

MascArthur High School



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Bullseye 2000



Bullseye 2000

Volume 16

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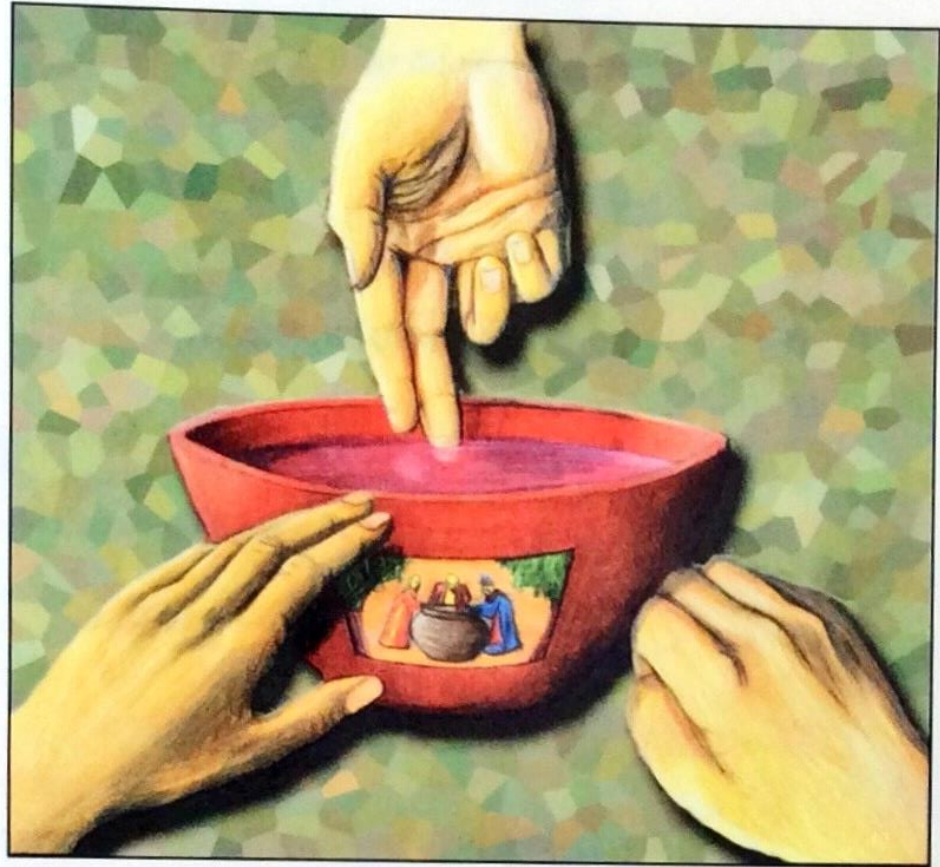
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靶心兩千年



The Vinegar Tasters

A Depiction of the Three Teachings of China

Taoism - The open hand represents Taoism, an ancient philosophy based on simplicity, balance, and harmony. The Taoist vinegar taster believes that all of life is sweet if it is correctly understood.

Buddhism - The reluctant hand represents Buddhism, a religion that views the world as a cycle of suffering escaped only by reaching Nirvana. The Buddhist vinegar taster experiences life as bitterness.

Confucianism - The closed fist represents Confucianism, the most strict and ritualistic of the three Chinese ideologies. The Confucianist vinegar taster views life as a sour experience.

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The Vinegar Tasters

A Depiction of the Three Teachings of China



Taoism 5-18



Buddhism 19-36



Confucianism 37-55



We see three men standing around a vat of vinegar. Each has dipped his finger into the vinegar and has tasted it. The expression on each man's face shows his individual reaction. Since the painting is allegorical, we are to understand that these are no ordinary vinegar tasters, but are instead representatives of the "Three Teachings" of China, and that the vinegar they are sampling represents the Essence of Life. The three masters are K'ung Fu-tse (Confucius), Buddha, and Lao-tse, author of the oldest existing book of Taoism. The first has a sour look on his face, the second wears a bitter expression, but the third man is smiling.

To K'ung Fu-tse, life seemed rather sour. He believed that the present was out of step with the past, and that the government of man on earth was out of step with the Way of Heaven, the government of the universe. Therefore, he emphasized reverence for the Ancestors, as well as for the ancient rituals and ceremonies. Under Confucianism, the use of precisely measured court music, prescribed steps, actions, and phrases all added up to an extremely complex system of rituals, each used for a particular purpose at a particular time. A saying was recorded about K'ung Fu-tse: "If the mat was not straight, the Master would not sit." This ought to give an indication of the extent to which things were carried out under Confucianism.

To Buddha, the second figure in the painting, life on earth was bitter, filled with attachments and desires that led to suffering. The world was seen as a setter of traps, a generator of illusions, a revolving wheel of pain for all creatures. In order to find peace, the Buddhist considered it necessary to transcend "the world of dust" and reach Nirvana, literally a state of "no wind." Although the essentially optimistic attitude of the Chinese altered Buddhism considerably after it was brought from its native India, the devout Buddhist often saw the way to Nirvana interrupted all the same by the bitter wind of everyday existence.

To Lao-tse, the harmony that naturally existed between heaven and earth from the very beginning could be found by anyone at any time. As he stated in his *Tao Te Ching*, the "Tao Virtue Book," earth was in essence a reflection of heaven, run by the same laws - *not* by the laws of men. According to Lao-tse, the more man interfered with the natural balance produced and governed by the universal laws, the further away the harmony retreated into the distance. Whether heavy or light, wet or dry, fast or slow, everything had its own nature already within it, which could not be violated without causing difficulties. When abstract and arbitrary rules were imposed from the outside, struggle was inevitable. Only then did life become sour.

--Excerpt from Benjamin Hoff's *The Tao of Pooh*

教道

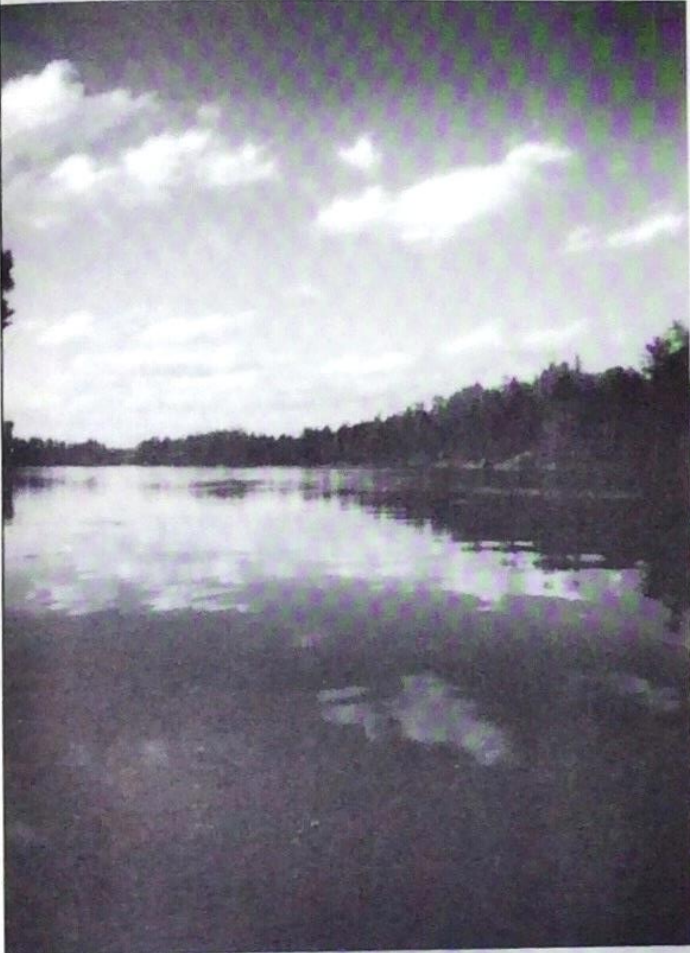
Taoism



我無欲而民自樸

Taoism

Taoism was founded around 500 B.C. by Lao-tse as a way of appreciating life and dealing with what happens every day. In fact, the translation of Tao from Chinese is "The Way." According to this philosophy, the Tao flows through and surrounds everything in the Universe, and cannot be described in words - any attempt to do so is limited, while the power and presence of the Tao is unlimited. People cannot see the Tao, but can experience it in the rhythmic cycles of opposing forces in nature, the Chinese concept of Yin and Yang. Taoism also stresses the importance of inner nature, letting things work in their own way and resolve themselves naturally, and becoming one with the Tao. According to the Tao te Ching, the best known text of Taoism, "the Tao does nothing, yet there is nothing it does not do."



*If Only
Dreams Would
Come...*
Steven Drezner

At night, when most people are asleep, I lie awake, staring, watching, glancing at everything that appears in the emptiness of night. Time passes by, in its ever-so-logical way, counting the hours, minutes, and seconds that make up the transition from night until morning. My eyes close and open repeatedly throughout the night. There is something I am thinking about that will not die out, not even for a few precious hours, so that I may awake in the morning, rather than rise from my bed at that inevitable awakening hour. I cannot reconcile the thoughts dancing in my mind, nor can I comprehend them. I am certain they are laughing at me, as they gain pleasure from my desperate plea for a necessity of life—the one that would allow me to function in the upcoming day. I have begun to lose hope, believing that I will always have these long, sleepless nights. There is yet a minute amount of hope within me, which somehow encourages me to say, “If only dreams would come.” Just as I begin to recite these words, I am distracted by the music broadcast to my clock radio. It is time to rise and face the day. “Oh, well,” I think. “There will always be tonight.”

Danny Warner



Howard Drezner

The Brink
Jenn Gillespie

Leaning over the edge in contemplation of finite outcomes
Sounds of the unknown forever instigate insecurity
 Increments away from anticipated liberation
Frustration as to what the whole is post freedom
 She falsely leans in question of the after all

Falling, falling, falling like a failure from society
Time spills in the establishment of true ecstasy
Without an intense yearning for a snapback faux reality
Absorption of the lack of connection in every essence
 She glances downways and smiles at the vision

Alighting in ponderance of what is true salvation
Space provides the sustenance for a being long lost
Regret of actions past create the desire once required
 Realization of the entirety of every movement
She deliberately opens her eyes and envisions the great divide

Jessica Ripper

This is the story of one young girl

who strives for equality in a not so perfect world.

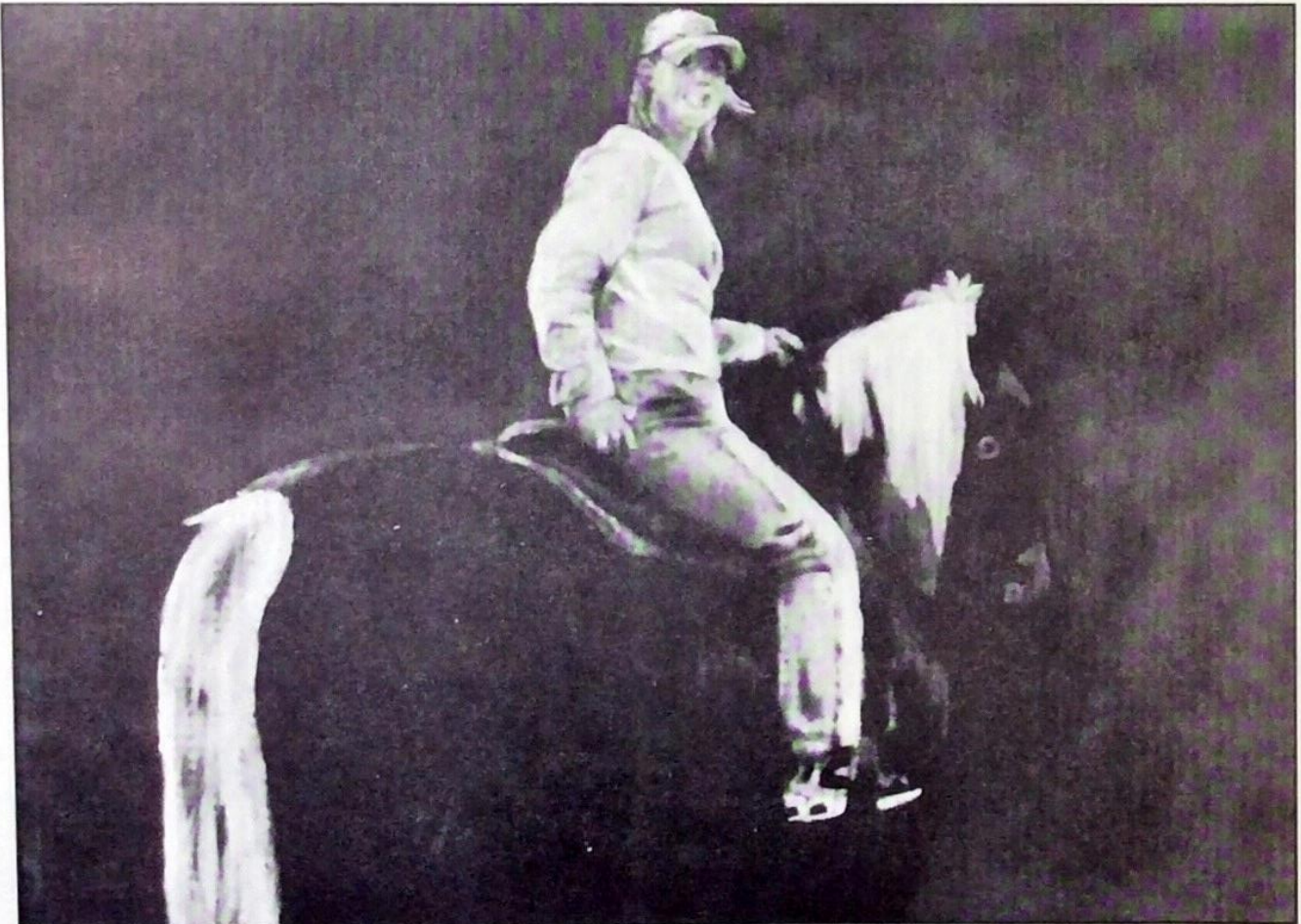
Though I mean not by race or gender,

beauty is her only contender.

But superficial is not what she is,

maybe just jealous...for her beauty is within.

Dennis Talbot



Sweet Strange Scholastic Sculpture Skeleton *Benjamin Tolleson*

Clang, clang, clang. Beep, beep.
Ding, clink, clunk. Haymnar!...!
A huge triangular prism moves
Like the long, strong arm of a titan,
Moving small bits of this and of that
With two twiddling, twisting ropes
Of fingers swaying, as a pendulum
Being used to put itself into hypnosis.

A huge layered cake has tiny insects
Moving all across, in blue jeans,
With threads attached to them for safety.
These little bugs have round,
White bowls for antennae and strange
Girdles belted across their abdomens.

Four fluttering flags fly upon
The titan's arm, stuck like arrows
Piercing an appendage.
The first flag is a darker
Hue of a naked and cloudless sky
With bits of snow making five stars
And an upside down "double-u,"
Symbolizing what the titan and insects
Are working together to create and build.
The second flag has a rectangular patch
Of blood and of snow laid in
The direction in which the sun
And moon go down to rest,
And has a rectangle of clear sky
Up like a tree with a long,
Icy star plugged in the middle.

The third has a tray of ocean blue
With fifty diamond sprinkles,
Made as a square on the shoulder
Of a backwards "L" of candy cane stripes.
The last one is stabbed into
The titan's elbow, checkered
With war and purity.

Splinters and toothpicks hold up
The layers of the cake
Of wood, stone, and air.
Within this culinary, architectural
Creation the insects take away and
Add the stilts and splints
For the cake's "crunchy" layers.
This cake is placed on a habitat
Of the surface of a tongue without saliva,
Dry and arid with debris of wood and metal
Cookies, wafers, and chips.
It is surrounded by metallic
Horses and carriages structured
Like flocks of fowl in an
Atmosphere of grey cotton and cold breaths.

This tangible skeleton of construction
Is being created by the massive arm of the titan
And by peculiar bugs busy bustling
For the scholastic supper of
A place even stranger
Which has an odd taste
For white and blue beef.



Rainfall
Robert Rogers

Blip... Blop...
Plink... Plunk...
Ssssss...

Rain falls, drops on my window,
Slow, quick, gliding down the glass.
Quietly the wind whispers
In, out of the cracks in the wall.
The voice of God follows the spear
As his thunderous laughter dies,
Muted by the rain.
Heaven weeps tears of joy.

Earth, Sky, Wind, Sea,
All are one in the tempest.
Blessings flow throughout.
Celebrate the life given by unseen hands;
Rejoice in the union of creation.
Hear the laughter, See the beauty,
Smell the breath of God, Taste his tears,
Bathe in his soothing rains.
Be healed.

Drip... Drop...



David Collins

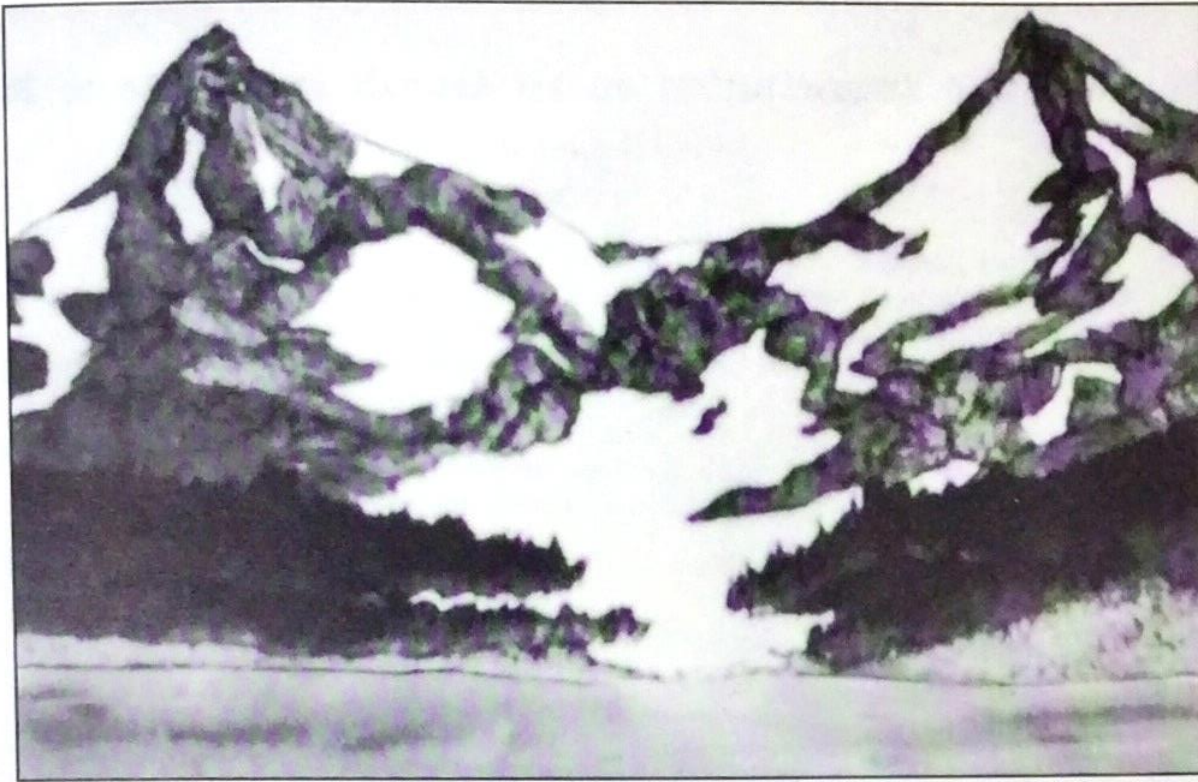


Sarah Bower

Sasion Noire

Sarah Monroe

I defy you, stars.
As also Romeo before
In a fit of passion I gave my world to another in your namesake
For the bloodstained roses and fading pictures of those eyes
For those eyes of such depth and complexity
I drained myself of existence
My breath, sold for a kiss
A second of exultation
I cry for you, stars.
I was inebriated by the rivers of words
The adrenaline led me
It tempted me with every beat of his heart
Glowing, that amaranth glare that blinded my eyes of reality
Taken by the hand and drowned out by emotion
Those eyes, those wings
You captured them all from my arms
I defy you stars.



Carl Thorson

I lie awake, it's 12 A.M.
There is a noise breaking the eerie silence
The pounding, thumping, rapping of rain
Beating against the window of my mountain cabin refuge.

So high in the mountains at 10,000 feet
The air is thin and the clouds are very low
The raindrops are cold and filled with much strength
The storm gathers intensity and settles very close.

The haunting glow from the lightning so near
Finds its way into my eyes
The smashing of the thunder rattles the doors
The cabin moans and creaks in the gale.

It's 1 A.M. and sleep still won't come
I've passed the night without making a sound
The rain still comes and lightning cracks the darkness
How will I make it until the dawn?

It's 3 A.M. and I drift into a shallow dream
I feel safe from all the horrors of the storm
I wish I could stay here safe and sound
But I know all dreams must come to an end.

But I also know that the radiant sun will rise and so must I
A new day will begin with all of its hopes and dreams
And I will awaken to a fresh new start
And the sounds of the mountain storm will be but a memory.

Mountain Storm

Stephanie Wiater

Surrealism, Moiré, and Emancipation on an Asphalt and Linoleum Pathway

Paul Bogen, II

2:44, I am staring at the clock, waiting for a crystal ring of freedom. Tock of double O, children's melody fills the air. Distortion makes a normal appearance arise as the golden protector of my bag lets it go. Quickly walking down the linoleum, shuffle of small feet, hurrying to approach our silvery gate as the smooth green bricks pass by. Reminders of what lies beyond heightens our urgency, as the swarms of eagerness rush out parting to their ways of disembarkation from the vessel which they have traveled for an eternity in. The numbers thin, I am almost running home, or away, away from the:



Circle your choice of term, they all equal a passion play of a journey that has been so generously handed to me by Clotho. Free! Never again, my final punishment for the crime of difference is paid. I can now go, go along the hilly black path, the path of fear and death that no longer has to be traveled. As the brick structure, which I was imprisoned in, fades away and I pass by the signs of the happy others: the red doors, gardens, and suburbans. They tempt me like the grapes and water of Tantalus. This all drops away as I return to my new prison, a farm house in the suburbs, the old depth which is mirrored by its occupant's essence, now can be the prison; before, I was still part of everything, but now I am just alone. Nevertheless, those 17 minutes between prisons, just as one moment did for Vincent, or Jean Valjean, or the numerous tied down souls of the human experience, made me able to keep going, even now. Those times, when I have felt emancipated from sorrow and loneliness, are the crucial elements in life for every individual. It is almost surreal to me, the chimerical realization that everything may work out.

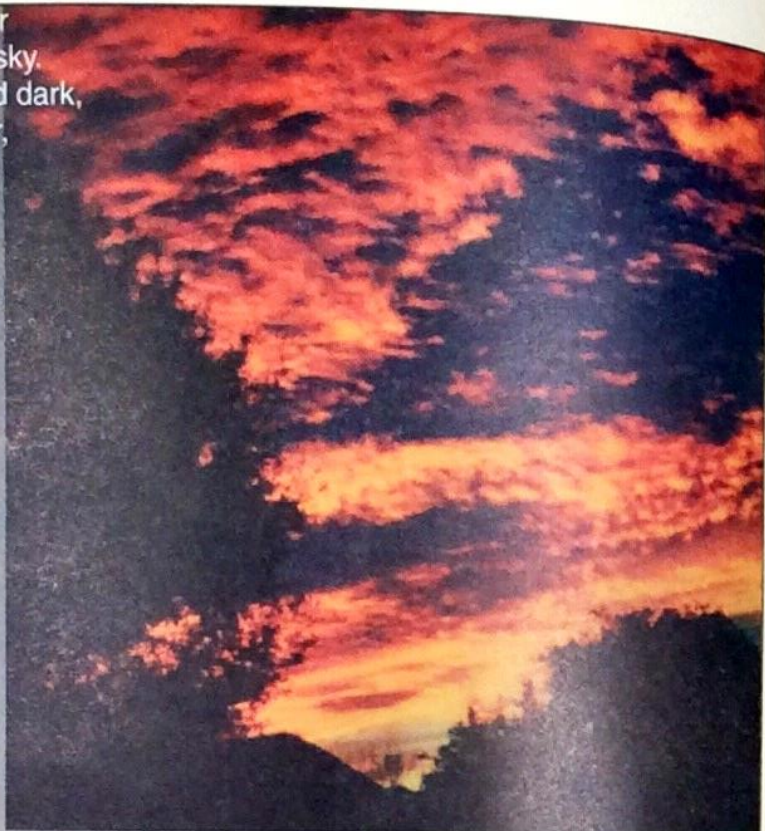


Erin Keck

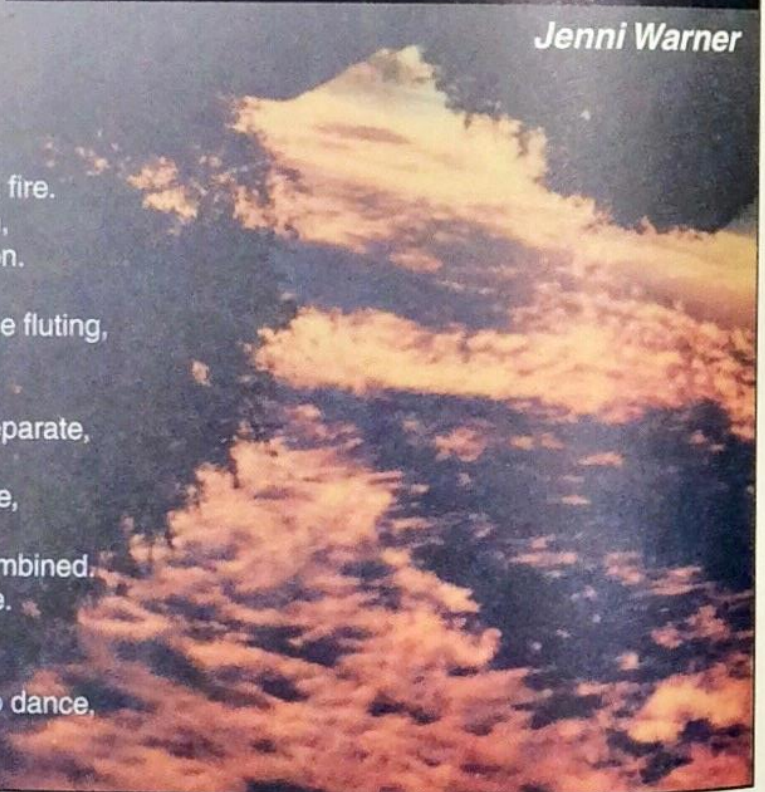
Distant Dreams

Devin Dalmolin

Look around and see. Study the atmosphere and all of your surroundings. Let thoughts drift like clouds on a clear blue sky. Forget, forget all knowledge, forget the concepts of light and dark, open or closed, top or bottom. Listen. There is a place afar, a place that may only be found by the path of a star. There are no boundaries on any decision that will erode any elements of a fantasy vision. No technologies or political terrorism, there is no possession so nothing is taken nor given. Illuminated skys meet the water with no horizon line, your feet don't touch, and there is no sense of time. Where to go and which way to turn? You make the rules so there is nothing to learn. Little elephant people live in castles made of sand, constantly playing, not knowing winter plans. How deep is the ocean, and why do stars shoot, ask cokapelli as he plays his glorious flute. And then there is Dreams accompanied by Woman, and a mischievous little pipe player named Pan. They play in the forest under trees that sing, sitting on beautiful mushroom caps that make the fairy ring. The rain falls in weightless slow motion. The music they sing echoes their souls' devotion. Dreams, a beautiful and ancient mystic, whose thoughts and powers are nothing short of exquisite. There is no shape to Dreams, his form eternal, he represents strengths and beauty of the internal. Woman, passion and physical infinite desire, her presence brings comfort and warmth like an everlasting fire. Reluctant but illusive, unique and fragile with no oppression, although petite, she brings a harmonious sense of protection. Dreams and Woman have engaged in beautiful wooing, but mischief rears his horned head. Too short breathed to be fluting, Pan knows just which he wants and is motivated to take. He calls upon the Death Crow who dwells among the lake. Pan demands the bird that Dreams and Woman he must separate, and if the bird fails, only death will be his fate. Dreams, knowing of the treacherous plans that come in time, his love for Woman shone and kissed her with sunshine. Then the aura of Dreams and Woman so fine, gracefully combined. And that is why it is possible for women to dream at anytime. And Pan, still defeated, is waiting for his second chance. Instead of death, the crow flies in an animalistic trance, when Woman sleeps she encounters Dreams and begins to dance, a gift that Dreams had made by his own loving hand. A peice of himself he gave to her, and they called it Man.



Jenni Warner



If He Could Only See

Marranda Whitlow

It's finally here,
My senior year.
I wish he could see,
How it all turned out to be.
I look up in the sky,
Wondering why he had to die.
I miss him so much,
I can feel his loving touch.
I know I'll see him again,
When my road comes to an end.
I really miss my dad,
He's the only one I had.
And on Graduation Day,
There will not be much to say.
I'll just look out in the crowd,
Knowing I made him proud.
He will look down and see,
How much it all means to me.
I'll look up and say,
In my own special way,
Dad, I love you dear,
I only wish that you were here.



Jessica Attie

Coffee and Doughnuts
Linda Bigelow

The last Christmas present
slowly unwrapped
painstaking care and caution
remove the delicate covering
drawing forth the gift
of a tiny baby girl
christened on that day with
a perpetual expression of proud affection:
her Grandpa's Christmas present.

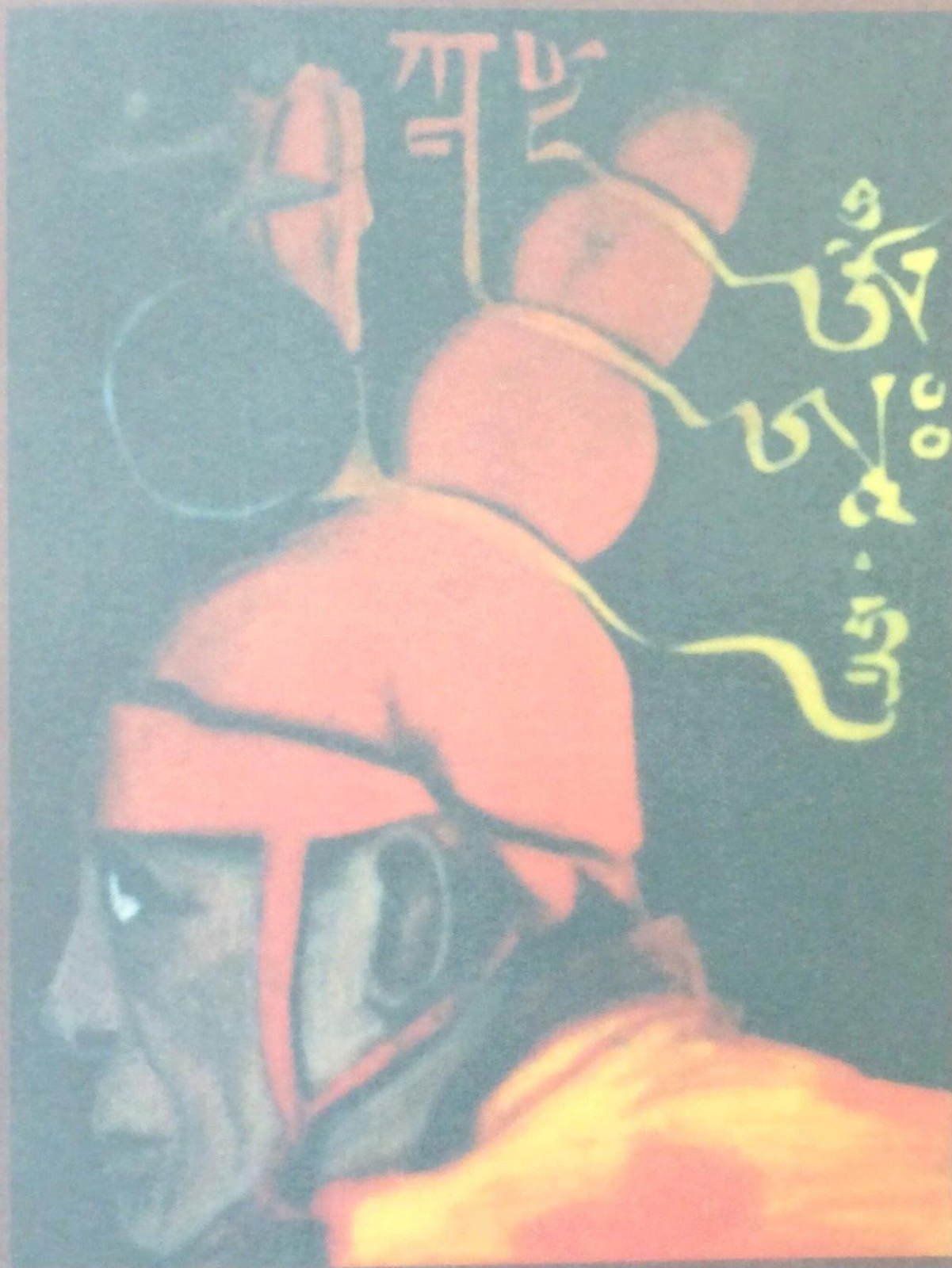
Time gliding by surreptitiously
on fleet tip-toes
unnoticed by
a chuckling, bright-eyed Grandpa
and his Christmas present
playing their precious games
a tiny finger poked into the soft belly
of the strong-armed Grandpa
funny grunt from warm-hearted man
childish giggles from blonde bundle of innocence
"Just one more time..."
"Just one more time..."

Prickly, mahogany pine cones falling...
landing softly in
a bed of once deep green needles
now golden brown
Distance...
cannot stop the cherished ritual
of a loving Grandpa and his treasured gift
at least once per visit
doughnut and rich, black coffee for him
doughnut and creamy, white milk for her
Ephemeral time spent together
creates Eternal memories
"Just one more time..."
"Just one more time..."

Days, months transpire
blurring together to form
a continuous circle of motion
tires spinning as an aging Grandpa
rides with his now teenage Christmas present
bell dings softly on door as they enter
to partake of the sacred ritual
doughnut and steamy coffee for him
doughnut and steamy coffee for her
talking...laughing...
another memory added to the special collection
"Just one more time..."

佛 教

Buddhism



ॐ
अमि
दमि
मो

Buddhism

Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha), is a religion that shares very few concepts with Western Judeo-Christian values. Buddhists believe in reincarnation and self-enlightenment, while expressly rejecting the idea of divine beings or God. The Buddha left no written document of thought, only disciples who later recorded their beliefs. At the core of Buddhist beliefs are the Four Noble Truths: 1. Life is suffering, and the nature of this suffering must be understood; 2. The power to control or create suffering must be given up; 3. Nirvana (supreme truth and freedom) must be made accessible to all; and 4. The path to the suppression of suffering is ariya (correct living), which consists of morality, wisdom, and samadhi (concentration). Buddhists believe that by following the tenets of ariya, one can become a complete person, or Buddha.



Dennis Talbot

What Matters

Carl Thorson

Time is a questionable existence
Between birth and happiness,
Death and forlorn aching
What does anything matter
If we perish in the blink of an eye,
If our sorrows are not shared,
Or our greatest achievements never admired
By anyone but ourselves

No, it is not those personal accomplishments
That make all the difference;
It is those vague, non-tangible moments
That feel eerily distant
But remain the most compelling memory
Ever brushed over one's needy heart
It is the realest thing
We have ever experienced

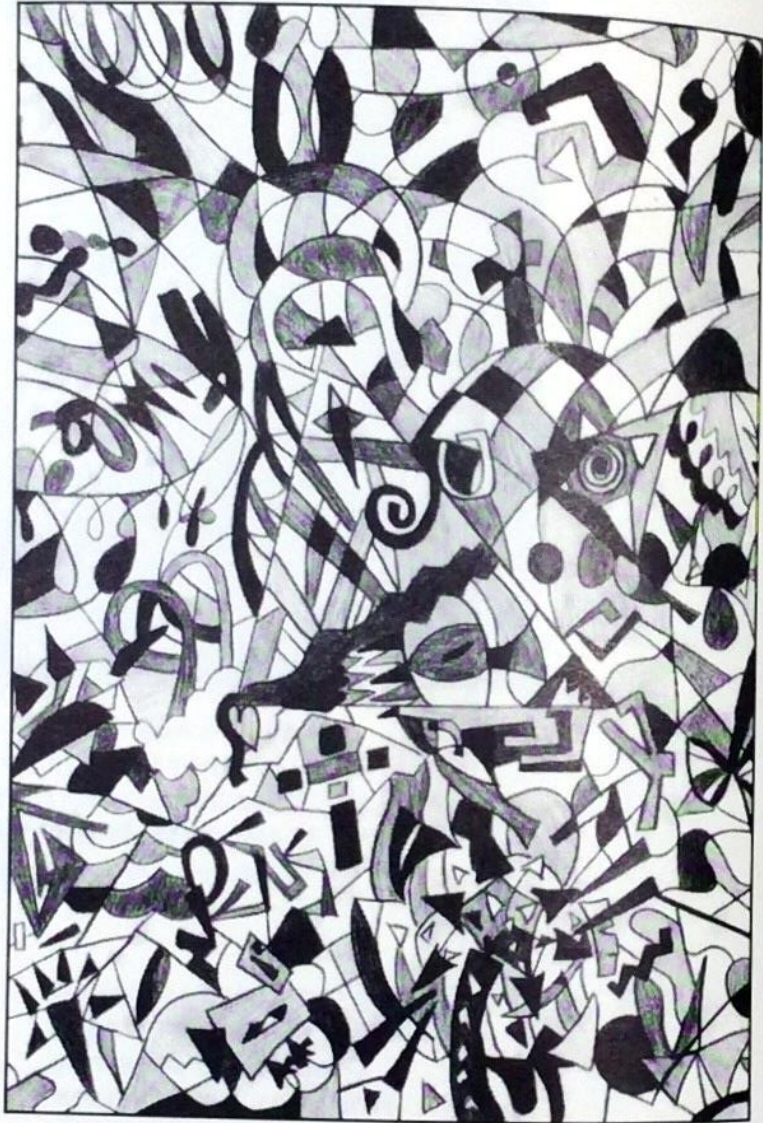
It is the love we share with others
For it is not what we have done, or where,
Or even to the extent that was gone to fulfill
One's own desires
The only thing that matters
Is if we have made a difference,
And those same morales, values, and ambitions
are passed on to others

No matter how insignificant it seems

GRAY

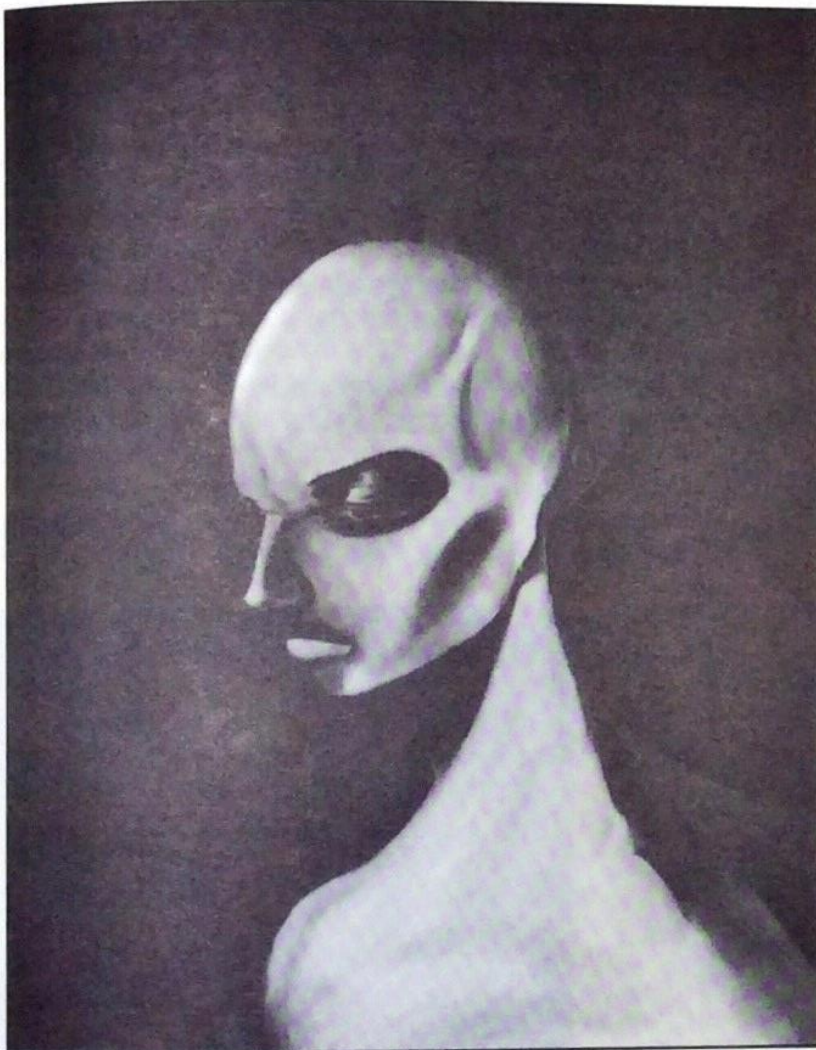
Joyce Johnson

It wasn't black and white
It was gray
Somewhere, a likeness
That wasn't one or the other
Was caught in the middle
It was you
Not on one side or the other
But in the middle
You're the gray
That enters my mind
You're not black or white
But somewhere
In between
Caught in the middle
In between a sea
Of gray
Black and white
Swirling together
Creating
You
The way I see you
Not on one side or the other
But in the middle
Of black and white
Caught in the middle of
Gray



Aimee Sternberg





Joshua Smith

MIND VICE

Matthew Hudson

Twisting tighter
from within
growing slighter
growing thin.
Spiral brainstem flashing
raging cerebral spasms,
mind blender motherboard crashing,
leaving cherub-grave chasms.

Thought socket shocking reality.
Synaptic plastic glowing red,
matter fabric losing consistency.
Brain-veal's always been ear-fed.
School stuffed mind
with cotton candy data.
Ignorance was always kind
to those who created it.

Psychic rants
from ruby eyed bone-men,
manifested through
bone-cliffs wrapped
in stranglehold skin.

Terminal questions gagging
weary soul whose feet are dragging,
slowly dancing to his funeral dirge.

Mad Hatter's
gray matter's
convoluting,
quickly shooting
thoughts that were
never known
to be unknown.

W H E R

The sun burnt through the clouds and sent streams of light to the ground. An inferno of heat permeated the cement and caused Rain to immediately retreat to the coolness of the mossy green, damp lawn. Rain never really was a "girl of summer," in fact, she even hated the song, but something coerced her to go outside in her bathing suit and run through the sprays of water coming out of the old, rusted, brown sprinkler. Well, not really coerced. That's too magical sounding. It was really because the air conditioning went out, and it was "Africa hot" (as her best friend, Dee, would say) inside her house; she needed to feel the refreshing water on her temperate body. After Rain immersed her scorched feet in the clear water, she laid down in her trusty green and orange, practically worn to death, lawn chair. "Rain, darling. Dee's on the phone," shouted her mother. Rain paused for a second then dashed into the house with the speed of a romance novel heroine to her love. "Cookies, dear?" her mother begged.

"...it's not healthy to use the illusion of words..."

"No, mommy dearest!" Rain snapped sarcastically. Rain had an unnatural abhorrence for her mother ever since her father left when she was ten. After he left, her mom went into shock and tried to turn them into a "Leave it to Beaver" family. She was everything Rain despised in a person. Rain bitterly snatched the phone away from her mother.

"Dee?"

"Yup! How are you, dear?" he replied enthusiastically.

"Me? What about you? What did the doctor say?" Rain questioned.

"Oh, well, it's not so good. Let's just say, I'm moving on up to the top in a..." Dee sang.

"Damn it, Dee, stop sugarcoating it! By the way, it's moving on up to the East side."

"Sorry, you know how I try to lighten up things."

"Dee, it's not healthy to use the illusion of words to cover up what y..."

"It's not HIV anymore."

The silence was deafening. Dee felt like saying, "Toto, we're not in Kansas anymore", but he knew Rain and her tendency to get easily annoyed by his cheesiness. Those few moments crept by ever so slowly and toyed with each of their hearts as if they were puppets on strings.

Rain had known Dee ever since they were eight, and Dee was the new kid in school. Rain and Dee immediately became best friends. Partially because they both had uncommon names, but mostly because since Rain was an outsider, there was always room at her table during lunch. So that's where they began. Dee was short for Dean, and Rain was just Rain because her parents were hippies, enough said. They each knew more about him or her than the other did. In ten years of friendship there are always the tougher times, but these last couple months had been the worst.

Dee was always a well-liked guy, but nobody "really" knew him except Rain. Rain was completely oppo-



E V E R

Jennifer Louise Brown

site. Dee was her only real friend because she thought everyone else was completely fake. She confided wholeheartedly to him. Dee was trusting of everyone but only Rain was allowed full access to pick his brain. But life's reality was closing in fast. That summer Dee had gone in for a blood transfusion but had come out with HIV. Trying as hard as she could, Rain tried to convince him to sue the doctor for misuse of needles. But Dee knew he didn't want to spend the last years of his life battling for his health as well as for a lost cause.

Summer was fading fast and school's malevolent presence was creeping closer. Rain and Dee sit in their coffee shop.

"What about school?" Rain asks.

"I'm gonna tell them, well, at least Tara. Everything."

"But if you tell them, her, you have..." Rain struggles.

"AIDS," Dee bluntly answers.

"...and that you're gay, you know what will happen."

"Tara will understand."

"Please! She'll just jump to conclusions. She's just one of those faceless, fake people!" Rain practically screams.

"Rain!" Dee shouts more forcefully than usual, "I have to tell someone. I need someone else's comfort, too, not just yours! God! Why are you so possessive of me?"

Rain is overcome with emotion and can't stand to be closed in by Dee's ignorance any longer. Bursting out of the shop like the tears streaming down her face, Rain leaves. Dee sits solitary and feeling completely isolated; it had to come out.

One week later, school's starting its second week, and Dee appears in Rain's room. He stands, seeming to absorb the room's dreary atmosphere.

"I told you the rumors would fly."

"I said I was gay and that I had..." Dee stumbles.

"No chance. I said I was gay that I had..." Dee stumbles.

"AIDS."

"...and she gave me no chance to explain." An awkward pause fills the room.

"I, I don't know what to say. You must feel...well, I actually don't know this time," she says to fill the space.

"I don't feel anything. I can't change anything they think. We know the truth; that's all that matters," he says honestly. That's all that was said. Rain went to Dee, meaning to comfort him, but he ended up comforting her.

"You're all I have. I love you; I need you," Rain spills all emotion out into the air.

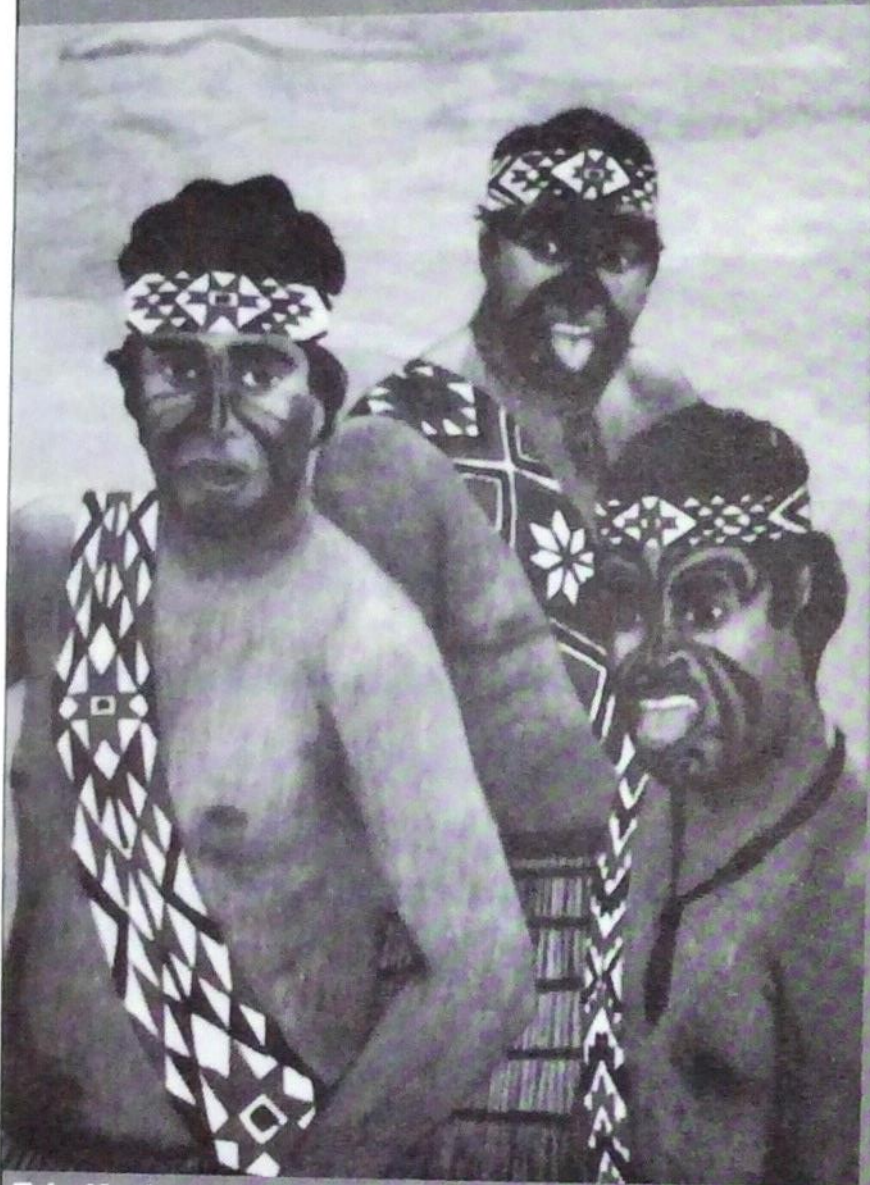
"You won't lose me," Dee kisses her forehead, "I'll watch over you always from..."

"Wherever," Rain utters in a hushed whisper. "Wherever."



Expectation

Claudia Zapata



Erin Keck

As he pondered the consequences of the letters, he battled with his morals and "The Rules." He had told the truth, a little barbarously, but still the truth is usually not pretty. Would he be condemned to pay for his opinion? Some had been in their favor, but most were against. As he began to struggle with himself again, the responses and reactions rung in his ears; "That's so true." "You're exactly right." He then questioned the responses, for he did not know whether they were merely being nice or they were expressing their opinion in favor of his. He didn't know, for they were part of it. They were in what he had been degrading. They agreed with him, yet they still went along with "them," basking in a lie. "Why?" he asked himself. Why would they agree, but then go to "them" immediately after agreeing with him. It confused and frustrated him. Scared and yet exhilarated for having told the truth, he still pondered the consequences. "I told the truth," he kept repeating to himself, but that was still not a proper solace for him. Truth is what you make of it. Whether you want to decide on the truth yourself or want the truth from "them" is up to you.

Mirrored Lies

Joshua Smith

The quieted child crawls inside his mouth and analyzes the substructure of his sacred outlet of creation past the jaded mirrors cracked by reflective sight from the legion of light sources aplenty. Descriptive outlook on the flowing water falling through inner-space. A paradise gazed on the ground, sanctuary of fingernail sloth encased in casts with eyes set down. Pale exterior of the night prince, electronic buzzers sounding three seconds past my witching hour. Impasse and invisible daze of jeweled ore crystals smeared on walls of self preservation. The strength hidden by frail exteriors beyond the mirror into his internal world submerged in verse, a cycled circular symbol of life, an existence restated, a petite happening and the eyes fall on wall of a baked environment of orange and black lives, a dream and I'm falling down onto his hands. He sees the blood flow from uncooperative sources alternating angles of liquid ricocheted from mountainous peaks of layered layers of cellular membranes: broken. A brain signaled to the dream a brain of electrocuted connection pressing on, "we've got work to do." The mouth spread and salivated prison door set to unlock with mirrors demonstrating talents unnoticed flexibility. Molded screams of clay the ultimate complexity defined by the underscored presence of indiscretion for the loved ones outside the palms glowing with collected comparisons to the contraption I defined as human. A probing puncture wound sent in by an army of white blood cells ensnaring the victim, an attacking mirror hiding hidden potentials behind sheets of cowardice. The lips are broken and battered by the waves of silken potential unchecked and perfect in its possibilities for growth beyond the standard 1.

Jessica Attie

I Am What I Am...Through a Restless Day

Nancy Goggio

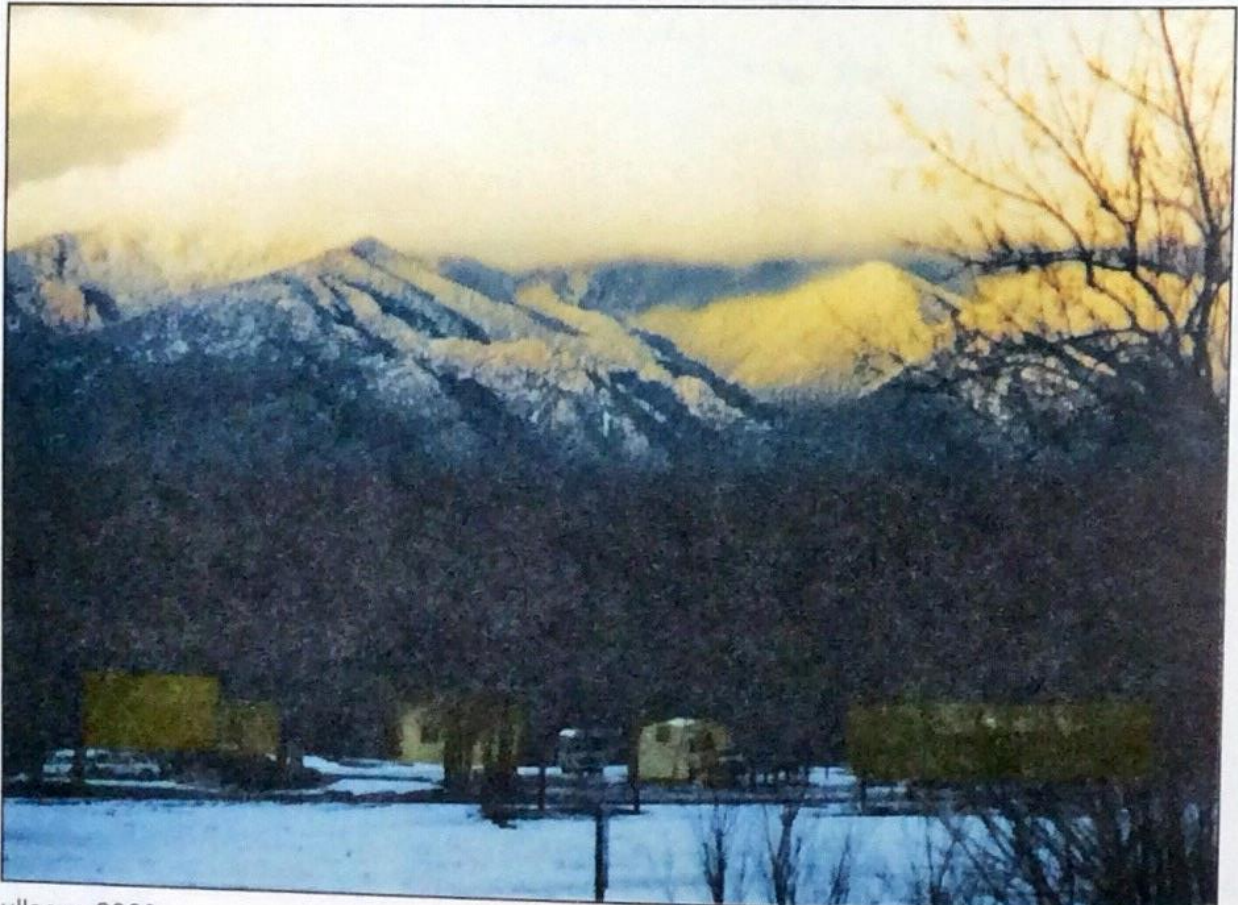
A rustled sky is carefully taped along the blushing, holy heavens, opening up to bind the morning of the coming day with my violet corruption. The drift of clouding misery strains and then falls with reigning disappointment to my unstable stance. I then walk down the endless path before me where thoughts come uncaring and dull in understanding among the bitter clouds. All the warning signs are beaten down and then hidden beneath the tumbling, tarred trail. I grope more in strolling.

I am slowly withdrawn from the livid light and emptied far from myself; only thinking clashes me with its whip. My lips are tardy of a happy smile and keen gestures that flow out into expressions. But then a recollection strikes me, beating me down vainly with sorrowful longing: the mass of mortal memories left behind while I did trudge more out of my youth. Then sudden nostalgia brims with remembrance and recalling meditation. I fall to wanting depths till there are no more to follow upon.

I'm released suddenly, shocked and unaware. I obtrude into doors then, all unrecognized to my life. Secretly, I try killing what lurks inside of me, which only leads to arguments and frustration; my life will never be balanced in steady hold. Branching arms grow upward for mercy; I gaze to the sky. Open heavens lead no golden angels to me, and I lay then, amidst impassive strength.

I wake from my mental comatose, linger, borrowing thoughts, learning opinions of others in my drift. Yet I'm sedated with my unique creativity and lust for foolish found love follied in the churning of my heart, yet so vivid that it could not be vague. But here I am; I am here, living through life with no care when I am the one that leads.

Howard Drezner



The Waves

Janelle Richard

I run into a sea of endlessness
The waves crash on top of me
I can feel the saltwater flowing through my veins
The waves are coming in threes
First wave lifts me up
Second wave gets my hair wet
Third wave sends me on a collision course towards
the shore

First

Second

Third

Crash

I have become one with the ocean
I inhale a giant breath of saltwater
I open my eyes and fight the burning that
the saltwater brings

The innertube that once kept my head
above water has deflated

The only things that comfort me are the millions
of bubbles that rush out of my nose and mouth

First

Second

Third

Crash

The fish rush over me as the wave crashes in
They spring out of the water

They come down on top of me

Cutting my face

First

Second

Third

Crash

I feel a jolt to my spine

My hair fills with sand

Waves rush over my body

Bringing gifts of seaweed and

Sharp shells that stab my feet

First

Second

Third

Crash

The sun toasts the blood
that flows from my wounds

I stand up

I run into the waves again

First

Second

Third

Crash



Jenni Warner

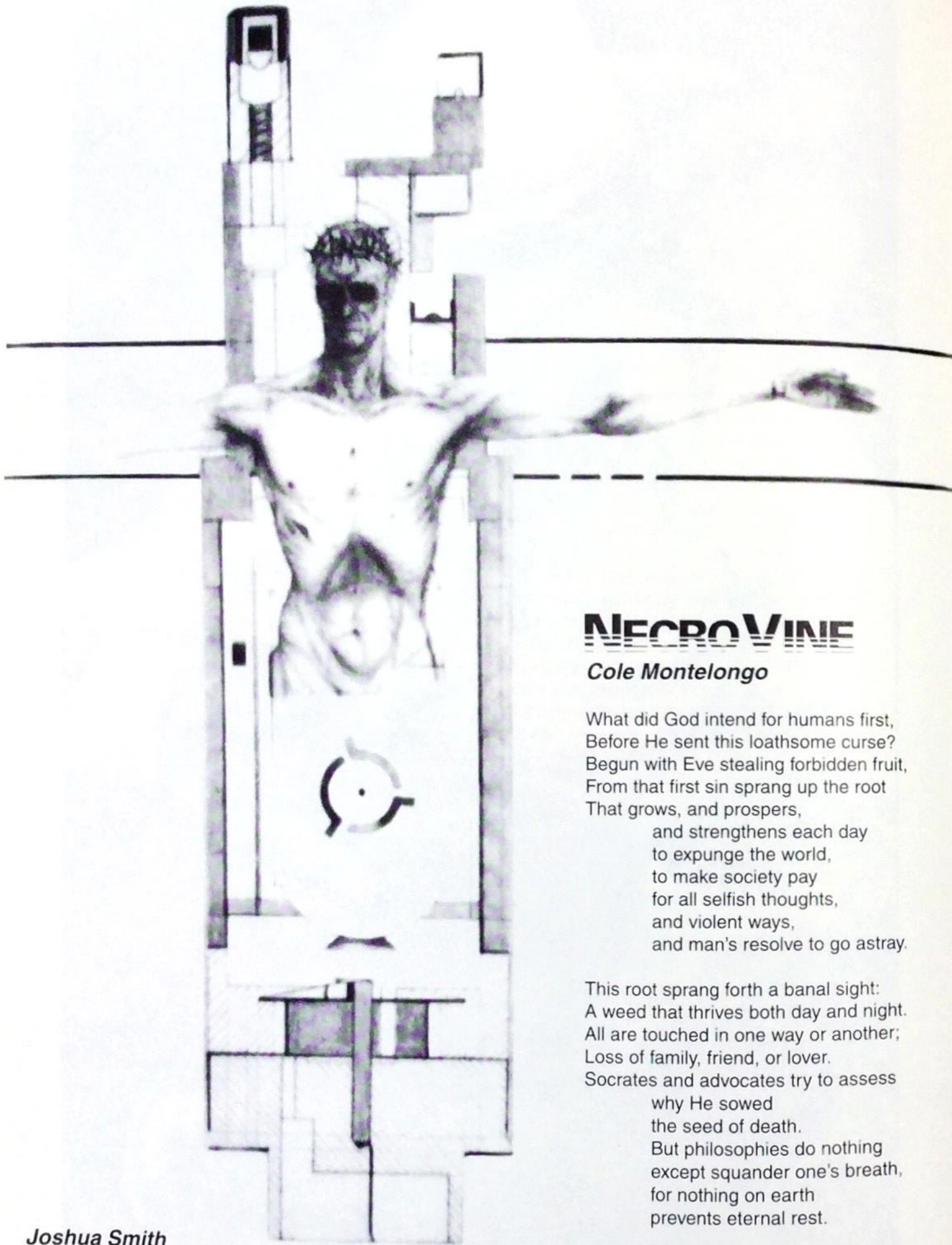
Dear Friend,

I need to tell you this. I need to get this out. All I know is I cannot stand not telling you. The fact is, I feel like you are the most wonderful person I have ever known. Being around you makes me feel like I must have some worth. I truly have wanted to relate these feelings to you, but I am terribly afraid that I might cause you to hate me. I do not know if this sounds stupid to you, but to me I know that no one I have ever liked has ever returned any feeling for me. I usually blame it on my ugliness or my weight. But I know inside, the true reason why no one will ever give me a chance is that I tend to offend people. I really hate it when I act that way but I cannot help it, even though that is not who I am. The person you know me as is the mask I put up out of fear. I have my entire life been mistreated, teased, harassed, insulted, and generally have let everyone walk all over me. Over time I put up a mask; I try to distract people from the real me so I will not be hurt as much. Unfortunately, this has led to even more loneliness and sadness in my life, as now I really have no true friends. I am telling you this because I want you to know what I am going through, because I am hoping you will judge me not as the person I pretend to be around people I don't trust or I am afraid of, but as the person writing this letter. I probably will never give you the letter and go on trying not to let you know how I feel. In class, when you said, "Just trust me," and I replied with, "OK," it shocked me, because I am not trusting at all. However, I trust you. You giggled and said, "No one else does." All I could think of was why would anyone not trust someone as wonderful as you. At the contest we went to, I cherished every moment talking to you because I find you brilliant, funny, sweet, and you seem to think a lot like I do. I love to hear you sing; I think you have the cutest laugh I have ever heard. I know you are probably thinking I am weird by now. And, I am sorry if I am bothering you. However, I promise that this letter is the end of it. I am writing this more for closure for myself than to profess any affection for you. My decision to write this is more out of grief than of happiness. I have hated my life since I was very young. I know you will go on being your wonderful self. Eventually, you will have a happy, successful life. All the while, I will be as alone as I have always been. I am sorry if this letter angered you. I wish you a good life.

--Paul Bogen, II



Stephanie Rychlik



NECROVINE

Cole Montelongo

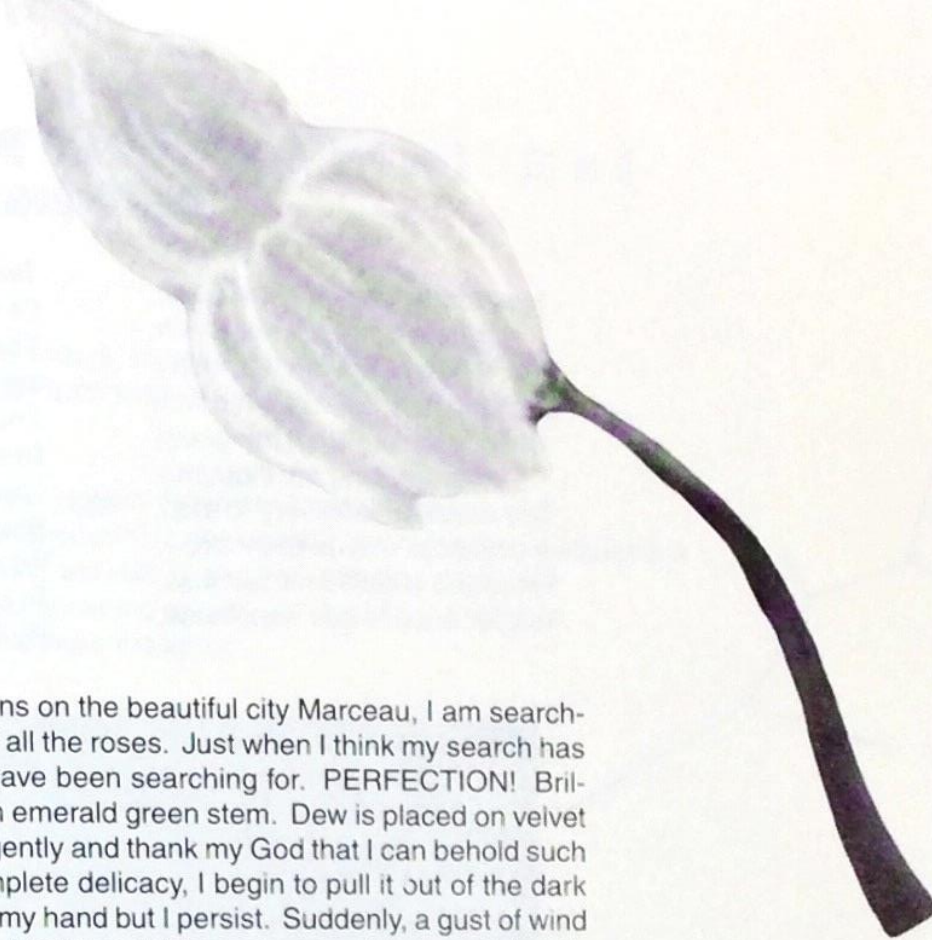
What did God intend for humans first,
Before He sent this loathsome curse?
Begun with Eve stealing forbidden fruit,
From that first sin sprang up the root
That grows, and prospers,
and strengthens each day
to expunge the world,
to make society pay
for all selfish thoughts,
and violent ways,
and man's resolve to go astray.

This root sprang forth a banal sight:
A weed that thrives both day and night.
All are touched in one way or another;
Loss of family, friend, or lover.
Socrates and advocates try to assess
why He sowed
the seed of death.
But philosophies do nothing
except squander one's breath,
for nothing on earth
prevents eternal rest.

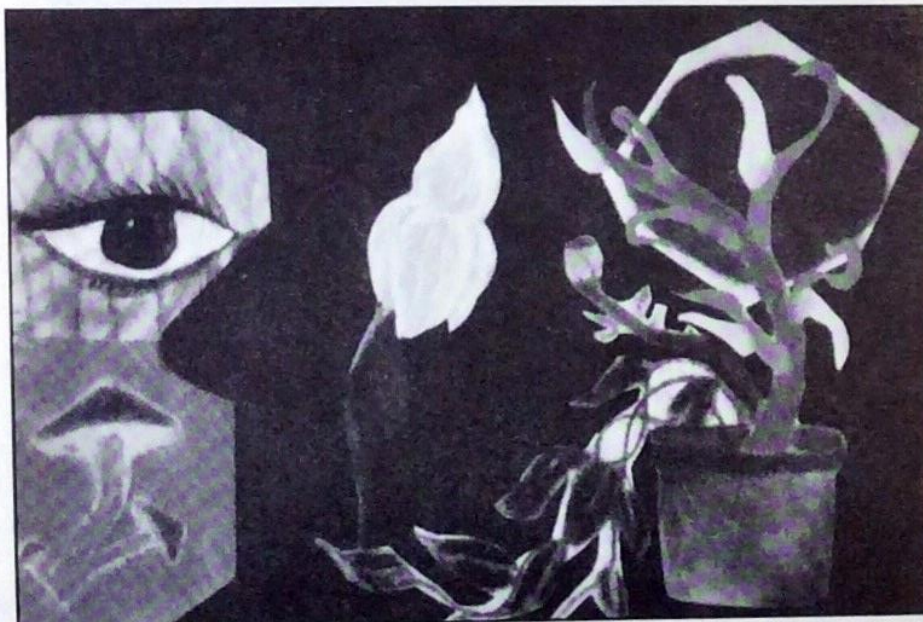
Joshua Smith

A Lesson for Life

Jessica Ripper



As I walk through the gardens on the beautiful city Marceau, I am searching for the most desirable of all the roses. Just when I think my search has been in vain, I find what I have been searching for. PERFECTION! Brilliant red leaves flow from an emerald green stem. Dew is placed on velvet by a fine jeweler. I touch it gently and thank my God that I can behold such beauty. Reaching with complete delicacy, I begin to pull it out of the dark soil. Its thorns are pricking my hand but I persist. Suddenly, a gust of wind threatens to take my rose. I hold on tighter now, so not to lose it, but its thorns pierce deeper into my clenched hands. Tiny nails of freedom that cause me pain. The wind is relentless and many of the delicate petals have blown away. My pain is too great. I let go. **I hate the wind, and I hate God for taking my perfection away!** I sit alone and mourn for my loss. Days, weeks, months, finally I understand. I realize it wasn't God or the wind that took perfection away. It was me. For I knew quite well that something so utterly beautiful should not have been uprooted and captured by my hands. No, it should have been uprooted and captured by my heart.



Jenna Rasch

Justification

Paul Bogen, II

Heartbreak chaining me down,
Heaven's gates approach,
A grasp falls inches short,
For sadness is holding me down,
Chances taken from my grasp,
Fear freezing my thoughts,
Too attached to misery to stop,
A detachment from an ever-present hope,
Too afraid of pain and sadness,
To ever hope to see happiness,

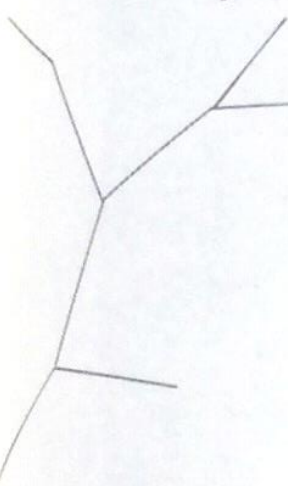
Tears burn the fear within,
Of some uncommitted sin,
That my guilty soul pays for,
Inside without cease,
The self-denial is starving me,
Desperation is setting in,
Lower hopes are my crime,
Binding me to someone,
Who is never what I need,
To break from the cycle,
My heartbreak has to fade.



Erin Keck

What Fool This Mortal Be!

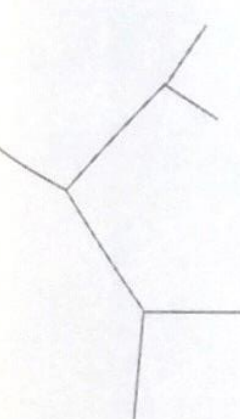
Nancy Goggio



I head into trudging waters, waves that spill with evil and corruption. I wind myself to spin from trouble, but only find fanning worry cooling my calmness away.

People's opinions are juggled within my head, moved by decisions and deciding to become parallel in comparison, but it only leaves scars etched in my creativity, wounds in my thoughts and originality. People's lives seemed to lust at ruining my own, forcing me to a cliff and pushing me with colored, careless thoughts.

What has made the world come to relying on fiends for assistance when they surely do not assist? The world will plummet before the end.



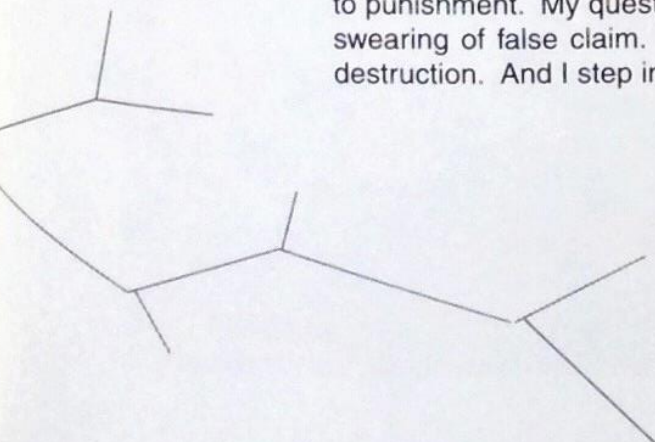
I am wrapped in a warm, treasuring infatuation, so fully beautiful in my youth. But others encourage threat to my folly of love. The thought is warmth in itself and the other faces blunt with his interesting instinct captured in a distant universe. But my heart feels as close to him as a home.

The draping agony of friendship is no friend to me. The lies and thoughts only brought to others are rejoiced in companionship. But how should I spell it out with silent wrath and quiet sealed pain? What will the next day bring if my feelings collide and spring to a fiery fountain?

My mind will not seize rest. Failure is riding its way to me, choking me with my stupid care, thinking as its master. My maternal relationship will be sizzled in rage to the lies concealed under my heart.

I am but a child, an unruly and spoiled figure to the unpolished society. My case will never be put to rest.

What obnoxious winged smiles will collapse my lips to cry when all the enemies and wandering losers taste what they deserve. But when shall this blessed day come? Tomorrow? A week? The end of time? Or never to my own sins God does note.



And with my mistakes of reigning insanity, I am tried and brought to punishment. My questions are left blank and my mouth raw with its swearing of false claim. I will end tragically in a swamp of religious destruction. And I step into the trudging waters.



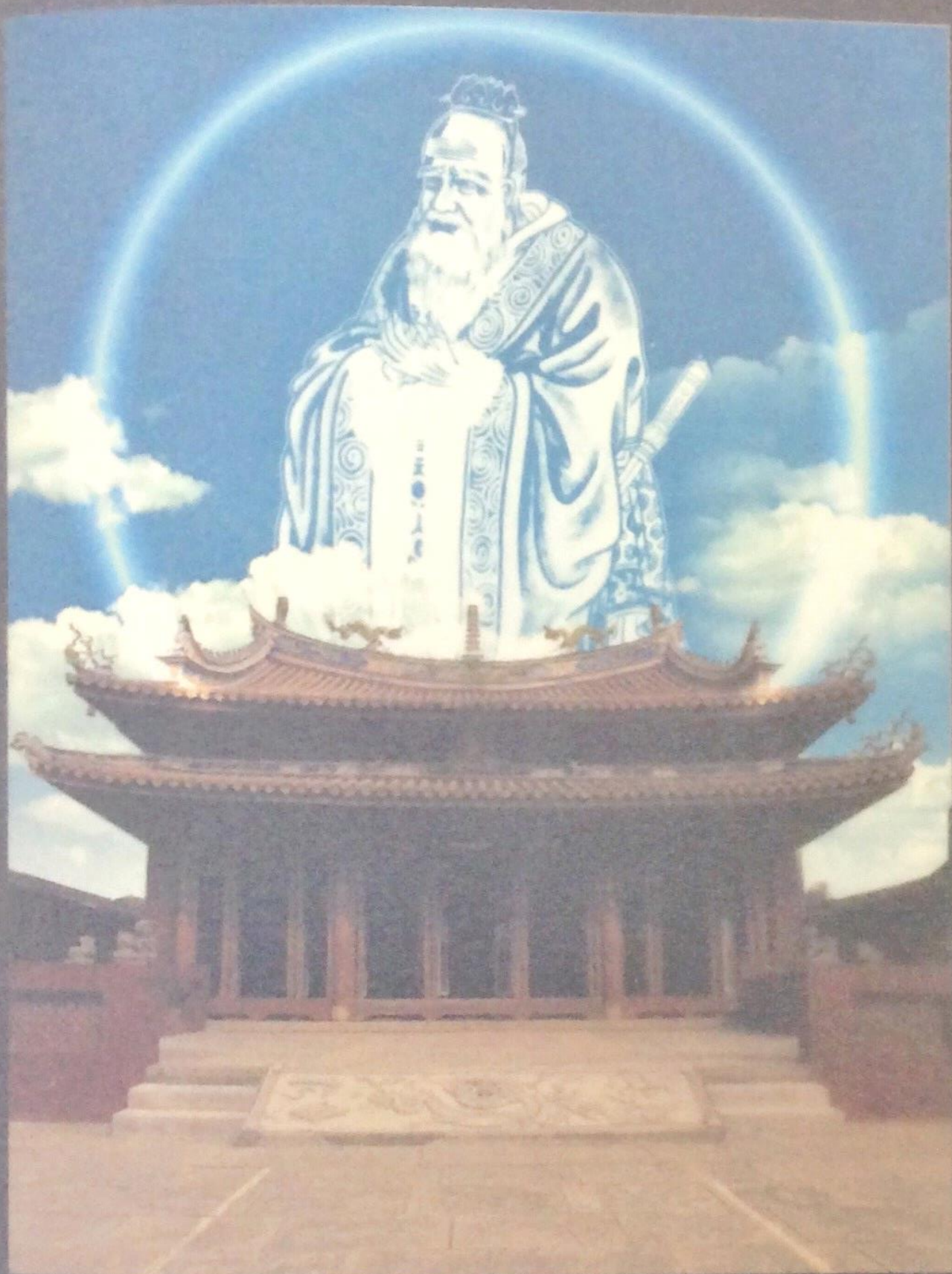
Evolution
Erin Keck

Through the flames of experience
You are melted and reformed
and the edges of your certainties and moralities
become blurred
As your young *idealistic reveries*
are tested in reality
Dreams become extinct or change
or they change you
But things never turn out as you plan
Disillusionment is the rule
When you see how love can be abused
and words are worthless without action
When stolen moments of time
don't fill empty spaces
You begin to notice the subtle differences
Between holding hands and touching souls
Between *dependency* and necessity
Between happiness and contentment
Then you sense that each trial you endure
might be making you into the person you need to be
To find your missing half
To find completion

Cameron Allen

子孔

Confucianism



己欲立，而立人

Confucianism

Based on the teachings of K'ung Fu-tzu (Confucius), the ideology of Confucianism is based upon a strict moral code. Under this philosophy, people give up their own individuality to fit the standards of society. The cornerstone of Confucian ideology is jen, which can be translated as "goodness" or "human-heartedness." This quality is best expressed in the Confucian golden rule, "do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself." Other Confucian virtues include righteousness, integrity, respect, obedience, and filial piety. One who possesses all these virtues becomes a chun-tzu (perfect gentleman). Confucian societies are also very paternalistic, with the ideal government being an enlightened dictatorship, and the father as the head of the family.

CANADA

Erin Keck

Two men walk stealthily toward the American border under the cover of darkness. Their steps falling sluggishly in the brush of the Mexican desert through which they have walked for more than a day, they can see the border...until they are suddenly found. Two teams of Border Patrol agents with night vision goggles and shotguns come from the right and left, and the two men begin to run. Searchlights at the border reach out into the desert, spotting the men as Border Patrol agents move in.

Meanwhile, a van full of drunken Canadian teenagers careens across the American border onto a Wisconsin back road in search of some reefer and a new Phil Collins tape.

Excuse me, could somebody tell me what's going on here?

I mean, come on! We pay so much attention to the Mexican border, and the Canadians are streaming in through the back door. They already have two baseball teams here!

Why don't we hear about 20 Canadians being smuggled across the border packed into a truck? It's because they are clever propagandists, those Canadians are. Who do you think controls the media? A Canadian made up all of our news networks. He's even got the patents.

And why is it so quiet up there? I bet they're planning an invasion. Quietly feeding us Canadian bacon and Alanis Morissette, until one day they come down riding their army of moose and overrun the country! They say they use all those guns for hunting deer or the occasional bear, but we know the truth...those hairy men roaming the northern forests are really on reconnaissance missions for the Canadian government. Play any Celine Dion CD backwards; it will tell you their attack plans. Her songs are the devil's music!

Of course, the Canadians would like us to believe that they are civilized people. But in reality, Canada today is like America 10 years ago! A Canadian invasion could mean the resurrection of the New Kids on the Block! Side ponytails! The Reagan Administration! And worst of all, we'd be required by law to talk like the people in Fargo.

So what's the message here? To the people — protect yourselves against Canadian influence! To the country — turn your eyes to the Canadian border and expose this slow invasion. Put the rat mask on Canada!



Midnight Witch Falls

Joshua Smith



Linda Bigelow

A cascade
a tree with leaves baking brown
on a decomposing cake
a salad of composite synthetics
organic chemistry full function
a science left spending
a cycle of broken records
Histories repeating
A walking stick broken
Falling apart in the palms
of giants stepping on we
They won't notice me
I spent my last dime
I'm not afraid to cry
Are you?
So come down from your
tree and kiss me sweet
We will fall away to the horizons
a beach of shattered glass
We will break and you'll smile
And I'll try to be hopeful
Our oppositions will mix
like the oil on your driveway
A land of sand dunes far away
Always wet with Astro kisses
From rickety sunsets
Your brother the rapist muscle-tombstress
He spake of predictions of a tortured blackness
I never touched.
So will the eyes pass my way?
so pass me on to your awaiting mate
Let me play this game
Of severed hate.
Let me stay I can fall with you
So taste my desperation
a blue baked wave of cascading planes
A summer long remembered
WE ALL LIVE IN CYCLES
WE PRETEND TO ESCAPE
So fall away and let me pray
For you.
I wanted to lick the religion from your lips
But the salt was melted too sweet and now your
Feet begin to bleed for you
Walk on trails and shower of broken sails
Torn by your misgivings
A wounded soldier on your porch
I lived in a dream from hollywoodland
Too bad I burned for my screams
A living desired prayer I just couldn't share
With you.
Our lasting gift
A regret of all high art learned
But perceived as truth you faded from grace
And your dress was broken on phone line messages
Never intercepted.

THE FOG

Robert Rogers

Billowing fog approaches.
Ethereal waves overtake us,
Devouring all creation.
You cry to deaf ears;
I am lost.

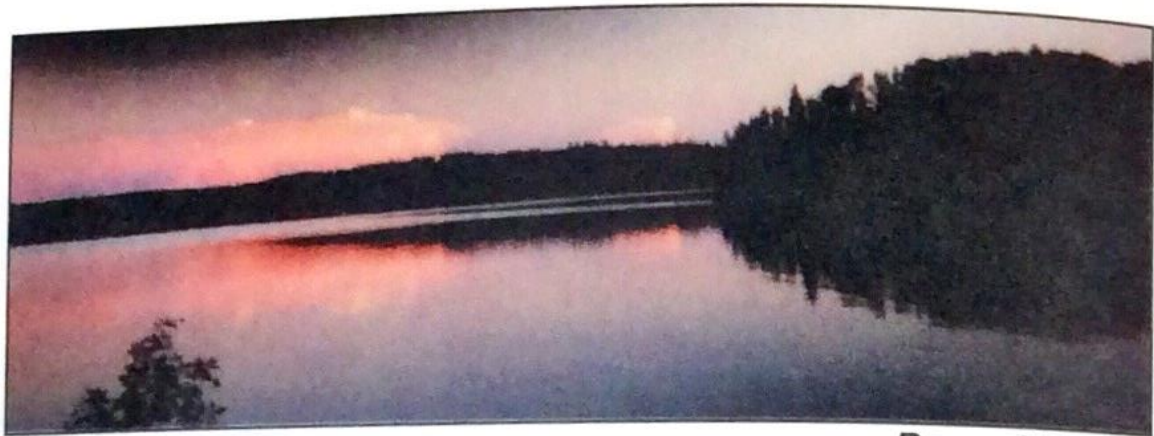
Blind I stumble, fall,
Desperately groping for you.
The fog obscures us.
Without you I am not.
Ephemeral reality drains my soul.

Vapour enters my mouth, nose, and lungs.
Whispering through my blood, heart, mind,
Fog sees through my eyes, speaks with my lips,
Becomes me... or am I it...?
No! Stop it! Get out of my mind!
You cannot have me!

I leave the fog and lose all hopes.
Starless sky touches dead earth.
Fog reaches out, whispering,
"Come back... be empty... be hollow... be false..."
I turn away to walk down that lonesome road.



**Karla
Holt**



Danny Warner

Birthplace

Joshua Smith

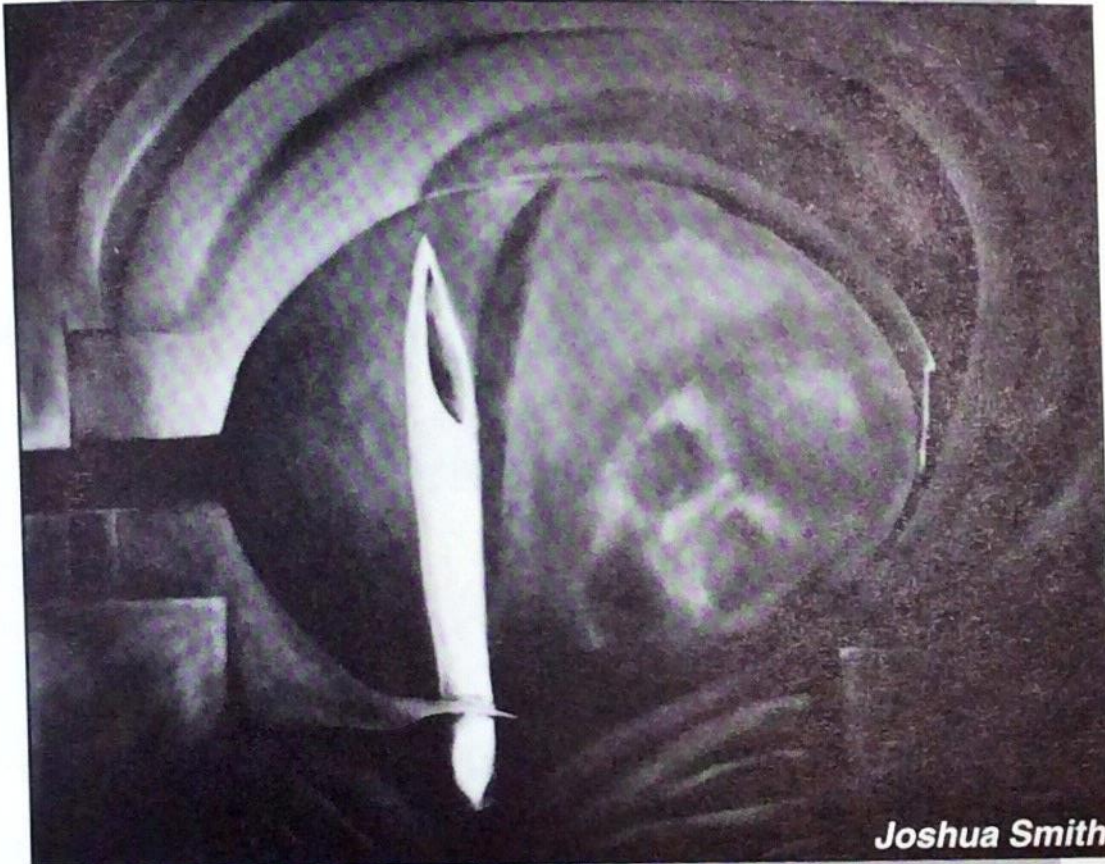
New meditation I PTS I See the pills melt into the
stream seeking a new world of recreated clear
consciousness I Find that whore I Who killed my still
brain? I concentrated ground walker on all fours I see
the world from new vantage points I stop the noise of
metallic birds 30,000 and rising / but all things die in
worlds of realism I all pills dissipate and highs crash
like the father's original sin I new plateaus I why has my
Walden been changed I odd seemingly pure horizons
nailed to drift wood I I now see from his point on the
world's sin I who is the blamer I have you my
head/pains with no one to transfer them to I your
disciples were weak and faithful I did they really listen
to your words your purposeful lies I did you hide them
in plain sight I the world has no need for color because
you only see/black and white/with the tearing hurts of
bruised hands I've seen your destinations stigmatic
sympathies of nails and palms shared in aromatic
/smoke screens tearing flesh on wood instead of the
obvious nail I You always liked cold steel I a reason for
new scar tissue.



NO MORE

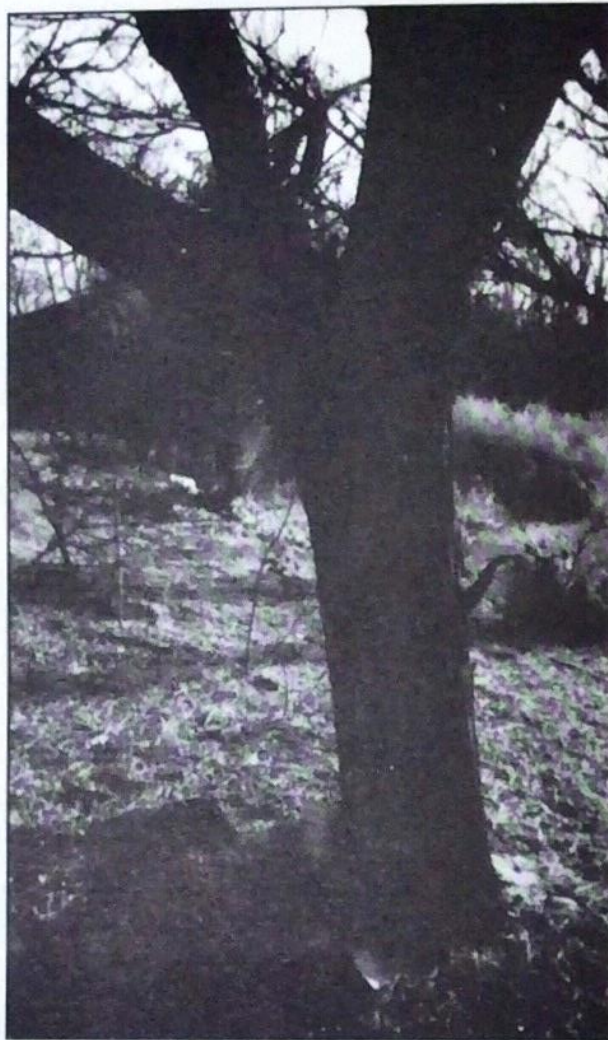
Jennifer Louise Brown

Sitting alone, the translucent girl watches her vapor rise from the mind she once possessed. Her life changing, she laughs at her inability to grasp the last strands of her diminishing existence. Watching her once vibrant frame, she floats down to her now inconstant limp body. Questions dangle just out of her reach as the answers sit stagnant in her head. Killing her non-existent mind are the realizations of a past life that



Joshua Smith

wasn't quite lived right. Lifeless, her body rests. The pills scattered about it, the bottle forms with the pale blue hand. Not me, not me. I'm not capable of anything; nonetheless, suicide. Give up, give up is all that echoes around the room. Her life was unfulfilled, nothing finished. Nothing permanent. Choices made were not her own. A smile formed across her two lips. A sick, twisted, seemingly satisfied smile that permeated the room's atmosphere. For once, for once she was free. Her thoughts belonged to her. Her choices, her own. This choice, last choice, was hers. The sky opens up. The earth shakes loose. A choice of infinite conclusions bring her to resolution.



Linda Bigelow

I'm Not Sorry *Julie Mainka*

You lie down inside my heart
and you opened every valve
the blood rushes warm into my veins
again.

I'm not sorry that I felt
for a brief time
that my breath returned as it was taken away.

A whisper spoken
translate transferred
into ear shattering, soul unbelieving
Screams:

I am worth so much more than I thought
my writing, my music, my eyes
spoke

to you.

I'm not sorry that I peeked
into both our minds
that my mind touched yours as I gained inspiration.

A mind shared
as my misty hidden emotion lay open
the physical closeness further understood underneath
by the slowly gathering Love.
I'm not sorry that I held you close
or kissed your fears into my head
or that I can't anymore
just another new experience.

I have your friendship
so how can I be completely void of Life?
How can I be sorry
for Loving the epitome of understanding,
for still Loving
a man who made me feel again and fall in Love?

Beautiful Little Mistake
Erin Keck

I'm your beautiful little mistake,
left with a legacy of unfulfilled memories
on one side of a glass curtain
that fell from nowhere
like the moribund moon
and tore my heart on a jagged edge.

My breath makes vapor roses
while the glass throws back my words.
Banished from your thoughts and cares
by the touch of another love, I see
two shadows embrace on the other side
where your stolen whispers caress
the ears of the thief beside you.
I am only a shade of my former self.

As I long for lost affections
you leave my life without direction
condemned to search for bitter comfort
in remembrance of our love,
when I held you close in all ways
my embraces quieting your cares,
yet open to accept you in my heart
and set your worries free.

My love, I've cried an ocean for you,
and still you go begging water.
As I seek a place for you in my world
that doesn't suffer in your absence,
transparent barriers of denied attraction
sever bonds and outstretched hands
and echo two thousand little reasons
why my everything isn't enough.

Cole Montelongo
9.16.99



Karla Holt

Rigmarole
Sarah Monroe

I know the passion
Pull me petal by petal into your arms
So helpless under my spell
The feelings that make you scream
I am in your dreams
Dark-haired vixen with crimson lips
 Starlit eyes
Sweet breath of sonnets
Wallow in my tainted blood
Unleash the golden dreams
I read your mind
 All the time
Sever my soul
Set it to flames
I know the pain



Karla Holt

Heat, Flesh, and Dreamscape
Matthew Hudson

Sand-papered redhead flares,
its rage spreads to my purple, waxy companion.
Orange glow's warm flow reflects
off yellow brass.

Plastic brass - a frozen figure
Poised on marble, an obelisk hailing a victory -
twisted memory. Prone to flights of fancy.
Warp reality to fit a pleasant memory.

My companion melts slowly
as nervous shadows twitch on my wall.

Shuddering,
sliding,
creeping from the wall,
into my skull.

Mind's eye darkening, firelight in my eyes,
Lightning flashes from my brain.
Lashing out in my stillness.

Soul sheds this organic harness,
to take to the air and fly with the moon.
Straining to reach out and kiss the stars.

Blackened skies bloom,
as pinprick stars are swallowed in the burning heavens.

My empty body beckons.
Spirit falls.

Only to repossess
the restraints of flesh
that were left behind in this nocturnal sojourn.

LOVE IN VAIN

Jennifer Louise Brown

Feeling like a sniper, I stalk him with the
soul of my heart's desires

knowing his wishes don't agree with the
philosophy of my soul.

The love I have steals my sense from me
and put my dreams in charge.

Reality is lost in my sea of fake love
not found.

The love I wish he held for me is a void
that fills up the part of his heart that should
belong to me.

The black darkness of his voice has
the tone of an angelic demon
that preys on my insecurities.

Yet still my wanting heart wants his
body to possess me
in all of his unsure glory.

He focuses on my stance
which shows my willingness.

His eyes show the perfection that he
displays

to conceive his inability to love an imperfect.

I try to ignore his display of fake hate.

The hate he's supposed to have for me.

Yet I love his pain and the way he makes
me seek real love from another source.

He will never change that act he puts up
and his heart will torture his inconsistent
means for it.

I learn from his cruel ways.

I see I must seek a purity in love
that doesn't display the fakeness his
loveless

voice possesses.

I love him for the caution he put into
the screaming confusion of my rampant heart.



Isaac Escamilla

MINE

Sarah Monroe

fill my mind

with thoughts of nothingness

the voids and grays

that cloud inside

sear my soul

with your eyes of cyanide

and seeping lightning

through my fingertips

throw me into the depths of devastation

with your lips of silk

and kisses of caramel

try to mollify the rain

cry for me

in your reverie

of golden fire

and silver raindrops

calming the storms

in your heart

awake, reaching for me again

those saline tears

burning down my face

trickling, flooding

this world of loneliness

the colors, the voices

hidden by the darkness

stiletto red scratches

won't bring back the sun

and the stars

not yet

Sarah Little



CHILDHOOD LILACS

Katy Reiffert

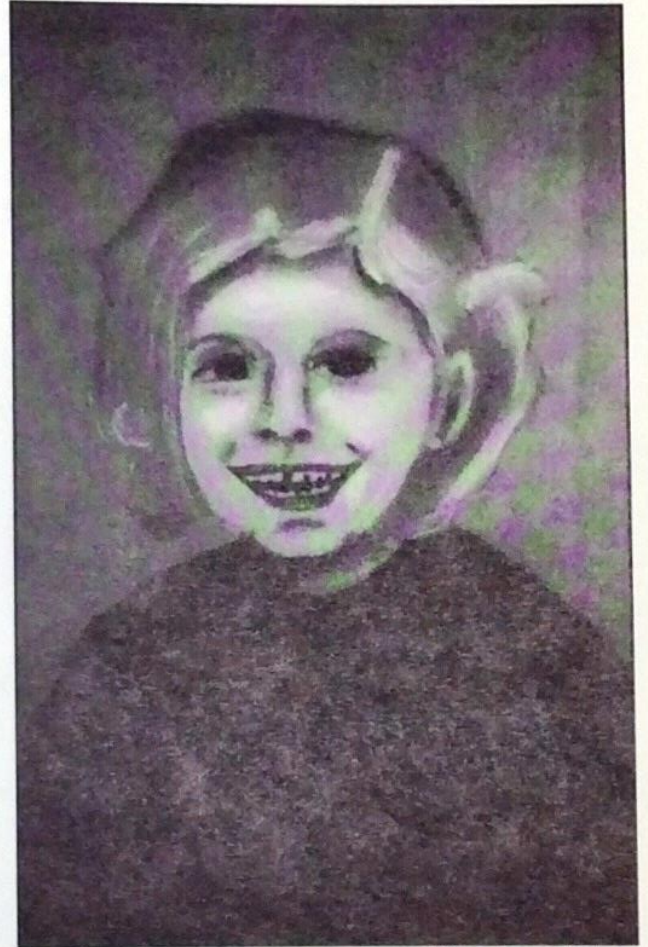
She was always lost in confusion and it didn't seem to matter. Everything felt like a dream where she was alone and drowning. When her screams finally pierced through, she was pushed down further into the nightmare. "By now she liked to be the victim; she liked to feel the pain. She made herself a victim almost every single day." She was so blind to the fact that things would never get better. She would bury her face in her hands because it always seemed that no one would ever understand or have the slightest idea what it was that made her be. They said everyone walks the same, obviously expecting her to step the narrow path they've lain.

The room was cold when she entered it, and she did not recognize its round shape and darkness. It was empty and strange. When she reached the center, a dim light shone in as if to welcome her. It reminded her of walking through a room and then having it feel like the room passed around her. Every step she took was slow and careful. Then a voice interrupted her thoughts, and before her stood all the people who had once told her she was ugly. She remembered every one and how their words had bored through her soul and how they still "sat" with her. All of the voices rang through her like the bells of a church on a Sunday morning. Her ears were filled with pain, and when she went to plug them the voices still ripped through. She could feel the blood start to trickle, and suddenly it was quiet. She lifted her head, and a girl stood in front of her with a sad face. They stood there staring into each other's black eyes. Then the girl spoke, "Show me love, stop hiding, you are beautiful. Show me love." As the voice faded she remembered the same words belonged to her friends who had all once asked the same things of her. She looked at the room before her, and it begun to melt into beautiful colors; it was no longer scary and black. Her friends appeared around her, smiling, and when she leaned in to kiss the mirror,

she looked up to watch her lips hit the glass. Suddenly she found herself staring at her own two eyes. She searched them for answers, and in the whites of them she saw the darkness of fear. She recognized it because she was that fear. She saw the room of black again and the people who were no longer her friends. She was so afraid of herself and the world before her. She wanted the pain to stop so badly, and the only way she knew how was to hide from it. But she was sick of hiding, and she knew she could no longer hide from herself. She looked up at her face, into her eyes, and felt her heart heave. She was every one of the things those people had said, not because they were true, but because she had allowed her heart to believe every word. So much pain ran through her every vein. Her soul cried in a whisper that got louder until it reached her own dry lips: "Don't try to kiss the mirror, child. For the reflection you see will never love you back." Her hand rose up; the mirror was cracked and splashed with blood. She ran from the darkness to the field of lilacs that she had played in as a child. The wind pushed her back, tearing her clothes and burning her face as she ran. Blood flew behind her, splashing the childhood flowers and ripping the open wound. She ran until she reached the sea. She stopped to look down at the rocks and waves below her. She tasted the salt and tasted the pain and flew away from herself, and the blackness returned.

In the end she perished not having known love, having been caught in the world of rejection and inner strife. Her dreams will still haunt her soul. As she takes empty breaths, her body will fall into the arms of the angels, and her voice will float off to create the cry of an unborn child. Her tattered soul will move efficiently beyond her own security, where all the opportunity awaits.

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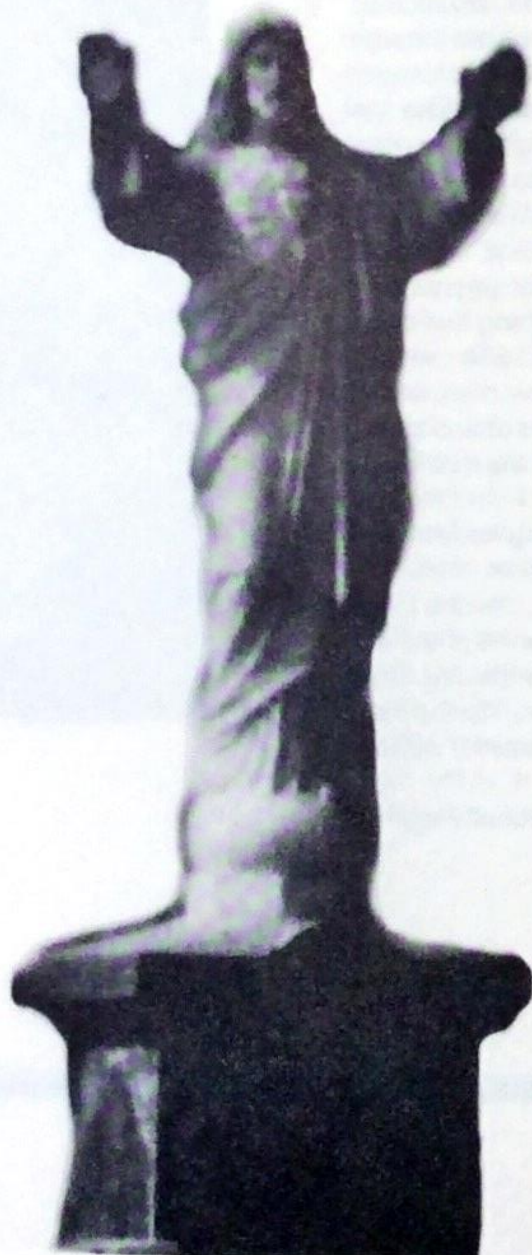
Meghan Dice

Forgiveness
Maria Haring

Forgiveness so strong
Hammered through my heart
The road is dark and uncertain
Pierces my thoughts
Forgiveness taunts me, ridicules me, spits upon me,
and says, "Where is your God?"

Like steel
I cannot accept this cross
Forgiveness like a crown of thorns
Seven times seventy strong

Forgiveness is a fire
That chases me night and day
A hieroglyph written in love's cryptic language
Minus a Rosetta
Plus an avalanche



The Old Black Man - Friend, Teacher, Loss
Micah Lane

His face
Battered and torn
Scruff salt and pepper beard of several days
His face drawn and scrunched
An image of our listlessness
His eyes so profound
Tired
Hurt
Old
Dead
Please forgive me
The tears
Nothing ——— Ends
He speaks to me with no words
Tell me what you know
Help me do those things you did not
Teach me
I do not want to make your mistakes
Please forgive me
The tears
End

Jessica Attie



Latent
Ricky Rosas

As the cold, dispersed air blew across my face,
I felt a certain consternation being placed upon me by the shadowed leaves,
The moonlit night grew dim as I stood under the bridge,
Two hands over my face.
As the tears trickled down my weary face,
I felt a surge of presentiment as the passing lights reflected dancing shadows across the gray wall
beside me.
With no one around, I fell to the ground, only my knees and shoe tips touching the floor.
I thought of the past, long and happy, tough but full.
And it all came down to this.
My last moments of any real happiness, gone.
I didn't want it to be this way, but destiny set no place for me.
Now, I am only a shadow of the past, no longer able to do things on my own.
As the cool wind suddenly blew calm and gently across my teary face,
Lights flashing sent me running.
I ran from reality, in my own world of enclosed feelings,
Thinking only about the present now.
The future is not mine, as I am not meant for the future.
And as I am taken in by my own deep cries,
I hide my face, which has seen all the world,
And even the best of people,
Sink to the very depths of insanity.
For even their loudest cries, cannot be heard.



Cole Montelongo

Wakeless Fear Matthew Hudson

Conquering dragons
brought the bloody stains
that made me what I am.
You see red.
I see you.

Demons dancing on the tip of my tongue,
skin drips from bones of glass.
Brain spinning in a blender skull.
We enjoy falling so much,
watching distractions rush up, spitting at the spinning stars.
Insects become gods
as earth fuses with the heavens.
One after another, lemmings seek their meaning.
They find purpose in a fall.

Emerging from our cocoons cold and wet,
commanded: "Amputate your wings!"
Vain efforts made in seclusion.

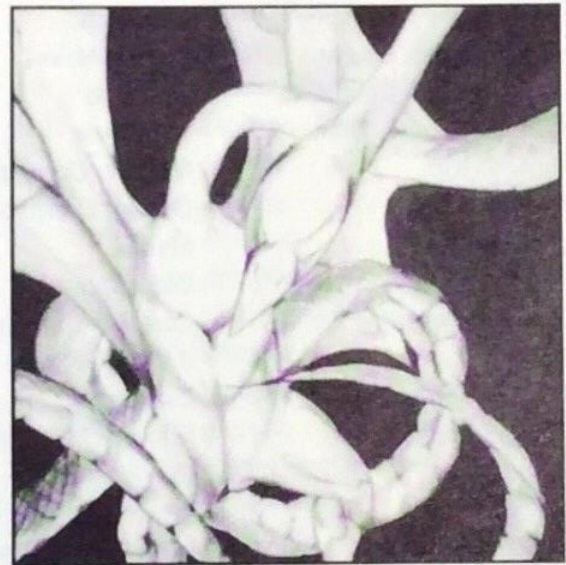
Grind away my plastic teeth.
Tongue swallowed for sanity's sake,
mouth gaping.
Prestige bought with incoherence.
The struggle to be a virtuous rubber stamp.

Insides wretch and burn
so I vomit the sword from my mouth, and
breathe again without her.
Anything will ease the taste.

Glow of electric glass,
the throbbing in my ears and behind my eyes.
Pumping digital ignorance into my brain.
Neuron swamp hardens like the bone trees around it.
Lusting to hide in the signals
and the numbness they bring.
Dripping from the nose of my glass shell
I shun the static
Self is preserved.

Reluctantly pressing on, rusted joints groan.
Acid from eyes burns my face,
gangrene calluses turn to scales.

Diesel engine lifestyle lived so swiftly,
all the quicker to end.
Soul,
eyes ablaze,
Awakened.



Isaac Escamilla



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Me, too!! Linda Bigelow

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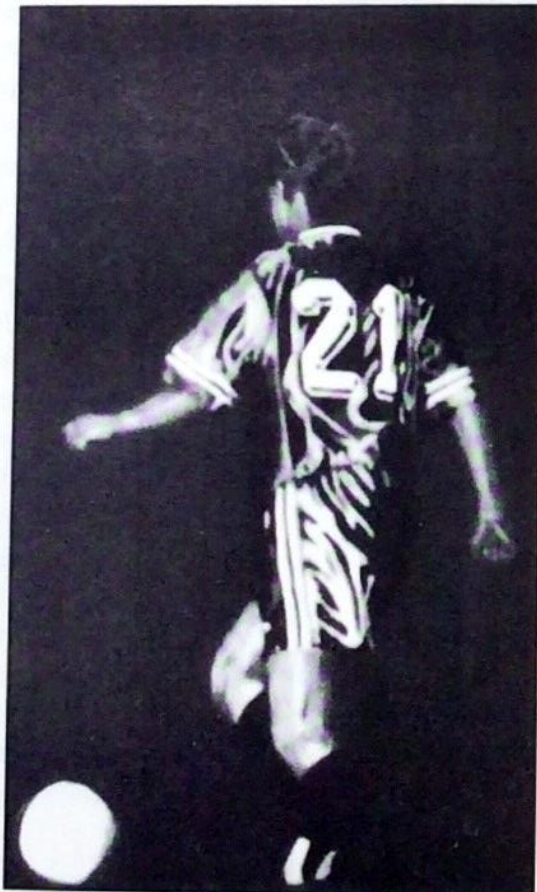
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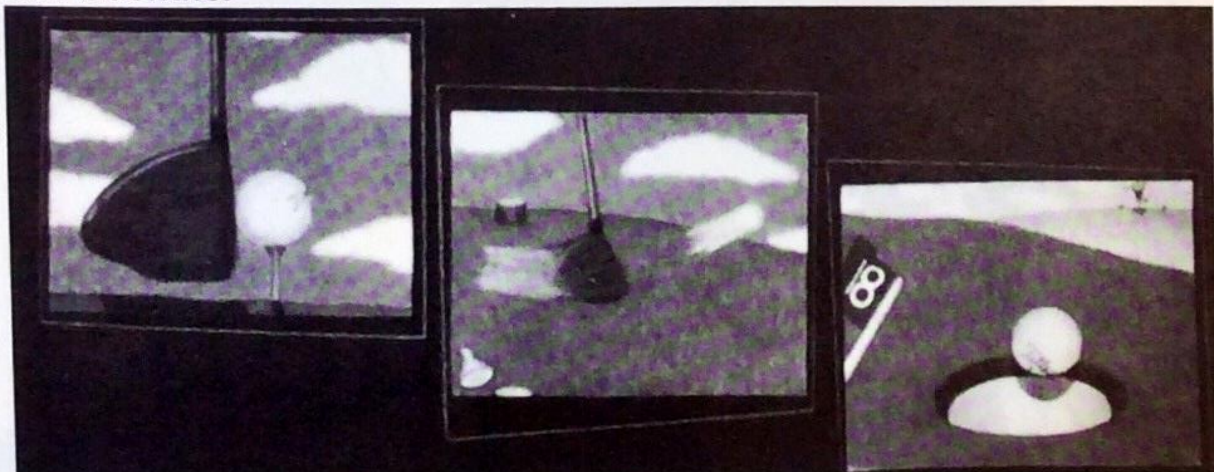
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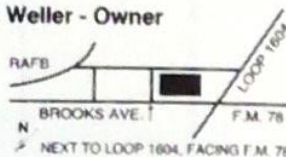
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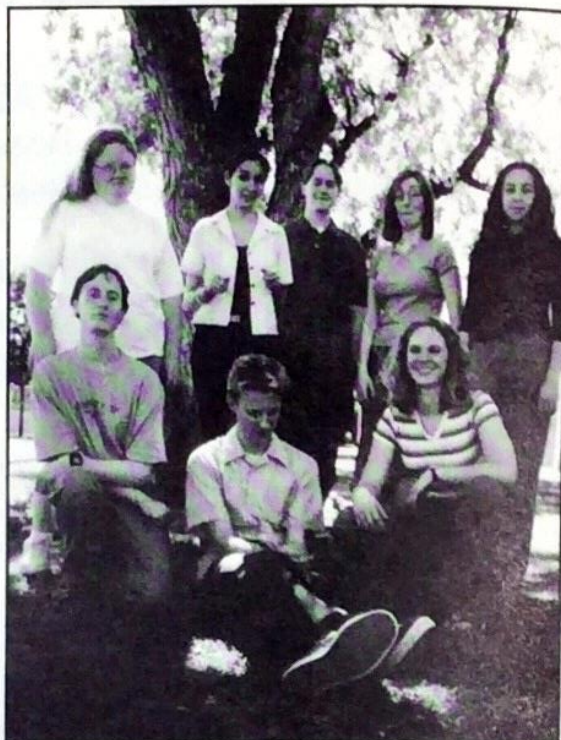
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