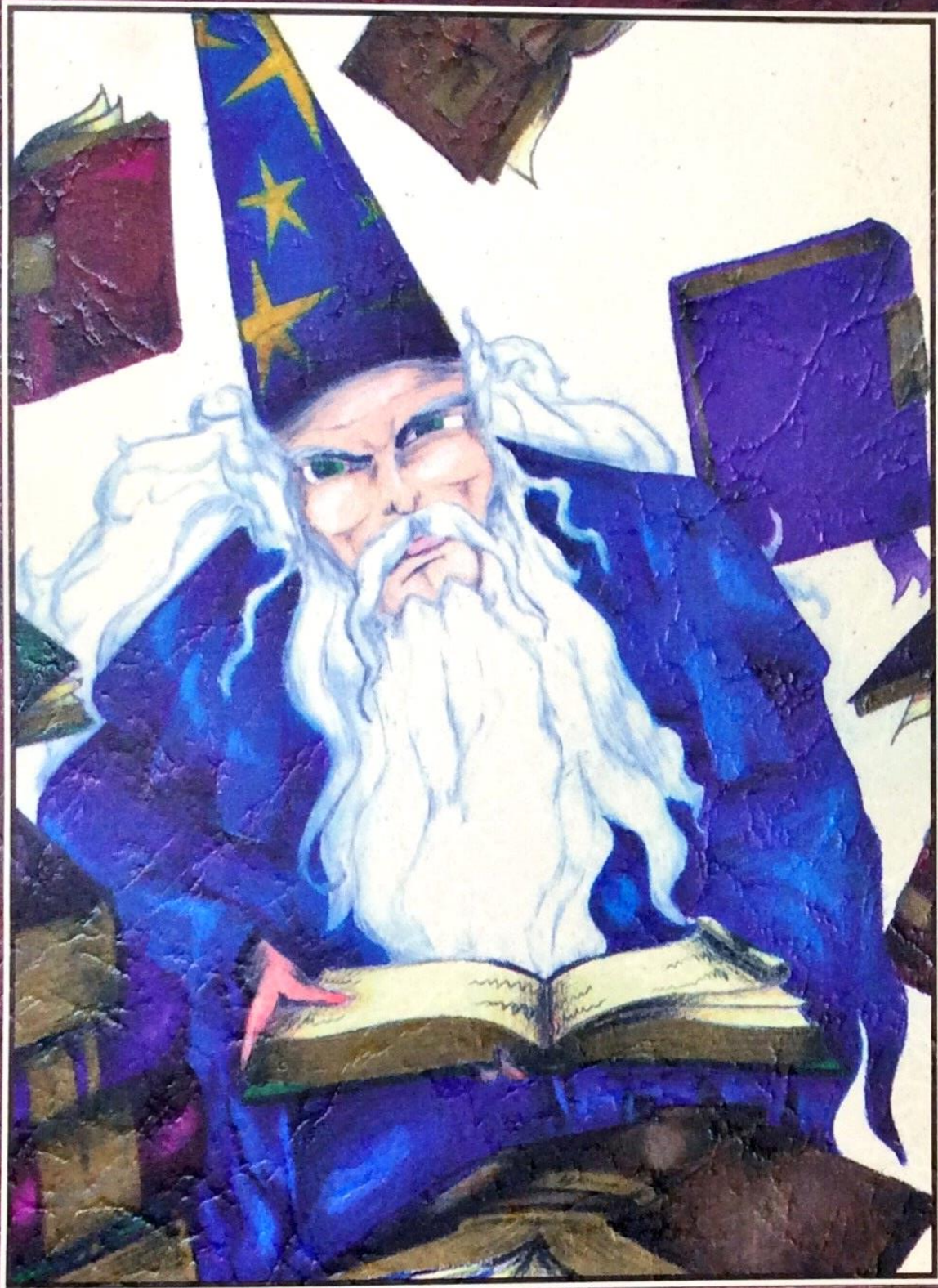



Bullseye



Volume 11

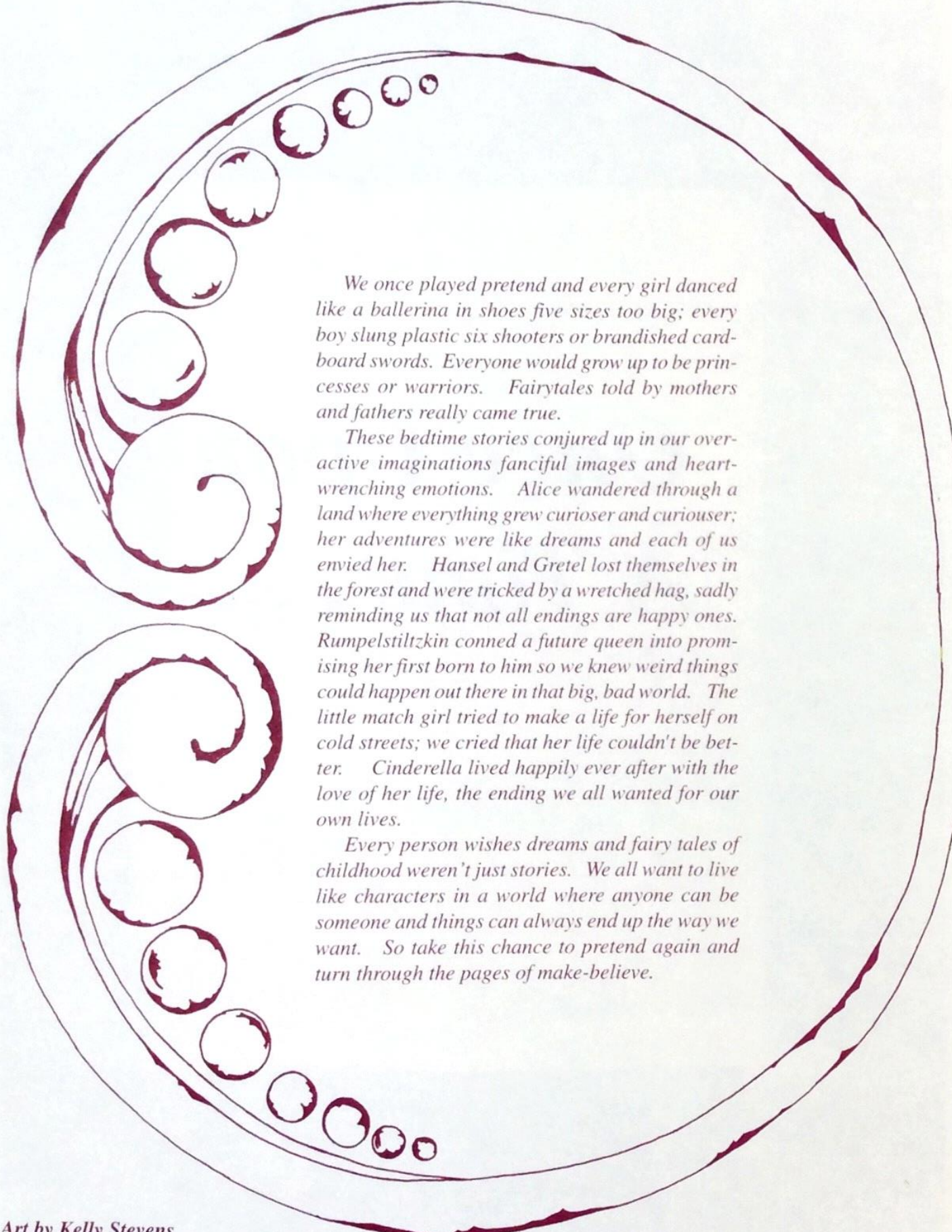


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Bullseye 1995
Volume 11

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*Once Upon
A Time . . .*



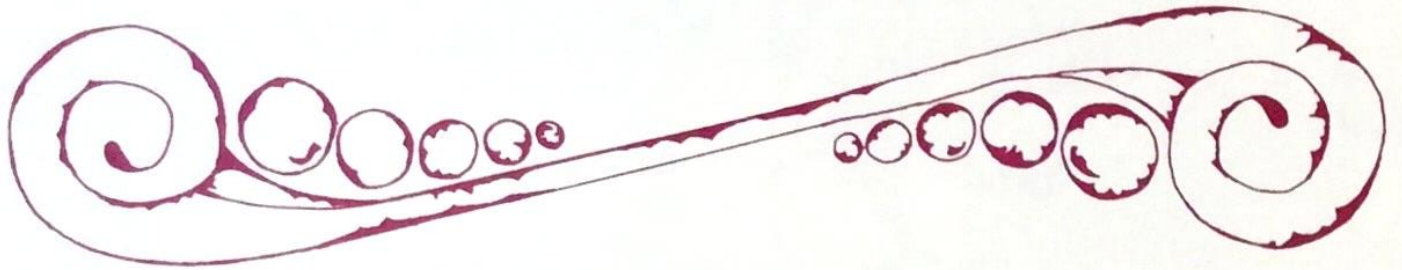
We once played pretend and every girl danced like a ballerina in shoes five sizes too big; every boy slung plastic six shooters or brandished cardboard swords. Everyone would grow up to be princesses or warriors. Fairytales told by mothers and fathers really came true.

These bedtime stories conjured up in our over-active imaginations fanciful images and heart-wrenching emotions. Alice wandered through a land where everything grew curiously and curiously; her adventures were like dreams and each of us envied her. Hansel and Gretel lost themselves in the forest and were tricked by a wretched hag, sadly reminding us that not all endings are happy ones. Rumpelstilzkin conned a future queen into promising her first born to him so we knew weird things could happen out there in that big, bad world. The little match girl tried to make a life for herself on cold streets; we cried that her life couldn't be better. Cinderella lived happily ever after with the love of her life, the ending we all wanted for our own lives.

Every person wishes dreams and fairy tales of childhood weren't just stories. We all want to live like characters in a world where anyone can be someone and things can always end up the way we want. So take this chance to pretend again and turn through the pages of make-believe.

Once Upon A Time...

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"Come inside, little children..."

-The Hag

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Alice in Wonderland

"The mushroom, of course!"

-The Caterpillar

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Art by Kelly Stevens



Rumpelstilzkin

"And then the child away I'll take!"

-*Rumpelstilzkin*

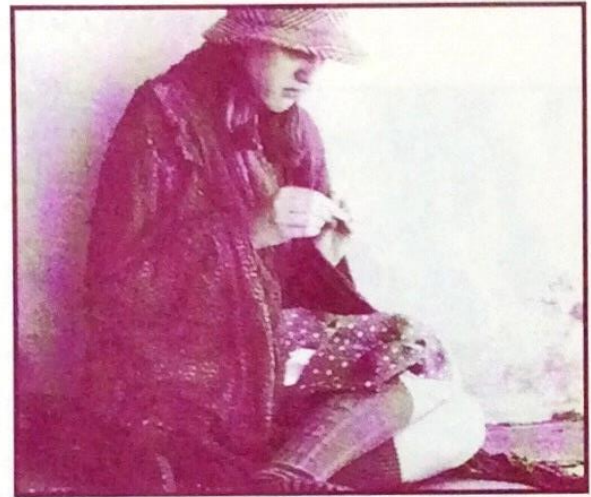
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-*The Little Match-Girl*

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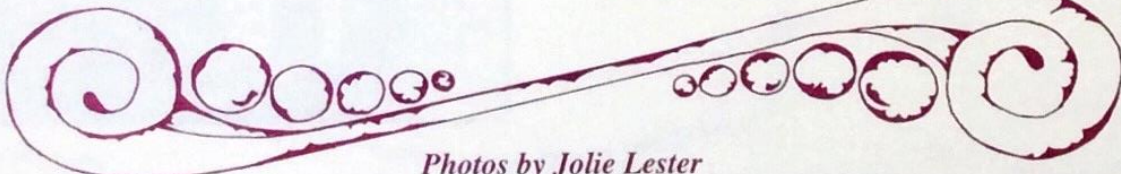
Cinderella

"Will I ever see you again?"

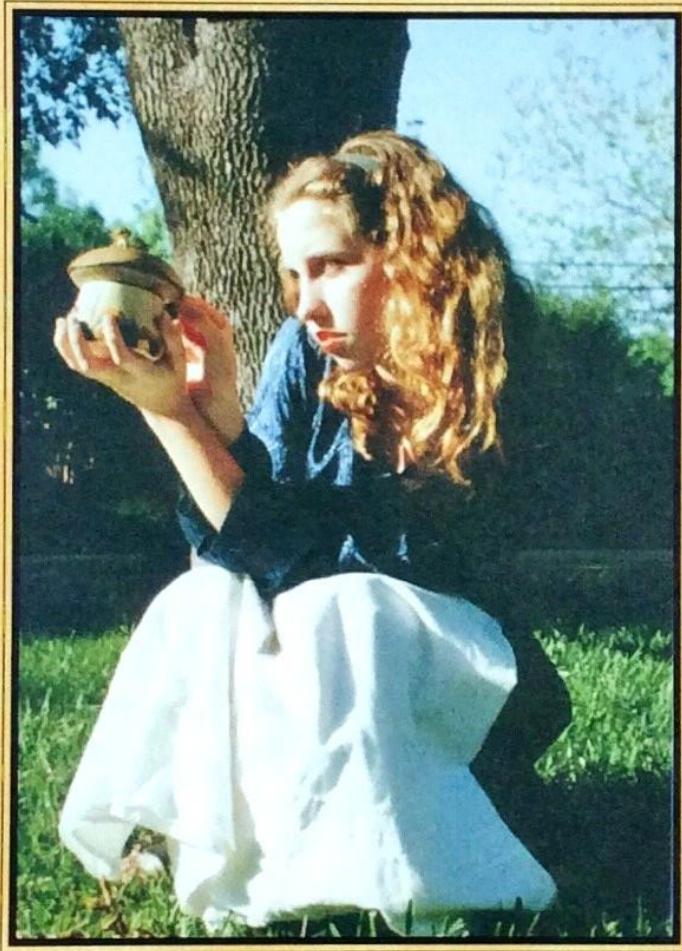
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Photos by Jolie Lester



Once Upon A Time...

Alice woke from her nap by the tree to find a white rabbit running by in a rush to save time. She followed him to his rabbit hole where she began to fall. She fell for a very long time. When she finally landed, she saw the white rabbit was still running and screaming that he was so very late. Alice pursued him, interested to know where he had to be in such a hurry.

While following the white rabbit, Alice encountered a slew of interesting creatures from Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum to the Walrus and from the Carpenter to the Cheshire cat. Perhaps the most perplexing of all her new acquaintances was the Caterpillar. The Caterpillar sat upon a mushroom and spoke in riddles. He told Alice about the bizarre changes she would undergo if she ate part of the mushroom. Alice puzzled over each piece of the mushroom she held, and then nibbled a bit on one. Suddenly, she grew very tall. After experimenting with many different sizes, Alice finally settled on the one she was accustomed to, her own.

Her wanderings through Wonderland continued as she kept looking for the White Rabbit. Finally, after numerous strange experiences, Alice found the White Rabbit at a game of croquet with the Queen of Hearts. She was an eccentric woman bent on manners. Alice made the mistake of beating the Queen in a croquet match, and the Queen ordered Alice beheaded. Alice suffered through the backwards trail, and then with animals for jurors, she was found guilty. Alice ran from the Queen and her court . . . and woke up wondering about her curious experience in Wonderland.



Raymond Uhlir





**What
the Road
Passes By**

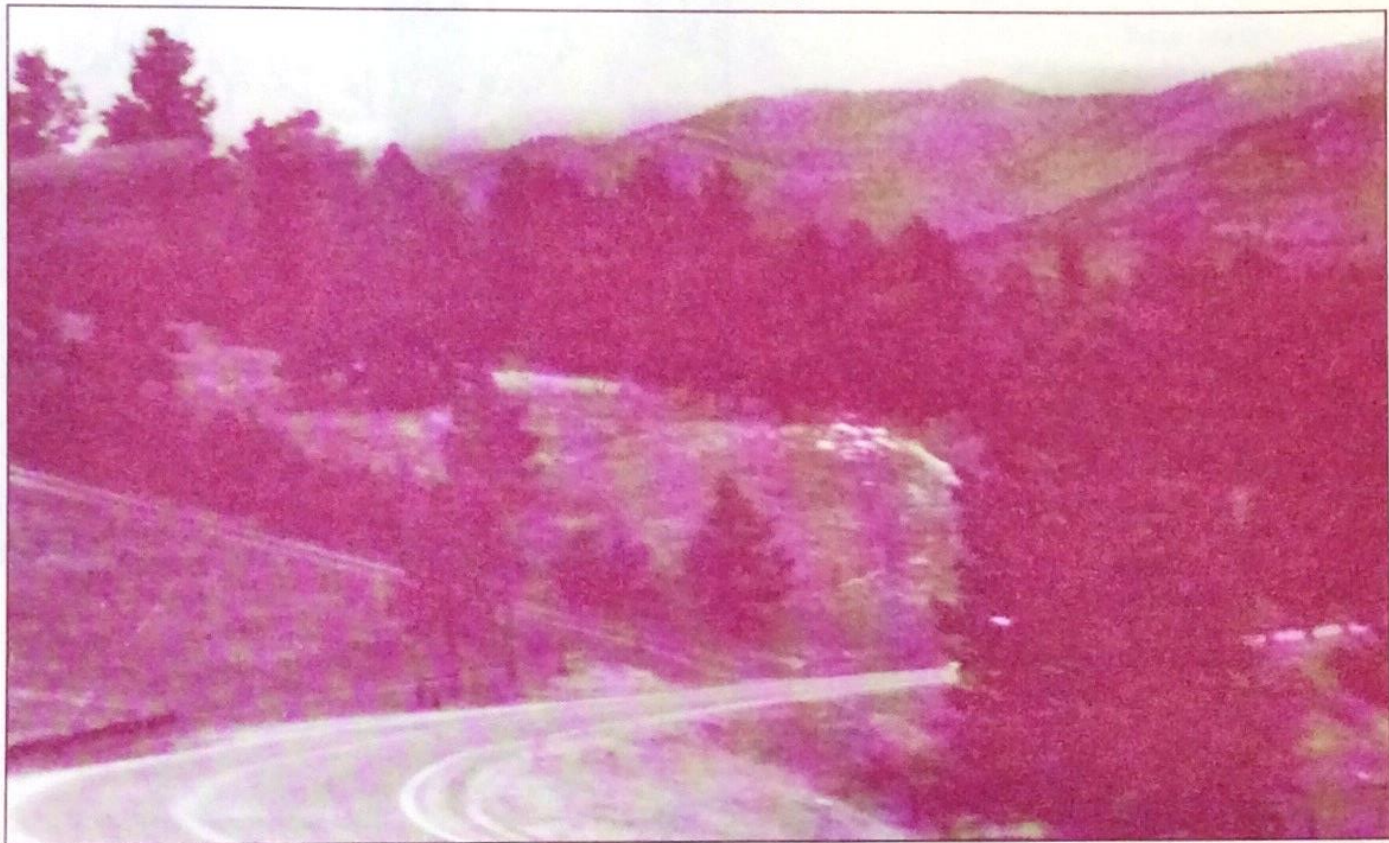
Joy Thompson

The road in all her glory
is adventure for the restless
hope for the contained
a dreamscape for the young
and a path home for the lost.
On her solid surface
the elderly trace their past
the youth advance to the future
the strong carry the weak
and the weak teach the strong.
We build our homes beside her
and a path upon her labyrinth of choices.
The road is our foundation
she represents what's coming
and is an epitaph to
the fallen soldiers of progress.
The road is always neutral
never choosing sides
symbolizing the peace that could be.
She passes the forests of green
the towns of old
the smog covered cities
the rivers of golden.
Through the windows
we see snow-capped mountains
plains blanketed in high grass
ocean of tears
and an infinity of laughs.
She gives trials as we create them
asphalt, dirt, cobblestone, and brick
variety is always available.
She gives us freedom
make a turn and change your destiny.
She is a billboard advertising progression
we her human travelers
buy her product with enthusiasm.
Understanding all of this
comes when we see it is
what the road passes by.

Samantha Ardison

Radio Transit

Karen McBurney



driving
barren empty
darkness
shattered by a billion points they call light
fading invisible are stars
road is home
heaven found
between a double yellow line and white dashes
five dollars a night
the world is currency
I live by five dollars
by exchange of meaningless paper
my life folded into a piece of paper
driving
afternoon
clouds soft and gray and low
the road soft and gray and low
follow lines to water
formless and eternal
escape to freedom
unrestricted
camped in sand
saved in water
born into a blue world of boundarilessness
swallowed by the ocean

taken on by it
taken in by it
I want to take it all in
rested in foam and silt
nothing but myself
buried in silt
nothing but empty
nothing but fear
and fear is nothing
driving
to find my self
fill the empty
acuity lost in the outside
find my place by wanderlust
find my home in nothing in particular
go on they say
and make a living for yourself
when what they mean is
kill yourself in repetition
I do not want that
I need change
and I won't find it here
here is where I've been
here is what I'm accustomed to
here I cannot stay

Joy Thompson

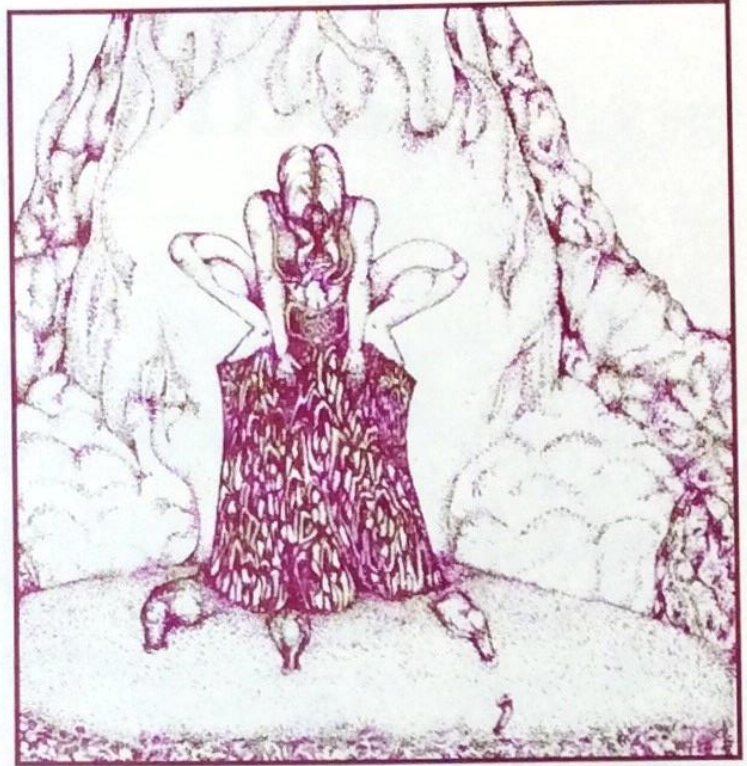


Peeling The Woman
Jolie Lester

I punish myself
Because I let you punish me
blood will spill out down my legs
to remind you what I am

I am woman
belittled by society
made to feel ashamed
weak

oversensitive
stupid
you will not use these words
to describe me anymore
you think you are stronger than I am
Well,
you may move cinder blocks with your arms
but I can move them with my mind
I am all heart
you are all surface
my love will smash your insecurity
And your
bitterness will self-destruct



Jason Cardona

You took from my body
and fed off my soul
while I said nothing
I sacrificed myself for
my children and my lovers
I endured the pain and suffering
of your discrimination
And I still stood my ground

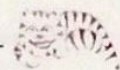
You cannot make me feel useless anymore
I have strength
(Self-worth > ego)
I have insight
And I see that
YOU are the one who is weak
you cannot contaminate me
with your anger
(I only pity you)
You have put up your front
— but you must have bought
those bricks from the emperor's tailor
because I can see straight through

Black Pride
Shanna Brooks

Every night our Grandmother would tell us bedtime stories.
Stories of pride.
Stories of courage.
Stories of winning when everyone seemed against you.
Stories of black women.
Women who were poets, athletes, doctors, and
Mothers of courage.
Therefore I was never without a hero.
They were all black, different shades of black.
Some were as light as the moonlight.
Others were as black as the African night.
But they were all black.
Being torn from their families and home.
Bound in chains.
Kidnapped from their motherland.
With half naked bodies and bare feet.
They stood with a cloud of loneliness.
Centuries of pain about to endure.
Awaiting the arrival of freedom,
So they may embrace it openly.
The drums beat out messages,
but not all understood,
Despite their desire.



Josh Rudloff



LITTLE DRUMMER GIRL AND MR. X

Kristi Gonzales

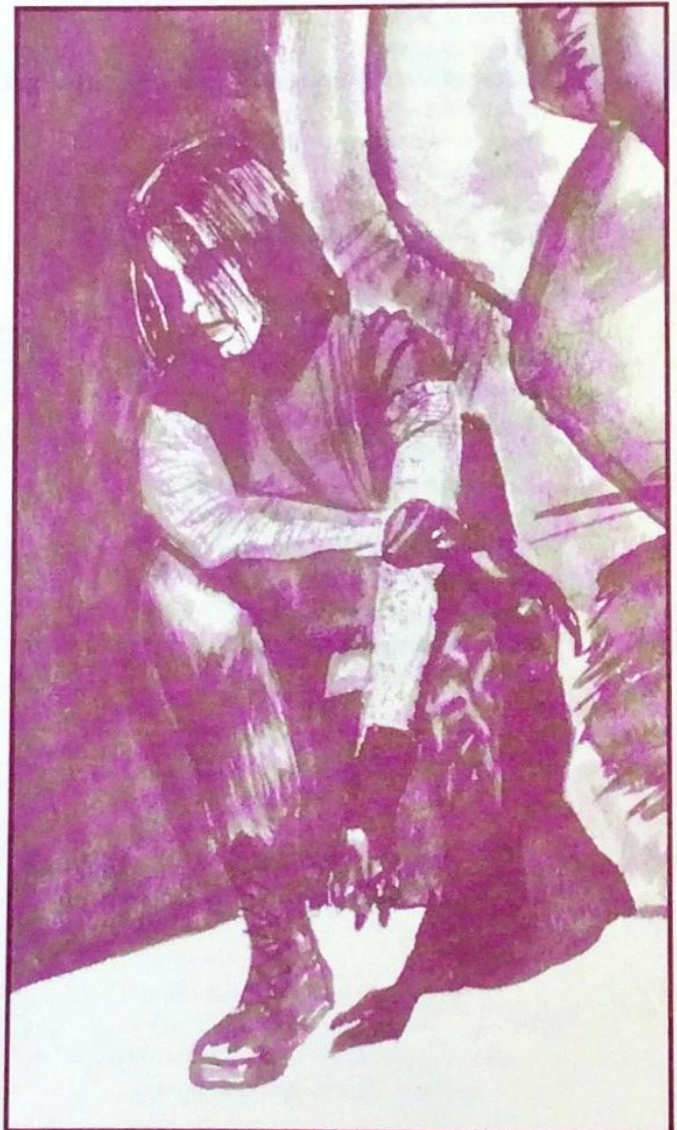
You ask about me? My life is probably one like many other high school kids' at this age. Good times? I have had some of those. Tough times? Had some of those, too. I remember every single one of those moments (almost). A good life so far? Most certainly. But... it's not what I really want to write about. No, I think that I would like to share with you one day in which I spent only a few hours in a place that changed my life forever...

Just last week, our school was dismissed for Christmas vacation, and my mind was pretty much drained from exam week. Of course, I still was going to have a headache trying to finish up my applications for college, but I needed at least to set some time aside for a little relaxation. I did manage to clear some time for one Monday afternoon for a very special reason. Before the holidays, my band director asked us bandsmen to gather a little Santa spirit and collect some toys for the children in a homeless shelter downtown. On Monday, along with the presentation of the gifts, a small ensemble would play during dinner time - I gladly volunteered my time to play. Why not? It could be fun.

Before rehearsal that Monday afternoon, we "kids" were "testing" a few toys to make sure they worked. For half an hour we rehearsed our Christmas tunes and then gathered all the toys together in a few boxes. As we all piled into cars to venture downtown, I tried to imagine what the shelter and the people were going to be like. How much did these people have? Did they have no place at all to go? Needless to say, I was sure to be considered extremely fortunate compared to these people, no matter what they had.

When we entered the complex, my whole image of a homeless shelter shattered. It was rather clean and quite organized. Little boys and girls were running around the play area, and their curious eyes peeked at us through the windows. They looked so innocent and undeserving of their living conditions. After a tour of the complex, we warmed up to perform our Christmas medleys. I must say that I felt rather uneasy in a strange place with people who smelt like alcohol and wore rags for clothes. The first song was played, and no one even acknowledged our existence. (We might as well have been elevator music.) Next tune, please. Still - no clap or glance our way. I so badly wanted to leave because I felt so unwanted (maybe that is the way the homeless felt), but I just kept my eyes on my music and made sure that I didn't look at anyone funny. I began to relax the longer I played and, ironically, felt more comfortable as more people sat down to eat. Every once in a while, this man up front would clap and crack a gold-tooth smile. I kindly smiled back. He wore a dark blue jacket, dirt-coated jeans, and a dark toboggan, which is probably what he wore every day, but the warm crooked smile he gave me canceled out any differences between him and me. After a few songs he shouted out, "Now, play some rhythm and blues!" I chuckled inside as I heard *When the Saints Go Marching In* circle

inside my head. He then began to clap after every song and between the bites of his meal. I felt so good. He enjoyed the music! I never thought that doing something so minor as playing my trumpet would make me feel good - no, not that - but I ended up making someone else have a better holiday. With this experience, I developed a new perspective on life and homeless people as well. As I continue to live in my fast-paced world, I will stop every now and then to remember how even someone like me with only a musical ability can help at least one person. I didn't give them money or pity... I just gave them a song to hear. That Monday night my heart warmed a bit, and I prayed to God for being so fortunate. (I hope the kid in San Antonio who has a new Power Rangers coloring book from a mysterious giver will grow up knowing other people do care for him and never give up living.) I will never forget that Monday... the day I learned how valuable life truly is.



Nicole Kotara



The Patch Quilt

Amy Pozza

Sara Prengel

A want, a need, a desire to succeed
To compete, to strive, to reach the goal
The goal of being the best
The desire
Woven into the threads of human nature
Not many can make it
The struggle is hard
The pressure
Like that of a hot summer day
The glaring sun beating upon your brow
The sweat trickling down your face
Into your eyes
Making everything seem blurry and contorted
The confusion
Of what you are
Of what you want to be
Of what you don't want to be
The questions remain unanswered
And you wonder if an answer exists
Emotions
A ocean of color and feeling
A contrast to the logical part of the brain
A pattern
Everything so different
Yet fitting together so well
The self-hatred
A product of not being able to accept imperfection
Never good enough
A piece of cloth
So many colors
Tiny threads
Each one full of wonder
All part of the pattern
Love, respect, admiration, attention
Always a need
Always a desire
All part of the woven threads of human nature.

WE WILL
WORK
FOR FOOD



F
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Lindsay Siberry

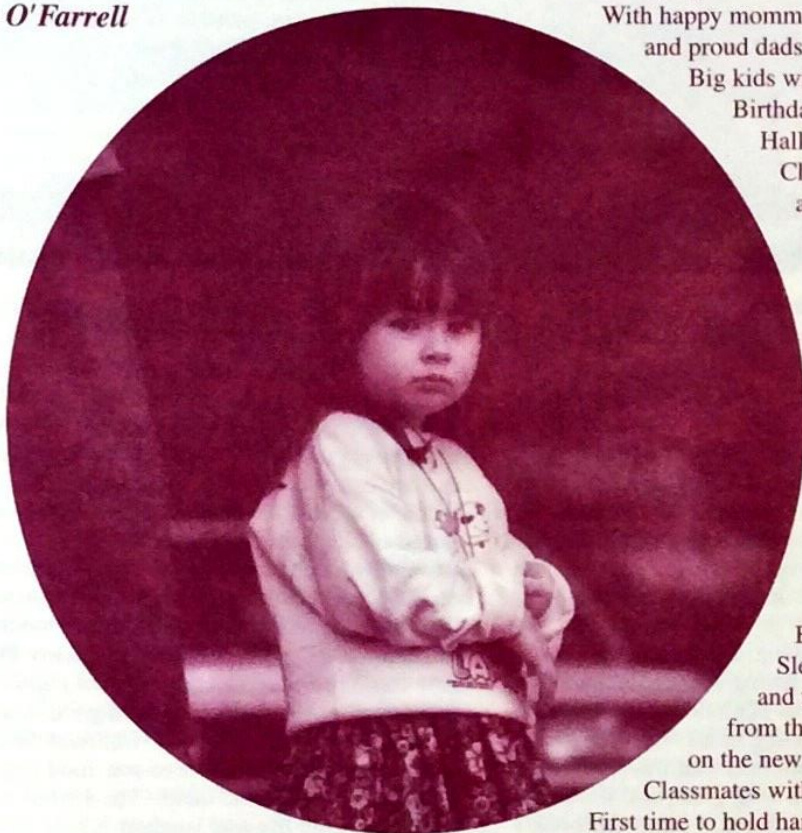
She lies in a small bundle,
A mere shadow in the light of the world.
Passed from hand to hand,
Until finally she lies in the arms of the one who bore her.
Three months too soon, her small life began.
As delicate as a porcelain doll,
She is born to pain and suffering,
Causing heartache and concern.
But as the river of life flows through her,
She begins to travel her predestined course.
Surrounded by the supportive hands of her seven elders,
She is moved from place to place.
Small for her age,
Young for her grade,
She longs for acceptance.
Relentlessly there is something pulling, driving her elsewhere,
To a destiny known only by the river.
Again she is moved,
Learning to adapt, struggling to survive.
Gone are the tutu and pink satin shoes,
Donned are the cleats, and the aggressive disposition.
But still insecure within,
Deeply desiring direction,
She must constantly look for guidance.
Invariably her heart will lead her to the one she loves,
The one she aspires to be like.
One whom she feels knows all,
The mother of her creator.
The hand that guides and encourages.
With the gentleness of a kitten, the constant purring of the aged voice
Encourages her to do more, try more.
And slowly she begins to age beyond her years.
Once too young, she is now too old,
Always trying to accept responsibility for all.
But the current carries her further in her journey,
As the innocent facade erodes away.
As determination sets in, the pain is evident.
Daily she is met with a knife in the stomach,
But the rewards are overriding.
And as she travels down the river,
So too has she traveled to another guide.
One who has been with her, from the playground to the lecture hall,
A peer who seems to desire so much less,
But actually does so much more.
With this calming, guiding force she looks ahead...
She envisions protecting the young, the innocent,
Those unable to protect themselves.
As insecure and unsure as herself,
Yet wronged and without the guidance she was so fortunately rendered.
But the obstacle remains,
Constantly craving contentment,
The hurdle to satisfaction, self-fulfillment.
There is the hope that at the end of the river lies an ability,
The ability to make an impact, a change.
Somehow her mark must be left,
No matter how great the pain, or seemingly rocky the waters.
At the end of the river must lie her waterfall,
Which shall imprint the world forever.

Laura Johnson

Joy Thompson

I used to think life was cruel
with all the death around
but life is good
simple if you choose
or complicated if you wish.

Elizabeth O'Farrell



The Circle

New little people born every day,
With happy mommies to hold them
and proud dads smoking cigars.
Big kids with new siblings,
Birthday parties,
Halloween costumes,
Christmas presents,
and kittens.
Small children running,
giggling and playing.
Dashing from their pursuer,
the dreaded tickle monster.
New clothes,
leaves fall,
school brings friends.
ABC's and 123's,
cat, dog, sit,
L-O-G: log.
Birds that sing
in trees to climb.
Bare feet on grass.
Braces and hair cuts.
Sleep-overs,
and the inevitable stitches
from the accident
on the new bike.
Classmates with cooties.

First time to hold hands.

The little boy
who walks with his "girlfriend"
across the hall,
carrying her books.

First kiss,
on the cheek of course,
But a kiss none-the-less.
Parties, rings, dances.
teens, car keys,
malls, and talk shows.
Movies and dating.
The infamous telephone.
Then packing
for school and a far away home.
Proposal and diamond rings,
engagement and marriage.
New little people,
born every day,
With happy mommies to hold them,
and dads smoking cigars.



By The Light of The Full Moon

Heather R. Cathcart

“**E**nough!” I screamed. “I’ve had enough!” Through my tears I glared at my nemesis. I was fourteen, and he was twenty. My brother, the “adult,” was home from college on spring break, and my parents, trusting us to behave ourselves, were out of town for the weekend. But we- pardon me- he had disappointed them, for as soon as they were out of sight, he began making plans to party. Now he was drunk, not thinking, and I knew this, but I was tired of the abuse he had been giving me for the past two weeks. He did not flinch at my words but held fast to the knife that he gripped tight in his hand, reveling in his sick little game. Jeff revealed no weakness, but my emotional wall was crumbling. My patience and sense of humor had long gone, and it seemed that my sanity was next in line. Trembling, I threw the book I had been reading on the floor and stormed out of the house. Adrenaline coursed through my veins as primordial fear guided my feet around the block and out of the neighborhood onto the sidewalk of the busy avenue. This instinct of survival had taken over my reasoning when I had first been confronted with the butcher’s knife. As I ran, the only thought in my mind was *I have to get away, I have to get away from there*. Eventually I tired, and I leaned on a car parked by the roadside to rest. The intense emotions I had experienced subsided, left me drained, and at this point my mind wandered to thoughts of *Where am I going to go?* My most trusted friends were either hard at work earning a living or halfway across the country; Connecticut is a long way from Texas. My only refuge was my high school. This, I decided would be my sanctuary.

Not being particularly in shape, and my pace being considerably slower than my initial sprint, it took me all of five hours to walk those grueling ten miles, and by the time I reached the campus, the sun was low in the sky. A quick glance at my watch told me it was a few minutes past eight, and a rumble in my stomach reminded me that it was past dinner time. The school was closed up for Spring Break, but I had no trouble slipping through the widely spaced iron bars on the front gate. Being careful not to

get too close to any of the buildings and risk possibly setting off an alarm, I settled down for the night in near the library. I sang songs to myself while I watched the sun set and counted the stars as they began to dot the night sky. After a while, my hunger faded, or at least I became less aware of it, and about midnight I dozed off. I slept fitfully until the sun rose. The March night was chilly, and the cobbles in the pavement where I lay rubbed my skin and poked painfully into my shoulder. At all times I feared a gang or criminal of some sort would enter onto the premises as easily as I had and kill me in my sleep. In the light of a new day, the whole charade seemed childish, and the events of the previous night had given me a good scare. I was afraid to go home, yet I was afraid not to. I missed the security of my home and the knowledge that there was food and warmth waiting for me whenever I desired them. The school yard was empty, cold, and void of the life and laughter it held when it was full of students. Not having anything better to do, I left the campus.

I walked aimlessly through a nearby park, and as I gazed into the depths of the woods, searching in vain for deer or other observable animal life, it occurred to me where I could go. I picked up my pace as I walked, filled with a new purpose once I had decided on a destination. In the parking lot of the church, there was only one car. It was an old, rusty, beat-up station wagon, held together by bumper stickers proclaiming an avid love for Jesus. Almost stealthily I entered the foyer, and finding no one around, I went to my sanctuary. There was a candle burning on an altar, and I inhaled deeply the sweet scent of incense. There were no electric lights on; only the candle flickered in the darkness. The hall was lofty, the buttresses flew high above me, and I imagined I could hear the strains of a hymn dying away... I begged forgiveness for my sins and courage and strength to face the future, whatever it might bring. When I was finished, I gazed up in wonder at the stained glass window, depicting the Virgin Mary with the Christ Child cradled in Her arms. A tear slipped down my cheek; before I knew it, the floodgates were loose, and my face was bathed in saltwater. I guess I must have knelt there for ten minutes or more, but before I could rise to leave, I felt a warm, strong hand grip my shoulder. I turned. It was the pastor

of the church, I supposed, a man I had never seen before—I did not attend church regularly and had never been particularly religious—but he looked friendly enough and seemed to be genuinely concerned about me. He pulled me to my feet and offered me a seat in the first pew. I declined as gracefully as I could, but I was still trembling from the power of the emotions that shook me. He drew me to him then, pulling me close in a giant bear hug. We conversed lightly there, who I was and where I went to school, how I was getting along with my studies. When he could see that I had full control of my composure, he asked all the right questions and I opened up, pouring out my pitiful story in a torrent. When I was through, he nodded and said he understood, and then suggested that perhaps we had better go for a drive. That day he took me downtown, past the football stadium and the ice skating rink, past the city offices and the great hall where the symphony plays in a majestic splendor, and even past the tiny run down houses crammed together like sardines in a can. We went to a homeless shelter, and apparently he was known there, for we gained entrance to the inside without any trouble. We played cards and colored pictures with the children, but after a while they left, and we talked to some of the adults who lived there.

"The children won't eat anything," they said. "The soup has bugs floating in it, and the bread is hard and moldy. People come in off the street, dirty and stinking, and the children won't sit next to them at the table."

"The shelter is turning us out at the end of the month," one said. "We've been here since January and I can't find a job."

"Where will you go?" I asked her.

"Out on the street," she said with resignation. "There's no other place."

Eventually we said good-bye to all who lived there, although from what I could see it was not so much a life as merely an existence, one as stable as a house built on sand.

Back in the car, the man turned to me. "Do you really want to live like that?" He said. "Because that's where you'd be, and only if you were lucky." He pointed out across the parking lot to a bridge under which three men searched garbage bins for edible scraps.

"I want to go home," I said. He nodded. "I was waiting for you to say that," he said.

My parents were furious. Intensely relieved that I was safe, of



course, but nonetheless mad at me for leaving in the first place. Weeks later I tried to locate the man who had helped me, but no one at the church recognized his description until a grizzled old woman from the congregation took me aside after a service on Sunday morning and said, "I hear you've been asking around about Mike."

I nodded eagerly. "Do you know him?" I asked.

She laughed. "He's an angel, my child. Dear St. Michael's the childrens' guardian, like the shepherd that keeps the young one of a flock from straying. He watches over you in heaven."

I thanked the woman for her help and went on about my way. Several months later while I was doing some early Christmas shopping, I ran across a pendant on a necklace that seemed to call my name. On the charm was a man with a child in his lap. The accompanying card bore the inscription:

*St. Michael, the guardian angel, watches
over children by night and by day,
and leads them back to righteousness
when they have gone astray.*

I bought the pendant and framed the little gold card, and when I went to bed that night I thanked God for my family and home, and I asked Him to bless those homeless people whom I knew were shivering out in the cold. But this time I added a new line to my nightly prayer: I thanked Him for St. Michael. And in the face of the full moon through my window, I thought I could see Mike's kindly face, watching over me.



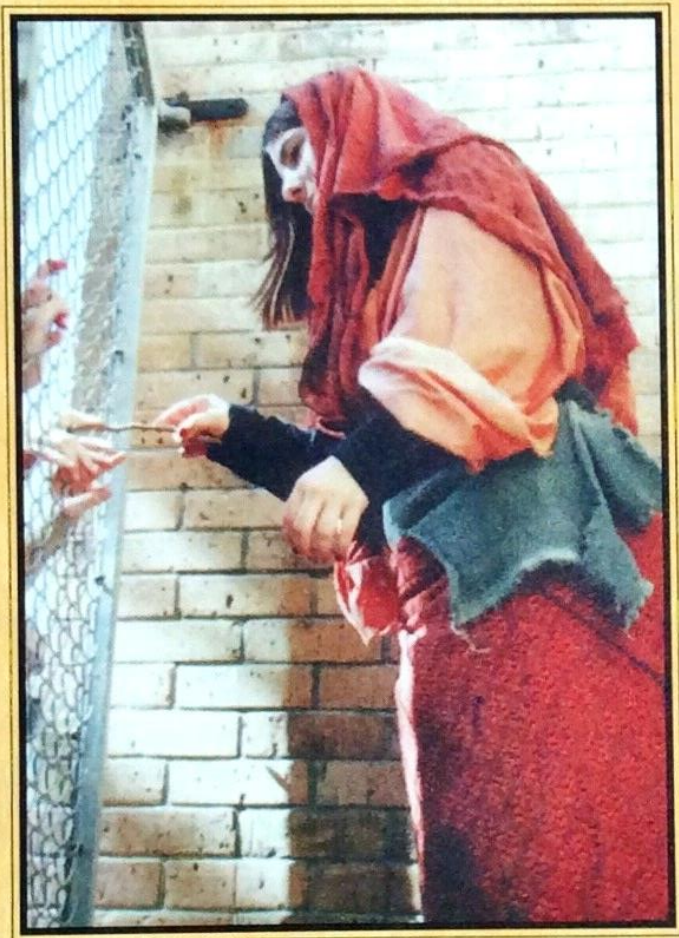
Dustin Goebel



Dreamscape
Heather Cathcart

A high-rise penthouse, a fanciful suite
Nestled in the heart of a bustling town.
The drawing room simplistically elegant
Pure white satin and black ebony wood
Highlighting, showcasing the deep crimson velvet
Petals of the rose that stands alone in
Radiant beauty.
Announced by the chiming of bells,
A young man, heavily clothed, enters the room
Accompanied by a burst of icy, biting wind
That chills to the bone and leaves small
Parcels of snow clinging to his form.
A graceful young woman in the prime of her life
Hears the ringing of the bells and remembers,
Remembers the face of someone she knew long ago.
Her heart knows the hand that touched the chimes,
The gentle, warm hand that is so much
A symbol of familiar love and strength.
She rushes eagerly down plush carpeted stairs
And flies into the waiting, open arms of her guest.
An embrace she knows so well
Envelops her and she is lost,
Floundering in a raging sea of emotion.
Tender hands caress her long chestnut hair,
Which is curled softly at the ends.
An exciting rustling of crimson taffeta
Follows her every move.
Her voice falls sweetly on the ears,
Musical and light,
Like carolers on Christmas Eve,
She showers love and joy on those who would cross her path.
The scene of merriment and reunification,
A candle rekindled from the glowing wick,
Grows hazy 'round the edges,
And appears as though one is on the outside,
Peering in through a window pane
Time elapses,
The River of Life changes its course.
The woman and her man no longer exist
In a girl's young mind;
They have been forgotten like two old dolls
Tossed to the back of the closet,
Buried beneath the suffocating
Mound of the present.
Dreams have drowned in reality.

Sara McShane



Once Upon A Time . . .


Hansel and Gretel lived with their father and their stepmother. Their stepmother disliked the children and insisted that their father take them on a walk and leave them in the forest to be forgotten. The father told the children what he had to do for his evil wife, and asked his children to trail bread crumbs behind them so they could follow the crumbs home later on.

The children did as they were told, but birds ate the bread crumbs so Hansel and Gretel were hopelessly lost. They came upon a house made entirely of candy of all kinds. The brother and sister stuffed themselves with handfuls of gingerbread, but their eating enjoyment was abruptly cut short by the house's resident. A kindly old hag stepped out and in a crackling voice invited the children inside to enjoy even better treats.

Hansel and Gretel followed the old crone through the front door and almost immediately were caged. The bent witch cackled and told the children they should keep on eating. She wanted to fatten them up so that she could eat them later.

The witch continued to feed them, but Hansel and Gretel tried to trick her by sticking a chicken bone through the cage bars. Undeterred, the hag planned on having children to eat that very night, and she prepared the oven.

The frightened children couldn't think of anything else to do. They decided to try to trick the witch one last time by attempting to push her into the oven, but the wretch was too cunning for the children and they ended up in the oven anyway. The children were cooked to the witch's liking and were eaten for her dinner.



Dead & Shot
Josh Batschelet

dead & shot
dead & shot
why did the man cross the road
why did the woman cross the road
why did the doctor kiss the road
with blood, with blood, with fetus choked tight
for they had a choice
He had a gun and a Bible
He had a mind like a gator fresh from the swamp
He knew how to strike
kill the family for the family
hypocritical tiger that eats His son
that beats His son
that raises His son to be Him
to kill in the name of the Lord
to beat his prodigy in the name of the Lord
my brother died on that street
ignorance killed him
a gun in Its right hand
a thought in Its right mind
a wrong thought in that far right mind
an ignorant thought in that far sick mind
a crocodile, carnivorous, murderous mind
that empowered Itself with a gun
and killed that man that crossed the street
that pierced that chicken in the middle of the road
no other side
simply dead
simply shot



Hatred

Gerald A. Voorhees

“**A**nd the meek shall inherit the earth.” His eyes glowed like yellow and orange flames that surrounded him, and the molotov cocktails he held in each hand seemed to be a symbol of the disorder not only in the courtyard but in his mind. “Are you ready to die?” he asked himself.

Just then a religious fanatic screamed, “God, have you sent the first horseman of Apocalypse?”

A cop shouted, “Drop the cocktails. Do you wanna kill these people or somethin’?”

Yes was the answer to all three questions. They had taken enough from Jeremy, and now he was going to take something back. He knelt down and lit one of his remaining cocktails in the flames left by his first.

The cop hesitated as Jeremy brought the lit cocktail back up. Jeremy took advantage of that hesitation and hurled the molotov at the cop’s pistol. The glass bottle hit the steel of the muzzle and the mixture of gasoline and laundry detergent splashed over the cop’s fat body. The rag fuse hit the cop in the face and fire spread from his face down to his knees.

The cop fired two wild shots before dropping the gun and running, screaming down the length of the courtyard. A would-be hero threw himself over the cop but only succeeded in setting himself on fire.

Jeremy gave a crooked little smile as he stepped through the ring of fire and picked up the cop’s .38 automatic. Before he could pick off the nearest administrator, Jeremy saw several more cops running towards him. They were still fifty feet away and didn’t have their guns drawn,

but their presence still upset him. He ran into the cafeteria building and up the stairs onto the landing that had several doors opening to the theater. He set down his remaining molotov and clenching the pistol tightly, looked over the three foot high partition to survey the damage he had done to Roger Waters High School.

One of the new cops was talking to a group of administrators that had pointed in his direction several times. The other cop was a woman with a dike haircut and a huge .357 Magnum strapped to her side. She tried to restore order, but the people running from the chaos only attracted more people.

Jeremy sat down and put his hands over his ears. He couldn’t bear to hear the screaming coming from outside. Most of all, he couldn’t stand to hear the screaming of the girl who went down with the first cocktail. How she had writhed in pain as the flames covered her body, her hair first burning and then falling in clumps as charred ashes.

She was an innocent casualty in his war against the machine. But then the system was so bad that a few innocent deaths had to be expected. He had almost been one of those victims.

He closed his eyes and remembered how he had saved twenty people on his bus from Kevin when he went insane and became a gun wielding psycho, how the system had dared put him on trial for killing that maniac when the parents screamed for blood. He remembered how evidence had been “lost” and testimony ignored and even altered so it would



The Jester

Lari Whitford



seem that he had been using Kevin to do his dirty work and take the fall. He was to be the sacrifice put up by the system to the angry gods, the taxpayers. But he had killed Kevin to save his own life and killing the jail guards was no harder.

And now Jeremy had come back to fight the system where it had gone wrong in the first place. He remembered the torment that Kevin went through every day right under the noses of the administrators. The administrators wouldn't do anything because the main tormentor was the star wide receiver for an otherwise dreary football team. The administrators turned their backs to the torment that led Kevin to snap and kill.

The memories were coming back too fast now, and Jeremy would have screamed had the creaking of one of the theater doors not snapped him to attention. Jeremy raised the .38 and pointed it directly at the small crack now in the door. "First thing that comes through gets blown off," he said calmly.

"Even if your good buddy Cain were to stick his head through?"

"Yeah, even if Cain, the drug dealin' janitor, were to stick his head through."

"Shh," Cain said in a stage whisper. "We wouldn't want the cops outside to hear that, would we?"

At the word "cops" Jeremy took a quick glance over his shoulder to make sure and turned back to the door. "Cain, please just leave. Don't get involved."

"Come on, you got another good sixty years to get high. Why die young?"

"Cuz this is the only way to be heard," Jeremy said getting a little nervous.

"I'll listen. What do you want to say?" Cain asked him. "Tell a fellow castout from the Garden."

"You sound like you got a pig and a psychiatrist back there and you're freakin' me out. Just leave me alone, Cain," Jeremy begged. "Maybe this ain't the only method, but blood's the most effective way to say 'suck on this' to a bunch of people that normally wouldn't give a damn."

"Do whatever the hell you want. Tell the devil that Cain sent you and you might get a room with a view." Cain added before leaving.

"I will," Jeremy told him as the door clicked shut. Jeremy slowly turned around and stood up to face the front of the building. Over the partition he could see that a large number of cops had come in the past few minutes. Most of them were unrecognizable and were therefore patrol cops that had been called in because of him.

He decided to say his peace after either twenty minutes or when a news crew came. The news crew came within five minutes, and Jeremy couldn't have been more pleased. He had carefully rehearsed what he was going to say, and it was etched in his mind.

As the camera focused on him, he began to speak. "Ladies and gentlemen, police officers and distinguished local celebrity news people, I hate you." He said this loudly so that it could be clearly heard through the glass doors at the front of the building held open only by two small doorstops. "Perhaps after my actions today, you'll hate me too. I don't care. You are the ghosts in the machine with all the power at your fingers, but you obviously don't give a damn, so neither do I. I condemn the actions of this school regarding the affairs of its students."

Jeremy looked down and saw the boredom that was quite apparent on everyone's faces. He laughed a little to himself before giving the shortened version of his speech.

"You don't even care what I'm saying now! Well at least listen to this." He screamed, "I am justified in killing Kevin! He deserved it after killing all those other people!" Jeremy looked around and saw that he had actually gotten the attention of the news people.

"I am the judge, jury, and executioner and find myself guilty of killing that girl," He said pointing to burnt body of the girl that still lay on the courtyard. "That is my only crime, but I have to die for it. Justice is justice."

Jeremy raised the gun and before the cops could react, squeezed off four quick shots. Two hit their mark and tore off the small wooden doorstops, shattering them into pieces. The doors swung shut as the stunned onlookers watched; he lit his remaining molotov cocktail with a small brass Zippo. Several of the police below tried to open the doors, but the doors had locked as soon as they closed, and the locks could only be opened with a key.

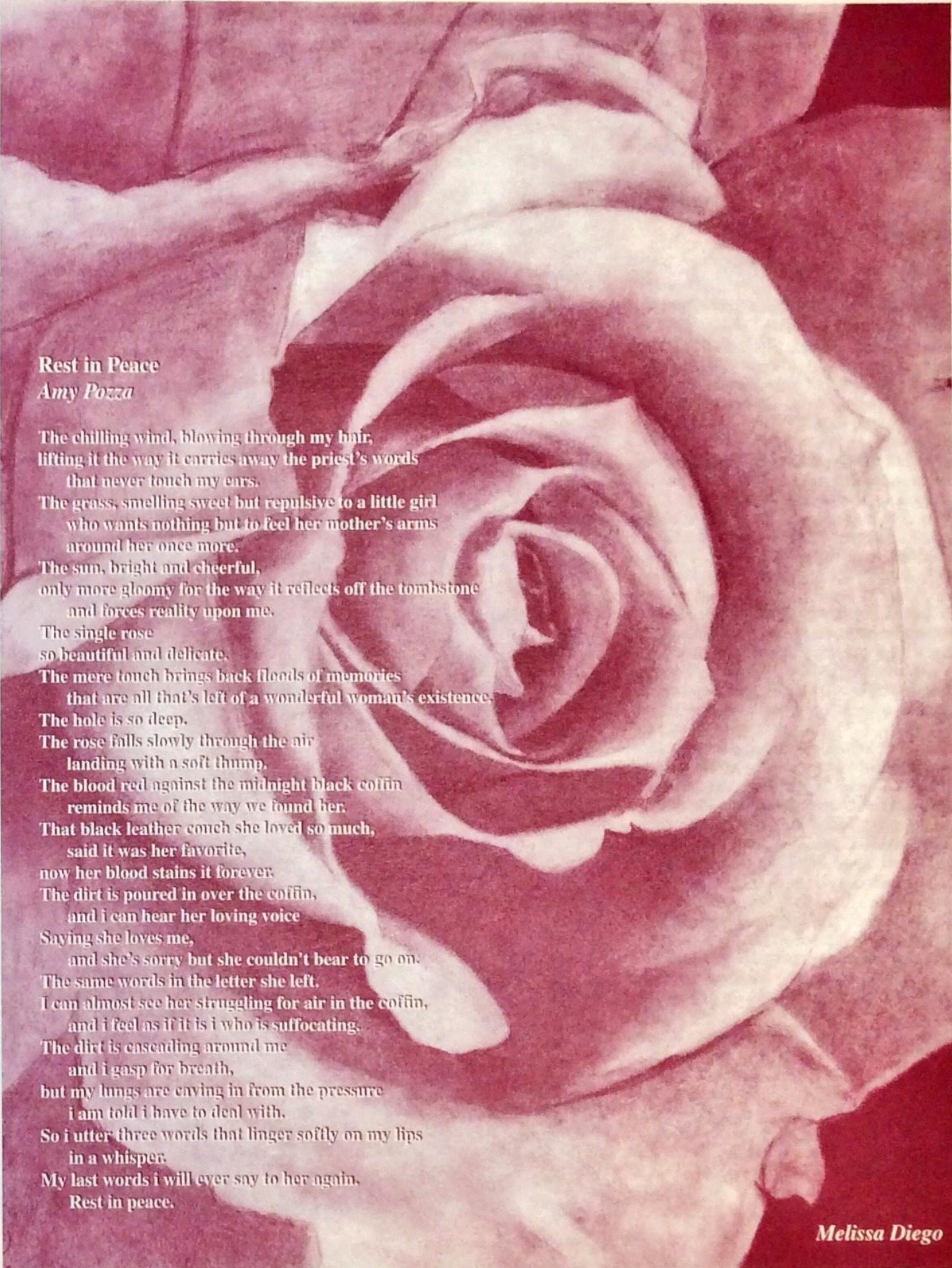
Jeremy smiled and muttered a short good-bye to Roger Waters High School before he threw the cocktail to the ground near his feet. As the fluid splashed on the ground, he lay down in it and was quickly absorbed by the flames. Despite or perhaps because of the intense pain, he bolted upright and grabbed the partition. He could hear onlookers screaming in terror but he could no longer see them. Pain surrounded Jeremy. It was only then that he wondered if man should really have recourse to death in the law. Was the pain really justified even for his actions?

The partition caught on fire where he had touched it seconds ago, and the cheap white paint began to burn and release a pitch black smoke into the entire room. The theater door slowly creaked open, and Cain walked through the dark smoke to where Jeremy stood laughing with insanity. He took a small homemade knife from his worn work boot, and in one quick slash, he opened Jeremy's throat. As Cain walked back to the theater through the dark smoke, Jeremy dropped to the floor and crumpled where he fell.

Cain looked back one more time before he went through the door and saw Jeremy's dimming eyes looking up to him. He knew Jeremy still couldn't be alive, but before they burned off, Jeremy's eyelids closed over his pale green eyes.

"Tell Jesus that Abel sent you." He closed the door and never stopped walking.





Rest in Peace
Amy Pozza

The chilling wind, blowing through my hair,
lifting it the way it carries away the priest's words
that never touch my ears.
The grass, smelling sweet but repulsive to a little girl
who wants nothing but to feel her mother's arms
around her once more.
The sun, bright and cheerful,
only more gloomy for the way it reflects off the tombstone
and forces reality upon me.
The single rose
so beautiful and delicate.
The mere touch brings back floods of memories
that are all that's left of a wonderful woman's existence.
The hole is so deep.
The rose falls slowly through the air
landing with a soft thump.
The blood red against the midnight black coffin
reminds me of the way we found her.
That black leather couch she loved so much,
said it was her favorite,
now her blood stains it forever.
The dirt is poured in over the coffin,
and i can hear her loving voice
Saying she loves me,
and she's sorry but she couldn't bear to go on.
The same words in the letter she left.
I can almost see her struggling for air in the coffin,
and i feel as if it is i who is suffocating.
The dirt is cascading around me
and i gasp for breath,
but my lungs are caving in from the pressure
i am told i have to deal with.
So i utter three words that linger softly on my lips
in a whisper.
My last words i will ever say to her again.
Rest in peace.

Melissa Diego



THE WIT

Aaron Harbour

A man stepped forward to address the dissident crowd, the tired mass of bodies from which a horrid cry arose and a massive warmth emitted, the mass of bodies which desired nothing more than a voice, his voice a raindrop upon the stagnant pond of their peasant souls.

"And so my brothers, we inevitably come to the glorious subject of death. Death, a step upon a cycle. Without death, is there truly a life? No, there is nothing, nothing but empty existence, merely an eternal damnation of solitude within one's meaningless life.

"Is there truly a flower, my brothers, without the final withering, the inevitable loss of petals to the wind, the morbid fading of deep red to brown? Without the withering, the dying, the flower is just another leaf, another stone, an obnoxious red member of the whole, no better than the rock, the leaf, it once aspired to rise above. Life, my friends, my brothers, must be like a flower, a blazing red against an all too ordinary backdrop of pale green, brown, and gray, an innocent child amongst the fields of death."

The withering, breathless, aching crowd could do nothing but stare at this man, a tall, emaciated figure of pale flesh with his peasant black coat and boots, standing above them all, mesmerizing them with a sheer ecstasy radiating from his face, his eyes, and from each word, each word transcending the innate and indeed quite customary fear of the individuals' inevitable demise. None spoke, and one could clearly hear the wind go by, the new artificial wind riding the currents of many carrying the stench of genocide. He spoke once again.

"I feel it my brothers! You, like a flower, are not bound to the shades of black, brown, gray, and green. You are like a field of roses staring skyward, laughing, screaming at the sun, the tormentor of souls, the horse which carries fate, death, and freedom to this garden. Do not resist the spirits trapped so long within, for they are restless and tired of the bondage of society, the chains of conformity, the cages which are the carcasses to which we are held down. Let the pain be the conduit of the whole vessel of your soul; for the pain, like your body, will soon



ATHERING



Josh Rudloff

be behind you on the quest for the next world, the after life."

"Yes, there is an after life, but you must not forget that evil has not forgotten its old friend, death, and thus evil shall be waiting for you beyond, if you do not try to control temptation, if you allow yourself to be weak."

Humanity, wind, finally came forth from deep within the sky, its deep tones of orange and violet symbolic of the pits of hell society had planned for the innocent.

Somewhere within the crowd a child gripped his mother's arm.

"Mom, why must we leave our homes, leave our friends? I love you, mother, my only hand to hold, why... why must we die?"

"You shouldn't, shouldn't love me. Even in youth, at such a tender age, you must let go, though I myself cannot hold back the tears, or let you see me fall. Breathe deep my son, and remember not to fight your spirit, be it demon or angel; for there is an angel crying somewhere beyond with me, a watcher who we may never meet. Seek out the angel; she shall be your new 'mother'."

These are the stories told to weaken the blow, ancient tales to soften the tears as they tear away the substance of mortality, the flesh worthy of any god.

"Good-bye."

"Good-bye, my son."

No screams were heard that day, that moment when the clouds of fate grasping, wiping away sound as the new wind swirled to and fro, filling both hands and lungs with the heavy gaseous death of a cult to society, or rather the birth of a society amongst the gods; for the demons and angels came to sort out the souls, the innocent from the blind follower, the evil from the child, and the nauseous scent of the shells of the dead drifted over the earth like the petals of a withered flower.

Good-bye, My Uncle

Andrew Lee



The Age of Wisdom

Tricia Novreske

I can remember picturing my Uncle Richard as a horrible man who loved to terrorize little children. He would hold us upside down by our feet, over a toilet, and flush. It was very traumatic to a seven year old who still believed you could fit in the passage way to the sewer. He would threaten us with the imaginary alligator in the box in the back of his rusted red pick-up. As I began to grow up, he evolved into a man that was there for me anytime I needed him, even though he lived twelve hundred miles away. He taught me that phones can keep families together always. My last memories of Uncle Richard are of a warrior fighting the infamous cancer. He fought until his body had run out of resistance, and his "Purple Heart" was eternal peace and tranquillity. All this ran through my mind as I looked at a muddy puddle forming from the drizzle rain outside the funeral home. Just four days before, I was beginning my senior year at MacArthur High School in the warmth, or should I say heat, of the San Antonio sun. Then, at the ring of a telephone, my whole week was rearranged, not to mention my life. We got the news; Uncle Richard had lost. We had mixed feelings of joy and sadness. We didn't want him to die, but the cancer was exhausting his body. My uncle's battle had lasted almost a year. He was very positive through the initial esophagus cancer to the ending stomach cancer. Chemotherapy and radiation treatment just extended the suffering. Slowly, he withered away. The only part we saw was the before and after, no in-between. Now here we were, in the cold, rainy, wet Chesterton weather. Needless to say, this was not where I wanted to be. School was better than that. I didn't know exactly how to act. I had only been to one other funeral in my life, when I was six. Then I didn't understand the finality of death. This time it was different. I understood that Uncle Richard was dead, gone, not to be seen again. On that thought, we walked into the funeral home.

The room was beautiful. Many different flower arrangements traced the rose-colored walls and filled the air with a stimulating scent. In the middle were wooden, fold-together chairs that were arranged in a twelve-by-seven rectangle. As I looked to my right, I saw it. It had a white marble finish with six gold handles. The top part was open with white ruffles of silk lining the inside. It was an exquisite casket, but I wasn't quite ready to view what was inside yet. In front of the casket was a fragile figure of a woman, Aunt Jackie. Uncle Richard and Aunt Jackie just celebrated their tenth wedding anniversary. She is a remarkable woman who showed Uncle Richard that life was what he made out of it. I really believe the only way he lasted a year was because he knew he would miss her. As I snapped out of my trance, I walked over to my grandmother who was crying. I just hugged her until she stopped. Then I was introduced to cousins, aunts, uncles, and family friends who knew me, but I had no idea who they were. After that, which took forever, I decided it was time to go up and see Uncle Richard. I waited in line like everyone else. When I finally arrived at the casket, I glanced in. The man in there was not my uncle; my uncle was strong and full of life; this man was thin and frail. My aunt had dressed him in his uniform that he wore when he worked at the gas station. It was a faded navy blue button down-shirt with a white name tag sewn

on the right side with red script letters that said, "PIKER." I have no idea why people called him Piker, but it stuck to him. He had a baseball cap on that said "San Antonio" on it because he enjoyed coming down to visit us so much.

I was brought back to reality by Aunt Jackie calling out my name. She was so touched by seeing my family come up. She didn't expect us to come. To us, it seemed so natural; we didn't even think twice about it. She said that the angel I had sent her from Germany was watching over Uncle Richard. I fought the tears back until I sat down. I started bawling. Why did it have to be Uncle Richard? Why did he have to suffer so much? I asked myself these questions and many more. Of course the only one with an answer was God.

As the priest entered, everyone settled down. There were only so many chairs, so a lot of us stood up in the back. Father was in the middle of "Our Father" when my cousin hit a plant stand on which a lovely bouquet of white roses sat. The whole thing tumbled over. Three of us tried to catch it but to no avail. It fell to the ground and made a loud noise like that of glass breaking. Father continued on as if nothing had happened. Of course, he was quite old, and I assumed he probably did not hear it. Everyone in the hard seats sat up straight, head forward, and ignored our scrambling efforts to pick up the mess. We tried so hard to keep a straight face. Then, I said something that worsened the situation; I said that Uncle Richard probably did it because the mass was becoming way too serious. We moved on to the church portion of the mass, where something totally different happened.

My family has a deep history with St. Patrick's Catholic Church and School. My great-great-grandfather dedicated the original church, my great-grandfather donated money to build the school, and my cousin helped build the new church. Plus, the majority of us went to school there. Uncle Richard apparently wanted to be remembered at the church, too. Most of the family gathered outside in the windy and rainy weather. As the hearse drove up, one of my aunts collapsed in tears. The pallbearers lifted the casket out and proceeded to walk inside the church. My extended family walked in together. All of us were connected somehow, by holding hands, linking arms, or leaning on each other for support. We took up the first five pews of the two rows in the house of worship. Father walked in with incense burning. Most of us had tears streaming down our faces like tributaries joining together under our chins. As Father continued with the service, we only wept a little. As Father said, "Take our brother Richard into Heaven with you, oh, Lord," a blinding ray of sunshine pierced the stained glass windows into the casket. It was as if God were saying, "It's all right; Richard is with me. You have nothing to worry about." From that time on, we knew exactly where he was—in Heaven.

As we stepped off the bus at O'Hare airport in Chicago, I stepped in a puddle left over from the rain. After the ripples were calm, I noticed my reflection. Suddenly, I heard a voice say it was going to be all right. I don't know from where it came, but I was the only one who heard it.

Four months have passed since Uncle Richard died. Although we feel our loss, we know how much God gained. In fact, we're surprised God let him go sixty-seven years on earth. We went through a family album recently and found many pictures of Uncle Richard. Our favorite was one of him with his brothers and sisters, including my grandmother. We made copies of it and sent them to everyone pictured and Aunt Jackie. In a thank you letter we received, one of my aunts summed it up: Richard is dead to the outside world, but his soul is alive in our hearts.

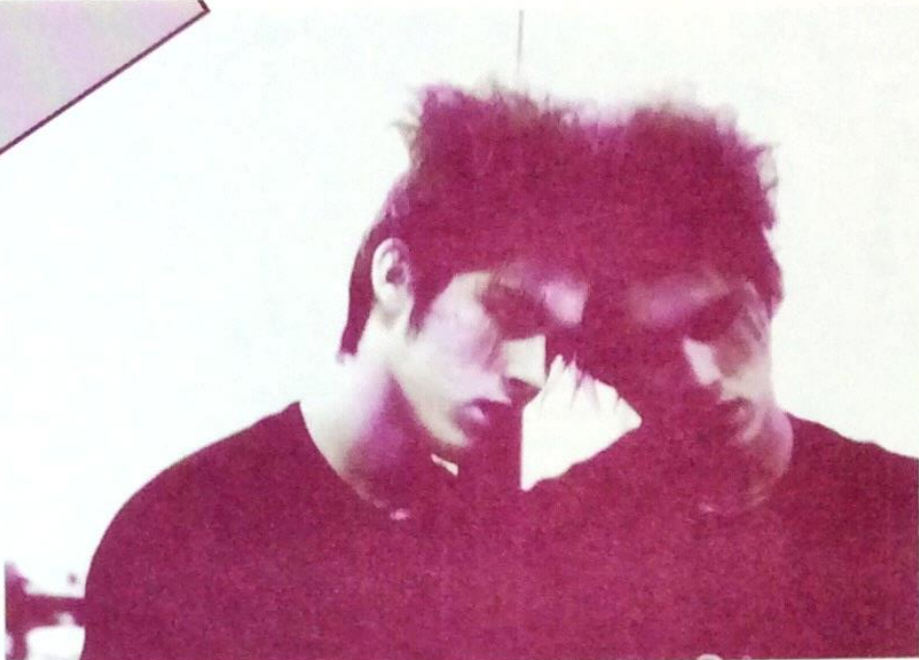


Johnny
George Potter

she was holding me close
trying to comfort me
of what im not certain
maybe it was what my mind
was trying to tell me
that message
that i would not let in
all i know is that Johnny
was lying there
in that small box
why didnt they give Him
a larger bed
to sleep in
and His face
it was so pale
didnt they know
Johnny wasnt that pale
and his hands
were covering that spot
oh god
i remember that spot
it was the last night
that He had spoken to me
there was a bullet
a bullet meant for me
and red

oh my god
there was so much red
why was there so much red
Johnny hated red
but that night
that night His shirt had a circle
a circle that was dark red
and the lights
they were also red
the lights on that white bus
that they put Him in
the bus that took Him away
from us
until today
when they placed Him
in that little bed
with the walls
and made His hands
cover that spot
and then she began to hold me
even tighter
as i tried to
reach out
and touch Johnny
and make Him talk to me
damn it Johnny
please talk to me
why are You still mad at me

it wasnt my fault
and then that woman came
right as i was about
to touch Him
and yelled at us to leave
and told me
that i had killed her son
and then i collapsed
and that same white bus came
with the same red lights
god i hate red
and they tell me
that i screamed
and they tell me
that i fought
but i dont know
all i know
is that they took me away
from Johnny
but they didnt put me in
a little bed
oh no
they put me in this small
white room
and left me to wonder
why
Johnny
wouldn't speak to me



Sara Prengel





Randy

Grace Odle-Kemp

The silent car ride home began to get to me; my mother even cried in silence. I began to hum quietly to satisfy my boredom, but not so loud that it would ruin the mood of solitude. I chose the only song that came to my mind, "Under the Boardwalk," a classic. Soon enough my little sister joined in, singing the harmony as I sang the melody.

We could barely finish the chorus when my mother sharply snapped, "Girls!" We shut up. We pulled into the driveway of our house; people were already there - probably eating and talking about what a good boy my brother was. They'll never know.

People dressed in black, apologizing to my mother, and always asking me, "How are you?" stood in a line as they entered our house. I felt like saying, "Well, the closest thing I ever had to a father was taken away from me. How the hell do you think I feel?" but I answered them, "Fine." It was only last weekend I took an old rag from my back pocket and held it to his eye. My

brother canceled his date so he could take me to the dance because my boyfriend unexpectedly had to see his dad in New York. We could have stayed all night singing and dancing to "Under the Boardwalk." God I loved him - loved? No, love.

I smiled for a moment when some lady who smelled like a mixture of fabric softener and too much perfume woke me from my sweet memory saying, "I'm so sorry, sweetheart."

"Thank you," I said. "Yeah right," I thought.

At the end of the wake I changed into a pair of cut-offs and one of his old T-shirts that I stole from him about a year ago. Since my car was in the shop, I jumped into Randy's jeep, without thinking, and drove down to my boyfriend's house, but he and his family weren't home yet. So I drove down to Mike's, (Randy's best friend and my second brother). He was sitting in the driveway when I pulled up. His face was a little red from tears. As soon as he cleared his eyes and realized who was standing in front of him, he stood, embraced me, and repeated, "It's all my fault Grace, it's all my fault..." I kissed him gently just so he would shut up, and he started to laugh - we both did. He said, "I'm sorry..." I immediately turned to look into his glassy eyes, "about your car," he finished.

"I let him borrow it."

"I was driving."

"He was drunk."

"I should have been paying attention." Tears began to well up in his eyes. I was at a loss for words.

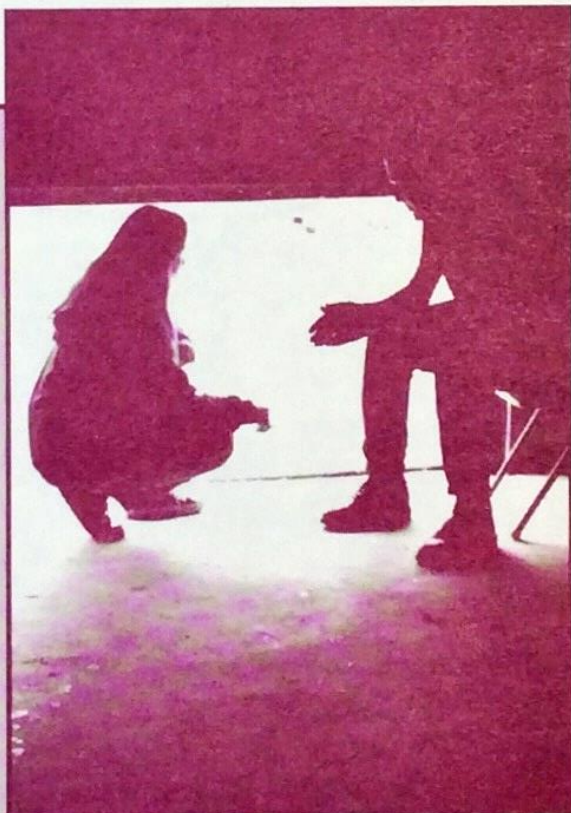
I took an old rag from my back pocket and held it to his eye. He took it from me and wiped his tear-stained face; then he kissed me on my forehead, and we both began to laugh again. Under his high shaky voice he said, "You want a beer?"

"Wouldn't hurt."

Mike put his arm around my shoulder, and I put mine around his waist, and we walked to an ice house - - and we talked. Although no one could replace my older brother, it was almost as if Mike were trying to fill the void. I love him for that.

I then went home. As I pulled into the driveway, a vague apparition of what appeared to be Randy stood at the door. I could almost hear him saying, "I love you, Grace."

I said out loud, "I love you too, Randy." With that he disappeared. A single tear of mixed sorrow and joy fell onto his shirt - the only tear I had shed since his death. Then, I collapsed to the grass crying.



Melissa Rentfro



Dead Rain

Jay Whitecotton

Hollowed happiness falls on someone's lonely life
Blood swept tears call for the unwed wife
and if nothing is right
Then for what do we fight
It's just dead rain on the walk of life

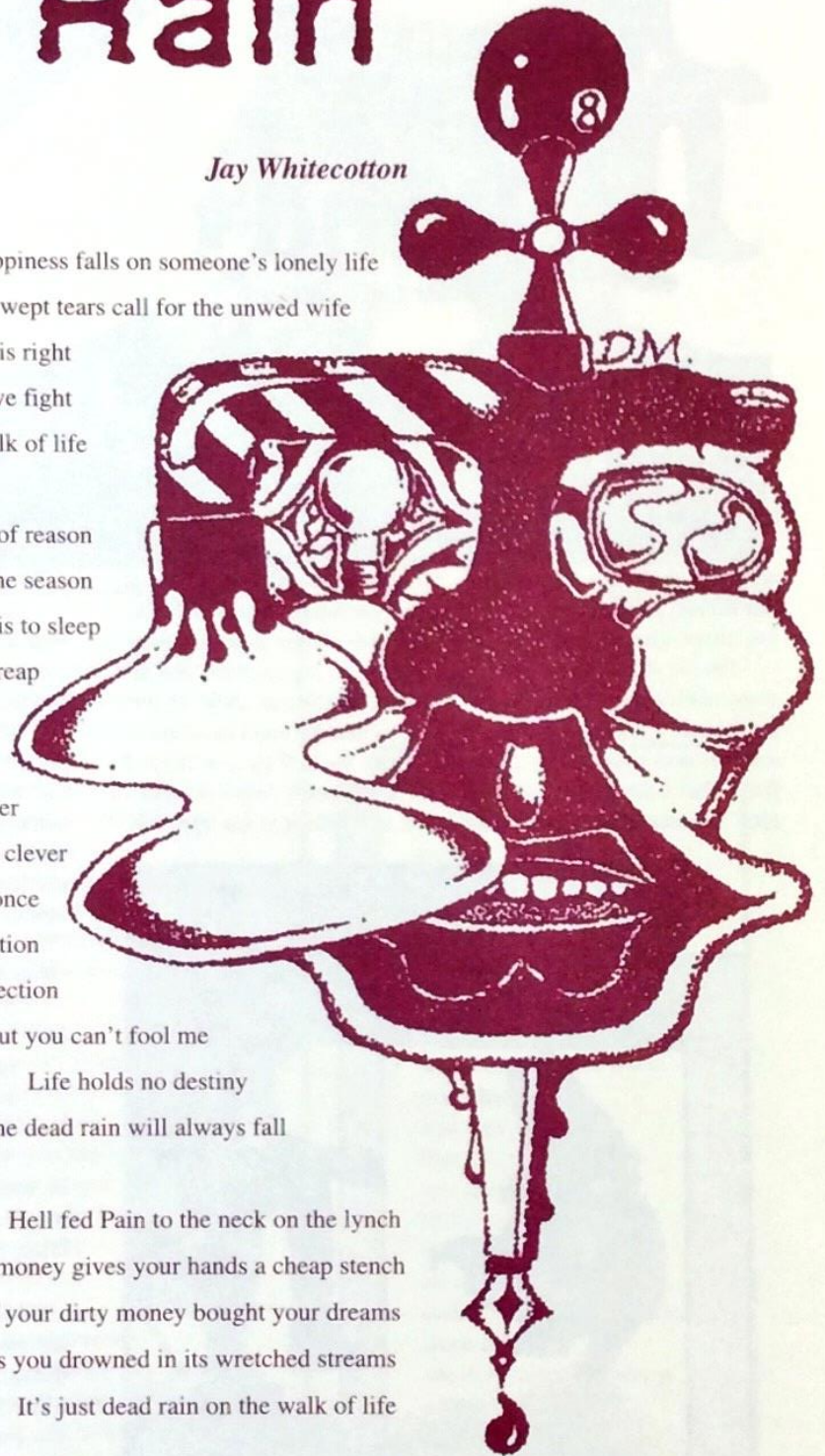
What is a dream to a man made of reason
How can so many count on the season
If science is to sleep
and happiness from what you reap
It's just dead rain on the walk of life

Dead rain falls on forever
You're stupid but you think you're clever
Never have you thought for yourself, not once
You live by the misconception
That your life has its own direction
You can fool yourself but you can't fool me

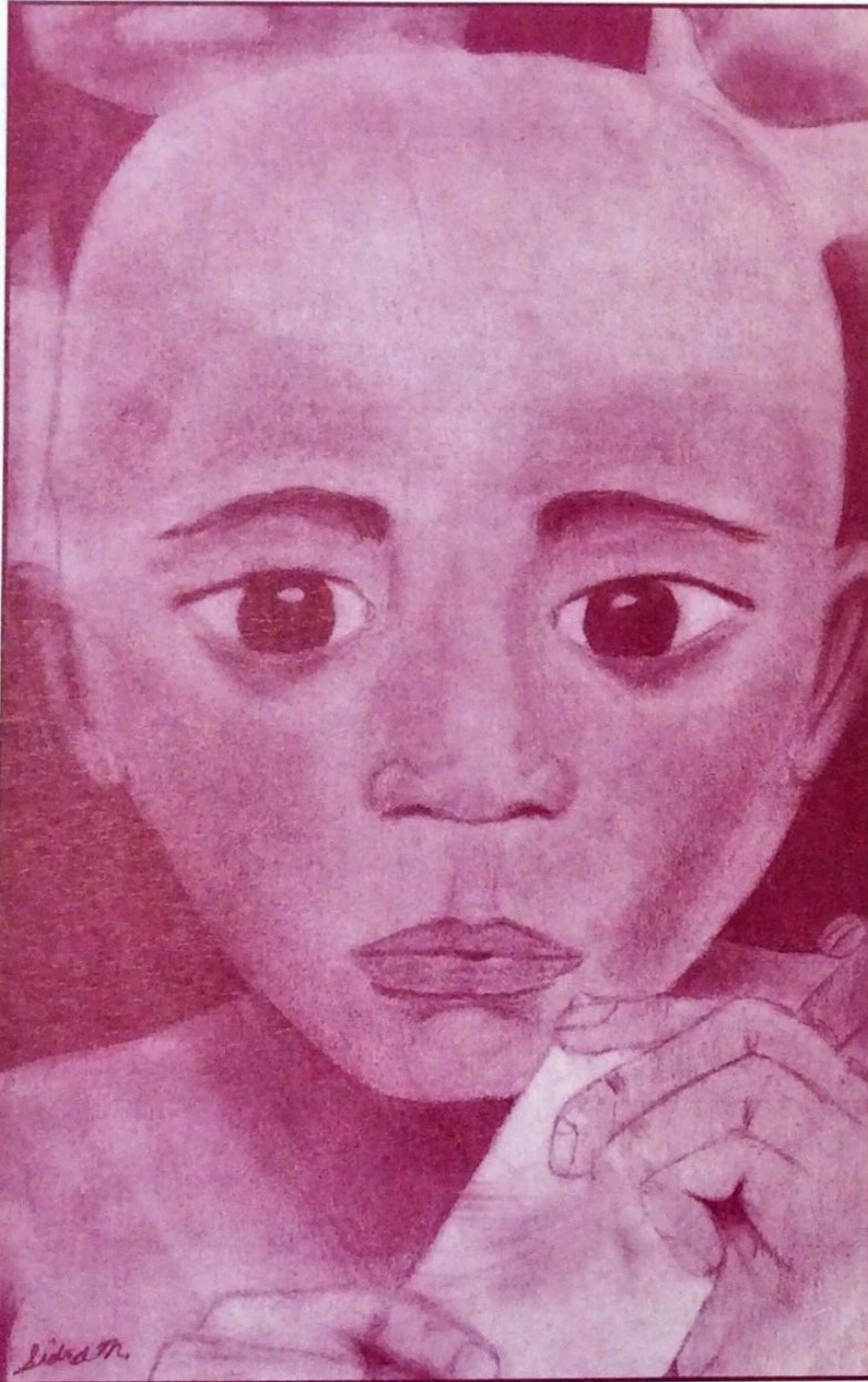
Life holds no destiny
The dead rain will always fall

Hell fed Pain to the neck on the lynch
Easy money gives your hands a cheap stench
and if your dirty money bought your dreams
but it has you drowned in its wretched streams
It's just dead rain on the walk of life

Clouds spill sympathy on the shoveled ground
Your grave now keeps you safe and sound
and now that you've fallen
Come death he's a calling
It's just dead rain on the walk of life




Auschwitz



Sidra Maldonado

Annette Garza

Their eyes were dying.
I could hear the terrible cacophony
of their souls crying to me.
Begging me to help them, save them,
but I am late.
Late by decades.
They stare at me from the movie screen,
some faces frozen with fear,
some tight with anger and determination,
fighting an unseen battle,
and other faces...
Faces that are blank,
faces that tell no story,
have no soul.
For the souls are already dead
behind their sightless eyes.
Crying out, I strain to reach them,
pull them back to me, to safety;
away from the horrors of death,
away from the most evil sin,
but I cannot.
They keep begging me,
"Please, please! Take me away..."
and I bury my head in sorrow,
pain racking through my body.
Why?
Why?
And with an aching heart
I look up,
and they are led away, out of sight,
but not out of mind.

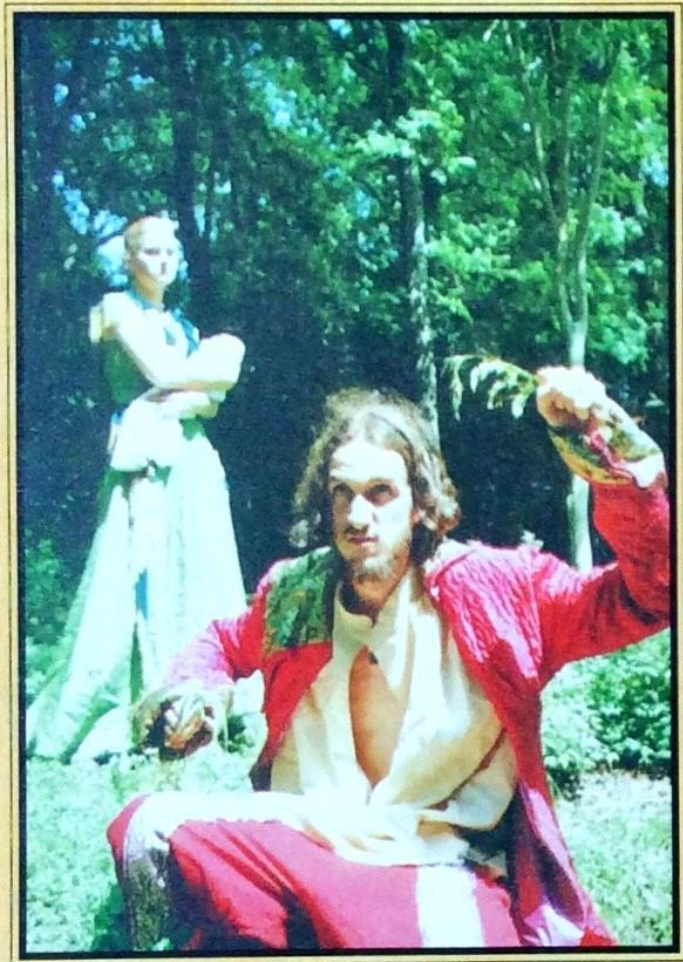


Dare to Discover
Rebecca Saldiva

Dare to discover
What's in my heart,
What I think of,
Who I am.
Find out what I have in me,
What people hate me for,
What people love me for.
Come see what I can show you.
Learn something about someone
You're supposed to hate.
Understand what you fear in me,
And the fear will go away.
What I am is not wrong.
What I am is right,
As long as I live in flesh or memory.
If you find you can understand what I have,
And you do not fear any more,
I will live on.
I have lived all my life,
And tried to break through the limits,
Trying to make others understand,
So willing to love and trust,
Succeeding and failing in this,
But still, "Living with AIDS, until the day I die."

Dedicated to the life and
work of Pedro Zamora
March 1, 1972-
November 11, 1994

Michael Rey



Once Upon A Time . . .

A miller's daughter was said to be able to spin straw into gold. A king heard of this girl and because he loved gold so much, he insisted she be brought to his castle. The miller's daughter sat by a huge pile of straw, and the king told her she would die if the straw weren't spun to gold by morning. The girl cried. She didn't know how to spin straw into gold. Suddenly a strange little man appeared before her and offered to take on her impossible task for something in return, so she gave him the necklace that she wore.

In the morning, the king found a room full of gold with the miller's daughter inside. He then led her to a larger room with even more straw. The tiny stranger showed up again, and the girl gave the little man her ring. By next sunrise, the straw was gold.

The king insisted the miller's daughter spin one more roomful of straw into gold and then she would become his queen. The tiny stranger came, but the girl had nothing to offer. The stranger asked to have her first born child and she agreed. Again, straw became gold.

The delighted king married the miller's daughter, and soon the queen bore a beautiful daughter of her own. A few months later, the bizarre little man who had once helped the queen showed up to claim the baby princess. The queen pleaded with the small stranger not to take her child so he gave the queen three days to guess his name.

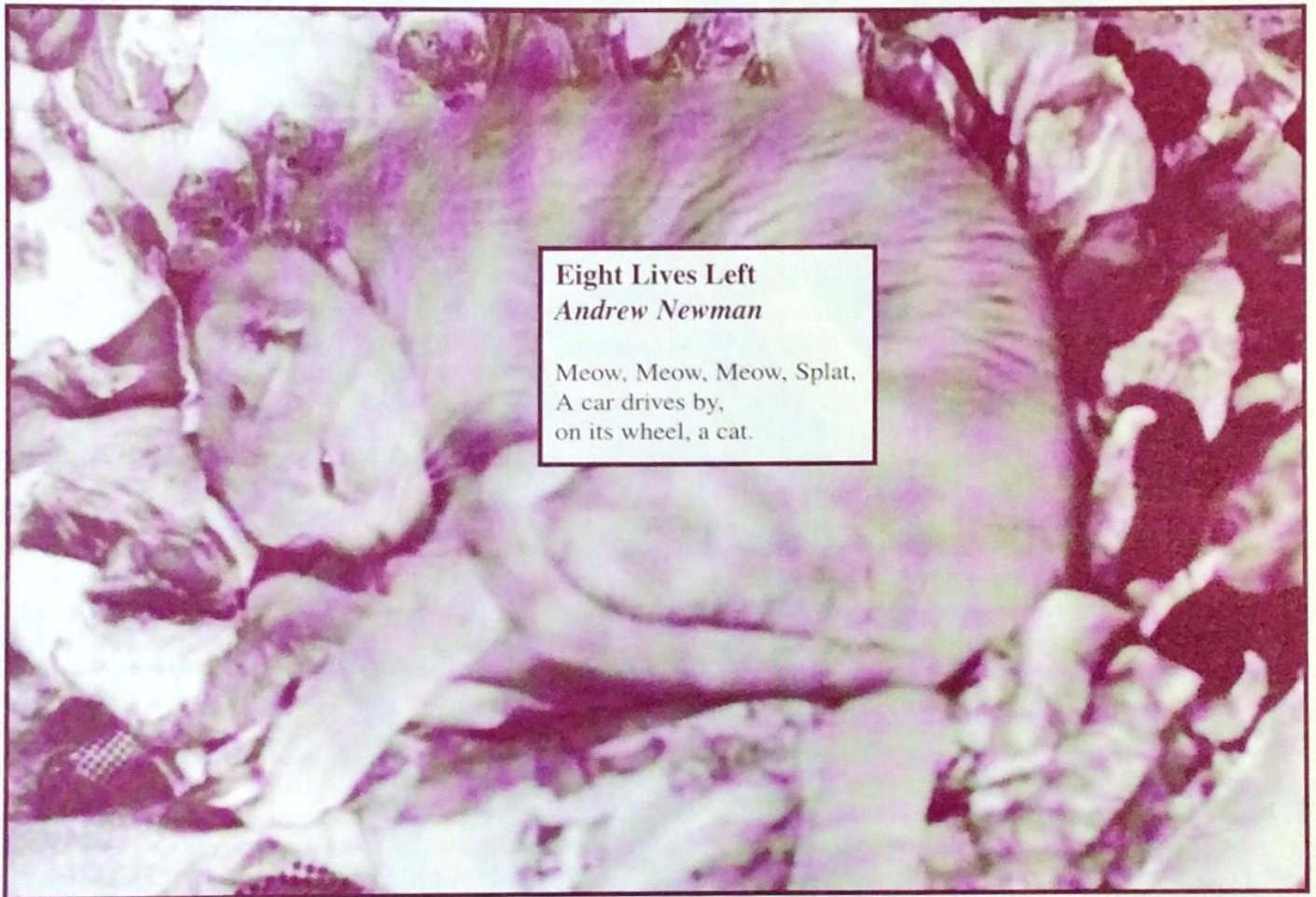
The impish man returned the next day, and the queen guessed every name she knew. The little man laughed and said that none of these names were his. The queen sent messengers out into the kingdom to find any unusual name they could.

When the little man returned, the queen guessed all of the odd names, but none belonged to him. The stranger reminded the queen that only one day was left before the baby princess was his.

One messenger returned later and told of a strange encounter he had in the forest. The messenger said he saw a small man who danced and sung out that his name was Rumpelstilzkin. The queen thanked the messenger and gave him a handful of gold.

The next day, the tiny man returned to the castle. After a few simple guesses, the queen asked if the stranger's name were Rumpelstilzkin. The little man stamped his foot so hard that he broke it, and he limped out of the castle angrily. The queen never saw Rumpelstilzkin again, and she and her king with their daughter lived together in happiness.

Little Cat



Eight Lives Left
Andrew Newman

Meow, Meow, Meow, Splat,
A car drives by,
on its wheel, a cat.

John Mandy



Elephant *Eric Uhler*

Bullseye 1995

Little Cardboard Box

Jerry Fuentes

A h... it was a bright day, full of sunshine, with a gentle wind whispering at the trees ever so slightly. The soft green grass nestled the animals in their daily frolic around the pasture.

Basking in the warmth of the sunshine, horses pleased themselves to contentment by sipping from the river. Across the pond bathed the ducks, as the pure, serene water cleansed their milky white feathers. All the animals felt a happiness so bright that it glimmered, blinding the eye. This wondrous day beckoned a call for joy and love. At this moment all the animal brothers and sisters gathered on the prairie. Species from all over met each other with hearts full of gladness and devotion. The peaceful harmony was so thick that an aura of love and kindness plagued the souls of all the land.

As the horses grazed peacefully in the field, the bears crawled to join the horses. The horses accepted the bears' arrival with a cheerful yelp so they could share the goodness of the land.

Wallowing to and fro, the pigs giggled when the fresh mud tickled their bellies. They rolled around, oinking here and there, only to instigate a playful herd of sheep to join them at this fun game. Such a joyous time these animals had in their party of peaceful games.

In the shade of the trees, cats and dogs humorously befuddled themselves in a delightful chase of tails. They loved every minute of suspense trying to grab hold of this phenomenon.

As the ducks finished their luscious bath, swans of utmost beauty floated by. The swans convinced the ducks to accompany them so they happily danced and paddled all around the pond enjoying its rich lather.

A most spectacular day indeed filled the land! Every species of animal was together, caring and playing on heaven-sent land which fulfilled all their needs. One bear couldn't contain all the happiness he felt, so he shared with them a message for everyone on the land. "Brothers... sisters... gather... for I would like to profess a heartfelt message to all of you about how happy—
—(crunch)—"

A bolt of terror struck the animals. The horses screamed. The ducks cried. Everyone suffocated in disbelief at what their sensitive eyes had just witnessed. As if out of nowhere, the happy head of Mr. Bear was ripped off. Then from the sky fell parts of Mr. Bear's ear landing beside his headless body.

In utter despair a sheep cried, "Baaaaah... Whyyyyy did thiiiiis haaaaappen?... Whaaaaat haaaappened?... I'm scaared... Baaaaa—," but before the frightened sheep could express his fear any longer, his ears were ripped from his head one at a time. He had no time to react; the front part of his nose ripped, and

departed from his face, an unfair demise to be sure. Now all the animals felt a fear so real that many imploded on the spot. Others started to run in a frenzy all over the land. They ran into each other and fell down, screaming, barking, and quacking. They ran in fear, yet the fear seemed ill-placed because, from all appearances, they were fleeing from nothing.

Horror seized the cats and dogs completely as they started to collide with the trees. One dog barked, "Ruff... Ruff... Re reed ree!... Rut's rapping?... (snap)." It was then that the poor dog's tail was separated from his body. He shrieked in pain, but only for a while. His head burst leaving a helpless corpse without a head or tail. His fellow cat friend attempted a rescue, but before he could move, it also happened to him.

Frightened thoroughly, the horses darted aimlessly about trying to escape the unknown force. Unfortunately, no speed was fast enough. As the horses tried to flee, their legs cleaved at the joints, and the rest of their body collapsed on the ground in aching distress. Mr. Horse suffered only a short period of time because his torso split at the neck. A head possessing a blank stare rolled across the ground.

The swans, in their escape effort, lifted themselves from the water and flew away. Yet, to their surprise, both wings of each swam was attacked by this belligerent force. Disdainfully they collapsed back into the cold, swampy water. They were powerless as their handicapped bodies floated to the top of the pond; piece by piece they withered away.

In what had been a land of kindness and heart-felt joy, only the inferior ducks remained alive. Horrified as they were, they hid under the water periodically gasping for air. However, to the ducks' dismay, they could not go unnoticed from this beast and his hunger. They summoned bravery from within, and then they cut open their ball of courage and attempted to waddle themselves out of their bunker. Unfortunately, the ducks' hapless attempt failed miserably. As their tiny, webbed feet reached the land, they snapped and cracked off, crippling the ducks painfully. In extreme pain they pleaded for mercy and wondered why all of this was happening to their peaceful day. As if to quell the questions on their minds, the head of each was severed. Now their decapitated, feathered bodies lay sprawled lifeless . . .

Without hesitation the hidden murderer did away with the corpses in only a matter of seconds. The once bountiful land of love and kindness lay abandoned. . .

"Billy, Billy are you finished with your snack?"

As she looked at her son's face, she could see the wide smile of her six year old boy and his empty box of animal crackers. . .

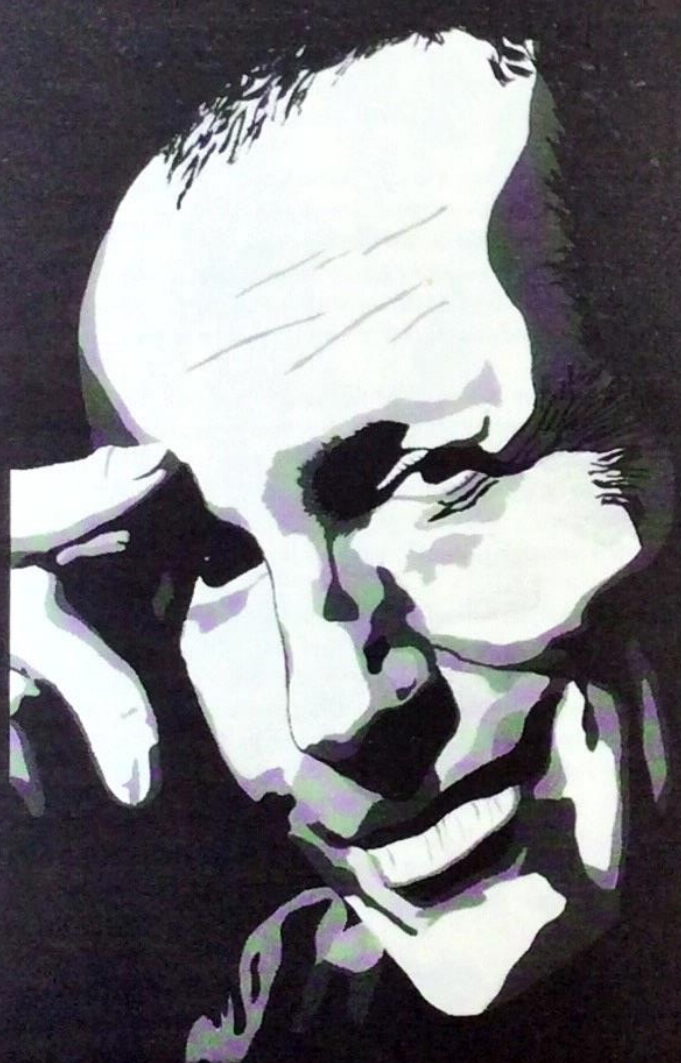


Eric Uhler

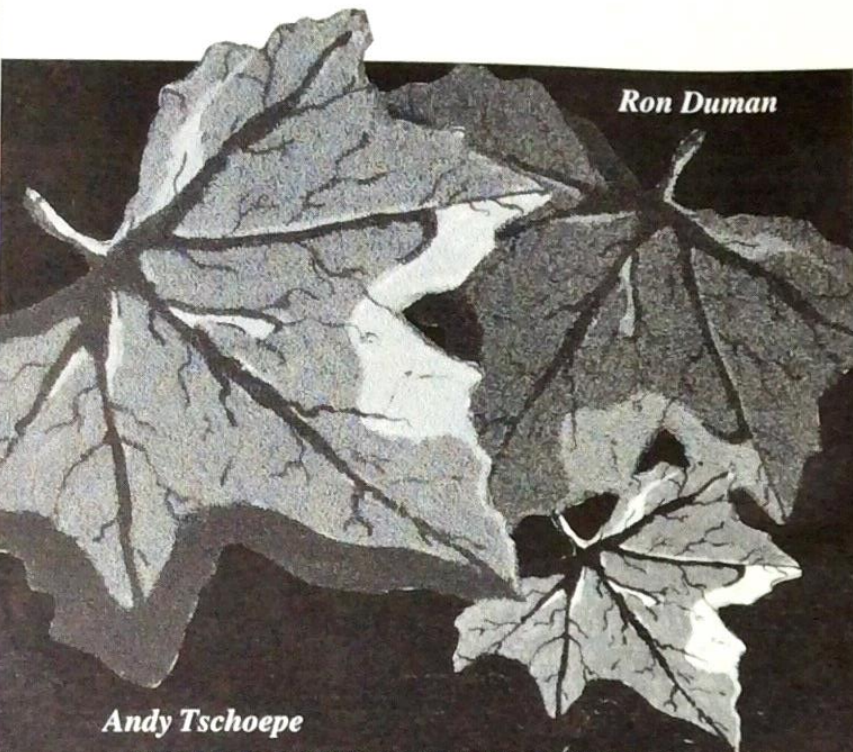




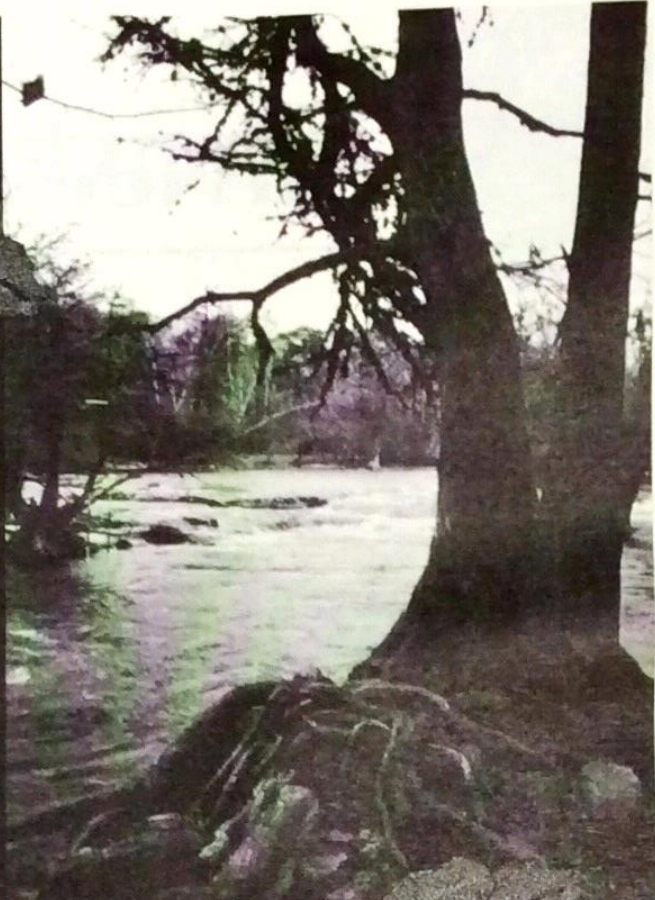
Andrew Lee



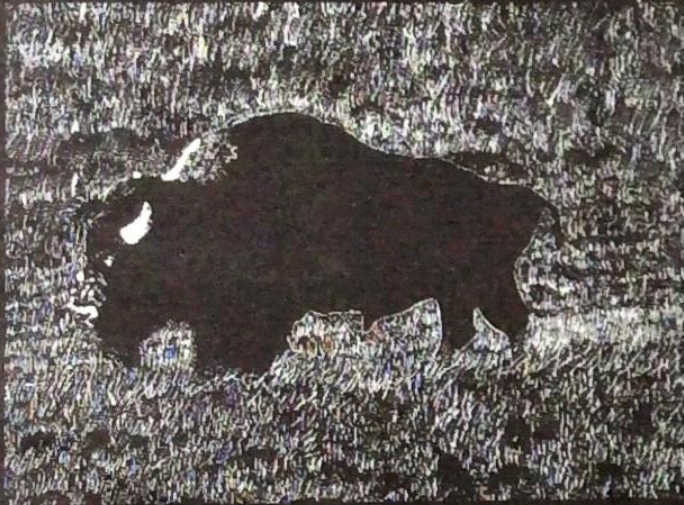
Leslie Lindig



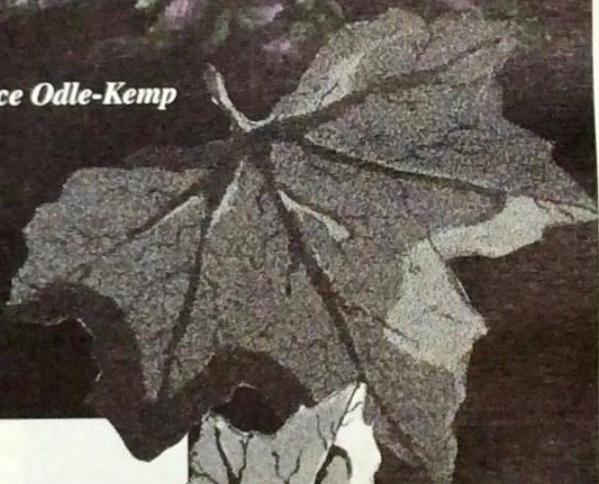
Ron Duman



Andy Tschoepe



Grace Odle-Kemp



Sara Prengel



Xavier's Revenge



Andrew Newman

Sid the squirrel never had anything handed out to him. He had to claw tooth and nail to get where he was, but when his brother appeared out of nowhere, he started to question if he should have ever accepted that endorsement contract for the cereal.

Sid grew up in the slums and lived in an old oak tree that produced few nuts and little shelter. He lived with his brother Xavier and his mother Sophilla. He can still remember those long nights he stayed awake, protecting his mother from oncoming traffic and guarding his precious stash of nuts from those rabid squirrels who lived down the way. It all took its toll on poor Sid, and he became a paranoid, unhappy squirrel. So when that big-time Hollywood commercial producer came flashing his tasty acorns and bushy-tailed women, how could Sid refuse? After he signed the contract, he packed his bags and moved to Beverly Hills without a thought of the family he had left behind. It was all he ever dreamt of. He was given a huge redwood tree to live and frolic in and a variety of nuts whose supply was seemingly infinite. He found a mate with a bushy-bushy tail, and she had a fine litter of four little squirrels he could call his own. He was the biggest squirrel in show business.

Meanwhile, the family he left behind was falling apart at the seams. Xavier alone could not protect his mother, who was old and senile, and she fell out of a tree and broke her brain. In addition to that, there were fewer and fewer nuts to be found so Xavier resorted to a life of crime and violence. He became a skilled safe-cracker and pickpocket, skills that were essential if he were to survive. All of these problems he had blamed on Sid, who left him out in the cold, and he swore he'd get his revenge.



He moved out into the country, and for two years he trained himself to be a finely-tuned killing machine. He ran up and down the trees and pounced upon squirrel dummies with pictures of his brother sewn on their heads. His training was also psychological. He recorded his brother's commercials, sat in a small room, and watched them for hours at a time, causing severe psychosis. Xavier was undergoing devolution. There was no trace of the fun-loving Xavier everyone had known when he was young. He was now Xavier the Demon Squirrel. He seethed with anger 24 hours a day, and he knew that it was past time to show his brother just how angry he was.

He was possessed. Beverly Hills was miles away, but he ran nonstop, driving his aching muscles with the vision of his brother chirping away about his cereal. He arrived in three days, and told himself that if he were going to be an efficient assassin, he needed food and rest. He ate and slept. Then, the time had come.

His brother's tree was the largest in the city, so in no time at all he found himself at the trunk of the towering redwood. He was overcome with emotion and would savor nothing. He shot up the tree and slaughtered Sid's children and wife; then he found his brother, who was snacking leisurely on pistachio nuts. Poor Sid choked with a mixture of fear and shock because while he sensed he knew the intruder, his brother had undergone a complete transformation since the last time they'd been in contact.

"Hello *brother*," began Xavier with perfect sarcasm, "surely you remember *me*?"

"Xavier?" whispered Sid timidly as he squinted into his brother's bright red eyes and was blinded by the anger.

"Yes, that's right, it's your loving brother here to pay you a visit! Well, you certainly seem to have done well for yourself! I'm sure you didn't just forget Mom and me while we were nearly starving to death. I'm sure you have a great explanation for why you just up and left us. I'm sure..."

"Listen, Xavier," began Sid in a rambling panic, "I don't know what has gotten into you, but you can have whatever you want! Anything! See that huge almond over there? It's yours! And there's plenty more where that came from! Just calm down and—"

"Don't bother, Sid," interrupted Xavier, "that means nothing to me; there's only one thing that could make me whole again, and that's to see your blood hit the floor. You're a disgrace to squirrels across the world! So prepare to die, brother, and so you know, my only regret is that I can only give you but a fraction of the pain you've caused me."

And with that, Xavier let out a shriek of joy and ripped his brother to shreds.

Joy Thompson

Bullseye 1995



Drake



Rebecca Palmer

All in all, I think I had a normal day. I had a test, two quizzes, and some homework. I was ready to get home and watch some TV. It was Friday and I was ready for the weekend. What I wasn't ready for was Drake.

When I got home, I dropped my stuff down and walked into my room to throw off my shoes when I noticed a bag sitting on my bed. I had been the last one out of the house in the morning and being the first one to get home that afternoon, seeing this foreign object in my room grabbed my attention. At first I was curious, but then I got a little nervous when I heard a sound coming from my closet. I was getting ready to hightail it out of there when my bedroom door shut, and my closet door opened. A man stepped out dressed in a very peculiar outfit. He looked like he had just stepped out of one of my dreams. He seemed to be in his early twenties and for some odd reason looked very familiar to me. I was terrified until I saw the his eyes and the look he gave me. He knew me.

Finally the silence was broken when he said, "Hello, Tajas." I'd never heard such an accent before. I'd never heard that name before, but I knew it was mine.

I took a step back, overwhelmed by the situation. Everything was so familiar, yet I knew I had never seen this man or heard this name before in my life. I finally found my tongue and told him my name was Rebecca, not Tajas. He just smiled and said he understood.

After a while of staring at each other, I became relaxed and he began telling me his story. He told me that his name was Drake, and he was from another world in another dimension. When I asked how he had gotten here, Drake said the doorway connecting our two worlds opened every fifteen years for a few days. He said he had been waiting for this moment for every minute of those fifteen years. He also said I was everything he had imagined I'd be; Drake told me it had taken him two days to find me and that the gate connecting the two dimensions would close again for another fifteen years tomorrow night. He said he had come to take me back with him because I was his sister.

When I told Drake he must be mistaken, he went on to explain the whole story to me. He explained to me how one of their "mad scientists" had kidnapped a group of babies fifteen years ago and had crossed through the door just as it was closing. They didn't know what had become of him, but they did know what his next experiment was. He wanted to plant the babies into

some of the women here. My brother said this was entirely possible if the infants he took were still in the hibernation stage. In this other dimension, babies were carried in the mother for a year and a half, and then they spent nine months in a machine similar to an incubator. Unfortunately, out of the three "embryos" he carried across with him, I was the only one to survive.

My brother told me that the people from my homeland could communicate telepathically through dreams among family members. He said that this was why everything was so familiar to me. He had been sending dreams to me all this time without even being sure I was receiving them or that I was even still alive. When I thought back, with his help, I began to remember the dreams as if I were in them myself. There was always another young man present in my dreams besides my brother, though. After describing to him what this man looked like, Drake told me that this man was my ramsa, my partner-to-be. When I heard this, I told him I wasn't going to marry someone I didn't want to, let alone someone I didn't even know. Drake explained to me that I knew him better than anyone else and that he wasn't chosen for me. Drake told me that I picked him and he picked me. Whether I remembered all my dreams about this man or not, long ago I had found him in my heart and then found him in my dreams. This was the way our people chose one another. I had even told him where I was, and that was how my brother had found me in only two days.

Drake said he would allow me this one last night to gather all of the possessions I wished to take with me and to say good-bye to my family here. The gate would open for the last time tomorrow night, then close for another fifteen years. My ramsa, Corkto, would be waiting for me on the other side and would probably be with me in my dreams tonight.

Sure enough, Corkto was the only thing I dreamt about the whole night. While in my dream world, he seemed as close to me as if he had lived next door all my life. I was more ready to see him than I had ever been ready to see anything in my life.

The next morning I woke Drake, who was sleeping under the bed, for fear my mother would find him. We spent the day catching up, dodging my parents, and explaining different customs to each other.

I had a wonderful time getting to know my big brother that day, but by the time the sun was setting, I began to get a little nervous. Yesterday I had been ready for anything, but now that the time

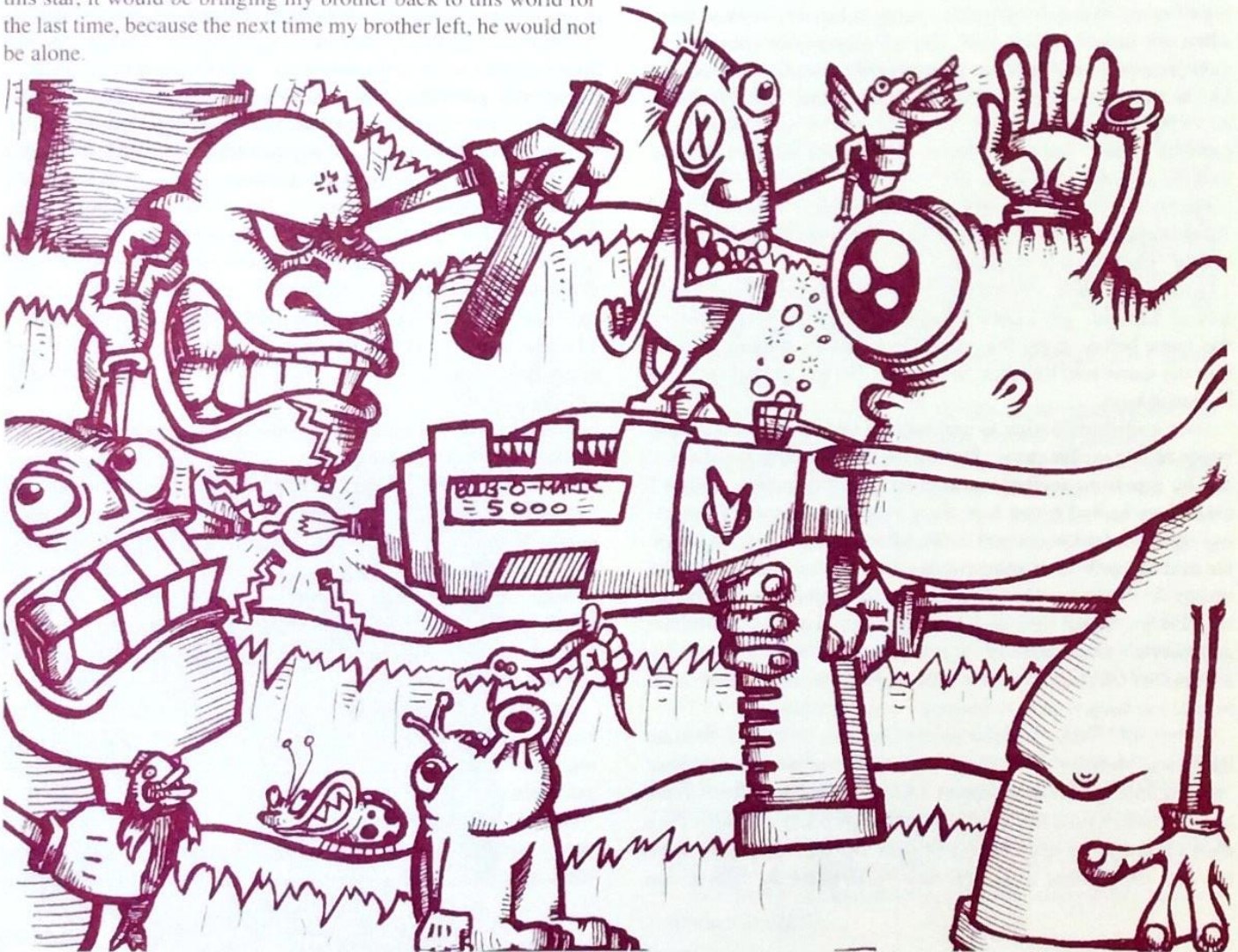
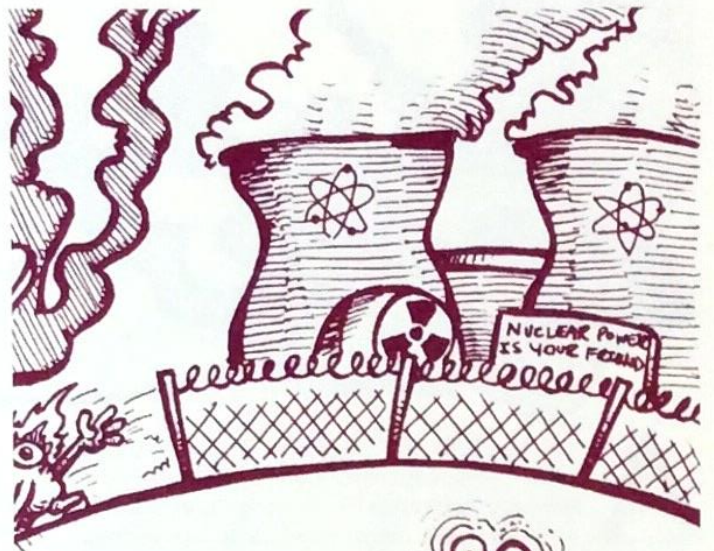


was coming to say good-bye to my home, I wasn't so sure any more. During dinner I was absorbed in my thoughts, debating both decisions and outcomes, when I remembered something Corkto had told me in my dream. He told me of the couple hundred years he was looking forward to. When I asked Drake about that, he told me that our people lived up to 250 years of age. Once I heard this, I knew what my decision would be.

That night I walked alongside of my brother who was hopeful yet disappointed. When we came to a park close to my house, he turned and asked me if I were sure I wouldn't change my mind. I had to tell him, "No." We hugged each other good-bye, exchanged sorrowful glances, and he was off.

Drake took a few steps away from me, touched a button on his belt, and looked up. All of a sudden, there was a great light in the sky. A big, beautiful star came zooming towards us out of nowhere. It stopped up above the clouds and seemed to wait for Drake's signal. He looked back one last time and then raised his hand to the heavens. The star began to spin and then sucked him up into one of the grooves. Once he was out of sight, the beautiful, bright star started to "undo" itself. It pulled into a blue string of light and zipped away.

As I watched it take my brother away, I knew this would not be the last time I saw the spectacle. I knew that the next time I saw this star, it would be bringing my brother back to this world for the last time, because the next time my brother left, he would not be alone.



Amy Johnson



TRUTH



art by
*Jeremy
Mack*

there is an energy that causes me to pound my feet
as i write this
there is an energy that causes me to rock as i eat
it sounds stupid but only to human nature
human nature attempts to take away from the energy
the best actors are the ones who act like "people"
(i really want to stop using that word,
human seems much more basic,
but "people" is a hard habit to break,
it makes us to appear to be on some higher plane
than other living creatures
(HUMANS ARE ANIMALS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!))
the best actors are the ones who seem human
the ones who you say "that's me up there"
(unless your that actor)
that last line used 2nd person; a big writing no-no
i believe in a powerful destiny for me,
higher energy calls for it
i'm afraid of a car crash that will damage my exterior
causing me to pull inside for my energy
i can do it on my own with out warping my body
(i keep reaching for the shift to capitalize my "i",
a hard habit to break,
it makes me appear to be on some higher plane than
other people[scratch that] humans)
humans need patience
it is a key to life
patience keeps you(2nd person) out of car crashes
(it's treacherous to call them accidents)
accidents don't really exist - neglect does
jesus has become too great of an excuse(a scapegoat)
i would like to be jesus, but not the scapegoat part
just because he "died for your sins" doesn't mean its okay to sin more
there is no excuse for immorality,
but morality must be updated from its old confining coffin
it is now a time for a renaissance in thinking
the youth are turning to some sort of alternative revolution,
but are losing the consciousness that used to come with it
the lower class are going to erupt in some form of violence
that will be undirected
humans need education
it is a key to life
violence is immoral
it should be fought in life, for it is an enemy
i have sinned and am trying my hardest to mend the tear
i can tell you all this because my soul is soiled also

and
Nothing
but
the Truth,
So Help
Me _____

Josh Batschelet

nobody is perfect
the higher energy is perfect, but it is everybody
(at least the good parts)
satan is the impurities in pe[scratch that] humans
and other things
purify yourself and you move on to a higher plane
evolution is not the elevator to the higher plane
humans need spirituality; it is a key to life
(it is an elevator (or at least a button on that elevator))
i have the luck to be born in the form of a leader
being listened to causes you(2nd person) to form opinions
being questioned causes you to form correct opinions
(as long as you don't get angry)
anger can fuel action, but it must be contained
or else it explodes into immorality
your anger must never impede others' rights; that is immoral
my fist shakes when i control my anger
my eyes tear when i control my anger
i used to think this inaction was a form of fear,
but it was a bravery that harnessed it from causing stupidity
respect those that can harness that anger,
be wary of those that dismiss it or give in to it
wanting to lead is not immoral
the new trend in in distrusting the government is wrong
as is the government that caused this distrust
i do not believe in anarchy
i do believe in an empowerment of the people
all of these opinions are courtesy of seventeen years in this body
courtesy of the roots i've set down in this town, this life
my roots are wide spread
in one year i will be uprooted and only the thickest roots will remain
if energies are too wide spread, roots become too thin
and are easily broken in turbulence
reevaluate what is valuable and thicken roots there
i have been given a deadline to secure these ties
these ties form a complete picture of your life
(individual pieces like a jigsaw puzzle)
an upheaval breaks apart the picture
a few large pieces make it easier to recreate
than numerous small pieces
spreading yourself too thin
makes you not devote enough energy to anything
spreading yourself too thin is immoral
more thoughts about the renaissance in thinking now
(a valid returning subject for this will redeem life)
the renaissance in thinking must also incorporate a return to old values

family is an example of an old value that is worthy
these old values must be mixed with the new lessons
family has been expanded beyond two parents,
or a heterosexual relationship,
and this is not immoral
as long as it functions to nurture, it can serve as a family
nurturing only truly comes
when applied along with respect
my parents have always respected me and nurtured me
seventeen years well spent i say
i believe that the arts
(especially music for it seems the most accessible)
are key to life; everybody has some tie to the arts
some talent in the arts
it is not automobiles, buildings, money, or conquest
that make being human an honor
monkeys have been taught to fly airplanes
and money is a burden
it is the ability to create art
that makes it an honor to be human
without art we become mindless
television is not(generally speaking) an art
sitcoms are definitely not an art
movies are becoming less and less art
for they are becoming simply reruns
the information highway is seeming more and more malignant
for it is mindless
mindlessness is immoral
human nature could be said to be mindless
and it isn't necessarily immoral
(obviously this is a flawed piece for it contradicts itself)
it is human nature to catch someone that is falling
it is also human nature to ask "what's wrong"
(but not necessarily care for a reply)
insecurities are a waste of time
insecurities are uncertainties
which just implicates indecision
indecision is immoral
i have no respect for sheep that just bleat
to what they are told
i do have respect for changing your mind
that implies that you(2nd person again)
are paying attention
loyalty is something very important to life
being disloyal is a sign of poor character
(i do not claim to always be of strong character)
humans need loyalty
it is a key to life
loyalty to the point of sacrifice is admirable
(i do claim to have sacrificed out of loyalty)
sacrifice implies that the actions were selfless
and nothing was expected in return
a true sacrifice is not necessarily made just because
somebody is holding the short end of the stick
more thoughts about roots now
(a valid returning subject for these are my life)
i think humans take the relationships they have
too lightly

the fact that you have people to talk to at work,
or a congregation at church to go to on sundays is special
now that college is coming for me i have realized
that a lot of my friends are not the writing type
relationships should be built so that
when you(once again 2nd person) disappear you will be missed
the new global society has become so broad
that peop(not again)
humans seem very distant
the zen belief is that you(zen is written in 2nd person)
should remain focused on what you do
if you are showering, think about washing
if you are working work
this is a good thought though it is a little too simple
since it invalidates dreams(for if your sleeping ...)
when you hold a conversation, you shouldn't just nod
at what they are saying and think about supper
then you might as well be watching television that mindless sin
for all of this preaching against mindlessness,
i still enjoy video games
there is hypocrisy in the ranks and i am the first to admit it
these things that i'm saying are meant to be goals
i don't mean don't watch television, i mean read a book too
i don't mean never get angry, i just mean to stay focused
so anger doesn't ruin your plans
anger has a habit of ruining plans
burning bridges is not a good idea
it isn't necessarily a sin, but you should choose carefully
which bridges you burn
when i had geometry i angered my teacher
and didn't make much effort to win him back
with this bridge gone my grades severely plummeted
to be successful in this ever imprisoning world,
you(the incomparable 2nd) must be aware of others goals
with this awareness mixed with knowledge of one's goals
you can know when to make a stand
and when to stand aside
more thoughts about the higher energy now
(a valid returning subject for it fuels the universe)
kurt vonnegut described the human soul as being
a little neon tube inside a lot of meat
each tube a different hue and a different size
plato had a theory of ideals being reality
the particular elements are only apparent
and the actual ideal is reality
so the neon tubes in their individuality
are only the particulars of the ideal universal energy
i would describe the human soul as a sun
and its impurities are the sunspots
the goal of living should be to burn through
as many of these spots as you possibly can
this is what enlightenment was for budda
it was disintegrating the impurities
so that his soul could shine
every person is a particular of the higher energy
strive not to forget that and you(the ever talked at 2nd)
will be fair and kind
which is really what all of this was all about



Nicole Kotara

Ode to Insomnia

Jennifer Price

The tick-tock of a chirping clock hammers into your head (you're starting to wish you were dead) and your eyes are peeled wide alarm clock by your bedside flashing 12:00 12:00 12:00 (but you know it must be like four-oh-three now) you wonder how and your pajamas cling like plastic wrap there's a history textbook sitting in your lap which makes you think of English projects left undone and you wonder if you could be having any fun ("probably" you think) suddenly you're thirsty and need a drink (what you really need is rest) but then you remember that first-hour French test so you ponder this as the radio drones elevator tones but all you want is to fall asleep (and you're worn out counting sheep) you leave the kitchen and head back to your room to face impending doom the narrow hallway is empty and dark (but you see streetlights are on across the street in the park) hollow footsteps are pounding inside your head and you wish you could just go to bed the sun slowly begins to come up (just as your eyes were drifting shut) out of nowhere the alarm clock beeps as you were finally falling asleep (you thought the stupid thing wasn't working) but you roll over and it's still flashing 12:00 12:00 12:00. . .

A Long, Soft Note

Samantha Ardison

There was a familiar silence surrounding the air of a small rectangular room decorated with roses, brown and wilted at the tips. They hung off an antique Victorian dresser polished almost mirror-like and the wood was bleached from the omnipresent incoming sunlight. A twin-sized bed with black velvet sheets, white roses, and a single lacy white pillow stood in the center of the room. Thin black chiffon was draped over a lamp standing in the corner, separate from everything else. Dirty brown scuff marks on the bare tile floor made patterns that be followed if put to the right music, probably the kind that puts fantasies to work within the mind of a woman confined to her own isolated world.

Footsteps echoed from down the hall, and carried with them a pair of soft pink Sunday school shoes in a woman's size eight and a half, accompanied by a knee-length apron dress of blue and white gingham, worn by the twenty-seven-year-old Mary Jane. Her thick brown hair was in a loose braid at the nape of her neck, and she had a pale, bare face with rosy supple lips. She paused at the door, squeezed her eyes shut, and let out a long, clear, soft note. Eyes still closed shut, she stepped over to her bed and sat straight down on the edge. Reopening her eyes, she turned toward the window and glanced out at an empty green lawn, then surveyed the dirty white floor. Following the brown footprints she had tracked in, she eventually distinguished that her tracks contained more than just dirt. Crimson red blood was smeared in.

All she could do was stare. Breathing became difficult. Hyperventilation started rapidly coming upon her, and a cold sweat chilled her body. She bolted up and squeezed her eyes shut again, walking to the window, letting out another long, soft note. Kneeling toward the window, she extended her arms out and let her torso hang out the sill with her feet fastened around the bedpost. Some fresh air was all she needed. Mary Jane had finally opened herself up to the outside.

A delusional mind caused her reality to become warped. The empty green lawn before her undulated. Hands swum through it as if drowning, struggling to reach the surface, and then molded into bloody red splotches.

A sickly feeling began to consume her body. As she felt for something to grasp onto, she realized that she had slunk to the floor long ago. Before her was the white tile floor and the soiled blood that she had tracked in. Weakness had prevailed once she extended her arms out the window, and a locked fetal position tried in a failed attempt to provide consolation.

Mary Jane's pink Sunday school shoes were still stained, and as she lay there staring at them, she began to whimper to herself, trying to contemplate the situation. Her childlike psyche dug a deep cavern into her heart that she never before knew existed. She cried softly to herself, "Why? Why? Why? ..." imagining what that little boy felt like lying there -- stabbed so brutally, over sixty times -- and somehow her hands had managed to remain completely immaculate.



Candace LoBue

Utter panic started to invade the silence. Beads of sweat -- icy, needlelike -- seeped through her pores. An increasingly rapid heartbeat caused her movements to become spastic. Mary Jane's fear caused a circle of paranoia that could be interpreted through her desperate mutterings, "Momma, oh, Momma's not gon' be happy. She's gon' to be mad. Look at the floor, oh, it's filthy. Momma's not gon' be pleased if she sees how dirty that floor is. I gots to clean it up. Oh, yes, Momma won't notice a thing if I do that. Oh, Lord ..."

Frantically crouching over the floor, jaw clenched, flushed scarlet face, she grabbed the front of her blue and white gingham dress. With it, she scrubbed rigorously at the bloodstained floor, determined to remove the seemingly permanent smears.

Delusions began to violate her psyche again. The splotches of dried blood transmogrified into one -- now an amorphous pool of streaming blood.

She scrubbed even harder, and when that provided no help, she spat on the floor -- it always gets the stains off everything else.

Tears of fear and frustration welled up in her eyes, dripping onto the floor. Her arms were getting weak, but she continued to scrub at the floor with her dress. Mary Jane noticed that her hands no longer managed to stay clean. Blood was streaked all over. At that, she leaned back on her knees and closed her eyes. When she opened her eyes to the floor, it was nearly spotless. There were no bloody streaks on her hands. A few drops scattered here and there about the floor were all that remained.

As she followed with her eyes the tracks leading from the doorway, a woman's voice broke the silence. Mary Jane turned toward the voice that looked over her. She burst into a frenzied panic.

It was Linda—dear, sweet Linda. Her motherly voice addressed the tormented young woman, "Come now, Mary Jane."

Almost by instinct, Mary Jane clammed up underneath the window, pulling her knees to her chest, trembling in a numb stare, completely segregating herself.

"Momma, oh, Momma, I'm so sorry. I didn't do it on purpose. Please don't hate me. I even tracked it on the floor and, oh, Momma . . ."

The curious tranquility on Linda's freckled face appeared to Mary Jane as a determination to steal her freedom away. Linda had a certain gracefulness. Even at the age of thirty-one, her blonde cascading waves remained thick and healthy, shining as she stood in the shafts of sunlight.

A perplexed expression came to Linda's face as she observed Mary Jane's hopeless murmurs, "Oh, sweets, you saw, didn't you? I'm so sorry, baby."

Linda wrapped her arms around the clammed up woman, cradling her as if she were only an infant. Caressing the radiant brown hair that rested upon her bosom, she lifted Mary Jane's

delicate chin and gave her a gentle, motherly kiss on the forehead.

Mary Jane's hypnotized spirit began to develop a trust for this loving woman.

"Oh, Momma, Momma, you saw?"

"Your dress, sweets, what happened? And you cleaned up after yourself? Oh, baby, I'm so proud of you."

"Can't you see, Momma, the floor—I cleaned it all for you. Please don't hate me, Momma. I'm so sorry, so sorry."

Mary Jane glided out of Linda's arms and managed to pull herself to her knees. Feet fastened around the bedpost, hair frenzied with sweat and dried spots of crimson, she extended her arms about the window, whispering, "I gots to breathe again, Momma, I gots to breathe."

She stared frozenly at the empty green lawn, chanting repeatedly, "I'm sorry, Momma, I'm so sorry,"

Linda's words had absolutely no value in Mary Jane's mind: "Not to worry, sweets, they found the wicked one already. Justifiable punishment will be delivered . . ." only taunted Mary Jane, heartlessly invading her susceptible, childlike mind. She droned on monotonously, "Momma, oh, she's gon' be mad. I gots to clean it up. Oh, Momma, I'm so sorry . . ."

Mary Jane clearly sensed a kindly hand sliding down the back of her leg, eventually arriving at her splotched, pink Sunday-school shoes and holding onto them tightly.

Mary Jane had softened. Her torso hung loosely over the window sill, and Linda's elegant hands were grasped tightly at her feet.

"You know I'm sorry, Momma, so sorry," Mary Jane muttered faintly. Linda's long, agile fingers slyly worked an opening between Mary Jane's fastened legs and yanked them out from under her, away from the bedpost. Mary Jane's body was no longer secured.

Her body descended naturally over the edge of the sill onto the empty, green lawn three stories below as Linda sang to her, "Don't be sorry, sweets, I'm not your Momma."



To Kiss a Desire of the Highest



Samantha Ardison

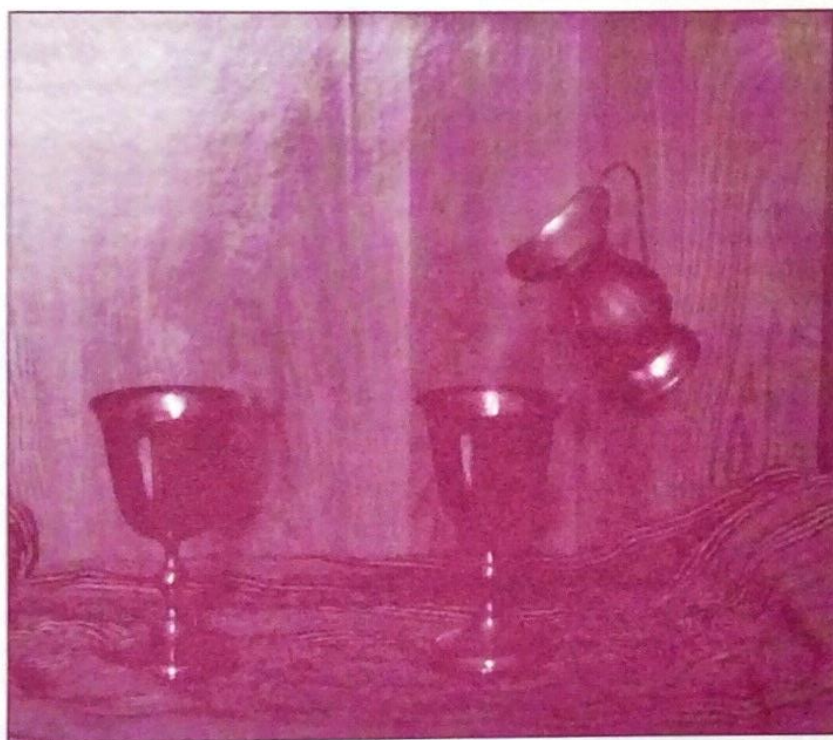
Mama was tranquilized with her usual spirit of gaiety, yet more so tonight. I watched as she manipulated the floor with her dancer's feet, floating in circles about the room to the melodiousness of embracing the virgin year. The eve of a new year possessed a strange power over her, as if it had magically implanted within her a helpless desire to triumph amongst the human beings," as she called her friends -- the few people who truly appreciated her eccentric nature. Envy invaded me whenever I saw her in a mood like tonight -- a state of euphoria that seemed to come to her as gracefully as snow falling from benevolence. Never have I seen her in darkness, never a tear or an omen of distress. She pretends to be happy; maybe I'm pretending to be sad.

The aroma of the "nectar of the gods" she formulated at my birth -- in order to soften the harshness of an environment so unfamiliar to a newborn, in order to allow me to absorb its full spectrum with the ease it took to reach her states of hidden oblivion -- lingered in the room. Cranberry juice so tart it made the taste buds cringe with rejection -- "those things in life you want to make lemonade out of, but are too rotten to even attempt to," as my mama described it; pure vanilla -- ineffable sweetness, artlessness, "kissing desires of the highest"; rum -- numbness of the spirit, the suffering kind.

We had been sipping this elixir nightly, relishing in its therapeutic effects. Tonight was different. Mama danced ritually, as was her custom, and I watched. She drained the elixir from her champagne glass a thimbleful at a time, but blindly. The glass dangled between her thumb and middle finger, and I watched as it plummeted to the ground, shattering into a million pieces of broken light. No longer was she pretending to be happy, and I knew I wasn't pretending to be sad.

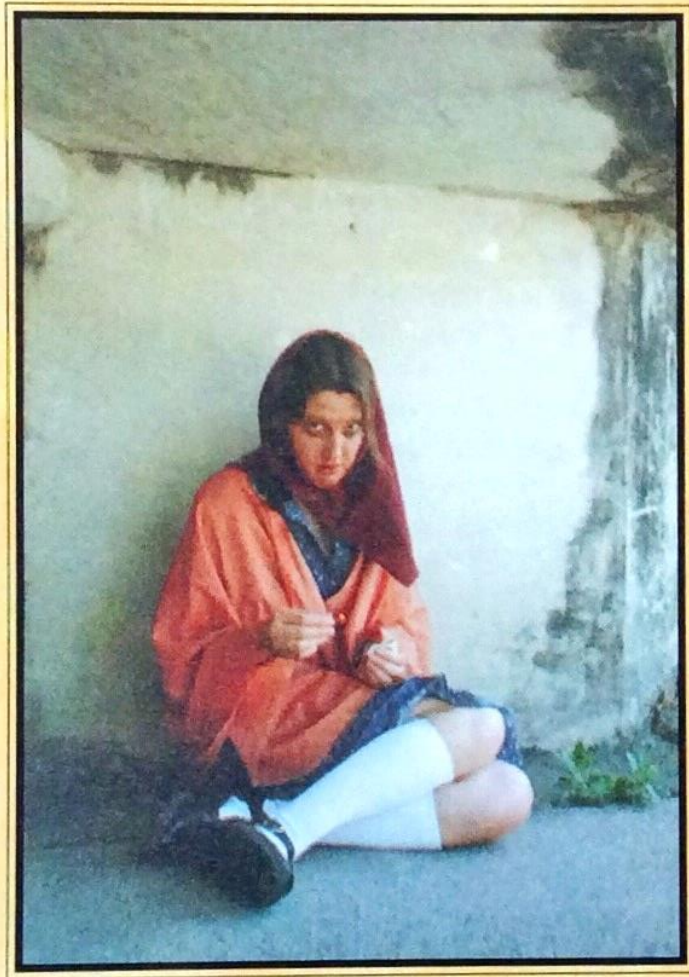
Her silence was haunting as the human beings' gaze pierced through her facade, while the enchantment of a new year faded to black. I cradled her like a mother, and she withdrew as the daughter -- evolving into a sanguine rag doll with a painted smile on her face, but numb -- of the suffering kind.

My champagne had been resting on our ancient mustard-colored



Melissa Rentfro

shag rug, the glass still half full. The aroma drifted upward, and I breathed in its bouquet of cranberries, vanilla, and rum. I ran my finger over the surface of the blushed liqueur and pulled it baptismally across Mama's forehead. She stirred and let out a heavy sigh. Euphoria that I had once envied I now possessed, as if she had released it to me. A smile like kissing desires of the highest found me. Mama had opened her glossy eyes, but I hadn't noticed. Her body remained still, hindering any passion for dance, while the curtain to mine was just beginning to rise.



Once Upon A Time . . .

A little girl walked the streets without any shoes, a nice warm coat, or hat. All she had was a box of matches. Her father had sent her out to sell them, but she had yet to make a nickel. She did not dare go home for fear of her father's wrath. If she went home with no more than what she had left with, she would surely be paid back with a great deal of pain.

Sadly, this little match girl sat in an alley with her box of matches, her feet tucked under her. She only felt colder and sadder. She wished she could light the matches to keep warm. Just one to warm her hands would satisfy the growing hunger her body had for heat. With a sudden rush of overwhelming need, the little girl lit a match.

She warmed her hands and fingers, beginning to feel the blood flow more easily through her veins. She took the match to her icy blue, bare feet, but it went out. Just like that the match was now only a small piece of wood between her fingers.

She lit another match. With this one, she saw the wall which she huddled against become a nice burning fire place. The crackling heat was wonderful, so wonderful. She stretched out her feet, but then it was gone. The match had gone out again.

A third match brought her the sight of a wonderful goose dinner. A fork and knife were coming her way, but then darkness filled her hands, and a light breeze touched her hands. Her hair was now in her face; it gently whipped her cheeks as she frowned.

With the fourth match, an image of her old Grandmother appeared. Although she had never been too nice when she was alive, now she looked angelic. Her smile was comforting and welcoming. The little match girl cried out to her Grandmother not to leave, or if she did, to take the little girl with her. She lit every match so her Grandmother would stay longer and hopefully never leave.

As a star flew across the sky, she remembered what her Grandmother used to tell her, "When a star flies across the sky, someone has died and gone to be with God." She smiled and lay down.

In the morning, the little girl held a match in her hands and a smile on her face. People said it was because of the freezing cold. "She was trying to keep warm."

No one would ever know the wonders of her visions, nor would anyone ever know the glorious fire that she had entered into with her Grandmother.

BECAUSE

Rebecca Saldiva

I look out the window,
There are children at play.
I think of only you.
He doesn't matter, but you do.
No one can make me feel the way
You can.
I see their innocent, smiling faces.
I used to stare at you all the time.
You would run and hug me.
You once told me,
If you were a little older and I were a little younger,
You would marry me.
Now you're gone.
I remember everything you ever said to me.
I pray you remember my face as well
As I remember yours.
I find myself sometimes trying to remember
What you looked like.
I should die just for trying.
I'll never see you again,
Never hold you in my arms again,
Or tell you how much I'll always love you.
But you'll always mean the world to me,
Because,
You are my son.

Elizabeth O'Farrell

R O U T

Lena So

The little boy sat on the cold, dark ground, waiting and waiting. Then, finally, there it was. He could now breathe normally, he could now go home. The lightning had struck, the thunder had boomed, and now he was ready. Heaven had answered, and it was now time. He placed his old, worn-out bike right side up, tires on the dusty path. He hopped on, pretended that he was a tough bike rider on a black Harley, and rode.

When he reached his driveway forty minutes later, he sat on his bike, staring at his house. Yup, God was right. All was calm and he could enter the house without fear, he could tell. He walked up the porch steps, opened the front door, which he had left unlocked, heard silence, and trotted down the hallway into the bathroom. He was worn out, but he was used to it by now. It had become a routine.

He locked the bathroom door, took off his dirt-soiled t-shirt and blue jeans, and searched his naked body for any new scars or bruises. Yup, one, two, three, four, five. No, four, the fifth one was an old one. He carefully placed his sore body in the tub and filled it with lukewarm water. He lay there in the tub, relaxed for once and was even humming "Yankee Doodle" to himself when he suddenly heard a knock at the door. It startled him, and he wasn't even going to answer it until he heard his mother's sweet voice say, "Honey, where have you been?"

He hesitated a little, then said, "I went riding my bike around the neighborhood." He knew that his mother didn't really know what the "neighborhood" was- a deserted forest out of town.

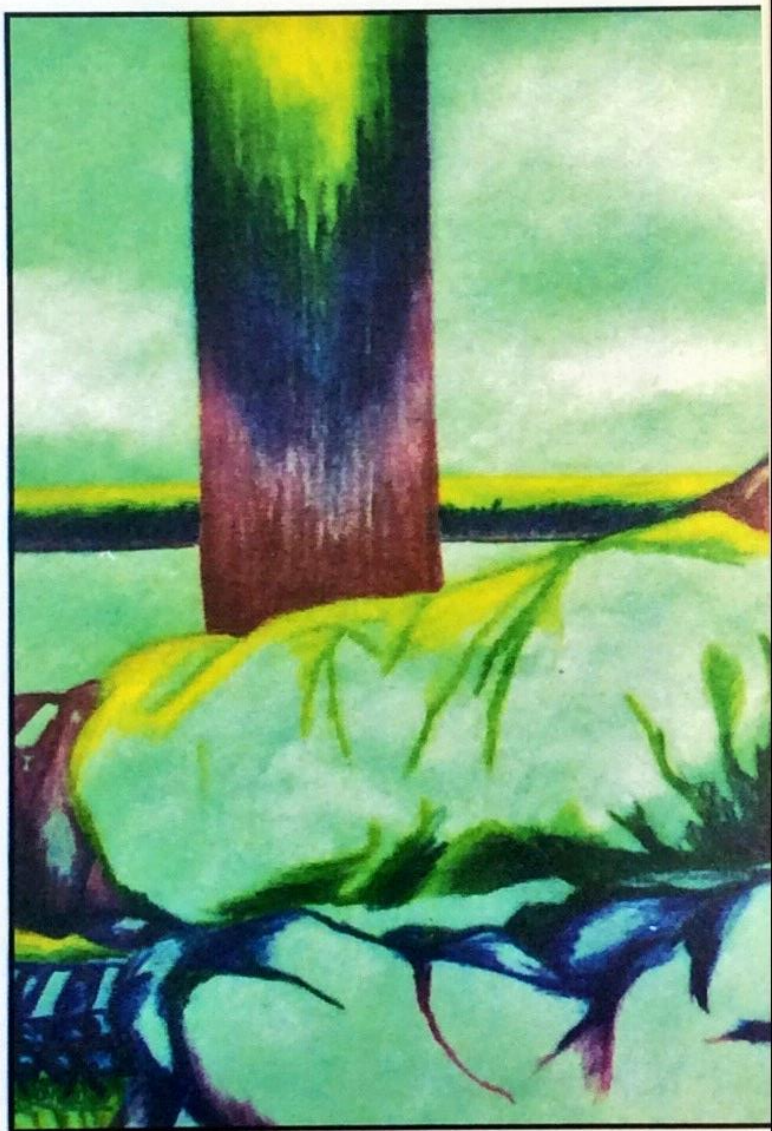
"Well, next time just tell us where you're going, and here's an idea. Instead of just taking off by yourself, why don't you ask Bill to go along with you? He could ride Grandpa's old bike, and you two would have so much fun." Silence. "I mean, Bill really likes you, and he would love for you to like him back. He's always inviting you places, like tonight he mentioned having a 'men's night out'." Silence. "Well, anyway, Sweetie, think about it, O.K.? He's really a nice guy."

The little boy cringed at this. He hated his mother's boyfriend, and he had good reason, too, he thought. And anyway, Bill hated him and he had marks to prove it. But the boy still said, "O.K., Mom."

Many days later, Bill made another usual but unannounced visit that surprised the mother and her son. He kissed her hello, handed her a bottle of wine saying that it was for later, glanced at the

boy, and gave him a rehearsed smile. "Hey, pal, how ya doin'?" I brought some Chinese take-out for us to eat."

The boy stared at the six-foot two giant, of whom he was scared to death, but managed to return a fake smile, said, "Fine, I'm glad you came," and headed towards his room when he was stopped by his mom.



i n e

"Sweetie, where are you going? We're having this Chinese food that Bill brought for us, remember?" She gave Bill a wink. "Come set the table, will you?" Even though they had already eaten dinner that night, the boy said, "Yes, ma'am," and set the table. He didn't understand why his mother loved this guy so much. He didn't understand why she tried so hard to please this

guy. He didn't understand why he had to eat two dinners that night just because Bill brought the second dinner. At any rate, he did what was asked of him for three reasons: one, to please his poor, sweet mother, two, to please his poor, sweet mother's boyfriend, and three, the sooner he did this, the sooner he could flee from the house.

The dinner went as it always did when Bill was there- fake smiles, fake "how is school going?"s, fake "let's go out for a men's-night-out sometime"s, and fake "sure, I'd love to"s. The mother watched and smiled sweetly, too kind and ignorant to know the truth.

When the last chicken dumpling was eaten, the three, almost like a family, helped each other clean up. When his mother and Bill were in the middle of a political discussion, the boy found that it was the right time to disappear. He took a hand-sized flashlight, sneaked out the front door, left it unlocked, and rode his bike for forty minutes. It was just about sunset, and the boy's mind began to wander. He remembered that before he had discovered this place, this forest where he could be safe, he was forced to stay in misery with Bill, even more misery than now. He thanked God that even for a little while, he could be at peace with himself.

He waited and waited, and bam! there it was. Lightning struck, thunder rolled, and he could now go home. He trusted God now to be right; He had never been wrong. He hopped on his old, worn-out bike, pretended he was a tough bike rider, and rode his Harley.

When he reached his driveway forty minutes later, he stared at the house. He knew that it was safe. He had grown this instinct over the past few times and just knew now. He entered the house, through the unlocked door, and tiredly plodded down the hall into the bathroom. He stripped off his clothes and counted his new bruises. Bill had given him one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Seven new bruises- all from this morning when his mother made the dreadful mistake of leaving for work. He lay in the tub filled with warm water and was awoken from his daydreaming by his mother's voice.

"Hey, Honey, where've you been?"

"Riding my bike."

"Well, Bill likes bike riding, too. Next time why don't you invite him along?"

"O.K., Mom."



Kelly Stevens

i wonder if butterflies mate for life

Rebecca Rosser

Dawn shines between the branches
that line the highway stretched
in front of me
coated in layer after thick layer
of molasses colored monarchs

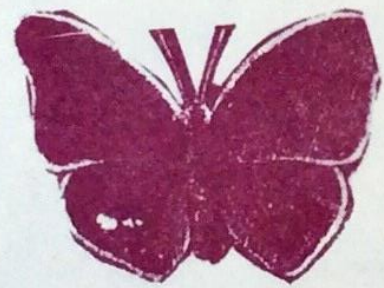
It is a long way home and already
Eyes
 drift
 closed

Straining to hear over the loud
THUMP de THUMP de THUMP
of the seams that join the road
I make out the delicate
snap crack crush and rip
of tiny stained glass mosaics

The first partner
a golden phoenix takes
is his only
without one the other will die
from starvation

Such a devoted species
very rare
 and unique

Frost came early this year
the monarchs never made it south
and a hollow feeling inside says
no one in Brazil will care
for their dying mates





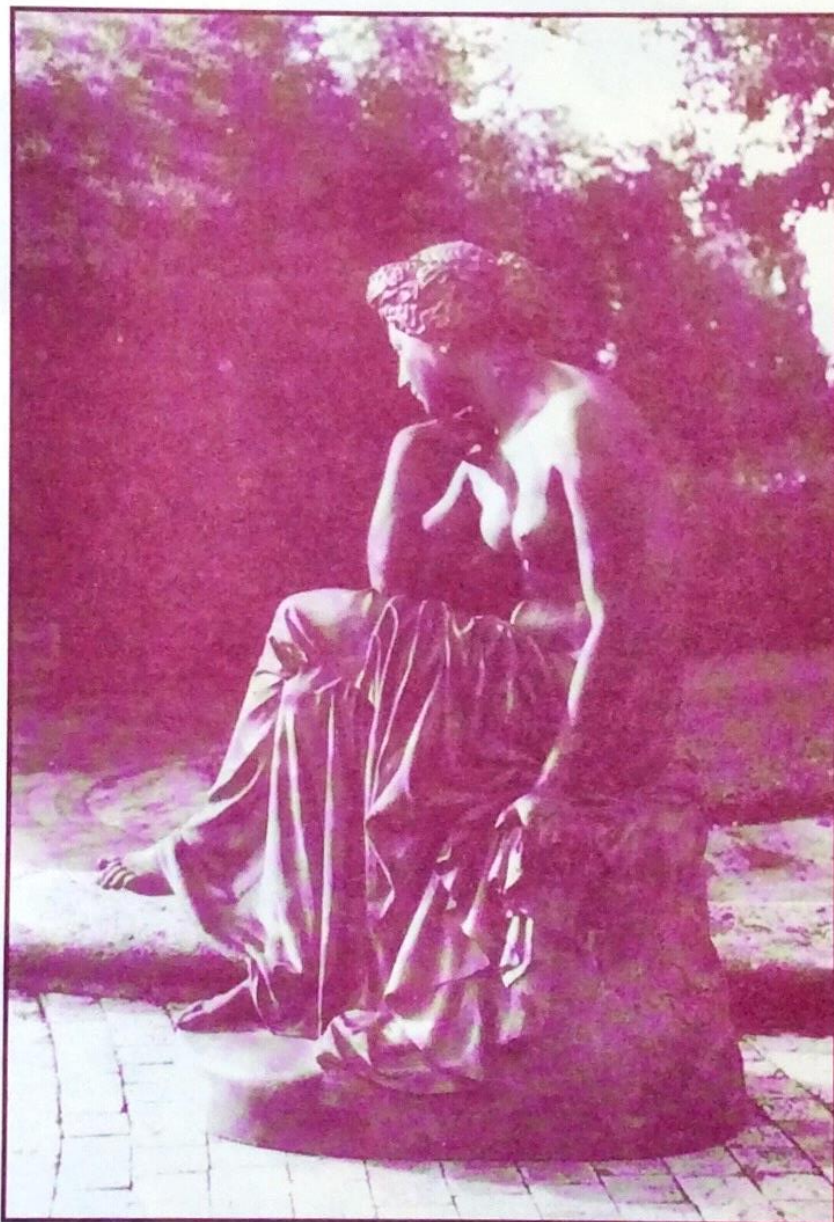
trying
Karen McBurney

pale and crinkling at the edges
let go of to fall
sifting glass wings
through small holes of a killing jar
unsteady beating
limpid and not really
the softness
existence
grasping at nothing
with cold chapped fingers
dancing over a threadbare carpet
wearing your jacket
in solitude
saying nothing
personal comment
on not being held
so ravenous
watching
envy china doll her perfection
immaculate skin and hands
shattering
scratch out
edit the situation
tape strung out
like Christmas lights
all across the furniture
voices from before
now destroyed
I'm starting over

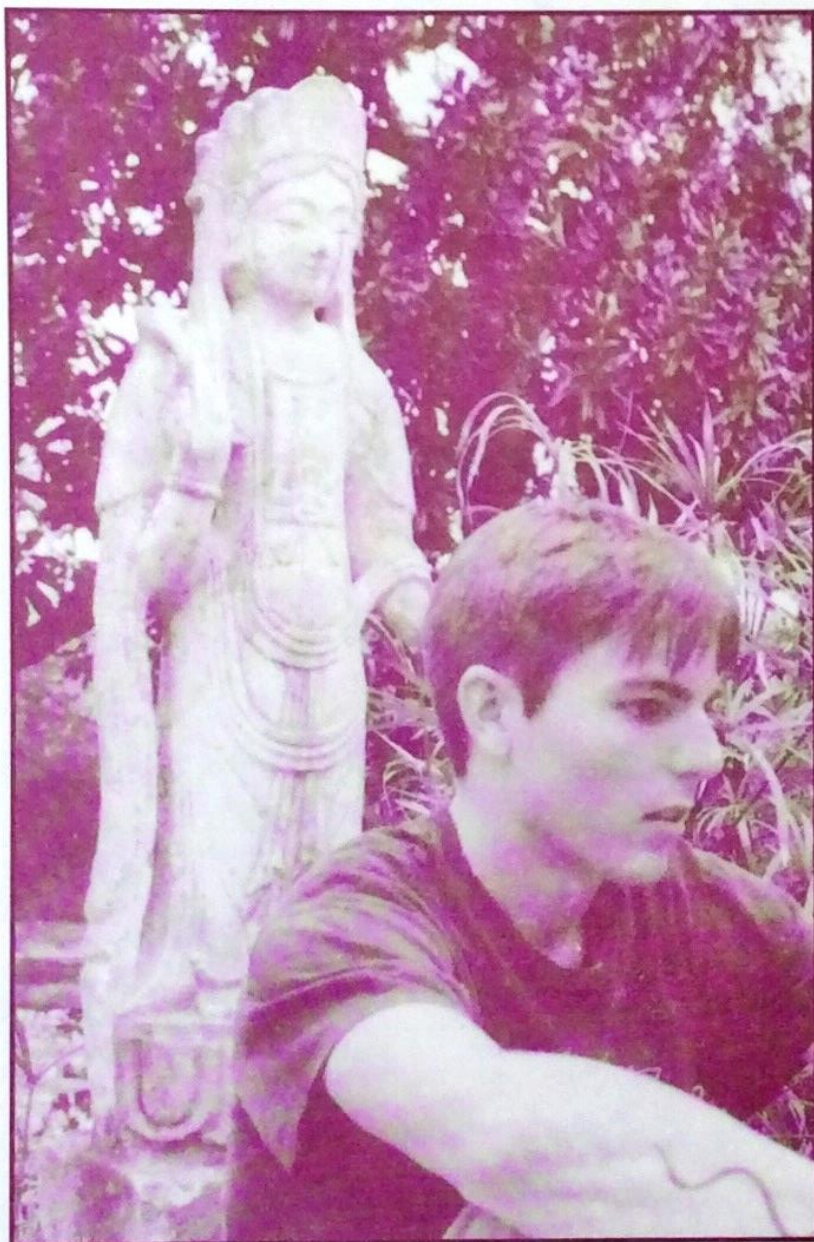
Silence

Candace LoBue

You can listen to silence
And when you do
The world's wooden French doors open
And you set foot into a sunlit eternity of
Stained glass
You are enabled to hear the sun
Going down and rising in the morning
You can not avoid the echoing boom
of seconds lifelessly passing by
In a world without a clock
Unfamiliar voices whisper your name
Through cattails
In a strange and vacant nowhere
The commonly tangible diminishes
beneath your fingertips
And is replaced by the intriguing silence
It overcomes
Your already hopelessly overwhelmed soul
You are drawn into a ball of yarn
A mere fiber to the whole
And all the while your mind is none the wiser
Your ears still physically attuned
To the benign and petty human clinks and clangs
This world booms, roars and swishes out all space
Yet it is known as the undefined term.....silence



Nicole Moore



Jolie Lester

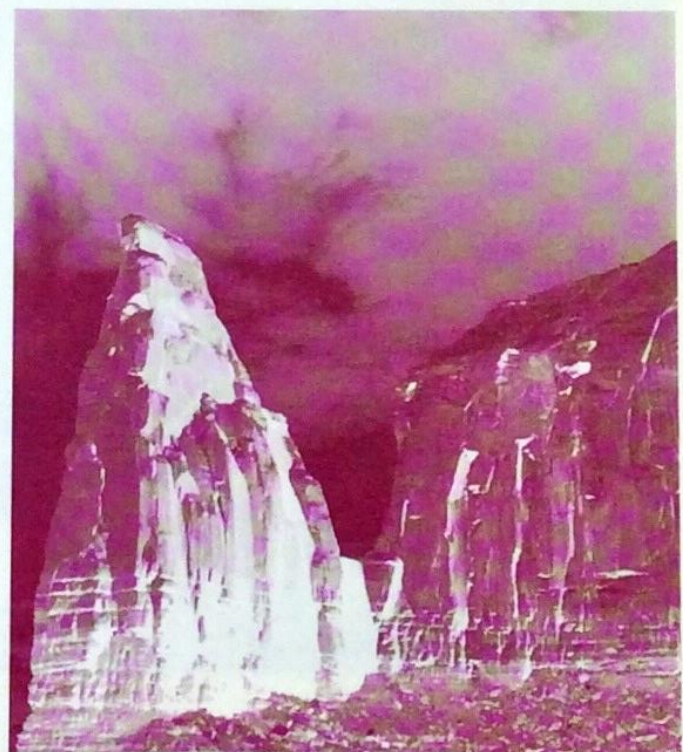
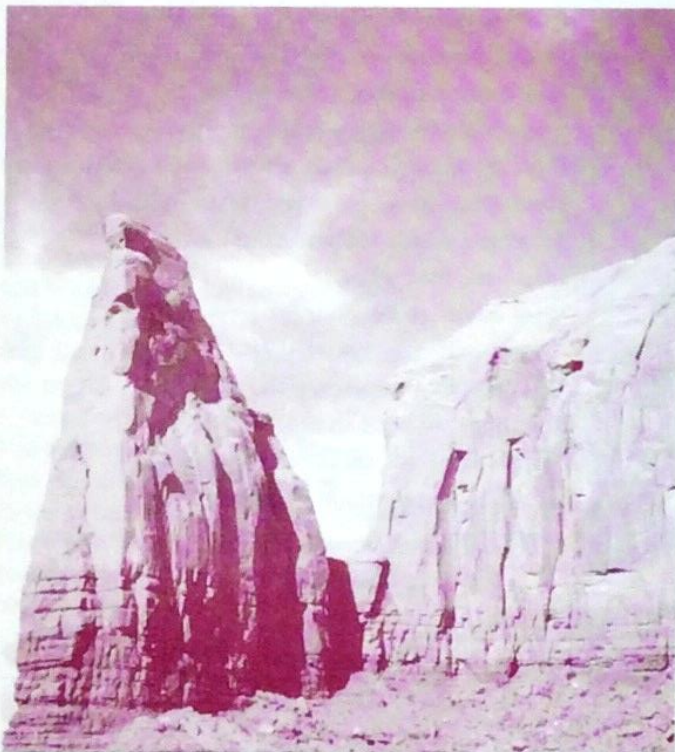
Christen Me In Monotony
Rabi Shook

So strong
holding down the rising scream
that echoes cynically through deafened ears
pleading for a savior that never comes.
Wishing now that you could feel her beneath you
able to plant your fears in her as solace,
although each time the sky sheds a tear for
the human anomaly, they return. . .
Knocking us back a few more steps each time,
sorting through us like vine ripened produce
and what would we expect from so many
sleeping minds too underfed to survive
the long cold winter.
Not anymore than our progenitors felt
necessary to endow us with.
Hopelessly scraping up the pieces of
memory we hold so dear.
For what, but a small, small place in
the hearts and minds of those we've
forgotten.

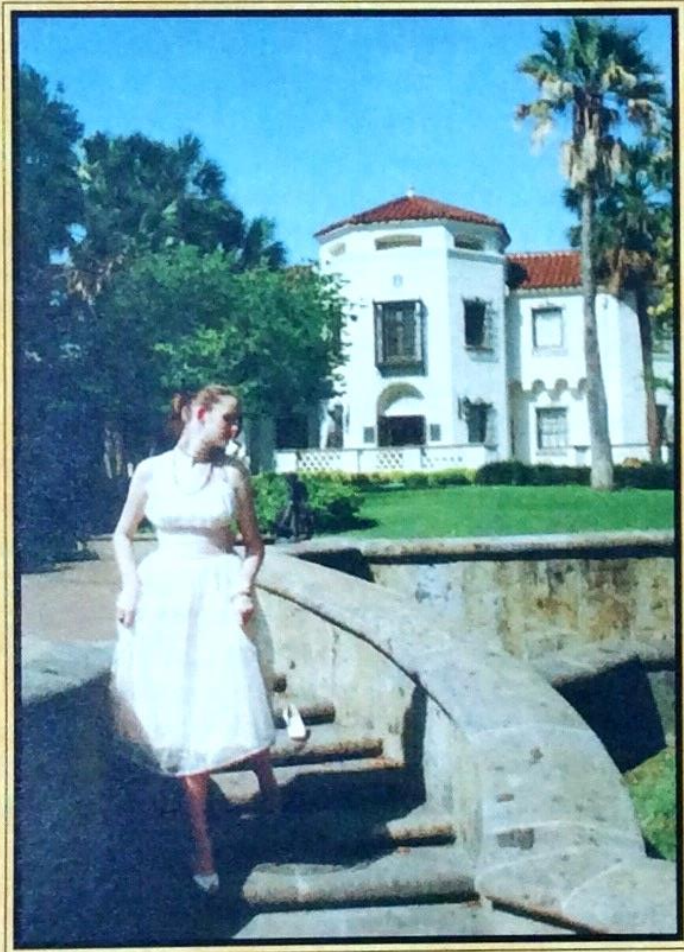
Sand Castles
Amy McGuff



When we were younger we would play in the sand
You would pull my chestnut curls
And I would pull your blonde braids
That more often than not made you look like an angel
Now I see you in the hallways
I want to run to you, hug you
Braid your hair and put pretty red bows in it
Lead you to a sandy spot where we could build castles
Draw with fallen sticks
'Til we were on the ground laughing
But we don't laugh anymore
You have dyed your hair crimson red
And do not speak to me
You say I am superficial and transparent
You say you see right through me
You don't want anyone to know you wore pink frilly dresses
And always wanted to be the mommy
I am a horrid reminder that your hair is not the color of blood
That you are not as dark as the black layers
Covering your fragile body
So I tuck my hair (still chestnut brown) behind my ear
When I pass you in the hall
I will stare at the white brown tiles
Trying not to think about bows or sand castles that were
Long ago swallowed by the sea



Nicole Czech



Once Upon A Time . . .

When Cinderella was very young her mother died. Her father remarried a wicked lady who had two ugly daughters. Cinderella worked hard every day for her stepmother and stepsisters, but they said her work never amounted to anything. Cinderella's stepsisters created so much work for Cinderella that she could never go dancing like her sisters did.

One day, from the palace where the prince lived, announcements were sent to every unwed woman in the kingdom. Even Cinderella and her wicked stepsisters, who lived in the last house of the kingdom, received a royal invitation to the ballroom dance.

Cinderella bubbled with excitement over finally getting a chance to go dancing. However, her sisters soon informed her of all the chores she had to do before she even thought about going. The day of the royal ball, Cinderella worked diligently and completed every job she had. Still, the stepsisters would not allow Cinderella to go because she had no dress to wear.

Left in rags to cry by the cinders while her sisters went to the royal dance, Cinderella felt helpless. Fortunately for the poor girl, her fairy godmother showed up, and with the wave of a magic wand, decked out Cinderella in a stunning gown with glass slippers. She turned a pumpkin into a horse-drawn carriage, and sent her off to the ball with the stipulation that Cinderella must return home by midnight.

When Cinderella arrived at the palace, all those attending the ball were astonished at this mysterious girl's beauty. The prince was captivated and danced the entire evening away with Cinderella.

All too soon the clock struck twelve, and Cinderella ran down the palace steps. In her haste, she hardly noticed the loss of one of her delicate slippers, and then the magic ended. Cinderella found herself walking home in ash-covered rags.

The next day, the ritual of Cinderella's sisters taunting her continued as usual. However, the prince traveled to every house looking for a foot small enough to fit into the tiny glass slipper. The prince found Cinderella slaving at her house, but he made her try on the shoe anyway. The shoe fit, and Cinderella produced its glass mate from the folds of her dress.

The prince whisked Cinderella off to the palace away from her cinders and wretched family. Soon after, the prince and Cinderella married and lived happily ever after.

Disconnected
Roseanne Lane

you could sit
endless hours
Watching re-runs on Telamundo'
revamping your memory
with a photo album
of cousins you have yet to meet

And i am **detached**
listening to the clouds
fumble the moon
the stars hide behind
their own shadows

Listening to you speak
rigid tongue
In Tex-Mex to your madre'
on the phone
the line is bad
your words are broken to segments

We could hold
onto each other
If i hadn't been brought up
with such a loose grip
your hands
swelled with protruding veins
i watch pulsating as you
continually adjust the volume

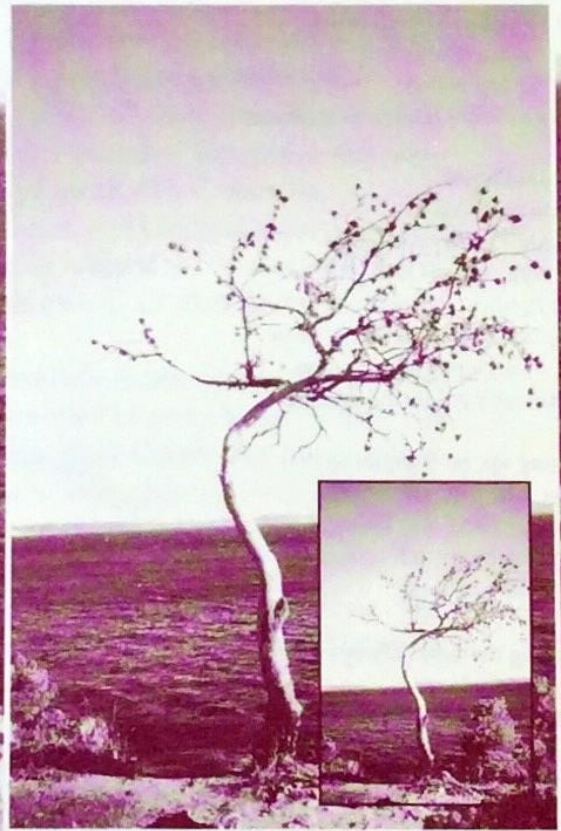
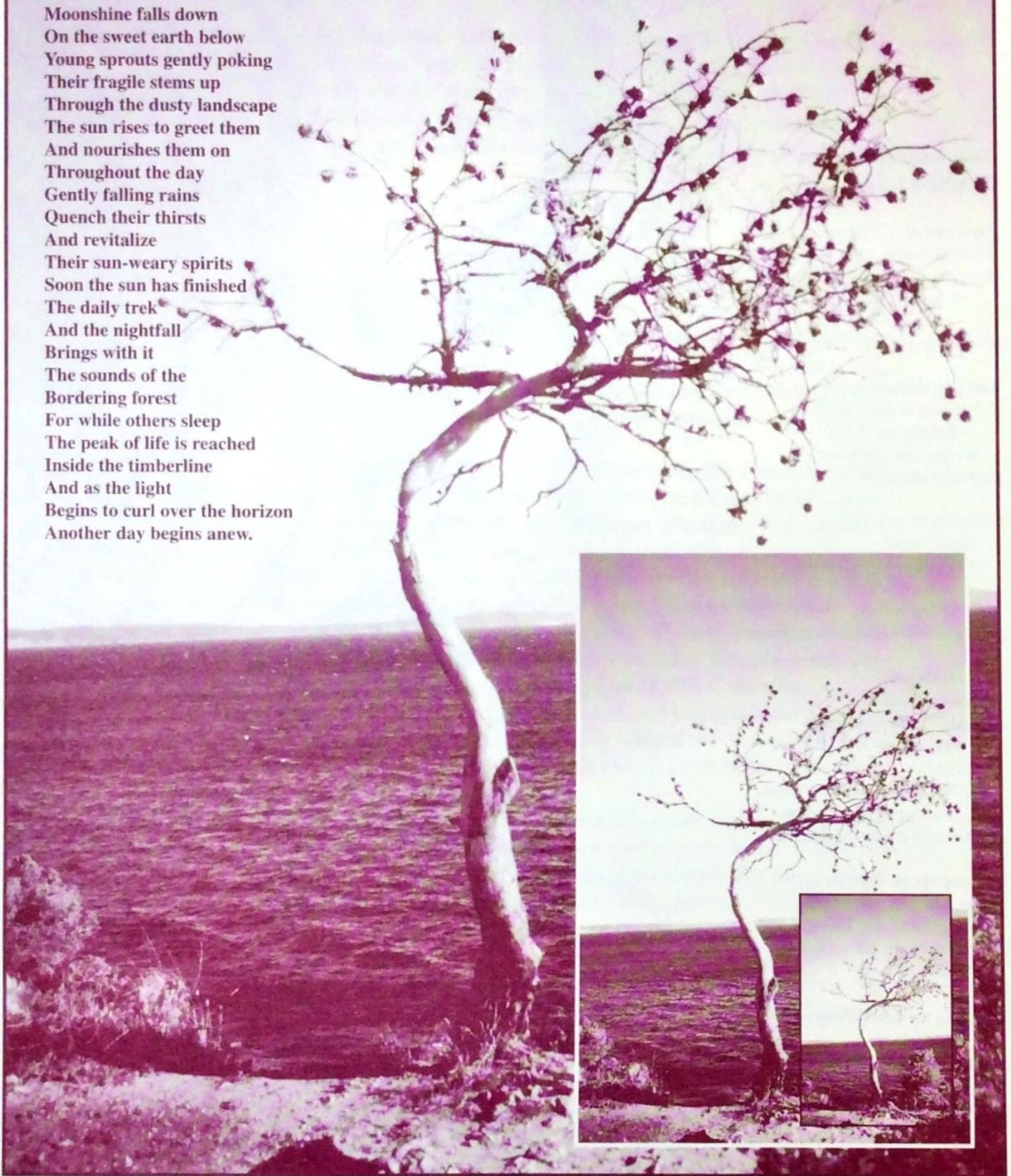
Hanging up, or disconnected,
you turn your attention
to the mindless chaos
Spoken on the television
and turn it off

Watching me undo my eye
from yours
you say you could sit
endless hours
listening to my silence

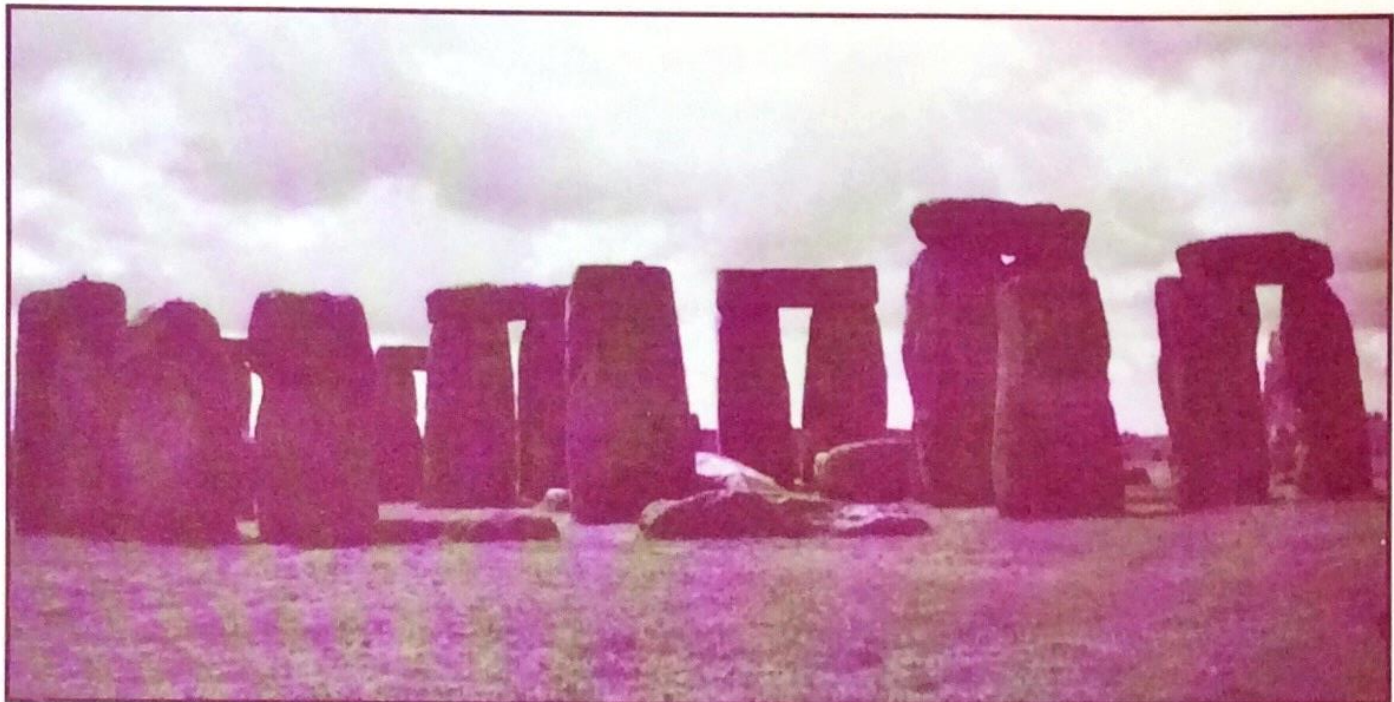


Life Anew
Keith Shaw

Moonshine falls down
On the sweet earth below
Young sprouts gently poking
Their fragile stems up
Through the dusty landscape
The sun rises to greet them
And nourishes them on
Throughout the day
Gently falling rains
Quench their thirsts
And revitalize
Their sun-weary spirits
Soon the sun has finished
The daily trek
And the nightfall
Brings with it
The sounds of the
Bordering forest
For while others sleep
The peak of life is reached
Inside the timberline
And as the light
Begins to curl over the horizon
Another day begins anew.



Michael Rey



Samantha Ardison

honoring the sun

Rebecca Rosser

i
following orion across the cerulean sky
pulling the finger nail moon down with him
over the horizon the first rays of
heat - - hope appear
to end the strawberry spring

ii
burns red and flaming
poison seeping into your blood
cancer eating away your skin
you give as much death
as you do life

iii
the only constant in my life
i am sure of the rising
and the setting
of the sun


iv
they say you represent the sun
nurturing mother
lover
i say you are
blinding

v
high noon
everyone outside
beware of *bisy backsons*
pooled darkly under foot
they may be the only ones you get

vi
the hammock holding you (me)
facing the river
into the hills and cliffs of mexico
covered in cacti
and carved caves
ready to swallow into the core
the glowing ominous sun

vii
i can prove to you
the world is round
standing on the edge
of the atlantic ocean
take flight and face a country
(i prefer scotland)
the moment the sun breaches
illuminates the water
you will see the gentle curve
of the earth





Dancing With a Woman with Rose Petal Hair
Jay Whitecotton

Dancing in a shower of neon and glitter
With a woman with rose petal hair
Life tastes cold and bitter
Driving away my thoughts with nothing to spare
Are you blind when there's nothing to see
Are you alive when there's nothing to be
Hissing cold whispers of nothing to care
Living life full and fair
Dancing with a woman with rose petal hair

Emerald green gin soaked eyes
Bathe me with natural love and roses
Can't stay away from her soul cracked cries
Wondering if she knows (does she know, does she know)
Red fields below a thorned dance
She's trouble but I can't break her trance
Can't leave that gin emerald stare
Because her love is so rare
Dancing with a woman with rose petal hair

Eloquent steps of a song of joy and life
Listen to her speak her laugh is a shriek of soul
If I'm silent will she become my wife
Will her soft lipped smile speak of love
All her dreams flowing in a blue sky dress
I heal her pains when we caress
Won't run won't die will only dare
Dare to dream that I can care
Dancing with a woman with rose petal hair

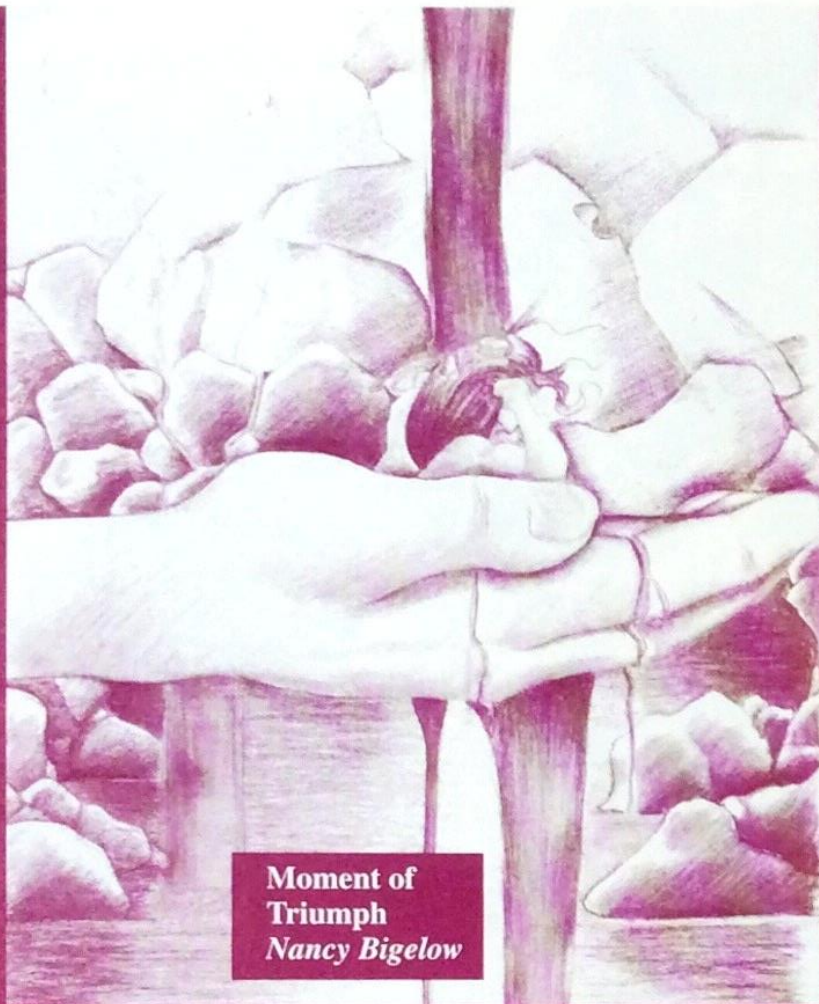


Sarah Christensen

Wood Nymphs
Bullseye 1995



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**Moment of
Triumph**
Nancy Bigelow

Josh Rudloff

The world may seem cold and gray,
The rain may be falling,
But remember every cloud
Has a silver lining.
Just because the sun can't be seen,
Doesn't mean it's not there.
One day, the harsh land will bloom.
The sun will shine through,
And the light will defeat the darkness.
The unforgiving landscape
Can become a paradise.
Even a long rain ceases to fall,
And a rainbow is born.
The dismal feeling can be fought,
And be conquered.
Dreams can come true,
If they're believed in enough.
The oppressing mist will melt away,
The sun will shine triumphantly,
And everything will become
As it used to be.





Hopeless Obsession
Shellie Sexton

Jason Cardona

Am I beautiful
Am I great
Am I pretty
Pretty enough for you
Am I you
Am I good enough for you

Can I love you
Touch you
Caress you
Kiss you
Will you kiss me

Forgive me I have been foolish
No matter what I do, it would
never
be good enough

I would hold you
Accompany you

Care for you
Lie for you
Kill for you
Die for you
I would give you my heart

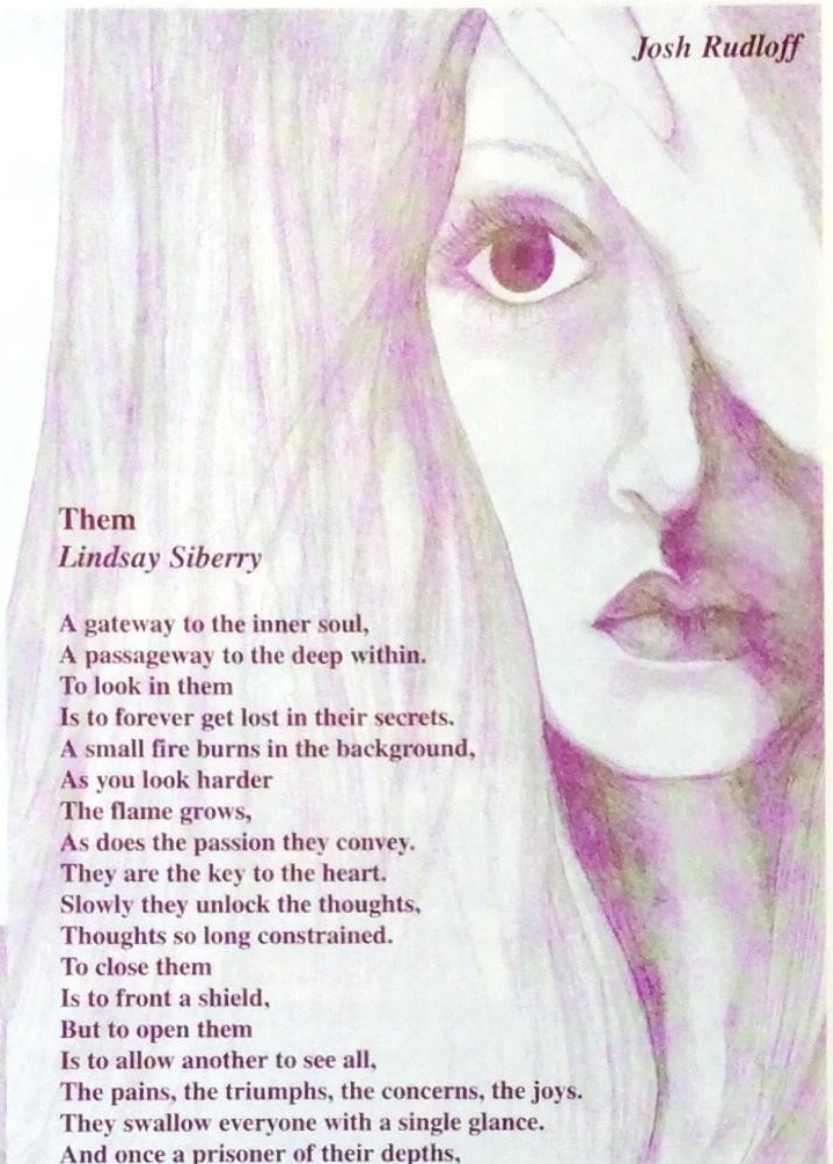
With my innocent hand I would
rip
into my chest
I would bear my heart while
you watch

I would do anything for you
I need you
I want you
I know you don't want me

But before this ends
Answer me one question...

What's your name?





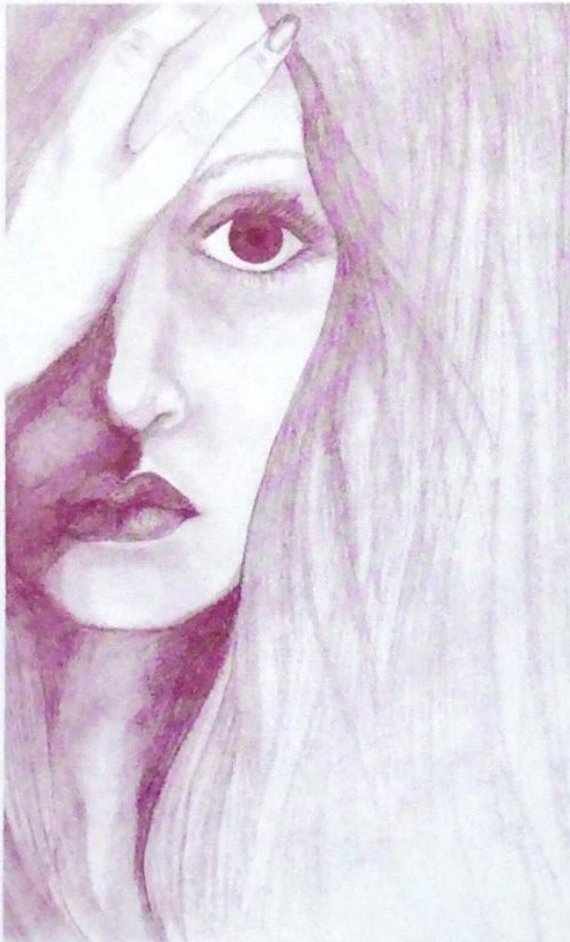
Josh Rudloff

Them

Lindsay Siberry

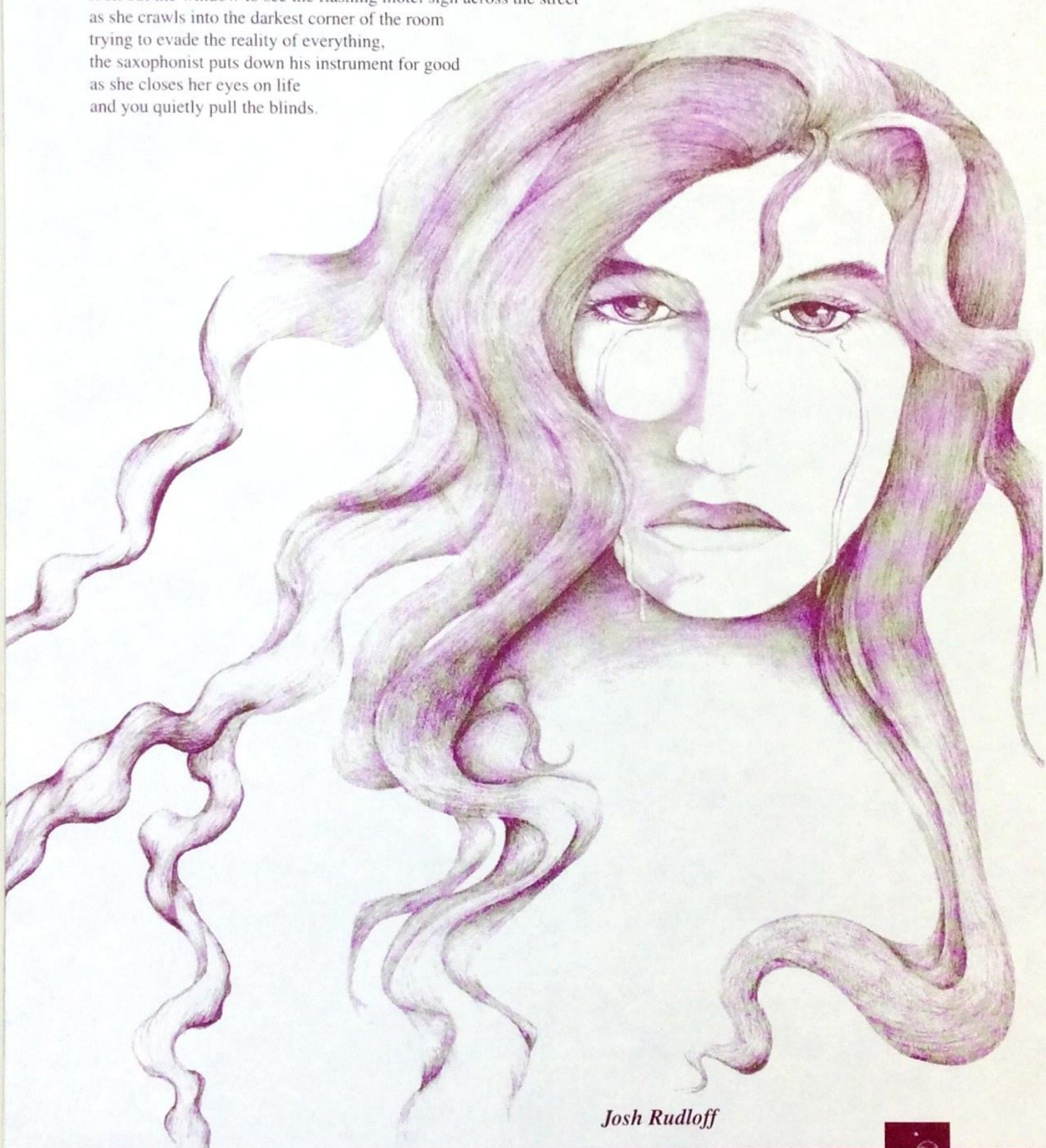
A gateway to the inner soul,
A passageway to the deep within.
To look in them
Is to forever get lost in their secrets.
A small fire burns in the background,
As you look harder
The flame grows,
As does the passion they convey.
They are the key to the heart.
Slowly they unlock the thoughts,
Thoughts so long constrained.
To close them
Is to front a shield,
But to open them
Is to allow another to see all,
The pains, the triumphs, the concerns, the joys.
They swallow everyone with a single glance.
And once a prisoner of their depths,
Never again shall you be free.
Free from their influence, their intensity,
But it is worth the burden,
For once you hold the key,
The flame burns higher and brighter.
And as the warmth overwhelms the soul of the spectator,
The beholder too is warmed,
And they are one.

Karen McBurney



find salvation
Nicole Moore

find salvation in the very sorrow of her frustrated screams
and kiss the salt water teardrop which has fallen on to your arm-
mocking her pain,
look out the window to see the flashing motel sign across the street
as she crawls into the darkest corner of the room
trying to evade the reality of everything,
the saxophonist puts down his instrument for good
as she closes her eyes on life
and you quietly pull the blinds.



Josh Rudloff





Burnside
Jayne Farrell

Calloused Hands
caress my protruding ribs.
Chills.

MOMENT OF SPLENDOR
I'll weave my implacable web
and keep this instant
forever.
As my own.
Burn into the memory so that
when my eyelids meet
we are still there.

I, the FOOL,
you, the DESTROYER,
intertwined as one.
Carl Jung said it shouldn't happen.
It did,
wonderfully,
better than ever.
Sharing a pillow and
monochromatic dreams
of flight.
Sweeping the stars from the twilight,
gathering as many
as our arms will cradle.

We stop and count our fading sparklies.
134...
135...
136...

136 ways I know to tell you
I'm falling
Have fallen
so far gone.
But none quite
sharp enough
to break through...
in voice.

Instead only a
bittersweet kiss
bringing you
back to me.



That Glorious Day
Sean Palen

The thin white line between
the ocean and the land,
the small lines on the palm of her hand
crumble and scratch
as she picks up each tiny grain of sand.
The castles she would build
just to watch them wash away,
nothing could harm her on that glorious day.

Josh Rudloff





Dustin Goebel

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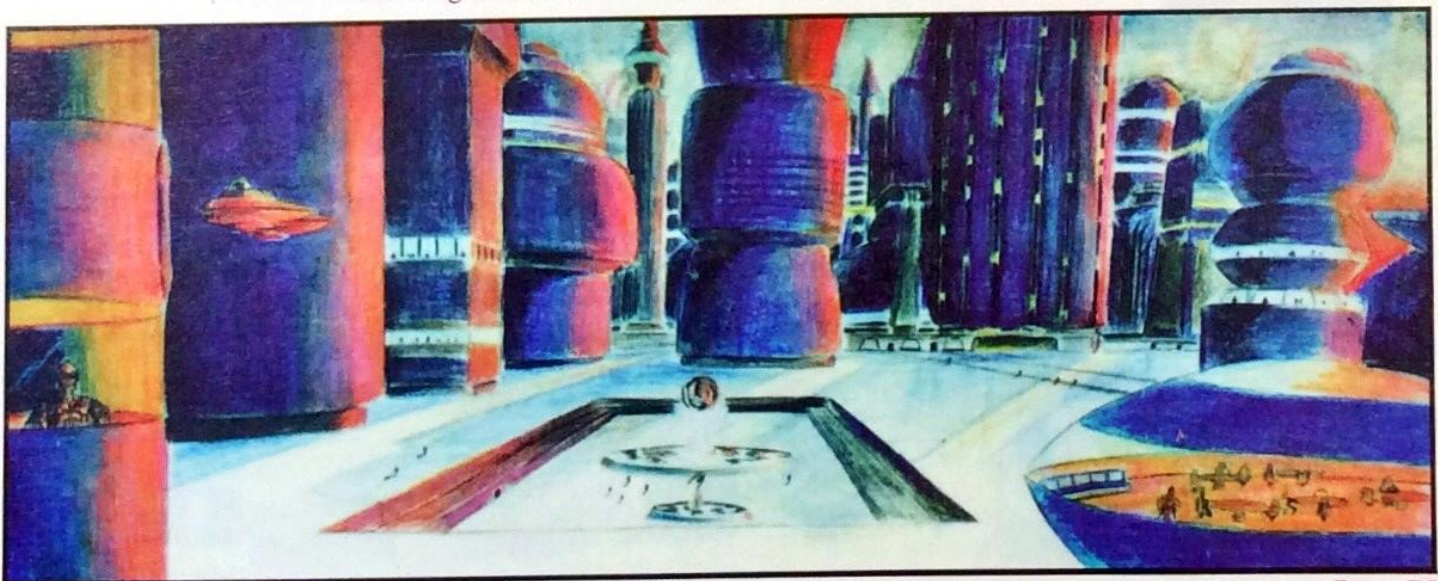
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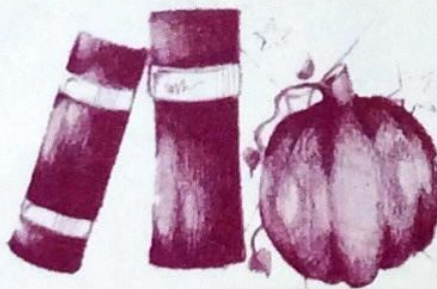
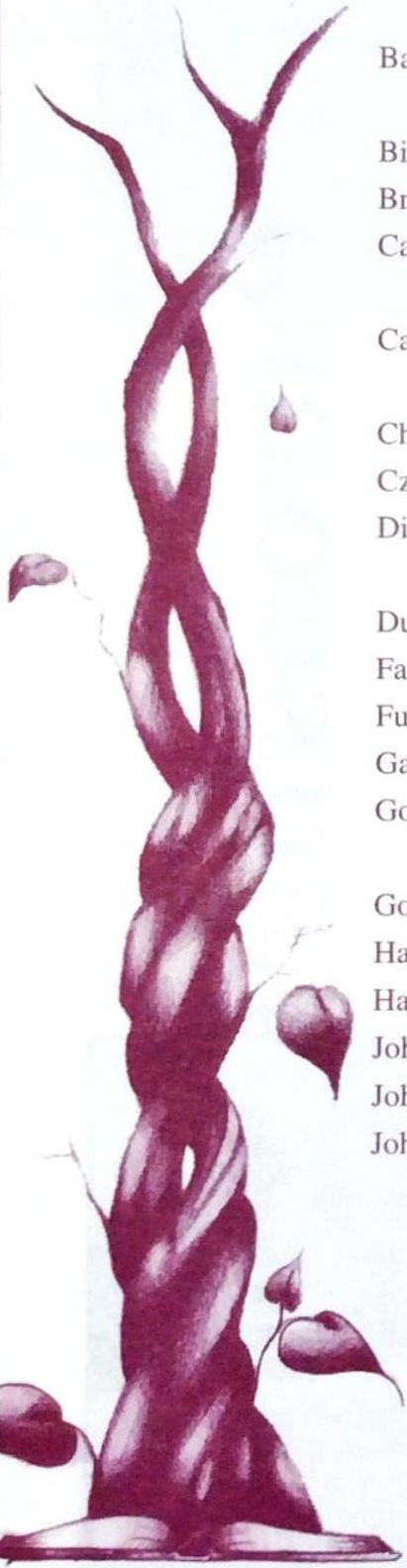
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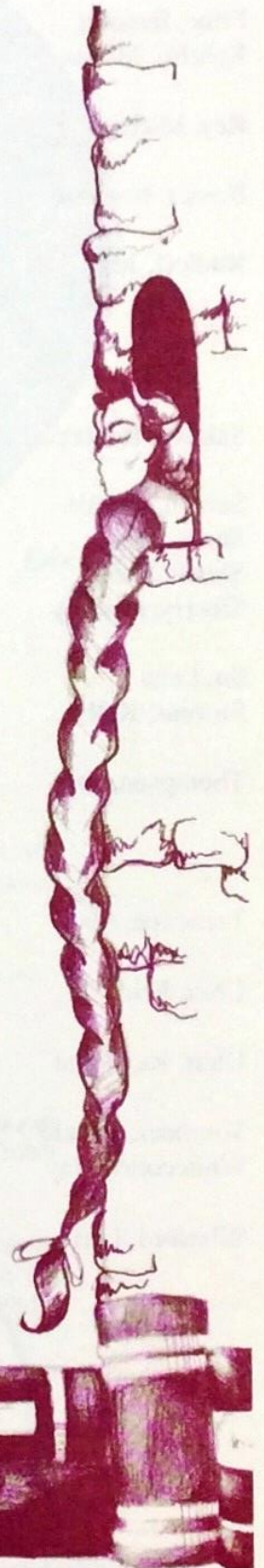
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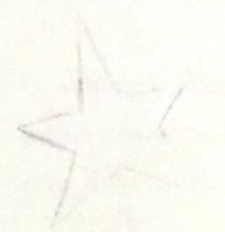
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Eric Haynes

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Texas High School Press Association: Texas Honor Rating 1989; State Champion 1990-1992; Reserve State Champion 1994; Honor Roll of Excellence 1992-1994; Best Cover 1993

National High School Press Association: Best of Show Competition 1991-1994; 2nd in Nation 1991-1992; 4th in Nation 1993; 8th in Nation 1994

Merlyn's Pen: Bronze Medal Award 1993-1994

American Scholastic Press Association: First Place with Special Merit (Highest Award) 1991-1994; 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; All Columbian Award for Concept 1990, 1992; All Columbian Award for Creativity 1990, 1992; All Columbian Award for Design 1992; Silver Crown Award 1991; Gold Crown Award 1992

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

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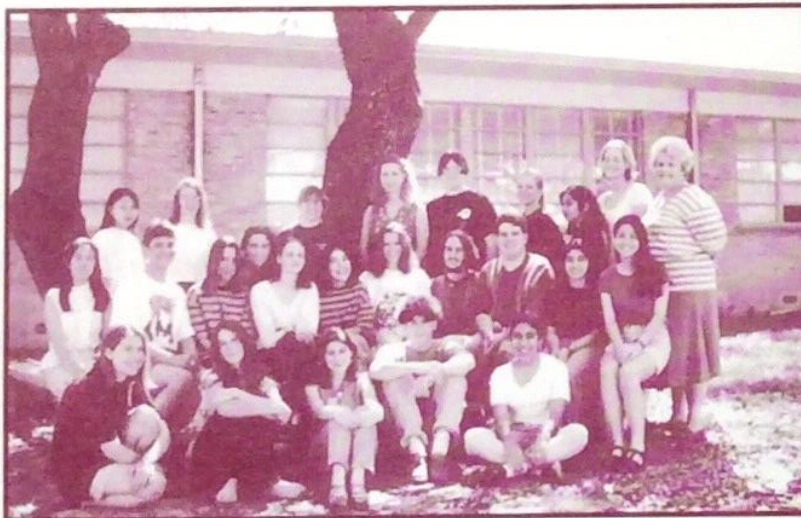
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*And They All Lived
Happily Ever After . . .*

