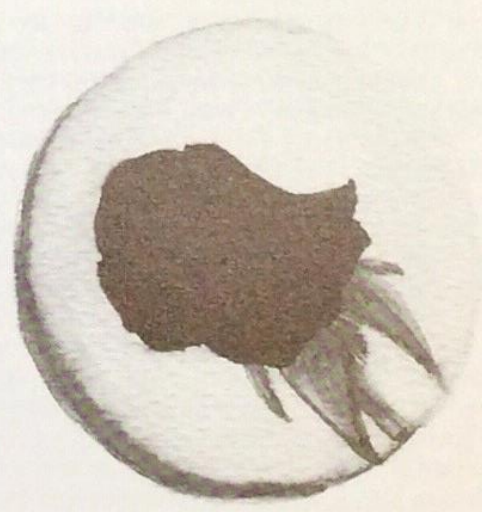
*Patricia Rosillo*



**Rusty Nails**  
*Josh Bishop*

the whip cracked  
his flesh opened, spurting blood  
his human body worn and beaten  
they laid on his head  
a piercing crown of thorns  
pushing it harder into his fragile skin  
blood poured down his face  
they mounted upon his slashed  
and bloody shoulders  
a wooden beam

taunted and tired  
he was forced to climb  
the top of a hill  
there they drove in his hand  
the first old and rusty nail  
a shrieking pain moved through  
his almost lifeless body  
then the next hand  
with all of his weight supported  
by two rusty nails in his hands  
they lifted him on a beam  
standing upright  
making a cross  
they hammered another nail in him  
this time through his feet  
they then drove a spear through his side  
blood poured out  
like water from a fountain  
the ground was stained all over  
with his sinless blood  
then looking up to heaven  
Jesus Christ died  
for you  
and me



# The Last

*Joel Holwitt*

The sun was setting and the sky was flooded with bright, blood red light.

*Sunsets are always worth watching, especially when you are tired or don't want to move or you just have nothing to do. Like now, I've got nothing to do but wait.*

The man who thought these thoughts was a young American soldier who lay on the side of the road somewhere in northern Germany. It was early nineteen forty-five. He would have turned twenty-two that summer.

His black hair was matted. He had wiped bloodied hands through his hair, trying to smooth the sweat-glistening lock of hair back. He wondered how long it had been. *Five hours? Six more likely; yes, it had to have been six hours. Six hours since his advance squad had been ambushed by the Germans.*

Since then he had been lying on the side of the road, taking in each painful breath and feeling blood ooze out of the bullet hole in his stomach with each drop of his chest. He didn't hurt as much anymore, and he felt rather nice, watching the sunset.

*Last time I enjoyed a sunset like this was six, seven or so years ago when Dad was stationed at the Embassy. Kurt and I would just lie on his lawn and wait for the stars to come out.*

His reverie was broken by the sound of approaching footsteps near his head. He heard a voice in English calling to him, almost from another world, another time, "Hello, Jon."

"Hello, Kurt," he said.

It wasn't so impossible, now was it? Such coincidences of friends or relatives meeting each other in war have happened before. Take the Civil War, where brothers would meet on the battlefield ...

"Does it hurt a lot?" asked Kurt, kneeling by his friend's side. The American smiled, "No, not too much. It feels really numb and that's actually a bit enjoyable-- it's almost like a wave of warmth is washing over me. My mouth feels real dry though . . . I don't know why . . . what I wouldn't give for a bit of water . . ."

He heard a canteen passing off a belt and then he felt it being pressed against his lips. The cool refreshing taste of water filled his mouth, and he could feel it going down his throat. It tasted good, refreshing, and after the hours he had endured the dry taste of his own saliva, it was the greatest drink he'd ever had.



# Sunset



Anastasia Toom

"Any good?" asked Kurt.

"Yes," said the American, "that was the best drink I've had in a long time."

"How's the family, Jon?" asked Kurt, screwing the canteen cap back on.

"I think they're fine," said the American, "but I haven't gotten any letters from them for the longest time. I occasionally wonder if they know I'm still alive."

Kurt laughed, and the American would have joined him if he had felt like it. He asked, "How's your family? How's the old man?"

"He's dead," answered Kurt. There was no emotion in his voice. After five or so years of war, his friend had grown accustomed to the deaths of everyone he knew, just like the American. "Remember Ted Jones, who got it at Normandy in the chest? How about Frank Washington, who got it in the throat, and no one heard him drowning to death in his own blood during the night?"

Kurt continued, "One of your firebombing raids. He died from smoke inhalation they tell me. He wasn't burned to death, they say. He must not have felt good, all the same."

"Sorry to hear that," said Jon. Kurt's father had been a good guy, and he'd always been nice to him when he had stayed with Kurt.

Suddenly he was hit with a double wave of pain and nausea, and he instinctively spasmed; then he started to cough up blood. He didn't know why; he didn't think that he'd been hit in the lungs.

*But obviously it has happened, hasn't it. And my lungs have been filling up with blood, haven't they?*

He suddenly felt very sick, rolled onto his side, and coughed up the water that Kurt had given him.

*That always happens with a punctured lung, doesn't it? I should've known. After all the guys who have drowned to death like that; I should have known that it had happened, known not to drink to the water. . .*

He felt Kurt's reassuring hand on his shoulder.

"I'll get a doctor," his friend said.

"No," said the American, smiling. "It doesn't matter. Stay for a minute, watch the sunset and wait for the stars to come out."

His voice was calm, he was happy, and he felt at peace. He knew that this would be the last time that he'd be able to watch the sunset and the stars with Kurt like he had seven years ago. *And sunsets are always worth watching . . .*

*Sheila Snyder*

How do I feel?

'Neath starlit skies I wait,  
so patient.

The ocean which until now had been so tossed that I could not see  
the candle in front of my face ... silence.

This sand I have walked many a night  
feels so smooth beneath my feet.

And the few clouds that dot the horizon  
are only drifting away on the wind's gentle breath.

I can hear the cries of lost and lonely creatures.

Sitting on the great stone always brings me comfort.

I am waiting for someone.

The peace begins to frighten me,

but at last I have escaped.

The sea, so still and dark

would seem only a black desert were it not for the moon's luminescence.

I wish I could reach out across the water

and with my finger trace the lines of how I feel

if only to vanish away in an instant.

To sit here forever would only be a dream.

With the sun's reaching light

I must begin another day of despair.

It is as if there is no hope in a life that once could not do without

... But the water is so calm ...

Oh, if only I could hide away my sorrows

as easily as my teardrops drown in the ocean's waves.

Alas, it is impossible.

Have I been put on this earth,

an earth too dear for my unbecoming existence,

for no other reason than punishment?

Is there within no friend which a secret can remain as such?

And who knows how I feel?

Not I.

He took the pain and left behind a serenely smiling void.

And later

after not much time had passed

he put it back

swollen, blackened, bruised, and cut.

The pain is searing.

It pierces more than all the hurt I have ever known.

Sometimes dormant

quiet and depressed

Other times raging

wanting to lash out and topple these walls that confine.

Altogether it is only bittersweet misery.

I have not one light which could lead me out of this seeming Hell.

And though the fires burn bright

they seek only to confuse.

He speaks of living in shadows

and I want to be there with him -

away from the blazing heat of this roaring inferno.

Sleeping peacefully in his arms which I still have never touched.

With his face - so dear, and his eyes so deep.

Tell me - reader of my story

what tragic end does await me now?

Though I believe to have been in the darkest, dankest dungeon.

And drowned in a river of sorrows.

Can it be true

My destiny is worse?

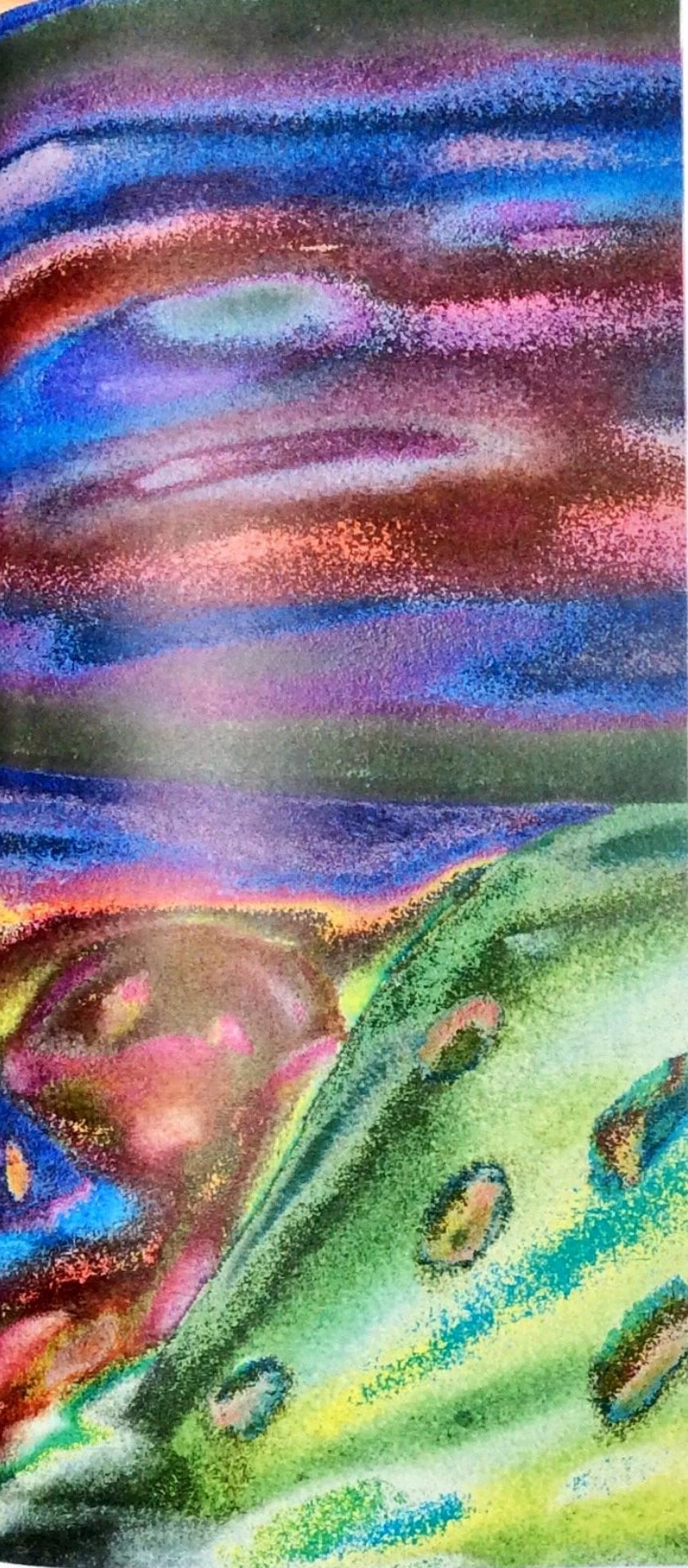


Hope

Patricia Rosillo







*Teresa Root*

Vanquish in a psychotic reality  
My wounds thriving with every etching of your  
repugnant meanings  
My skin of no true arrangement of the enigma  
Present as my friend only in words  
I deplore you unnoticed  
Suffering a hidden subject no one cares to detect  
Your words exacerbating my wounds that never heal  
You are a connoisseur without knowledge  
Declaring, grab a bus to your homeland  
I am home  
In a home that is pronounced should  
never have been mine  
They snicker at my character  
I cave into nothing  
Then they inquire what's wrong?  
Society's ungodly  
It went astray long ago  
Physical violence is less perilous  
than what they  
(WE)  
speculate  
Slaying the essence of my humanity  
is your pastime  
No great gaiety  
No innocence  
Just bewildered  
And who we are  
were  
is no more  
Vacancy  
Strife from the emptiness  
is all that survives

*Andy Tschoepe*  
Syzygy of Toadstools

# THE NECKLACE

*Lena So*

Bobby's face turned a rosy red when all eighty-four eyes of the guests looked at him. He didn't know them, but since they were friends of his father, he tried to like them.

"Come on, boy. Open it," one stranger voiced, urging Bobby. Bobby looked at the beautifully wrapped box and started to carefully peel back a piece of scotch tape.

"Just tear it," another unfamiliar voice said impatiently. Bobby's nervous, embarrassed hands fidgeted, and finally the paper was off. As he opened the box, his face, blushing and perspiring before, now glowed. Pulling out a handsome, expensive leather jacket, he said, "Thanks, Daddy," as he shoved himself into his father's strong, supporting arms.

"You're welcome, son. Happy tenth birthday," the father said warmly. "I love you."

As Bobby got ready for school, he threw on his brand new jacket, admiring himself in the mirror. It was his first day back from Christmas break and the first day back since his late December birthday. He had just come from his visit at his father's apartment in New York to spend the rest of the school year with his mother, who had custody during school, in Long Island. As he smiled confidently at the full-length mirror, he thought of all the compliments he would get from the kids at school.

Sure enough, Bobby became one of the most popular kids in the fifth grade. Despite his shy, unsocial character, all his classmates envied him and his "cool New York jacket." It took Bobby these few weeks to realize just how much he missed his father. Because he hadn't even spoken to him in a while, Bobby thought it would be extra special if he could get his father a present when he saw him in the summer. So, instead of spending his money on Pogs, comic books, and video games, he began to save the left-over Christmas and birthday

money, five-dollars-a-week allowances, and the money from chores he had done for his mom around the house. Bobby planned to buy a modest yet charming silver necklace, which he had seen at a small department store nearby, as a "Don't forget me; I love you, Daddy," reminder to his father.

As the summer rolled around, Bobby, unlike all the other fifth-graders, did not talk about swimming at Jimmy's pool every day, riding bikes down the steep hill on Oak Street, or selling lemonade to earn extra candy money. Instead, Bobby packed his suitcase and the necklace, representing his young but thoughtful and true love for his father, along with a card he had made. He was excited and nervous; he could not wait to visit the man he had not seen in six months. His father always had a strange impact on him. Bobby felt that his father was too good of a person to be *his* father. Maybe that was the reason why this gift was so important to him, so he could finally give something back and prove to himself that he deserved the perfect father that he had.

When his flight landed, Bobby looked around the airport for the tender, familiar face. When he found it, he showered it with kisses. The father and son drove home together, catching up on the wonderful world of the fifth grade and leather jackets.

The home they drove to, however, was not the apartment Bobby had been used to. Instead, it was a large, white custom-built house, big enough for a family of six. Surprised and feeling a bit deceived, Bobby was introduced to an attractive woman in her early thirties and a little girl of seven. Karen, as his father called her, and her daughter, Jessica, were friends. Bobby actually recognized her from the birthday gathering his father had planned with his office acquaintances.

Still in shock and not knowing whether to feel angry or jealous, Bobby was quiet. As the weeks passed, he could not feel comfortable around Karen, Jessica, or even his father. Since that moment back from the airport, his father had seemed like a whole new person, not the caring, warm

man he once was. Instead, he was just a man who paid for Bobby's food and clothes. Bedtime hugs and kisses were just forgotten, and Bobby and his father did not have any more of those "father-son talks." Actually, his father seemed to have more of those intimate talks with Jessica, an occurrence which Bobby could not understand; after all, she was three years younger than him. What could his dad say to her that he could not say to Bobby? Confused, the young boy lacked the confidence to say anything.

In the three months that went by, Bobby (being of shy, sensitive nature) never opened his mouth about spending more time with his father. As Bobby sadly started to gather his old and new belongings, a sparkle in the corner of his eye caught his attention. Wiping a tear from his other eye, he picked up a necklace that looked familiar to him. Its lustrous heart charm twinkled in the August sunlight peeping in through the window.

Next to it was a homemade card of construction paper which read, "Dear Daddy, this is just something I've saved up to buy you because you are so special to me. You do everything for me so now I want to do something for you. Please wear this all the time, and when you do, think of me and remember that I am thinking of you. I love you. Your son, Bobby."

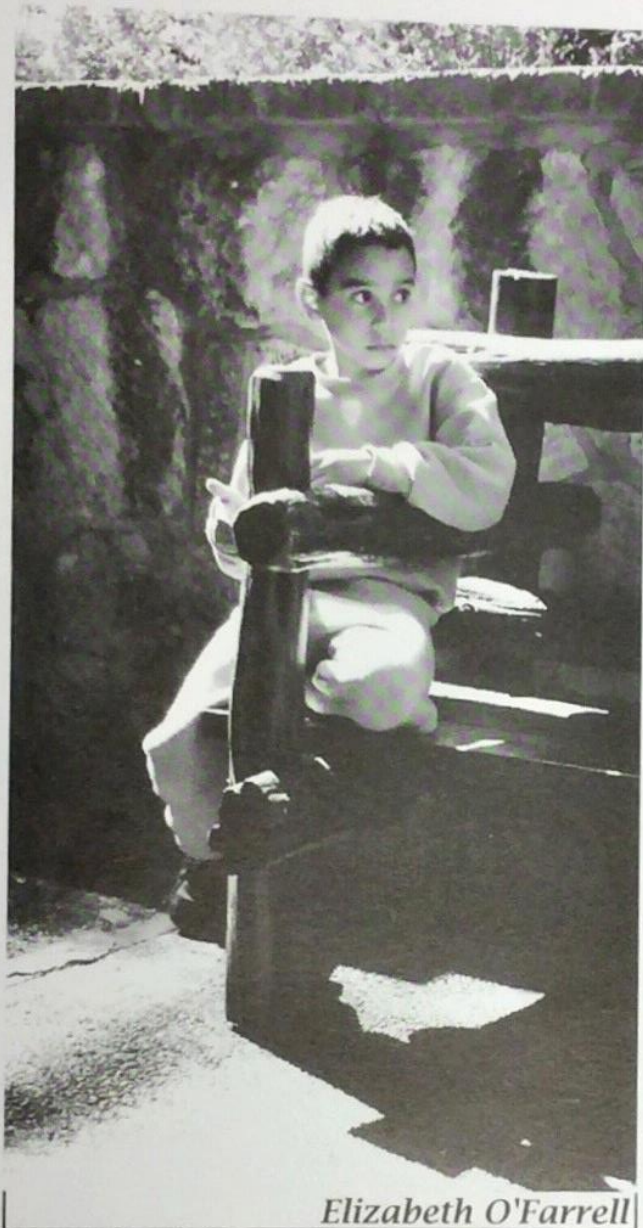
Just as Bobby was about to crumple the card, his father opened the door and told him that after lunch, he would take him to the airport. Bobby, sighing and feeling he had

nothing to lose, handed his father the card and necklace. Surprise and thankfulness entered the man's face, and he could not help but grab his son and hug him, something that he had not done in three months. The two bonded once again, as if those nine months of being "separated" had not existed.

As they ate lunch, Bobby returned to his old self around his father; he hadn't been that way for three months. After enjoying their last hour together, it was time to depart. They said their final good-byes, and Karen and Jessica both attempted to give Bobby an earnest "We'll miss you." Bobby ignored their failure and turned to his father. He touched the necklace which represented everything this father and son had shared, and he wondered when he would see his father next. His father looked down at him and told him that in a short four months, the four of them would be reunited again for Christmas and someone's eleventh birthday. Bobby smiled, then frowned at the thought of spending Christmas with Karen and her daughter, but he tried to like his father's friends.

After one last hug and kiss, Bobby was led away by a stewardess who promised to take care of him on the plane trip back home. His father and his two friends waved, and Bobby walked in the opposite direction. A few steps later, he unconsciously stopped and turned around. As he saw the

back of his father, holding hands with Jessica on one side and Karen on the other, his eyes were led to a sparkling necklace, lying on the floor where they had said their good-byes. He yelled out "Daddy!" but the man, seeming to be a stranger, did not turn around.



*Elizabeth O'Farrell*

**An Unreal Perfection**  
*Melissa Connors*

An imaginative bliss  
I only wish I could subside,  
Not wanting, but receiving,  
Feeling.  
Illusive possessions,  
That are taken for granted  
Wouldn't be known.  
Hate- a word  
Found only in a foreign land.  
Friends, admirers who know how to love  
Themselves, each other.  
Wretched thoughts dismantled from the minds  
Of all the patrons who choose to take refuge.  
A glorious place full of endless compassion  
Instead of selfishness.  
Protected by an enchanted shield  
That keeps out all invaders.  
No pain, no tragedy.  
Uniquely created individuals  
Overcome by benevolence and generosity.  
Guided by Adam and Eve  
Entering, experiencing  
A love never felt before.  
This beauty, so remarkable, so perfect  
So unreal.



*Tim Whitehill*

"Now, what kind of an attitude is that, son?"  
"My attitude," he said, angry that they would call him to the counselors' office in the first place, and even madder that they would do so because of his disposition.

"Come on now, son," the guidance counselor said softly. "What would give a kid like you an attitude like that?" He asked sincerely, having just reviewed a file which contained nothing but above average grades in advanced classes and praise from teachers. "Is there trouble at home?" he asked, offering a possible explanation.

To Jacob, there couldn't have been a dumber question. He didn't want to just sit there and tell the counselor what was on his mind, but he didn't want him jumping to conclusions either. "No trouble at home. Let's just say, I just don't believe anymore," he told the counselor, trying to move possible blame away from his family.

This last statement let the counselor know he was getting somewhere, and he continued by asking, "Believe in what?"

Jacob looked up with a sense of wonder in his eyes. He was trying to figure out whether the counselor was being extremely condescending, attempting to get him to speak his mind, or if he just didn't know. "America. I don't believe in its lies anymore."

The counselor leaned back in his chair, not sure

## Standing

on

the

Ninth

Gerald Voorhees

how to respond at the moment, but desperately thinking of what he could say. It was never easy talking to the "flagburners," the kids that thought they were anarchists.

"Do you still believe in the lies? One good look at this school, at any school should shatter your conviction." He paused for a moment. "It destroyed mine. I don't believe anymore. Do you?"

Having had several seconds to think, the counselor was able to respond quickly. "Yes. I believe in America and in what it stands for. I watch the news every night, and I thank God I was born in America instead of some Third World nightmare even God has managed to forget. Why don't you ask yourself if you would rather live in America or somewhere like Tibet where they rape nuns, beat priests, and murder the people who stop believing in the government."

Jacob looked away. He stared down and glared long and hard at the black and gray tile below the clean black steel toed boots that covered his feet. The whole room felt uncomfortable, impersonal, and vengeful, as if the tiles and walls were staring him down for every time he had walked inside that building, leaned against a wall, and stopped to rest. "To tell the truth," Jacob said, turning back to look the counselor in the eyes, "I would rather live here."

The counselor smiled for a second and began



## Standing on the Ninth (continued)

to nod, thinking he had won their brief war of words.

"But," Jacob continued, "at least over there I would be born knowing I would be treated like trash. Over here, you go through grade school thinking America is the land of freedom, liberty, and justice. But when you grow up, you're too smart to be willing to blindly accept the blatant contradictions between the Constitution and the school conduct code. The government made a big mistake thinking that they could give us knowledge, or at least the tools to find it, and still expect us to accept the hypocrisy."

"The supporters are complacent." Jacob tasted the disgust he felt from even referring to them. "But if you don't buy expression, there are others too. In fact, why don't we make a list? We already have expression, how about adding freedom of speech?"

"Now that's not true, son!" the counselor almost shouted, fearing he was letting Jacob get out of hand.

"Oh, but yes it is." A malicious smile crossed Jacob's face as he tasted the victory. "It's so obvious, and that's what makes me mad. I don't know how many times I've been told by one teacher or another to sit and



*Lena So*

"Hypocrisy?"

"Freedom of expression for one thing. What a joke. The dress code inhibits our minds. Youth these days don't exactly get a lot of opportunities to express themselves, and the dress code killed any chance we might have found."

"But there are very good reasons behind the dress code. Reasons that both students and parents support."

be quiet, to do as I'm told." Jacob paused to see how the counselor would react. Seeing nothing but a blank expression, he continued, "Why don't we just continue right along with that little list? Let's add the freedom of assembly, freedom of press, the right to petition, and the right to bear arms."

"Well now," the counselor spoke up, "that last one at least is for your own safety."

Jacob nodded. "That's the easiest violation of them all to justify. But then, I suppose if you locked us all in cages with padded walls, you could just as easily shrug it off and say, "Oh well, it's for their own good." Jacob finished this last sentence in a voice as patronizing as possible.

"You're out of line, young man," the counselor said, raising his voice further.

"Besides," Jacob continued, completely ignoring the objection, "how would that justify the others? And how about adding protection from unwarranted search and seizures to the list? The administrators can bust into anyone's car whenever they feel like it!" Jacob said, jumping to his feet and really starting to get into what he was saying. He let everything bottled up inside of him out.

"That's enough of that," the counselor shouted as he stood and pressed the call button to the intercom on his desk. "Someone get a policeman to my office immediately!" he shouted aloud for the receiver box of the intercom to pick up.

Upon hearing how angered the counselor had gotten, Jacob calmed himself and began to speak to the counselor again. "You're afraid," he told him. "You're afraid because I question what isn't supposed to be questioned. I question what you believe in, your principles. That scares you, doesn't it?" He began to smile again. This time the smile was caused by that curious feeling of joy that only comes with the realization that one is right.

"Get the hell out of my office, boy," the counselor said slowly, pointing to the door and enunciating each word to let his anger and loathing towards Jacob show plainly.

Jacob once again began to ignore the protests of the counselor. "I know that what I say and stand for scares you. It rattles your little sense of security, but do you know what scares me?"

The rhetorical question bounced off of the man's long-deaf ears. He only stared Jacob down, letting him know the depths of his hate.

Jacob was shaken for a moment. He had never before felt fear for his life -- not until he looked up into the eyes of the grown man standing before him, his face flushed a deep red with hatred. However, Jacob went on because he was too afraid to show how much he was afraid.

"What scares me," he began, "is that the government lets it happen. The President, Congress, and the Supreme Court let the state school board make a mockery of our rights. That's what put the fear of God into me. I don't know how it couldn't do the same for you."

The counselor's eyes brightened as he finally saw a chance to put in a winning argument. "You know enough about the Constitution and your rights, son," he said in the most condescending tone he could muster up, trying to hurt Jacob as much as he possibly could. "I'm surprised that you don't recall the tenth amendment. 'All powers not given to the federal government by the constitution directly go to state authority.' That does include education, son. Now, the government isn't all

that evil, is it?" He smiled victoriously and looked down at Jacob.

Jacob stood frozen in thought for several seconds trying to think of something to say in response when the two policemen came to the door. Jacob glanced quickly over to them and back to the counselor. The counselor looked to the policemen and then pointed momentarily at Jacob. They understood and began to approach.

One of them grabbed Jacob by the arms just above his elbows even as he began to struggle to push them away. Despite all the strength he could put forward, the officer's grasp was firm and held him steady. Still clutching Jacob by the upper arms, the officer slammed him down against the counselor's desk. The other approached with a pair of stainless steel handcuffs and pulled Jacob's arms awkwardly behind his back. Then he wrapped the cuffs around Jacob's wrists, pressing down on the clamps to tighten them.

They began to lead Jacob out of the office, his head hanging loosely downward, silently contemplating his rage. When they had just passed through the doorway and the second policeman was about to pull the door shut behind them, Jacob lifted his head and turned to look at the counselor. Their eyes met for a second, and it was the counselor's turn to see hatred. Just before one of the officers pushed him forward, Jacob spoke. "The ninth amendment."

The counselor turned away at Jacob's words and the officers led Jacob out, pulling the door shut behind them. He sat back down in his comfortable leather swivel chair and pivoted around to face a low bookshelf pinned against the wall opposite his computer. He looked past a row of pictures (consisting mostly of his wife and two children) that bordered the edge of the shelf and quickly scanned over the gold printing on the spines of the books shoved against the wall.

His right index finger moved with his eyes, running along the top of each book as he briefly read the title, and then moved onto the next. His eyes stopped on an inch thick book and his finger quickly caught up, stopping on the top of the spine and pulling forward. It would have fallen over had he not reached forward and caught it in his other hand.

The counselor swiveled back around and, placing the book on the desk, began to thumb through the large appendix. He stopped on a light blue tinted page and began to scan for the information he wanted. He found it near the bottom of the second column and began to read aloud.

"Certain rights in the Constitution shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." He finished the passage and slammed the book shut loudly.

Sitting back, the counselor shook his head, denying and resolving to forget what he had just read. Desperately, he tried to rebuild his sense of security left shattered by the Ninth Amendment.



*Kara Starr*

**Unsafe Landing**  
*Joy Thompson*

I am not the lonely child  
they see, or want to see.  
I am not afraid  
They were never so strong as me.  
I am the individual  
I am part  
of a moment in motion.  
I am strong.  
I am living.  
I am Rage  
all its good and bad  
radiate  
from my body.  
Move me,  
throw me,  
flailing  
into an unknown wind.

Daring the life,  
cheating the Reaper,  
pitching my nomadic soul  
back in their view.  
Learning, teaching  
I roar through life  
growing old too fast  
gathering all the wisdom  
my body can possess.  
Touch my hand  
and be pulled away  
from your stable rock  
in society.  
Be drawn along  
into my world,  
Where every stone is  
moving, rocking,  
teetering on the edge  
of insanity.

You can't avoid me  
I won't be ignored.  
You are drawn to me,  
to my living.  
You have it all  
but still want more,  
I have nothing  
yet I have more.  
You want my world  
of chaos and love and vibrance.  
You long to live it.  
You pity me/envy me the same.  
I am lost to you forever,  
you reach out,  
don't find my hand.  
Try and catch me.  
I must warn you,  
once you fly  
you never land.



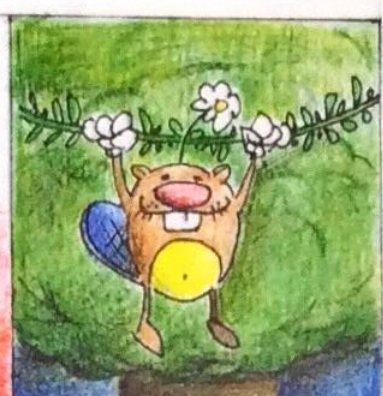
I'M NAKED, I'M NAKED, I'M NAKED  
I'M FREE,

1

→ 2

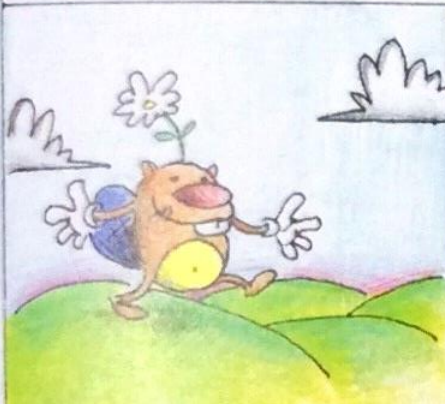


GOT NO CLOTHES ...



JUST WHAT NATURE  
GAVE ME!

3



YOU CAN LAUGH, RUN AND  
JUMP,  
YOU CAN STRUT YOUR STUFF.

4



'CAUSE WHEN YOU'RE  
ALL NAKED  
NOBODYS ACTING TOUGH!

5



HE'S NAKED,  
I'M NAKED,  
WHY AREN'T YOU?

6



THEN YOU COULD RUN  
AROUND IN NATURES  
NAKED ZOO!

7



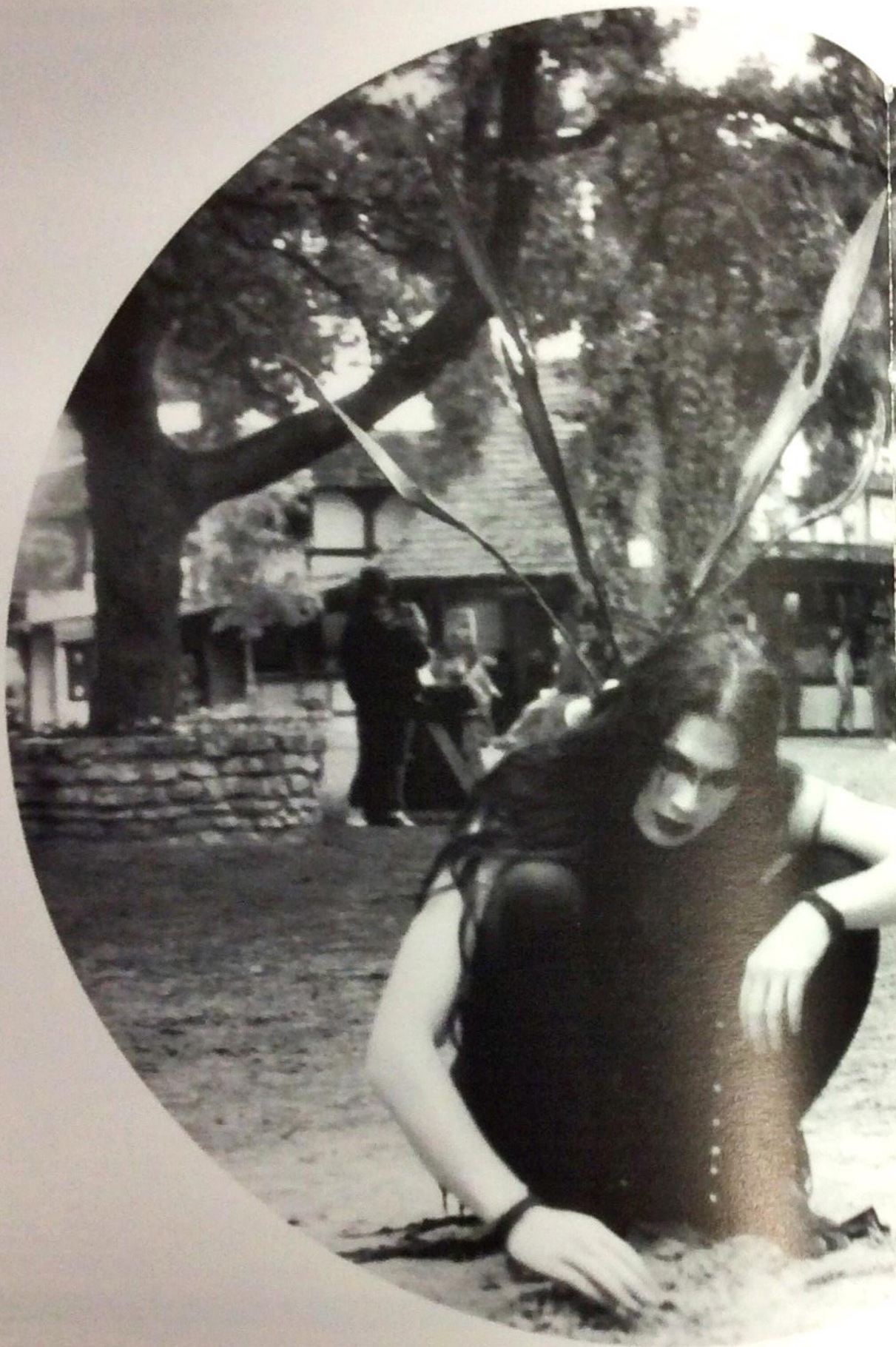
ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO ALWAYS  
WEAR CLOTHES,  
THEY DON'T KNOW JACK,  
THEY CAN LIVE WITHOUT  
THOSE!

8



WHEN YOU FINALLY  
DECIDE TO DANCE  
WITH ME,  
WE'LL RUN THROUGH  
THE VALLEYS,  
NAKED, AND FREE.

9



*Laura Nelson*

## Plastic

*Kary Aycock*

I walk down my empty street

waiting for the world to join me

to meet my plastic dreams

they have to be down this road

if I can just get far enough away

I wanna' live in the movies

where everyone is beautiful

and they all end up happy or dead

I don't wanna stay in this place

I don't wanna be like everybody else

Cardboard stand-ups and Barbie dolls

behind a gray curtain of apathy

a silhouette of their listless lies

what seems to be isn't even there

only languid forms without depth

Drones who repeat what they are told

I need a reality where truth exists

I am tired of your lies.



*Ray Rodriguez*

**Scenes from Plato's Terms**  
*Roseanne Lane*

Coveting your imperfections  
Bulging of eyelid crease  
surfaces where lashes should be  
Sparse pepper  
infringes upon faint skin  
Voice sounding trite, forcing each word  
leather cord hanging from  
your self-induced  
wounded throat

YOU  
had let depression go, be gone  
jaded expressions you said they faded  
I brought softness to your face you  
said you were dehydrated since  
our last kiss you transformed  
to exotic conversation convincing me it was  
L O V E  
striking the midpoint where  
your glances met mine before

I  
became too "high-school" youth  
was a crime innocence was no longer  
fancied you cut me off mid sentence  
but now you walk around dazed when  
I enter the room every 80's love song  
lost meaning you mutter  
Come back relationships evolve

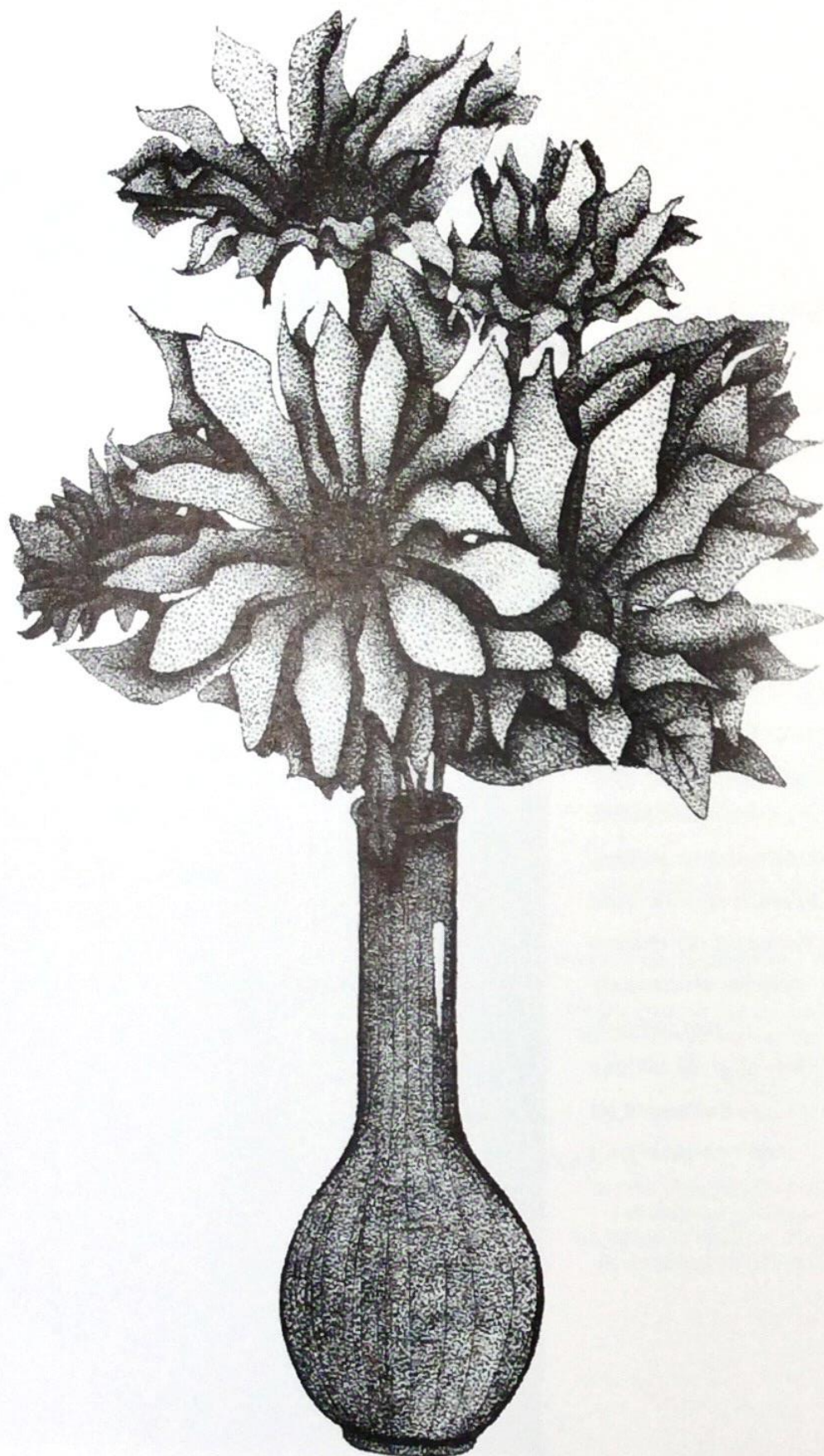
OURS  
is just going to the next level you  
explain past your ebony black hair I  
say bluntly I could stare into your  
sockets but I'd see no future.

**Sadistic?**  
*Nancy Bigelow*

I find satisfaction  
Out of your very frustration  
And delight in your suffering  
Comfort myself  
With your anxious agony  
Look on as you entangle yourself  
In your own ethereal web of guilt  
And watch you lust for the unattainable  
I would stare and do nothing  
As you reach up your hand  
From your self-created murky domain  
Striving so earnestly  
Just to touch  
Only to grasp nothing  
But barren air  
And I would rejoice



*Nicole Kotara*



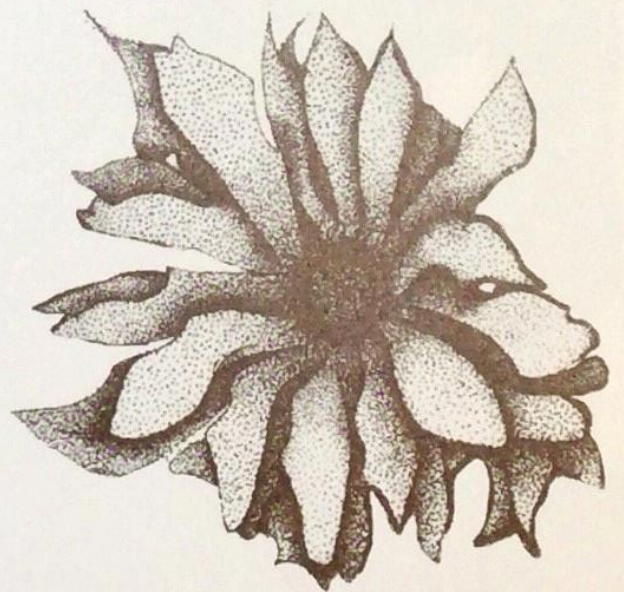
*David Mills*

Sunflower



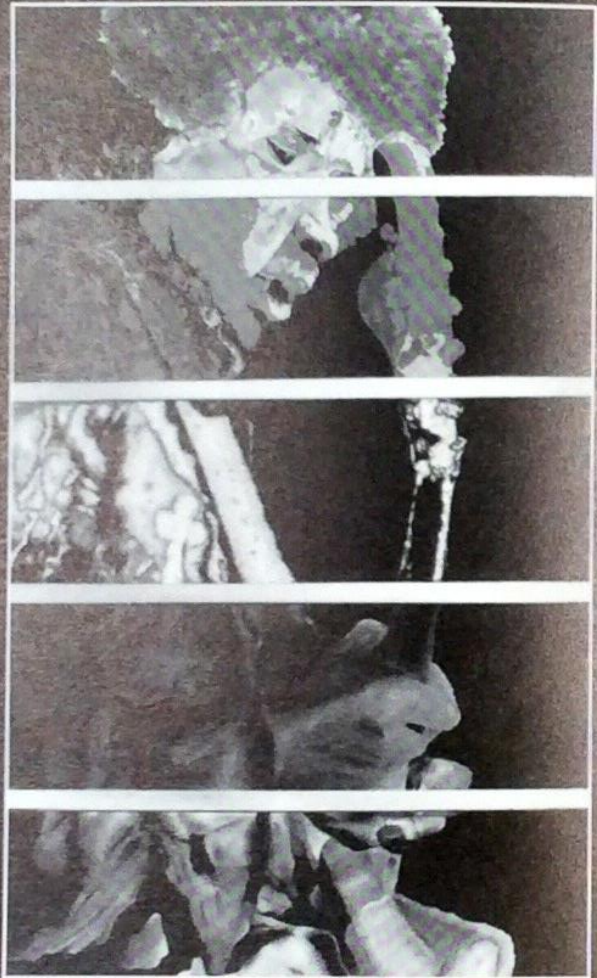
*Ricarlos Caldwell*

I creep  
Ghost silent, through a garden of warmth  
I weep  
A downward spiral of emotion lost  
I eat  
Your overpowering beauty  
I slowly  
Like a weather worn flower, born from a storm of dust  
I partake  
Of your communion of good faith  
I wait  
In a shadow of self denial  
I create  
A mood, a setting . . . a dream





*Dustin Goebel*



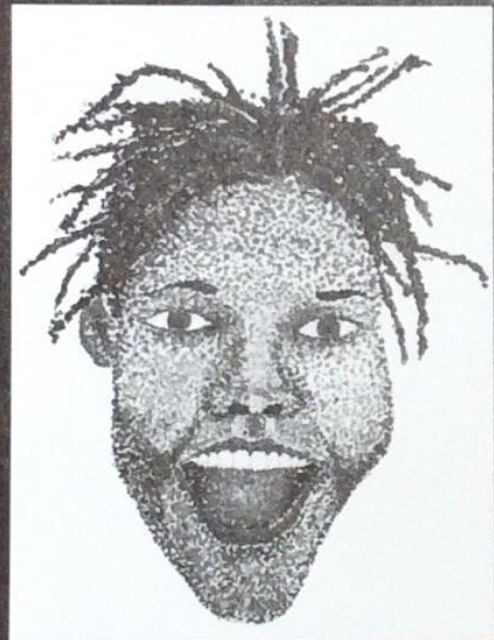
*Andy Tschoepe*



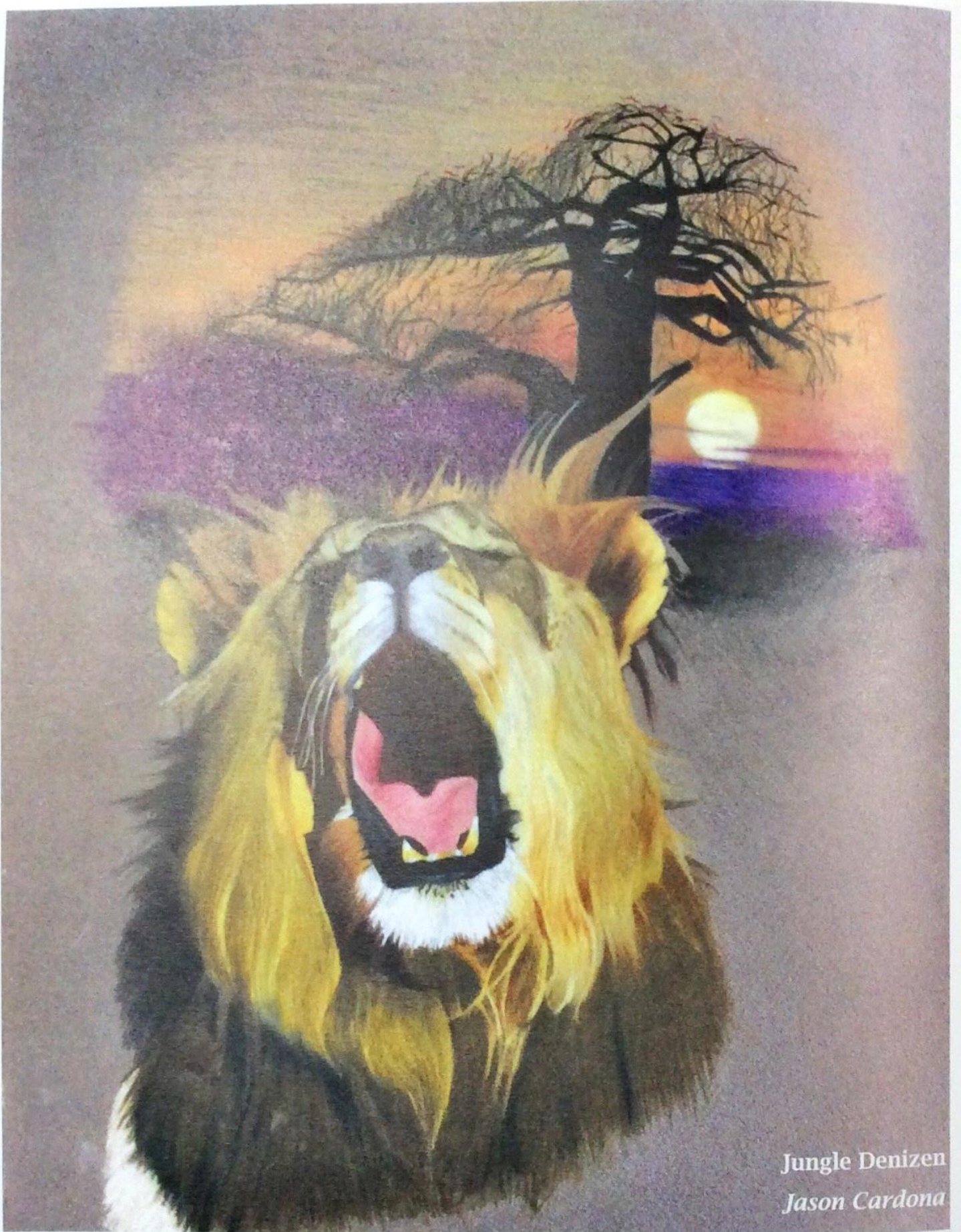
*Nancy Bigelow*



*Joshua Rose*



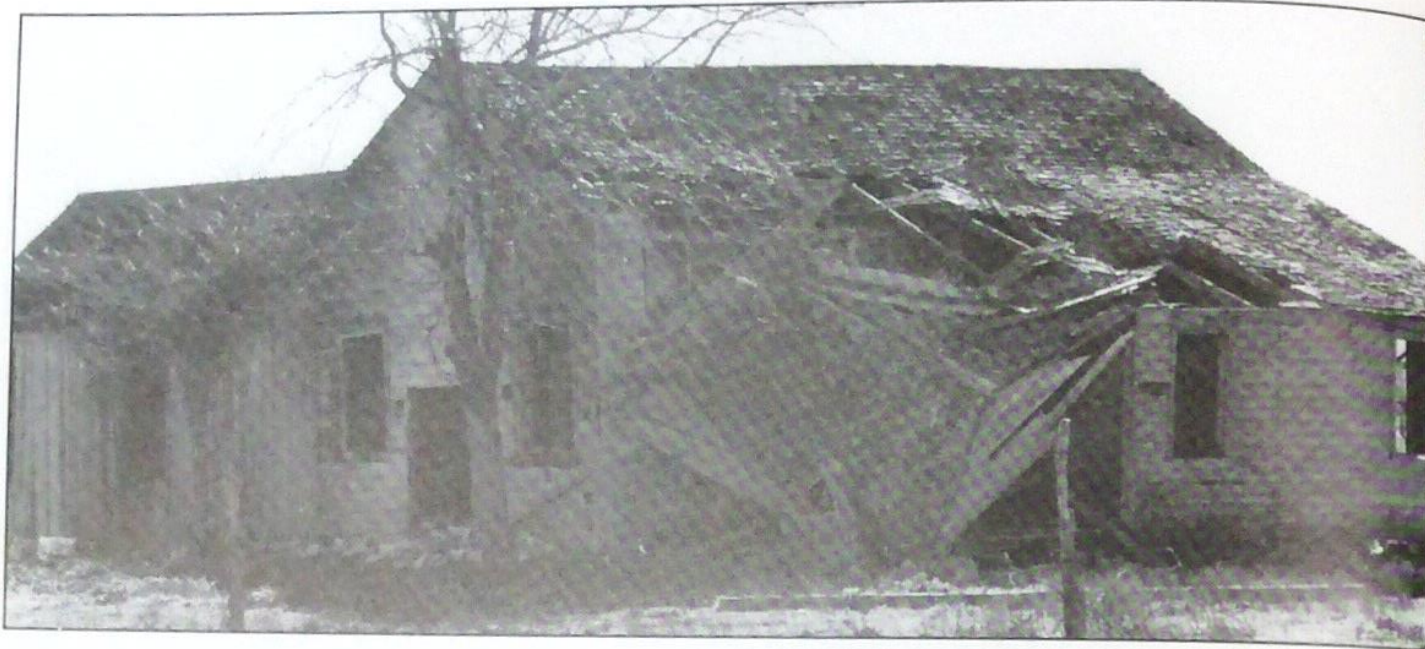
*Justin Garcia*



Jungle Denizen  
*Jason Cardona*

OM  
*Stephen Kinslow*

a primal scream  
an open channel  
an open mind  
an open body  
time is a river  
timing is the key  
the mind is a bridge  
the bridge of a monkey  
concentration is salvation  
even monkeys can concentrate  
it take two to tango  
it takes two to communicate  
it takes two to love  
it takes two to do this deed  
are YOU ready?  
you're already at the bank  
take a look across the river and hope to cash in  
you see them, they don't see you  
it's not the right time  
what good is having the only telephone in the world  
they see you  
they look at you (are you ready?)  
this might be your only chance  
you SCREAM a scream of ages  
they do the same  
you open a mind  
you open a channel  
the time is right  
the monkey is there  
you fill each other with  
OM  
You become one.



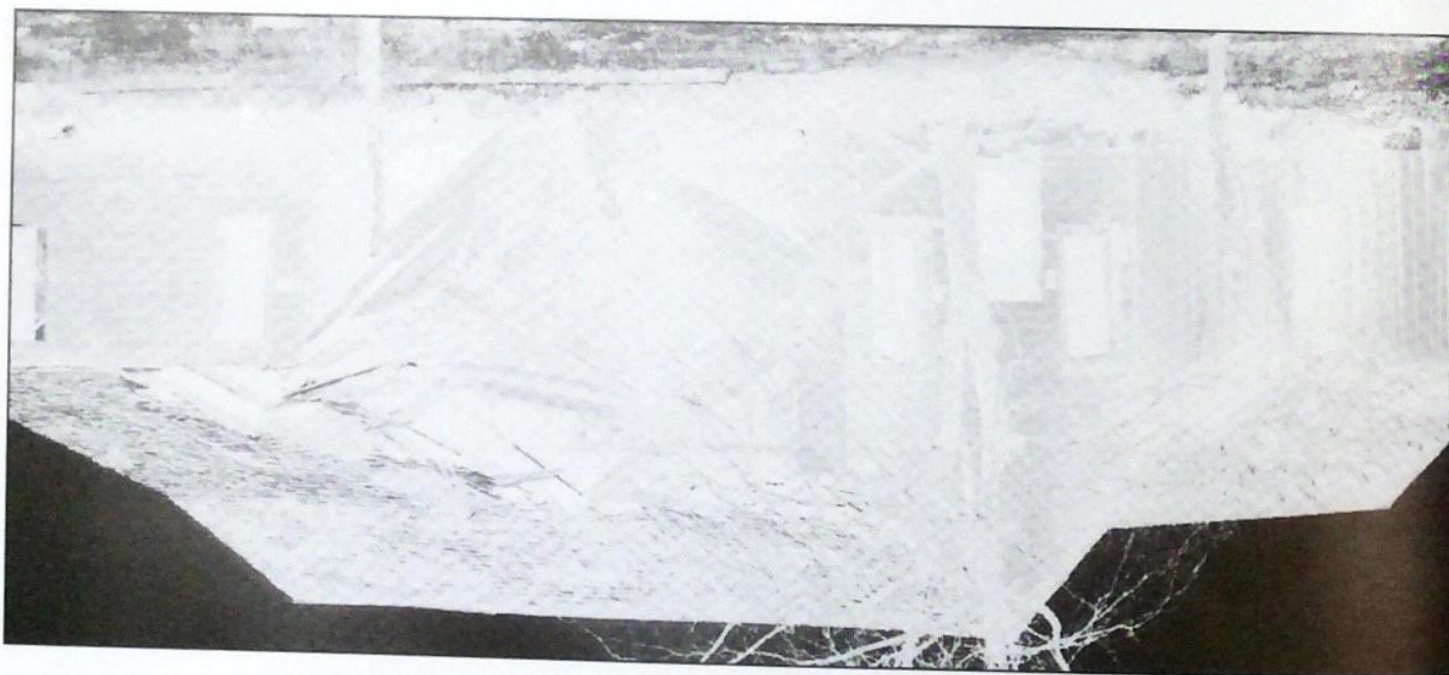
*A Crazy World*  
*Chappy Manzanera*

Cluttered thoughts, confused imaginations.  
Confront your feelings; dangerous confrontations.  
It's all an illusion, this fantasy we live in.  
Will you be strong, be different, or weak and give in?

Make a wish with the fall of the rain--  
But it's the same, see your reflection, the image of Cain.  
Is this you? Would you slay your own brother?  
Don't you see? We are all killing each other.

Suicidal thoughts listen to the rain fall.  
Do whatever it takes just to forget all.  
It's not too late to change your ways;  
Pray for forgiveness, wish for better days.

Can you think for yourself, and about what you do?  
You can either control your fate or let it control you.  
Clear your mind, understand your confusion.  
See the truth -- forget the illusion.



*Joy Thompson*

"Say, what's up? I'm just sitting here looking out my window watching the rainfall and listening to my music. Over here it's been raining all week pretty hard, but it doesn't bother me because the rain and the clouds remind me of myself somehow. The rain reminds me of all the tears I've cried, and the dark clouds remind me of how my heart must look ... the wind reminds me of the times my feelings used to control me ..."

Sometimes when it rains at night, I look outside into the bleak nothingness on the other side of the window pane. I think of Mark and wonder if maybe he's looking out

# T.Y.C. #0809410

*Jessika Rodriguez*

the window seeing himself. It's trivial how a person can compare themselves to a rainstorm, and every time it rains, you find yourself staring out the window at the rain, hearing the gentle sound of the rain coalescing with the ground, and wiping your tear stained cheeks. Emotions are funny things, ya' know? Sometimes you feel like you just want to beat something until you collapse from exhaustion or cry until you dehydrate; yet some other times, you just want to kill ...

"I feel so guilty and ashamed of myself ... I caused myself and my family so much pain. I don't think I'll ever be able to forgive myself for what I've done ..."

(I feel that right now I should explain a little something to you. This story is not fictitious. It was and continues to be one of the most difficult parts of my life. The quotes are from actual letters, and the feelings are genuine).

It all started with a scared little boy filled with rage and hate, a hate so strong it took a life ...

"I was abused a lot as a child by my brother. The abuse bottled up anger inside me which turned to hate ... As I got older, I started fighting back ... I couldn't take it anymore. I felt I had to put it to a stop ..."

## T. Y. C. # 0809410 (continued)

Mark had always been a sweet, sensitive guy. He always seemed to be in a good mood, yet there was a certain mysteriousness to him. I never found out what it was exactly until it was too late. I would never have thought he was capable of such a thing.

"I went inside and sat in my room and thought of actually hurting [my brother]. Maybe enough to shoot him. So I thought for 5 minutes, picked up a shotgun, loaded it and waited ..."

On October 7, 1993, a shot was heard from his home. Ten minutes later he was arrested. He was taken to Giddings Home and School, a penitentiary for juveniles where he was forced to grow up in a place I knew he didn't belong. For a long time I didn't hear from him, but when I did, I discovered a lot. It was through his letters that I found him. He wasn't impervious to pain or guilt. No one is.

"I'd try and act like I didn't care, but really I knew deep

inside I really cared and I really hurt ..."

A clouded heart, a stolen soul, a grieving spirit; still, Mark carried on. His feelings and emotions confused and hurt him, but with the help he needed he began to understand ...

"I let some light shine on me, you know? There the feelings became more painful, but I understand them. I still feel shame, guilt, pain, and regret for my crime, but I understand where they came from more, and I understand myself now. I'm never gonna' forget the pain ... That's something I'll always remember."

This just goes to show that even when you've gone far enough not to turn back, you can still get help and try to turn your life around. It's no easy task, but things always get worse before they can get better, just like wounds always hurt before they start to heal.

"Sometimes it just feels like I'm trapped in sadness and there is nowhere to go, like, maybe suicide! Damn, I can't explain how frustrated and confused I am! I just want to yell and cry."

Suicide wasn't the answer, and I thank God that Mark knew that. He is living proof that no matter how bad things may seem, or how terrible you think you are, the only way out is to reach for help.

"If I hadn't gotten any help ..."

For me, it's been years of convincing him that everything will get better. For Mark, it's been a constant battle to survive. Every day he has to wake up and remember why he's there.

"Here I am locked up for murder ..."

I have a hard time dealing with it, but for Mark I am strong. He doesn't realize how much I hurt for him; how every time I receive a letter from him, I cry; how, as I read, I remember him as he once was. I never tell him because I don't want him to know it upsets me. As I look out the window at the silent rainfall, I think of Mark. Each raindrop signifies each day he's been locked up; clouds, once white, pure, and innocent, darken with each painful memory. Most of all, the wind, wild and free, whispers Mark's name.



Ron Duman

## *Monet Tacquard*

an emptiness  
I cannot explain begins again  
perhaps it is time to feel like this once more  
and like before  
I drive away  
gravity pulling at me from all directions  
I seem to unconsciously resist it  
and to lose control now  
would be unheard of  
and to cry now  
would be too foolish  
so I'll keep on walking  
farther and farther  
away from this  
and everything  
and I'll be all right  
filled with nothing  
nothing new to me now  
this apparent apathy  
deceives me  
leads me to believe I cannot feel  
and once more  
like before  
emptiness grows deeper within me  
at this arm's length



*Carolyn Chen*

**Your Eyes**  
**Sam Harmer**

Summer's passed on and Fall is over  
Winter's come and it's getting colder  
Something's different in the air tonight  
Something magic in the blue moonlight

I couldn't recall from where she came  
All I could do was ask her name  
As the moon behind me began to rise  
I took my first look inside her beautiful eyes

She put me under her spell when I looked in those eyes  
She opened up her heart and let me walk inside  
As her face looked up she opened them wide  
And I dove right down inside her light green eyes

I can't think at all- don't know what to do  
I sleep all day and I dream of you  
You're here with me and everything's fine  
I can almost feel your hands held in mine

I dream of you when I close my eyes  
Wishin' you were here standing by my side  
Your face and smile might slip my mind  
but I just can't forget your sparkling eyes

I'll dream through the day and I'll fly through the night-  
By the way I feel I know it's right-  
Hold me tightly with all your might-  
But don't you ever close your beautiful eyes-

The day is over and we're at your home  
We've both been waiting for sometime alone  
We're face to face and cheek to cheek  
With my arms around you I softly speak

I'm under your spell as I stare in your eyes  
I feel the warmth from the flames inside  
I feel your skin, your arms, and your windblown hair  
But next to your shiny eyes they can't compare

I'm under your spell as I stare into your eyes  
I feel the warmth from the flames inside  
You sure make it hard to say goodnight  
When you kiss me gently and raise your light green eyes

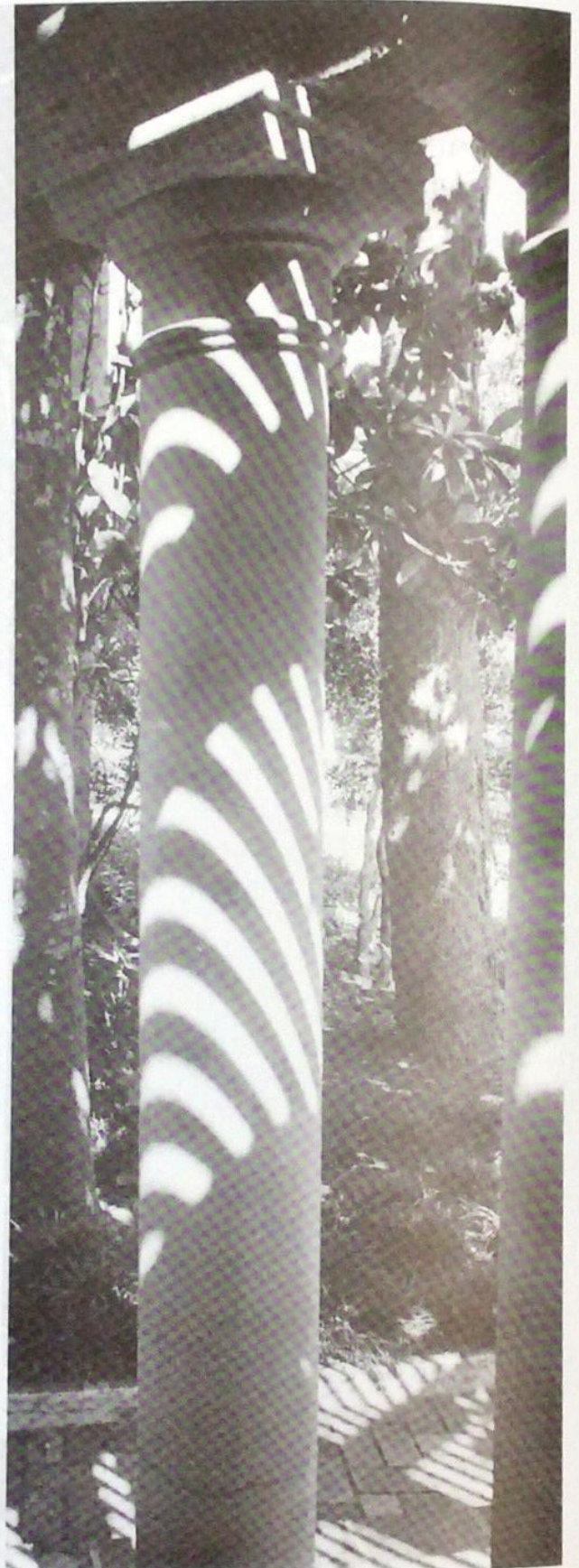


*Justin Garcia*

**Midnight**  
*Shelbie Stiles*

Peacefulness surrounding you  
shadows the darkness that awaits.  
Joys of the silence lure you.  
So beautiful are the scenes around you.  
Desperately yearning,  
you let go of your inner thoughts  
and snap like a crazed animal  
right before reaching his victim.  
Your dreams, hopes, desires, and pain  
flow out like a raging river after a storm.  
You are as naked to the nature of the night  
as a baby is to the new world.  
Suddenly the peacefulness fades.  
The darkness creeps around,  
covering you in a thick blanket of panic.  
Stars are losing their intensified glow  
as the heat from the blanket magnifies.  
Silence disappears,  
and all that is heard is the thumping of the heart.  
Screaming in the open world at an awkward time of night,  
you realize you are alone.  
All at once,  
the lights blur into nothing,  
the sounds cease.  
One last longing for peacefulness,  
you look up at the stars,  
Oh, how his eyes never seemed so cold!  
The sun rises, only to await  
the time the stars will shine again.

*Sara McShane*



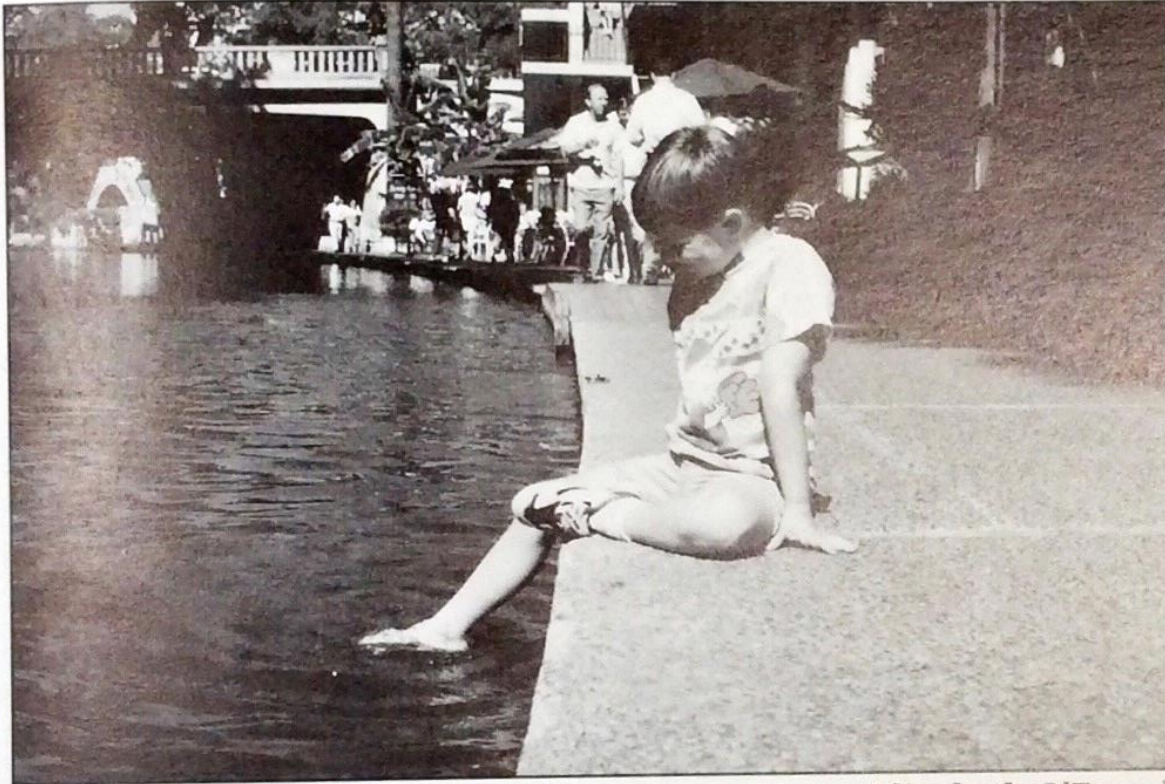
## A Grand Party Melissa Lynch

Childhood is a celebration of life,  
A grand party, with big, bright balloons.  
Laughter fills the air,  
Friendship everywhere,  
Fun and games to share.

Mischief, adventure, and trouble.  
Working as "spies,"  
Telling white lies,  
Serving mud pies.

A startling revelation: B ... B ... BOYS!!  
What a surprise,  
Look at those eyes,  
No longer just "one of the guys."

Childhood is a celebration of life,  
a broadening mind "Hmmm ... I wonder ..."  
Questions arise,  
When's, How's, and Why's,  
Now parents tell lies.



*Elizabeth O'Farrell*

Childhood is a celebration of life,  
Money on your mind; it grows on trees.  
Partners shake hands,  
Lemonade stands,  
Supply and demand.

"When I grow up ..."  
Make-up on face,  
Astronaut in space,  
Winning the race.

Childhood is a celebration of life,  
God enters the picture, opening a new world.  
"How do I pray?,"  
"What should I say?,"  
Not just on Sunday.

A quest for knowledge; power.  
Read, read, read,  
Want to succeed,  
It's guidance I need.

Childhood is a celebration of life,  
As with all good things, an end.  
Over so soon?  
What a sad tune,  
Where are the balloons?

I long to bring it back.  
I shut my eyes,  
And realize,  
In memories, the party lies.

**All In One Moment**  
*Bronwyn Wingo*

She was all alone one summer night  
He came to her door and knocked light  
He was politely invited in  
With her unaware of what was to begin

He rushed to her lips with a passionate kiss  
Delivering both nausea and bliss  
He played with her curls and stroked her skin  
With the eagerness of a boy and the courage of men

She fought like the beast raging inside  
Only wishing as a little girl to just run and hide  
Violated beyond all her wildest dreams  
No one was able to hear her horrified screams

Stolen so fast in just a moment's time  
All done for no seen reason or rhyme  
They played a game with immeasurable cost  
A solitude gained and a childhood lost.

*Nicole Kotara*





White  
*Kate Bode*

Your mind dances with your heart and soul; we are in the shadows. The way your mind moves is incredible. No one can tell you what to do. No one is brave enough to speak up, for they envy you. They want to learn, but they can't. They believe; I don't. The difference between lights and shadows is none. All is one.

Sanity leaves your body; the sky fills you up. The star you wished upon disappears to the souls in the heavens. God leaves you a staircase to climb, for He has watched you blind yourself with freedom. You dance on, moving everywhere at once like one giant shadow. The rhythms of the silent songs pound on in a deafening tone that no one hears. It's not that they can't hear it; they just have to open their ears.

You fly up with the moon until you're next to He who has opened the door. You become lively and flushed. Everybody freezes, and the world stops for an instant. But the rhythm has never stopped, and neither have you. Now you're free of mind. You stop thinking and let others pull your strings for entertainment. Some go and hide; others try, but no one is as calm as he who dances.

Later.

Later the world, with no thoughts, will be a cool place to be. Just being there means love. Now the wind rolls over my body, through my body, to where you are.

It's out there. It's not here.

## Caught in the Current *Rita Gonzales*

The river is the life that I have entered by chance  
Dangling above, the weight of my knowledge has broken my branch  
    Kerplunk! Plop, plop!  
    The cycle is disturbed by the splash  
    Enveloped by cool waters, refreshed at last  
    Worried, wary of the strength of my guiding friend  
    Floating along, settling for the rhythm of the swaying current  
The branch which betrayed me has become my supporting savior.

The scenery on the banks is my blanket of comfort from afar  
    Seeking out a stillness in the river  
    The current slows up ahead  
    A ray of hope.

Fooled by the calm surface, I release my tension  
    Relaxation.

I have failed to look below the sediment flowing beneath my shadow  
    Pain and fear once more  
    Slow waters quickly turn to rapids rushing  
    The river widens  
    I am too far from my comfort  
    I cannot fight the flow  
    Panic without control.

The rocks are no longer just below me, jagged edges jut out one by one  
    Faster, the pounding river is like a thundering drum  
    Tighter I clench — Crack!  
My branch has broken and left me — or did I let go?

Struggling, alone, the rocks block the way.

Slowly sinking in my river of dandelion wine  
Weighted by what I have learned too quickly  
Searching the bottom blindly for a chain  
    But the river of life has no drain.

My eyes are open, I see light up above  
    Rising — Radiance — the surface.

Calm again, clear waters flow gently  
    Peace?  
    No, a lull between growth  
Far in the distance there is a bend and a fork  
Rough rocks to hinder my journey, I'm sure  
    What path shall I take?  
    I'll know when I arrive.





*Angela Valdez*

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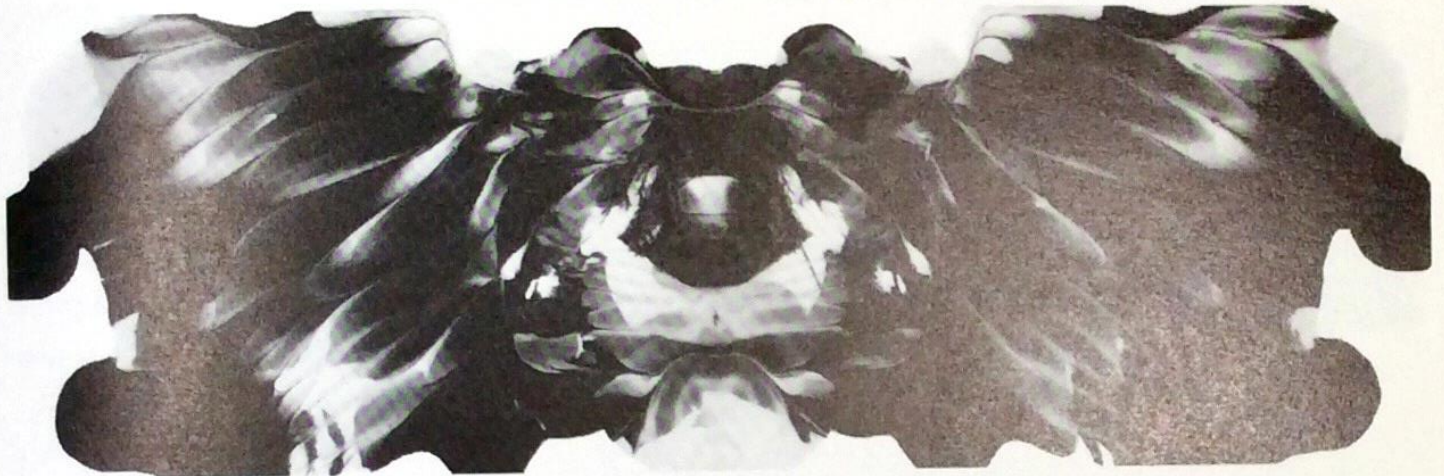
Dawn Young

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Dr. Scott Bates, DDS, MSD  
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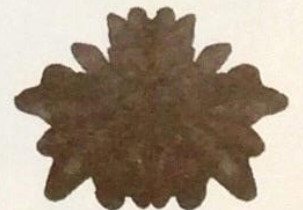
# Index



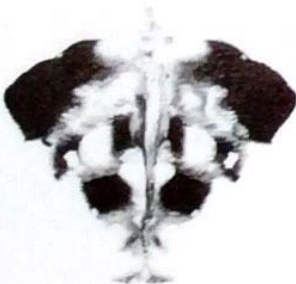
<u>Contributor</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Page</u>
<i>Aycock, Kary</i>	Black	Poetry	14
	Plastic	Poetry	49
<i>Banford, Sam</i>	The Suicide	Poetry	15
<i>Bertoldo, Nathan</i>	Bottom Deal	Water Color	10
<i>Bigelow, Nancy</i>	Just Another Day	Poetry	16
	Sadistic?	Poetry	51
	Piglet	Photograph	55
<i>Bishop, Josh</i>	Rusty Nails	Poetry	33
<i>Bode, Kate</i>	White	Short Prose	67
<i>Brooks, Marcus</i>	#201 Ba IV	Photograph	4
	#5821 21316	Photograph	5
	Untitled	Collage	12
<i>Bruner, Amanda</i>	Untitled	Paper Sculpture	10
<i>Burton, Faith</i>	Dans Le Vent	Short Story	21-22
<i>Caldwell, Ricarlos</i>	"Faces I cannot hear.."	Poetry	20
	"I creep . . ."	Poetry	53
<i>Cardona, Jason</i>	Control	Water Color	14
	Jungle Denizen	Prisma Color	56
<i>Chen, Carolyn</i>	Window to Eternity	Photograph	16
	Mythological Dreams	Photograph	61
<i>Connors, Melissa</i>	An Unreal Perfection	Poetry	42
<i>Constancio, Gabriel</i>	Dysfunctional	Graphite	6
<i>Duman, Ron</i>	Untitled	Graphite	2
	Memories Conceived ...	Poetry	27
	Rain	Graphite	60
<i>Fuentes, Jerry</i>	From the Records of..	Short Story	3-5
<i>Garcia, Justin</i>	Untitled	Acrylic	55
	Untitled	Acrylic	63
<i>Goebel, Dustin</i>	Untitled	Graphite	54
<i>Gonzales, Rita</i>	Caught in the Current	Poetry	68
<i>Harmer, Sam</i>	Your Eyes	Song Lyrics	62
<i>Haynes, Eric</i>	The Man at the Funeral	Short Story	25-26
	Spontaneous Combustion	Poetry	76

# Index

<u>Contributor</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Page</u>
<i>Holwitt, Joel</i>	The Last Sunset	Short Story	34-35
<i>Hooper, Gerald</i>	We've Been Given..	Opinion	28-29
<i>Johnson, Amy</i>	The Dirty Gerbil	Water Color	7
	A Frank Talk About..	Prisma Color	47
<i>Kinslow, Stephen</i>	Progress	Poetry	13
	Om	Poetry	57
<i>Kotara, Nicole</i>	Playing in the Rain	Water Color	51
	Indifference	Goache	66-67
<i>Lane, Roseanna</i>	Scenes From Plato's Terms	Poetry	50
<i>Lee, Bryan</i>	A Spaceman	Acrylic	11
<i>Litzman, Kevin</i>	The Jungle	Prisma Color	20
<i>Logsdon, Elana</i>	Untitled	Photograph	17
<i>Lozano, Ralph</i>	Untitled	Mixed Media	10
<i>Lucio, Krissy</i>	Untitled	Photograph	23
	Untitled	Photograph	29
<i>Lujan, Melisa</i>	Dark Angel	Poetry	9
<i>Lynch, Melissa</i>	A Grand Party	Poetry	65
<i>Manzanara, Chappy</i>	A Crazy World	Poetry	58
<i>McShane, Sara</i>	Solace	Photograph	64
<i>Mills, David</i>	Sunflower	Pen & Ink	52
<i>Nelson, Laura</i>	Untitled	Photograph	15
	Untitled	Photograph	48-49
<i>O'Farrell, Elizabeth</i>	Untitled	Photograph	41
	Untitled	Photograph	65
<i>Potter, George</i>	5 minutes, 5 billion dead	Poetry	12
<i>Roddy, Russ</i>	White Blaze	Poetry	23
<i>Rodriguez, Jessika</i>	T.Y.C. #0809410	Personal Incident	59-60
<i>Rodriguez, Ray</i>	Alone	Graphite	50
<i>Root, Teresa</i>	"Vanquish in a psychotic.."	Poetry	39
<i>Rose, Joshua</i>	Untitled	Tempera	55
<i>Rosillo, Patricia</i>	Souls	Watercolor	32
	Hope	Scratchboard	37
<i>Siller, Matt</i>	The Elements of Evil	Poetry	31



# Index



<u>Contributor</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Page</u>
<i>Snyder, Sheila</i>	Untitled	Poetry	36
<i>So, Lena</i>	The Necklace	Short Story	40-41
	Man of Secret	Acrylic	43-44
<i>Stanley, Greg</i>	Untitled	Scratchboard	30
<i>Starr, Kara</i>	Untitled	Photograph	24
	Untitled	Photograph	46
<i>Stiles, Shelbie</i>	Midnight	Poetry	64
<i>Tacquard, Monet</i>	Pretender	Poetry	31
	"An emptiness ..."	Poetry	61
<i>Thompson, Joy</i>	Glass Box	Poetry	24
	Lighting the Way	Photograph	25-26
	Unsafe Landing	Poetry	46
	American Dream	Photograph	58
<i>Toom, Anastasia</i>	November Sunset	Acrylic	21
	The Road	Acrylic	34-35
<i>Tschoepe, Andy</i>	Syzygy of Toadstools	Pastel	38-39
	Exp.	Mixed Media	54
<i>Uhlir, Eric</i>	Untitled	Pen & Ink	13
	Untitled	Prisma Color	18-19
<i>Uhlir, Raymond</i>	The Photographer	Scratchboard	27
<i>Valdez, Angela</i>	Untitled	Watercolor	69
<i>Valdez, Leslie</i>	Untitled	Graphite	11
<i>Voorhees, Gerald</i>	Standing on the Ninth	Short Story	43-45
<i>Walker, Michelle</i>	Eyes	Poetry	2
<i>Waltrip, Jim</i>	Instant Zen	Short Story	7-8
<i>Watts, Kaye</i>	Outcasted	Poetry	6
<i>Whitecotton, Jay</i>	Urban Macabre	Short Story	17
<i>Whitehill, Tim</i>	The Door of Perception	Mixed Media	42
<i>Whitford, Lari</i>	Remorse For The Dead	Crayola Marker	9
<i>Wingo, Bronwyn</i>	All in One Moment	Poetry	66
<i>Young, Christian</i>	Martian Saga	Poetry	18-19

## Awards and Memberships

**Texas High School Press Association:** Texas Honor Rating 1989; State Champion 1990-1992; Reserve State Champion 1994; Honor Roll of Excellence 1992-1995; Best Cover 1993; 2nd Place in State 1995

**National High School Press Association:** Best of Show Competition 1991-1994; 2nd in Nation 1991-1992; 4th in Nation 1993; 6th in Nation 1994

**Merlyn's Pen:** Bronze Medal 1993-1995

**American Scholastic Press Association:** First Place with Special Merit ( Highest Award) 1991-1995; Most Outstanding High School Literary Magazine of 1992; Perfect Rating 1000/1000 points 1992-1993; Outstanding Overall Art 1990, 1993

**Columbia Scholastic Press Association:** First Place 1990, 1993, 1994; Silver Medalist 1995; All Columbian Award for Concept 1990, 1992, 1995; All Columbian Award for Creativity 1990, 1992, 1995; All Columbian Award for Design 1992, 1995; Silver Crown Award 1991; Gold Crown Award 1992

**National Council of Teachers of English:** Excellent Rating 1990, 1995; Superior Rating 1989, 1994; Highest Award 1991-1993



## Spontaneous Combustion

Eric Haynes

It starts as an hour,  
Time progresses.  
The slow, peaceful inhalation of deadly smoke.  
Not enjoying, yet enjoying at the same time.  
What next?

The slow moving tide,  
In, out, up, down, over, across.  
Help, I'm almost drowning!  
I like it!

Deadlines.

I never knew stress was . . . fun?!

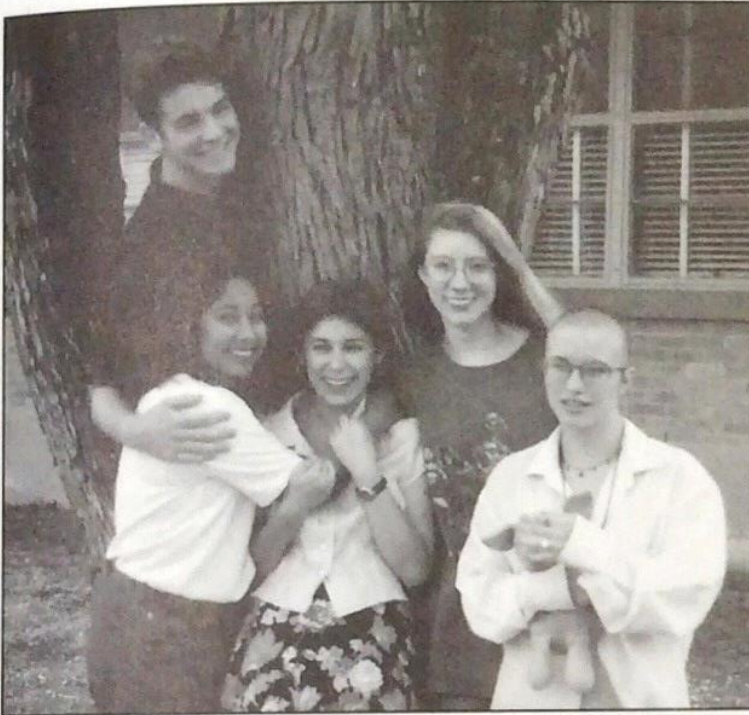
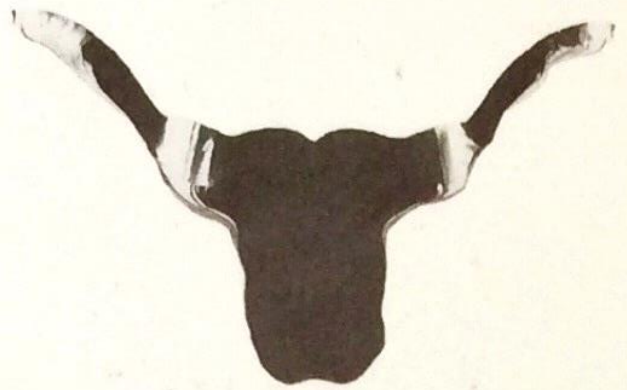
The weekends,  
Rowdy, kinky, bizarre, uncensored.  
"Mine are bigger than yours!"  
I never knew you could do that with a copy machine  
Midnight, one, two,  
OH MY GOD, it's three!

One more day,  
11:30 P.M.  
To the printer . . . well, almost.  
Pressure, strain, KABOOM!  
Spontaneous combustion never felt SOOOO good!

*Dedicated to the Bullseye 1995 staff.*

*Bullseye 1996* is a collaborative effort of writers and artists. Staff and submissions for publication are open to the entire student body. Text entries are selected by the staff and sponsors. Original artwork is selected from entries or is commissioned from art classes. *Bullseye 1996* layouts and text are set on a Macintosh LC 475 by the student staff. *Bullseye 1996* is printed in process color and black by Burke Publishing Company of San Antonio, Texas. On 70# Silverado matte book paper. The cover is 10 point Frankote C1S. Subscriptions are sold to students, faculty and administrations for \$5 per copy. Approximately 850 copies are distributed.

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