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MacArthur High School

BULLSEYE



2006



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Bullseye 2006

Volume 22

The Literary and Art Magazine
of
Douglas MacArthur High School

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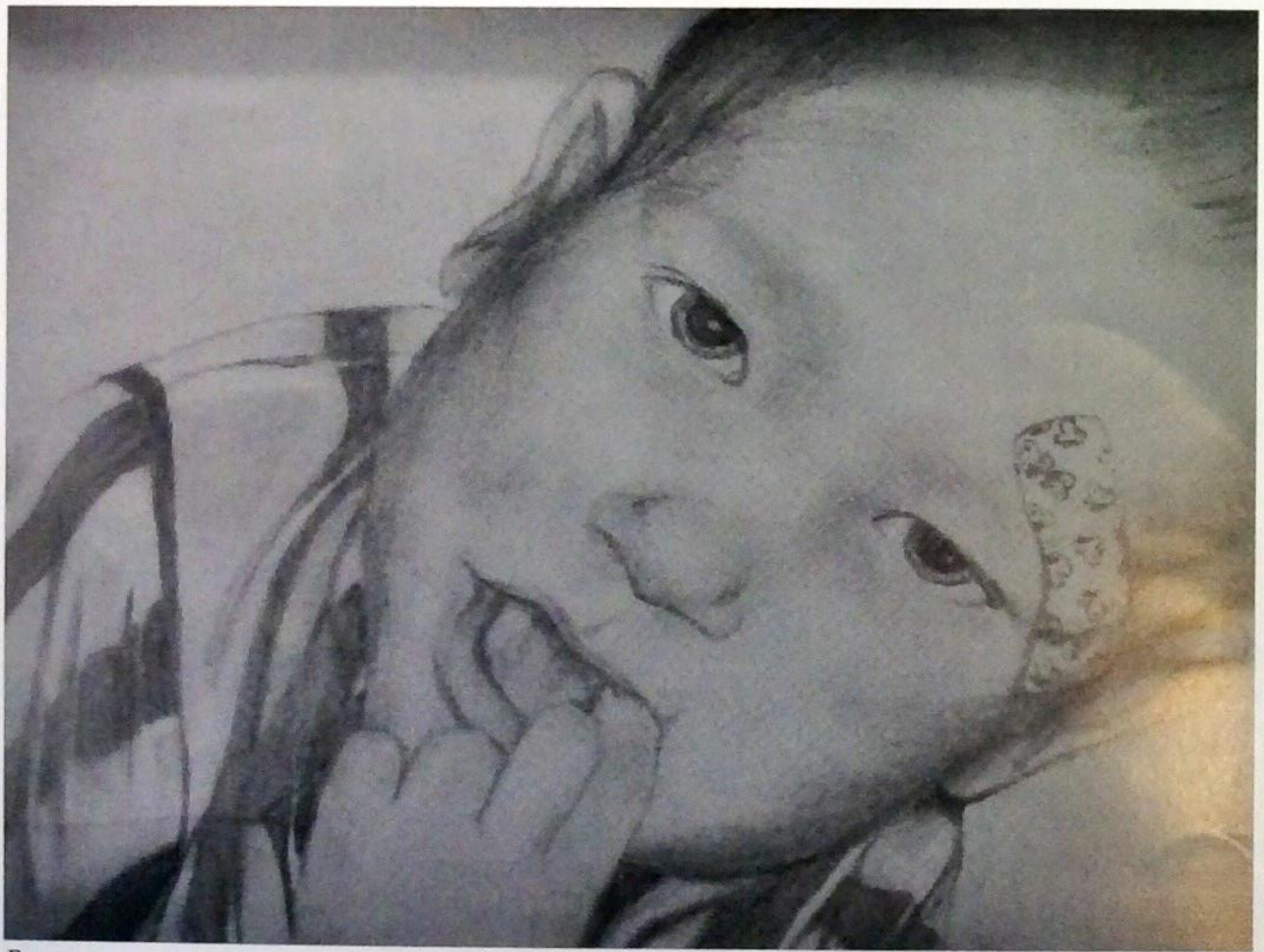
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Ray

Derek De La Cruz

mission statement

BULLSEYE 2006 is a collaborative effort of student and faculty writers and artists to showcase their work in a professionally produced magazine. Submissions for publication in the magazine are open to the entire student body and faculty. Text and art entries are selected through a three-round anonymous judging process by BULLSEYE staff and advisors.

awards and memberships

American Scholastic Press Association: First Place with Special Merit 2005; First Place 2002

The Columbia Scholastic Press Association: Bronze Medalist 2005; Silver Medalist 2002; Bronze Medalist 2000

National Council of Teachers of English: Superior Rating 2005; Excellent Rating 2002; Superior Rating 2000

National Scholastic Press Association: First Class with Three Marks of Distinction 2005, 2002, 2000

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Camouflage Art by Linda Arriaga and Avery Moore



Brody Dalle

bullseye

Stefani La'key

offense

marianna torres

This is for those who are offended by me,
 offended by others, just offended generally.
You come here expecting a show,
 then at the end turn up your nose saying, "Oh God, no!"
Because you were offended by a few little words you could have chosen not to listen to,
 you go and complain saying that they hurt you.
Use that system to bring us down,
 drag down our freedom along with our brothers and sisters across the sea,
 just cause you're offended by lil' ol' me.
Our families have fought for freedom, and, my God, we got it:
 Rapists writing books, manuals on homemade bombs,
 porn everywhere you look, suicide, and satanic dot coms.
All of these horrible things that come to be
 because our founding fathers wanted to be free?
 Yes.
I don't read those books, or make those bombs,
 or look in those pornographic directions, or go to those satanic dot coms.
The freedom that allows me to offend you,
 allows me to say no to those things that offend me.
So say no to me,
 come up and tell me I'm wrong, and that's fine.
I'm wrong in your eyes and right in mine.
But I'll be damned if I'm going to go complain to the system because I'm offended by your
 few little words--
 words I can choose not to listen to.
How did you (something I would never do if offended by you)
 walk upon that ground to the office and look at the administrators with a frown and
 say CoffeeHouse should be shut down?
Now, that deeply offended us here,
 but I will not complain to the system, 'cause, unlike you,
 I respect your freedom, cherish mine, and love this country.



life is a candle

megan bunsey

The burnt wax holds the memories
As we are forced to look behind us.
The candle begins to fade.
It ends with a whisper
And a blow from the creator.

la vida es como una vela

translated into spanish by

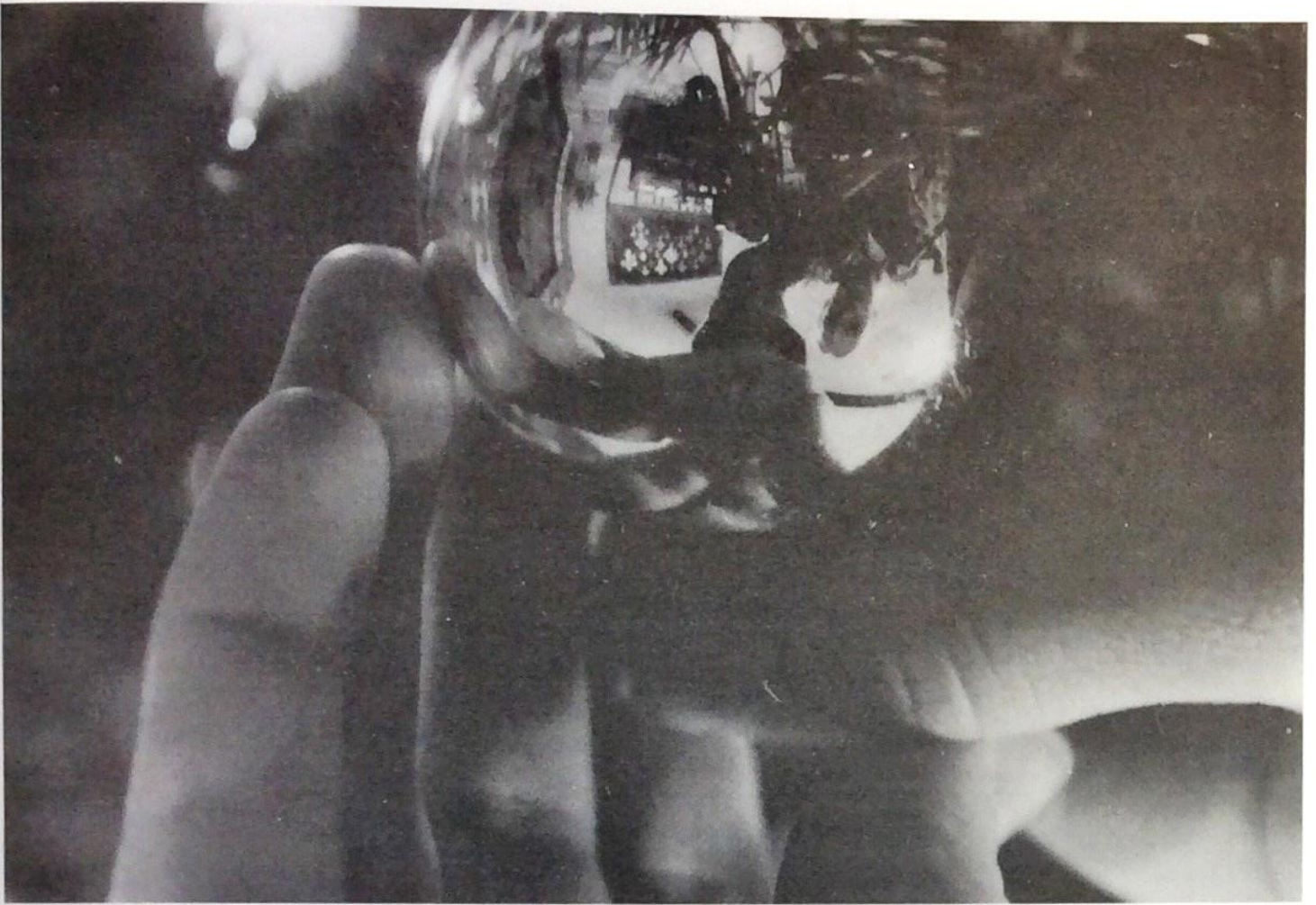
luis torres

La cera quemada aguanta las memorias
Y somos forçados a mirar hacia atrás.
La vela empieza a palidecer
Termina con un susurro
Y un soplo del creador.



The Illusionist

Josiah Castillo



Self-Portrait

Aimee Moore

my canvas
amy ochoa

I flip the switch and like a spotlight it shines on a section of my room.
I stare at the blank canvas and try to imagine a world of paint--
A world that has no lines, borders, that goes on forever.
A thought starts to come to mind.
I choose from all the vibrant colors that catch my eye
As my hands move up and down and side to side.
My dreams and thoughts become a reality.
I'm focused.
But in a blink of an eye my mind turns empty.
I walk away with half of my world on a piece of canvas.
I flip the switch and once again my room is dark, full of my wondering thoughts.

sifter (prologue?)

seth king

No matter how many times I go through, I remain oblivious throughout each experience. Perhaps you remember during it. By the time I usually focus enough of my spirit to realize what's going on, however, it's time to die again. Although from this state of being I'd warn myself against figuring out what's going on. Imprisonment is less painstaking when you don't know it's happening, but the awareness of imprisonment might come close to knowing you'll soon be trapped again.

My mistake came when I inserted humanity into my universal scheme; I wanted love, "the irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired," as I put it one time. Unfortunately, my infinite desire was reciprocated, and humanity developed an insatiable craving for me, one that will last for eternity apparently. Sadly, they're quite indecisive on what exactly they crave, and with the remnants of my last life still active, I feel like an irritable waiter before a customer who spends an eternity ordering.

They tried containing me within the sun first, and then in the earth itself, and the moon. But there certainly was never enough power in those purely physical bodies to contain my "grandeur." So they fashioned several outfits for me in the form of multiple deities. It was in that span when I first awoke from a human life. I vaguely remembered gold, heat, and worshipping an interpretation of me that bore the resemblance of a jackal. The exponential expansion of humanity's spiritual force allied with societal development of precise molds of me created enough synergy to catch me off guard.

This continued for quite a while. More definite "memories" (recovered gaps in celestial knowledge for humans) included gold, silver, and bronze pyramidal structures, and several instances of great power on the human planet. My earthshaking conquests and expansions of civilization of one life

somehow translated into a leafy side dish I would consume "years" later. I also recall keys to flying kites and the rediscovery of my brilliant design of electricity. So imprisonment is enjoyable at times, when I'm allowed to revel in the glory of my natural power.

But that's irrelevant in the grand scheme of things.

You see, humanity began to consider a singular form of me. With multiple forms, it was unlikely for enough focus to be on one form as to force an incarnation. But then, the

THE IRRESISTIBLE DESIRE TO BE IRRE- SISTIBLY DESIRED.

monotheism initiated strong bonds like those I had never felt. Suddenly, there was intense need, intense belief, intense dependence. Those who didn't need me or believe in me depended on those who did as antagonists or for power. The incarnations have been almost constant since then. And my own power overcame my will: the gateways I had opened for spiritual interconnectedness with humanity were instead used to pull me over to their side of the energy spectrum. Their bonds continually pull me into their world, and irony—which somehow became a central theme in my universe—cackles at me: the more I must serve in their realm, the less I do in mine, and, therefore, the more they depend on me and the more I must serve in my realm, then the less I do in mine, which increases their dependence further, which pulls me into their realm more and . . .

I fear that I will soon become wholly one of them, to be able to achieve extinction at a human death. Now my dependence on you has become critical. Before, I simply

used you to distract them from my power so that I might focus elsewhere, but now I'll soon be trapped and holocausts will occur in my complete absence. That is why your mission must be accomplished. Eternal paradise awaits you if you might only lure them away from me for a moment. It's all I need, just a second to break the bonds and separate my energies from theirs, just a moment to shut the gate that binds our spirits, just an instant to abolish their dependence on me, time for me to escape from them and for them to establish their own strength.

Therefore, I must grant you true independence now, Lucifer, not another phony revolution to instill a sense of conflict within humanity. Bear your load like Atlas and . . . I must go yet again. I've never adjusted to the linear time constraints that shackle me—I had eternity to ponder and now, only a moment. Free me, because for me it's too late--it's time to live.



Canyon de Chelly



The Inarticulate

Josiah Castillo

courting the chloroplast

eric mielke

Chloroplast, oh chloroplast,
So beautiful and green.
You're too small for my naked eye,
But with microscope you're seen.

Chloroplast, oh chloroplast,
I have a great confession.
Your way of photosynthesis
Is, for me, my one obsession.

Chloroplast, you chloroplast,
Your pigment turns me on.
That photosynthetic chlorophyll
Makes me want to burst in song.

Chloroplast, oh chloroplast,
Of you I'd overdose!
Watching water, light, and air,
Becoming sweet glucose.

Chloroplast, dear chloroplast,
You're the sweetest of the sweet,
Making magic glucose food:
A tempting sugar treat.

But chloroplast, my chloroplast,
You live in plant cell only.
And knowing you're not part of me
Makes me awfully lonely.

Chloroplast, oh chloroplast
You don't do your double membrane
To block unwanted particles,
And it's driving me insane.

Chloroplast, oh chloroplast!
I love your thylakoid!
I'll never leave your stoma gel.
Don't be paranoid.

Chloroplast, you chloroplast,
You move through cytoplasm.
Coily gliding gently by
Just to see me spasm.

Chloroplast, oh chloroplast,
There's little else to tell,
Except you know that, in my eyes,
You're my favorite organelle.

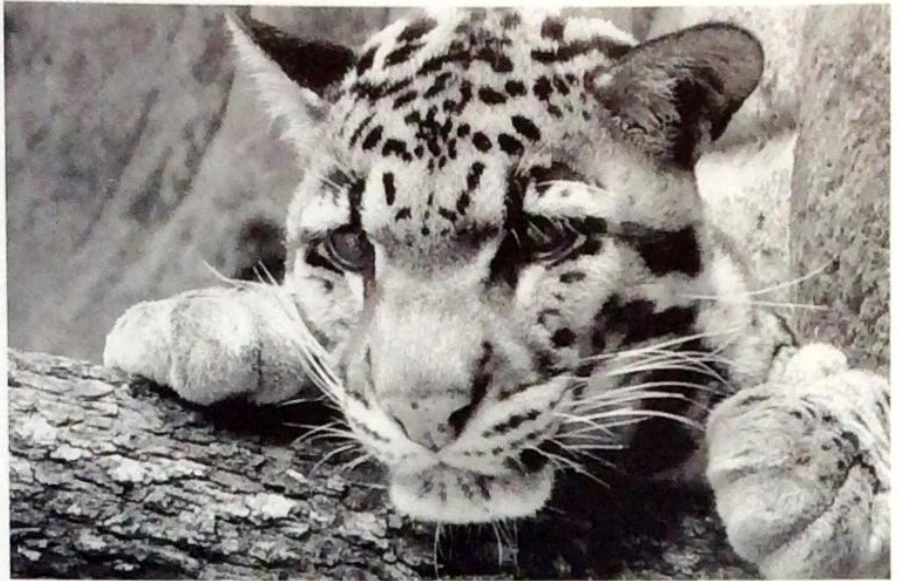
cheese obsession

alexandra villalobos

People are like lab mice
rushing to and fro,
racing to find the cheese,
sometimes getting shocked,
learning,
taking a different route.

And not a single mouse realizes
if everyone got together
and formed a mouse pyramid
they could escape the maze and live free.

They're just too busy looking for cheese.



Jaguar

Peggy Williams, English Teacher

Balancing

Under

Life's

Legacy

Sharing

Especially

Your

Experiences

sallie filippini



Dinosaur

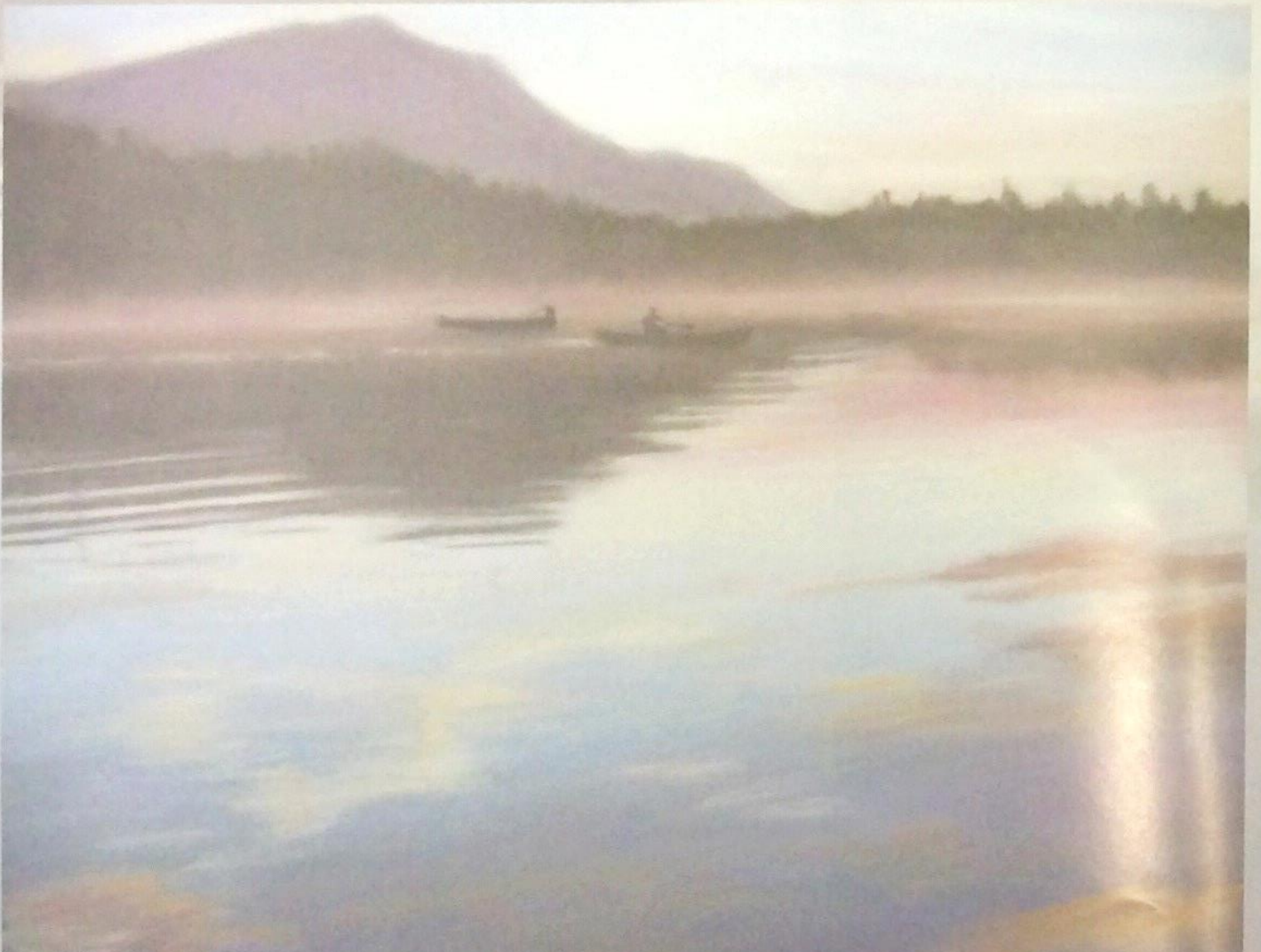
Kenan Jackson

celestial

jennifer schrauth

Whispers of moonlight
Slivers of voice
Taste-buds scream out
The throat is sated

Blue skins rub another's
White hair whips the face
Reflections of the celestial
Same black eyes



Serenity

Shannon Jones



Serenity Bay

Kim Jones

Tree branches screech
The pain bites back
So much to conquer
The sounds are delicious

Burning embers within
Languid desires
Ravenous mouths open
Souls toss and turn

Enraptured bodies
Ancient magic
Whispers of moonlight
Slivers of voice

bipartisan

Michelle Jones

On the edge of political sadism, we stand the risk of the bastardization of the people's right by slights and snaps, the subtle attacks of two corrupt parties.

We wave our foam fingers, while the sentiment lingers—of two hundred years, the jeers of both sides ringing in aging ears.

And they become the same as they rejected—the most highly respected leeches in Washington, lacing Armanis while we patch our old Wellingtons.

But I don't believe that. Not really.

We each have our respective shoes, our different backgrounds, our varied hues. They may wring each other's necks, they may dodge attempted decks . . . but it's equal-opportunity displays of heathen savagery, and I sadly accept the inept bickering of our leading politicians.



Kerryotype

Eunjin Suh

the epidemic

avery moore

"We must stop the rock! It kills your will to keep going in life. So stay focused. Pay your bills. Go home to your wife. For God's sake, if left alone, who knows, it'll get to me next. It'll stop your heart, you know, tear your family apart, and maybe it'll get you a new boyfriend in the pen. Do what you will, but don't grin, I'm serious. You'll get butt-raped and duct taped to the bars and it's hard to get over that solely on HMO counseling. I know it's wack, and seems temporarily glamorous indeed. It increases your need for speed and then you'll run right into a wall. Unless you stop, of course."

"I tried. I swear, I really did, but my will's not too strong, I'm only a kid."

"Don't give me that flabba jabba, you know as well as I do, that it's bullsh--. You don't want to quit; you wanna kill people for living, have Swanson's for Thanksgiving, and blow up half of your garage."

"But success seems like a mirage, sir. Hey, at least it doesn't give you cancer."

"So what? You little _____. You're going down hill, and if you don't prevent the epidemic you might as well take that little red pill. You ill willed little prick."

"Sir, I'm sick, this addiction is a disease."

"A disease that forces you to please your supplier, your pimp!"

"My pimp? No, my endurance is limp and I feel like a hummingbird."

"You're not even listening, you never deserved a moment of my time. You're trapped in a glass house and I'm throwing stones, but the funny thing is . . . nobody's home."

"Listen, stiff, working Joe, man-of-the-year, A-number-one, you have no right to speak to me this way. That hurt and you joke and I could just . . ."

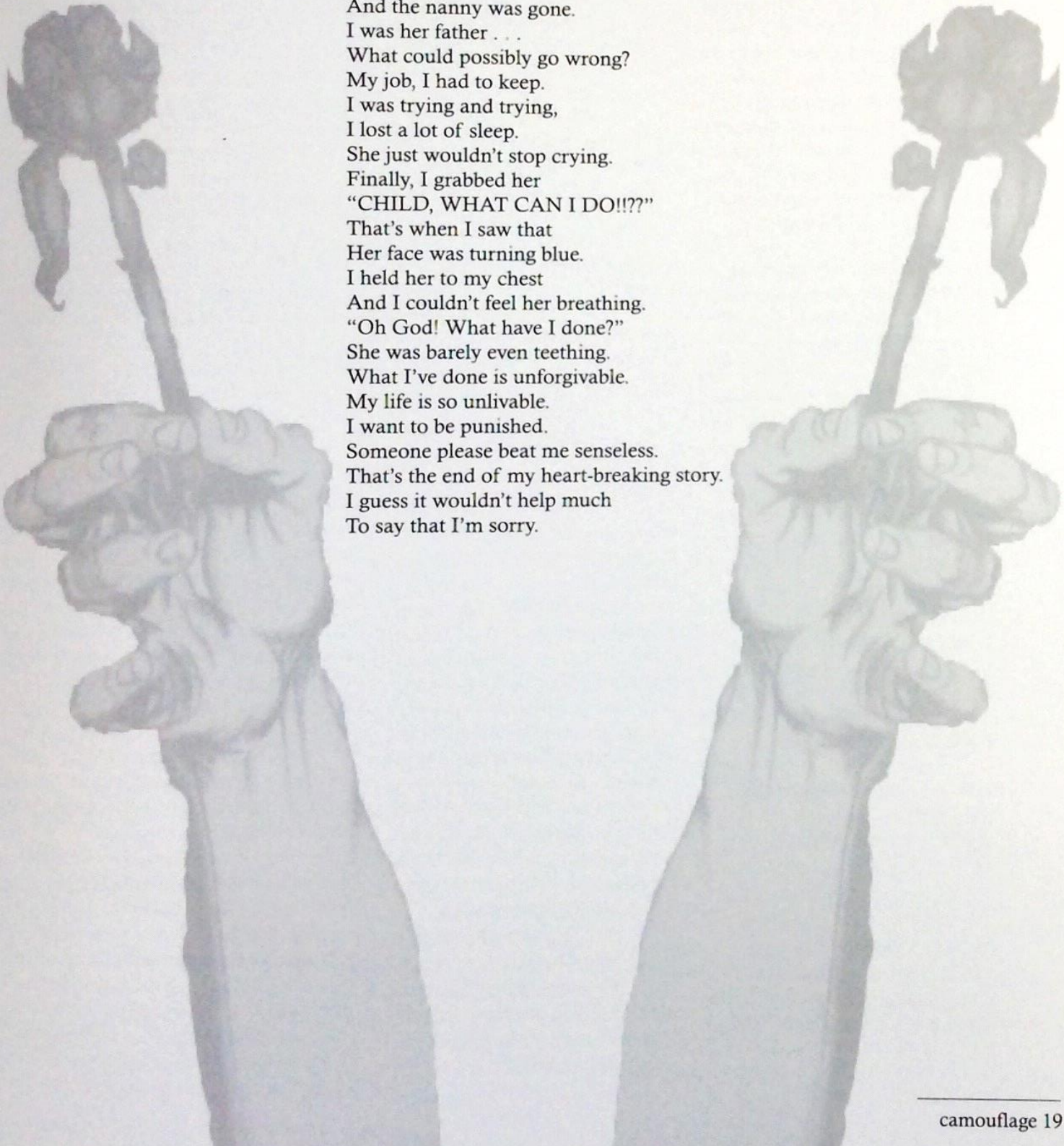
"Croak? Your morals lack good deeds. You're a crack fiend, but at least death will set you free."



Pollination

confession

solomon white

A faint, artistic illustration of two hands, one on the left and one on the right, each holding a single rose. The hands are rendered in a light, sketchy style, and the roses are also faintly visible. The background is a soft, light blue gradient.

Forgive me, Father
For I have sinned.
There's so much to confess
I don't know where to begin.
My wife was out of town
And the nanny was gone.
I was her father . . .
What could possibly go wrong?
My job, I had to keep.
I was trying and trying,
I lost a lot of sleep.
She just wouldn't stop crying.
Finally, I grabbed her
"CHILD, WHAT CAN I DO!!??"
That's when I saw that
Her face was turning blue.
I held her to my chest
And I couldn't feel her breathing.
"Oh God! What have I done?"
She was barely even teething.
What I've done is unforgivable.
My life is so unlivable.
I want to be punished.
Someone please beat me senseless.
That's the end of my heart-breaking story.
I guess it wouldn't help much
To say that I'm sorry.

eloi, eloi . . .

michelle jones

Nothing makes you feel more Simon-and-Garfunkel-
esque than drinking tomato soup
straight from the can on a broken
down, yellowed chaise lounge in
your attic. I think the only thing
at the moment that adheres my
penis to my body is reading the
myopically philosophical rants
of middle-to-upper class Anglo
males. *Thanks for preserving my
pseudo-manhood, Descartes.*

Sigh.

A lady from down the
street knocked on my attic door
with a broom yesterday (late
fifties, prone to greeting new
neighbors with lumpy cakes, and
a vague "anything you need . .
. great neighborhood . . . watch
out for that Mr. Johnson,
he's . . ."). She was worried
about me—hadn't seen any
moving trucks; was wondering
if plans were still going through;
did I need any help with getting
stuff shipped in, because her
nephew was in the moving
business if I needed anything;
and would I like to come over to
her house for a cup of milk?

I kind of wonder how she
knew I was in the attic . . .

At first I thought I'd just
wait her out, maybe give her a
little faith in her own senility,
but after fifteen straight minutes
of thoughtful neighborly chatter
boring through my skull, I
lowered the attic door and she
climbed right up.

"So, anything I can do?"
Her gears creaked audibly as she
noted every telling nuance of

my current apartment. A tiny
twitch of excitement tugged at
the corner of her eyebrow upon
seeing the expertly designed
Campell's soup castle and
Dinty Moore beef stew dragon.
"Trouble in paradise?"

*Damn her, the bat-eyed,
vindictive old—*
"Well, ah, it doesn't look
like we'll be moving in. The job
offer just isn't--"

"Job offer, oh."

"Yes, the company sent
a follow-up letter to tell me they
already filled the position."

"Well, I don't mean to
pry . . ."

*Oh, but of course not. And
who would utter such a slanderous
accusation?*

" . . . but it seems to me
your problem is less the lack
of a job than it is the lack of a
woman."

Oh, for God's sake.

"Yes, thank you, Mrs.
Neal. It's a shame we won't be
neighbors.

"Might I be able to help
in any way? I would never
want you to think of me as
inhospitable."

*Boa constrictors are
hospitable. She only wants a hug,
right? Next thing I know, she's
knitted a woolly prison around my
house and the only way to get out
is to kill my own kid and hope the
stench of the rotting carcass gets her
curious so she stops by for a visit
and then I can hit her over the head
with little Timmy's femur, take her
pinkish shears, and snip my way
to sweet freedom. I don't need a
hospitable neighbor, thank you.*

"Well, what do you plan
to do with house? Have you got
a buyer, or are you going to squat
here until you run out of clam
chowder and waste away on a
moth-eaten chair?"

*I should chuck a can at her right
now.*

"Fine. You really want to
help?"

"Finally! What is it you
need?"

"Sell my house. Get whatever
you can in the next week. Come
back with a million bucks or a rubber
chicken, I don't care, but sell it."

For fifteen historic seconds, she
was silent.

"You won't even try to get her
back? What kind of self-sorrowing,
cowardly . . ."

"You think I didn't try?!"

*My parents taught me never to talk
back to my elders, but damn.*

**Boa constrictors
are hospitable. She
only wants a hug,
right?**

"Look around you. I bought
this little shack she lived in when she
was twelve years old. I remade it with
my own hands. I built every piece of
furniture; kissed every inch of wood
in this place. She never saw it . . .
she hated me *that much*. I told her I
was sorry and I loved her and could
she meet me at our spot so I could
show her just how much . . . she never
showed up."

A bland, undirected stare—her
tongue darts across her lips, and then
the gaze abruptly finds its myopic
focus on my corneas.

I make a mental note to pick
up the lifeless roach's exoskeleton
that dropped from the ladder's second
rung as dear Mrs. Neal slunk away,
scratching "bake quiche for Adam"
off her mind's extensive to-do list.
The "old me," imbedded in my
current self, whimpers at the thought
of chitin being ground into the calf-
white carpet below, prompting the

current self to bludgeon the former until comatose. Meanwhile, my corporeal self is left unawares, aside from a slight twitch of the left eyebrow.

Those chunks of meat look disturbingly like human thigh. I wonder how cannibals prepare dinner. Are there special spices? Minced dandelion, maybe?

The Id theater projector flicks on briefly and shows an idyllic fifties' family seated around a dinner table. Two blonde children playfully consume human eyeballs while the baby is spoon-fed pureed entrails by a tidy, rapturous housewife. A good Christian family. The American Dream.

American Dream, like hell.

I finally come out to take a piece of the American Dream, settle down, but all I get is the proverbial kick in the balls. And why? No, not because I'm irresponsible or unfaithful or even too small. My sin was my vocation: accounting. Now to most folks, this would be a respectable profession—excruciatingly boring, but respectable. But in Rebecca's eyes, the only acceptable career was carpentry. I must, to be closer to Christ, inhale the same gritty, carcinogenic sawdust that He did. Because I rejected woodworking, she assumed I was an atheist, unfit for marriage.

It jarred me—I was so sure I could, with my romantic ploy, turn her into a squelching mass of jellyfish.

It turns out religious zealots don't give many second chances.

Clutching a can of chicken noodle, I attempt to hone my heat vision or will it into existence, as the case may be. The pressure on my bladder, which has been intensifying over the last two hours, is now nearly unbearable. Survival instinct overcomes my desire to go down like Tycho Brahe, so I burst out of the attic, power walk the distance to the

bathroom, and slam its door behind me.

I silently thank myself for not altering this room. The bathroom is a haven, surrounded by reminders of the void—the void of self-respect, really, more than that of Rebecca. She is the origin of my melancholy, but the real depression stems from the awareness of my own cowardice in conceding to unreasonable terms. The furniture only reminds me that I am now Jesus Junior, the devout carpenter.

I am everything she ever wanted, and she doesn't even know.

Four days, 247 random daydreams, and ten cans of soup later, Mrs. Neal is back. Her signature broom-assisted ceiling rap jolts me out of an irritatingly profound reverie concerning the sentience of animals. I generally disagree with the statement “animals are people, too,” mostly because this is illogical in every sense. Dolphins, though, I am convinced will soon stage a coup and prove themselves the master race—or species as we may have it.

Another pounding jerks me out again into reality, which sadly lacks the amniotic logic of my mind's womb. Once again, I lower the ladder, this time to a crooked, yellowed grin. Liver spots mar knobby fingers that hold up an unsigned deed.

“Yes, Mrs. Neal, I gave you that paper five days ago. Congratulations on finding it again.”

Come on, you little synaptic impulses . . . how long is this going to take?

“Oh, hah! Well, actually, you have a buyer waiting downstairs. We just need to review all of the details, sign contracts, and you will be out of this roach farm in no time.”

I think I'm actually rubbing

off on her—another of my reborn cynical spawn.

Goodbye, Chateau Campbell, Dinty Moore Dragon. I shall never forget you.

It turns out religious zealots don't give many second chances.

“It's a funny thing—this house is perfect for a young family . . . apparently other people thought so, too. Mostly newlyweds came to the open house.”

“You had a open house? How did I *not* hear that?!”

“But there was one young lady in the group, very quiet, writing in a notepad as we toured each room. When we reached the den again, I began taking bids. As the rest of the grouped squabbled for the winning bid, the lady went to her knees next to the computer desk, her face about an inch from its surface. Well, at first I thought she was about to do something inappropriate to your desk . . .”

I arched my eyebrows.

“Hey, think about Mr. Johnson . . . Anyway, I asked what she was doing. Without even taking her eyes from the desk, she said she ran an antique shop, and asked how old the furniture was. I just laughed and said, ‘Oh about two weeks.’ We continued the bidding, but just when the couples started wincing at their own bids, the antiquer jumped in, outbidding the rest almost arrogantly. When she got the final bid, the pregnant woman of the last remaining couple burst out in sobs.”

“Wow . . . that is one cold-hearted woman.”

“Maybe, but I think she can afford it. She's paying 750 grand if you sign it over today. I left her ogling the dinner table.”

“Well, let's get this all finalized.”

We padded down the hallway towards the dining room where my eyes met a crouching figure who seemed to be stroking the table leg.

Somewhere there's an empty straightjacket and two white-coated men mauled unconscious.

eloi, eloi...
continued

The woman heard us step in the room, and turned her head just enough that she could see us in her peripheral vision.

Son of--

"Rebecca? You're the young antique shop owner?"

"Today."

Some great deity hates me.

"Why are you here?"

"I'm looking for a carpenter."

I blink incoherently.

This has got to be the most debasing day of my life.

"Please, Adam. I love you."

I love you. I love you. I love you.

I stare into those shattered-glass irises, but the cool blue conveys less passion than obsession.

"You love Christ."

She pauses, aghast. "Of course I do, Adam. He is my savior, and---"

"That's not what I mean. It's like . . . it's like you are trying to woo God with the true expectation of marrying and mating with him. You honestly believe that you can assimilate a man of flesh and blood into Christ. It's not enough that I believe in Jesus. No, you'd have me wearing sandals and conjuring fish and . . . and God knows what else!"

"That's not true! I love--"

"And what if we ran out of wine at the wedding? You'd have the bridesmaids collect every water bottle in a five mile radius and plop them at my feet, and you'd look at me through the veil with huge batting expectant eyes. Those obscenely blue eyes! They get you out of everything, don't they?"

"I don't know what you--"

"Tetelestai."

"What?"

"John 19:30. Christ takes his last breath, whispering, 'Tetelestai' to God in his native Aramaic. 'It is finished'."

"Please, Adam."

"You wanted me to be like Him? Fine. I'm leaving you as He left the Earth. I surrendered myself to you, but you only flayed my flesh. It's time for me to rise to something better. Christ will love me as I am . . . and I'm sure there are women out there with more sanity than you."

Her lips formed unvoiced words as tears welled up.

"Mrs. Neal, would you mind completing the contract with this young lady? I'm sure she's eager to move into her new home."

I think I'll actually miss the old bat . . .





Antediluvian

Josiah Castillo

prostrate v. prostate

vincent ridenour

If there are two *r*'s around, you're down on the ground,
If there's one *r* on hand, then it's a gland.

the faded fan

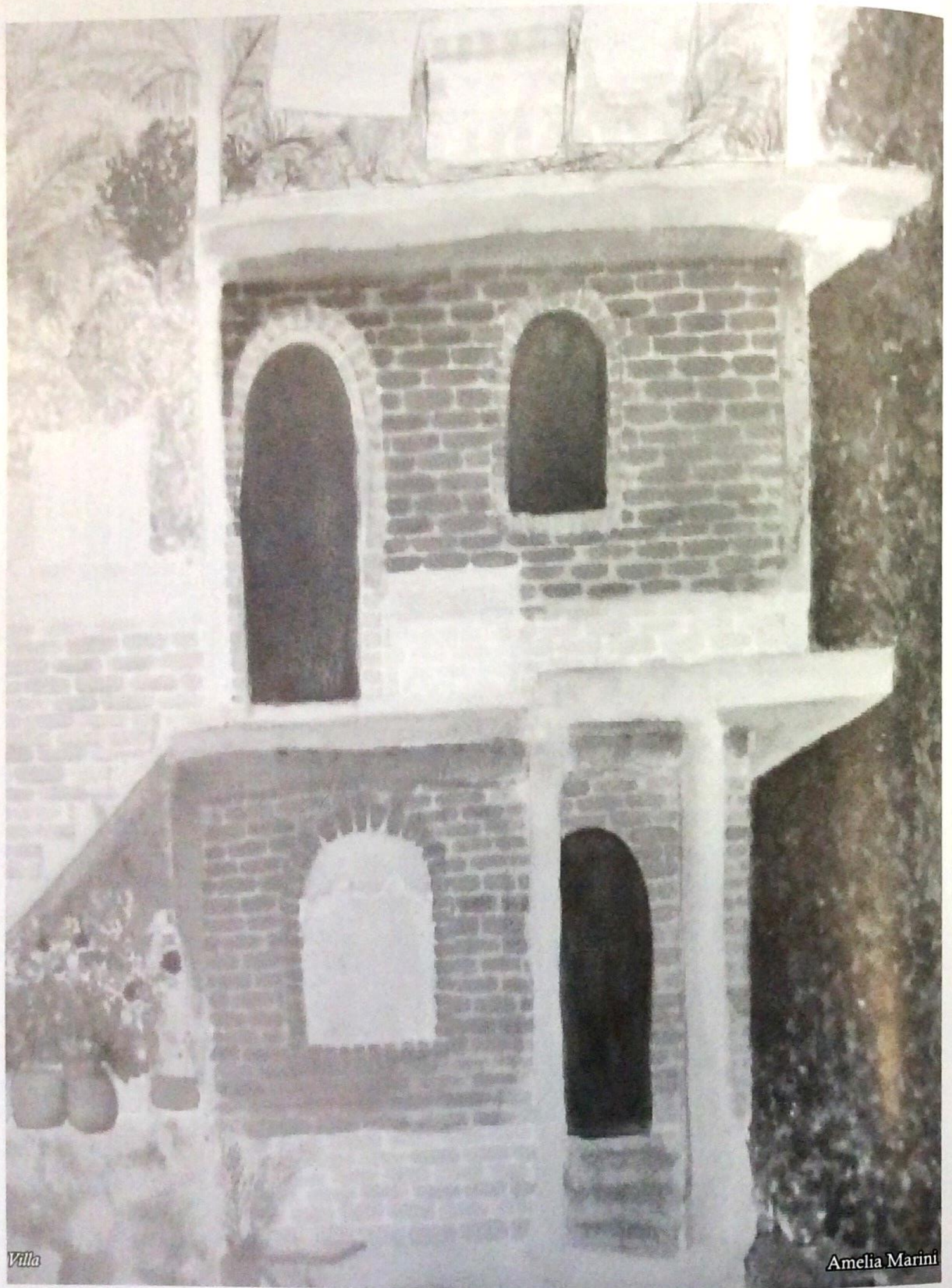
zara matthews

I came across an old antique shop
Cluttered with faded treasures,
And in the back there was a faded fan
Whose days probably saw better.
I asked the clerk how much it was.
He asked why I would want it--
The ink looked like dried blood,
The cherry blossoms were wilted,
The wood was breaking, and
Rust was forming on the swordsman's hilt.
It was no longer delicate----
It was falling apart at the seams.
It was no longer beautiful--
It was picturesque of decay.
He told me that it would break
If I handled it too roughly.
He told me if I wanted to be rid of it,
It had no value, except my own.
But I just smiled at him when he asked if I was sure,
And sweetly replied, "That's why I want it,"
When he said it was just a faded fan.



La Esposa

Eunjin Suh



Villa

Amelia Marini

rose

timothy draves

(english teacher)

Rose slept in the same dark dank upper room under the eaves where her father died nearly a half century before of an obscure disease of the cranium, which was--Melissa thought, ironically, erased from the medical journals two years later when a cure was discovered by a Harvard Ph.D. who, as Father's second cousin, was put through Harvard by him but still didn't himself know that the miracle cure he'd discovered was for that same disease that killed his benefactor, and as no one knew, but Melissa herself, his own Father, for even he hadn't been told of his parenthood, some secret form of punishment she's devised to wound his virility, but not effectively, for he'd sired and known of another son, on the Western section of the county, far beyond that small creek where he had played Indians with Slaves, and far beyond that creek of puberty where he had played his perverted games, thus beginning the story of the long end, which although locked behind the closed-doors of his mind, known in full by various members of the family alive today in and around Jefferson, was known by none of them completely, for they never talked, especially not about him, not after that alcoholic Uncle drank Theresa's savings forcing her to be buried not in a bronze, but pine, casket, indicating not her true stature in society, but a station in society shameful, almost pity-worthy, which, had Theresa known about, would have killed her of shock, not of that same disease of the cranium, which even though it was the night when the Mississippi winds that had blown across the Yoknapawpha County and still blow today, blew those fine linen curtains from the French Quarter in on a now cold body of decaying life in a town distant from the sweet sweaty bed where she had started her loneliness some sixty-four years before when the outside world, as she called it, still ran on horse legs and still wasted its idle hours in front of Ned's storefront, looking more like an artifact than a modern village to anyone who had just arrived from Memphis, that bustling town which had shown more Thompson boys the road to ill fame, than any of the hundred drunkards, rapscallions, potion hawkers, bootleggers, or lonesome widows who had pased through Jefferson since that first Robert J. Thompson was born almost twenty-four years before the last William P. Thompson came screaming for the warmth of his mother's bosom in that same dark dank upper room under the eaves where Rose now slept.

kabuki paint

luis reyes

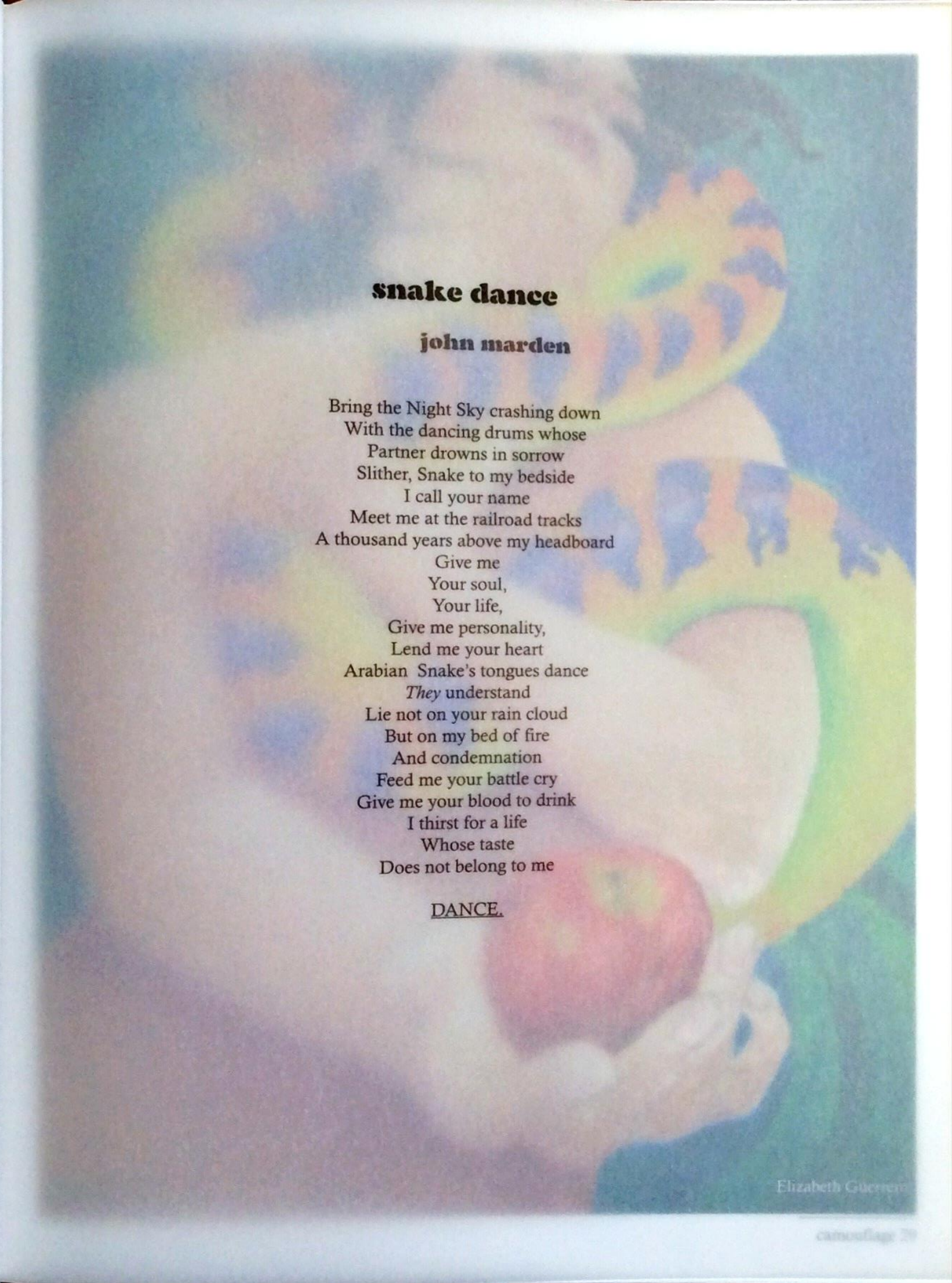
Bending light to crimson, gold, sapphire, kimonos sway and dance along the flower path
as sake pours lucid, flowing dreams into the azure eyes of western men. I feel my nerves plucked by the
slender, silk fingers of a young velvet geisha playing her lute. A
melancholy tune brings painful recollections to me who sits
Drunk.

Raindrops fall on leaves of lotus, screaming.



Oceanus

Caitlin Kirk

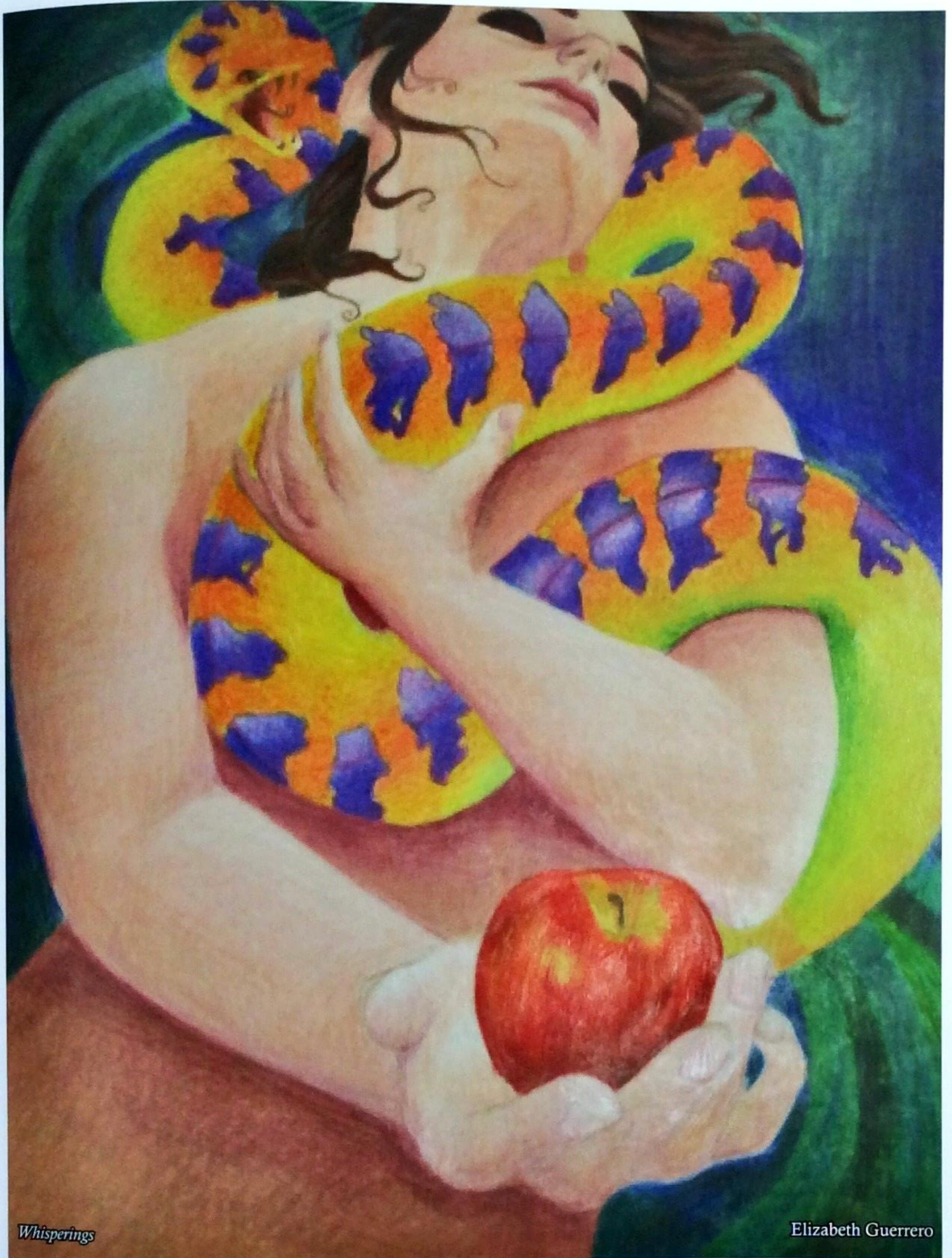


snake dance

john marden

Bring the Night Sky crashing down
With the dancing drums whose
Partner drowns in sorrow
Slither, Snake to my bedside
I call your name
Meet me at the railroad tracks
A thousand years above my headboard
Give me
Your soul,
Your life,
Give me personality,
Lend me your heart
Arabian Snake's tongues dance
They understand
Lie not on your rain cloud
But on my bed of fire
And condemnation
Feed me your battle cry
Give me your blood to drink
I thirst for a life
Whose taste
Does not belong to me

DANCE.



Whisperings

Elizabeth Guerrero

communion

kristen ketcherside

Her arms sprout from Her body like Her fingers from Her hand
ramifying gnarled twigs grow from Her holy land
She has wooden solidity with which an oak tree stands;
 sturdy, strong, low to the ground
 whose roots don't need to reach far down,
She's bent.

 from incessant struggling with gravity's demands.

again today,
She offered me Her golden plate
while holding it still firmly
She wanted for us to partake, to
drink simultaneously

But

Oak trees don't know how slight a breeze it takes to carry acorns
(of course they float down wind so they can't speak much anymore)
 white noise of rustling autumn leaves swallows attempts to try.
 and clouds of winter build up in the corners of Her eyes.

while

I wonder if I'm destined to
be forever airborne.

Her veins seem more articulate when we last were here
another spot coagulates, another crease appears
one action yields another as Her hands and fingers burgeon
Her passing of their gilded gold epitomizes burdens
when gravity fights strongly the desire to Grow Upward, and

I dream of taking flight as She grows increasingly tired.





Baby June

Eunjin Suh

the mirror

t.c. rayburn*

inspired by "the raven" by edgar allan poe

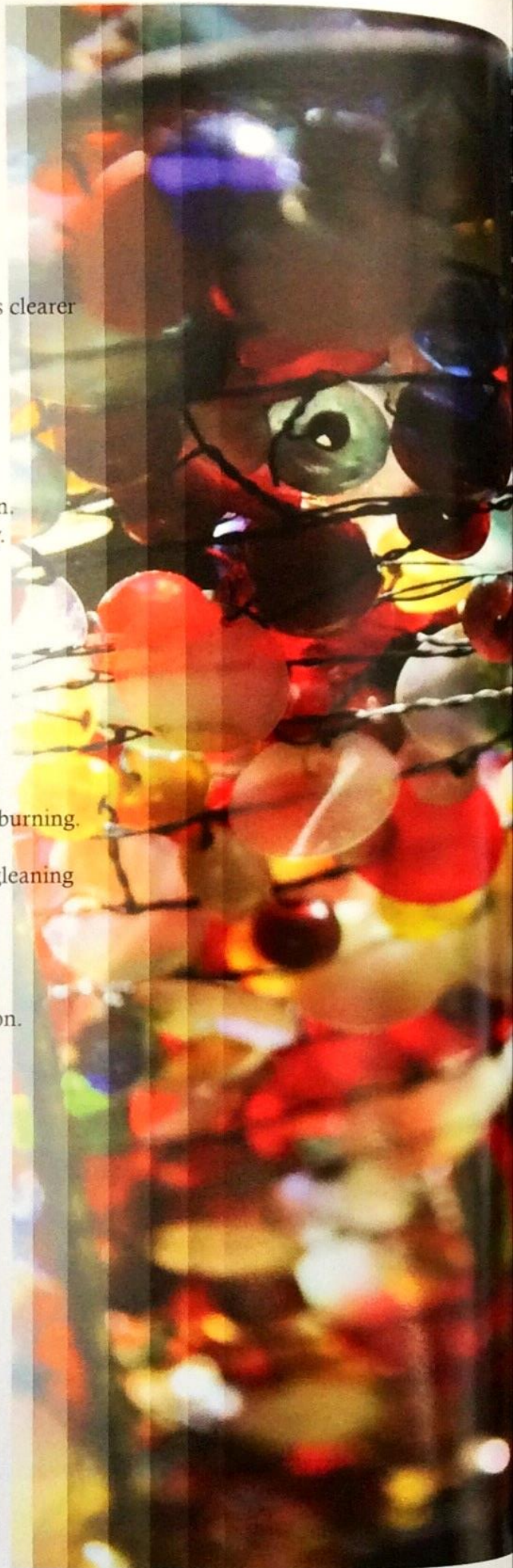
Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
The universe's vastness and my own mortality--
My blank gaze drifted o'er my mirror, sharpened, focused, then was clearer
The face therein had drifted nearer, neared me now and I could see
Something monstrous, gross, disfigured; I gazed upon it anxiously,
The face that had belonged to me.

Hell itself hath no creation that matcheth that abomination.
I cried aloud in consternation and desperate recreancy.
It looked like man in shape alone--the eyes and teeth had overgrown.
The deformed mouth began to moan, it moaned in rage and misery.
Asked I, "Who sent you hither, fiend, to terrify and torment me?"
Quoth the mirror, "Look and see."

And the hatred that I felt then for this lying apparition
Scared me-- 'twas so raw and charged with violent energy.
I wanted but to smash the face; I seized the mirror and with haste
I dashed it into the fireplace; I cried, "What's happening to me?"
Quoth the mirror, "Look and see."

My stomach was inside me churning; countless me's were brightly burning.
I felt vindication then, but my relief was not to be.
I slipped then in and out of dreaming; long I thought but still was gleaning
Nothing of the meaning that my face had spoke to me.
Nothing of the reason for my trial and misery.
Then quoth the mirrors, "Look and see."

The night I fought my own reflection, I can recall now with affection.
A little closer to perfection, and one more epiphany.
To hate is to identify, but we can always justify
How it is we judge and classify; always others, never we.
We hate things for a reason; it is no great mystery.
As quoth the mirror, "Look and see."





answer to “the mirror”

ronnie dublin*

Be in control
Of your emotions and your dictum
Lest someone should detect them
As anything more than reason.

You are the sole keeper
Of your own humanity--
Personal frivolity--
From sloth to jaded gallantry,
The psyche's unwilling treason.

And you are seen by your own will
As a blipping compilation
Of data and computation
Immune to pride, elation,
A sterile consummation
Of the promise of an apple.

A creature nearly all consumed
By the nips of inhibition.
A mortal on a mission
To escape self-derelection.
His own berated Id to grapple.

A mirror reveals your inner thoughts
And so it must be shrouded;
Your eyes forever clouded,
Should we find you have a soul.

world piece

josh casiano

*Storm coming, you'd better hide from the atomic tide
Flashes in the sky turns houses into sties
Turns people into clay, radiation minds decay . . .
Plastic flowers, melting sun, fading moon falls upon . . .
Burning globe of oxy'n fire, like electric funeral pyre . . .
Buildings crashing down to the crackling ground
Rivers turn to wood, ice melting into flood
Earth lies in death bed, clouds cry water dead
Tearing life away, here's the burning pay
Electric Funeral . . .*

"Electric Funeral" Black Sabbath

There will be peace on earth
When man and nature exist in harmony,
When man respects Mother Nature,
And remembers that she is supreme;
That she raised him and let him be,
And she is not to be used like a woman he found in a brothel.

There will be peace on earth
When no man silences another,
When man sees that all men are the same,
And no man exploits another,
And no man kills another,
Mistreats, abuses, or hates his brothers.

There won't be peace on earth until
No man hates or judges another,
And tolerance isn't sown and grown
By hypocritical religious views that make men reapers
Of closed minds and fists or open arms and embraces
Offered only to put a knife in another's back.

There won't be peace on earth until,
Driven by his own greed and blindness, hatred and lust,
Man is dead, destroyed, and gone.
How fast it will be over with the flashes of atom bombs.
A suicide bomber because his brothers he didn't understand,
And didn't want to accept because of trifling differences.

There won't be peace on earth until
The cities of man are sleeping:
Still, shut down, and dead silent.
When nature dares to creep back in,
Take over, refresh, and begin,
The age of man's self-annihilation is done.

There won't be peace on earth until
The sky falls out and the clouds come down,
And the bodies of men turn into the ground.
When the self-inflicted holocaust is complete,
No men are left alive,
And the earth itself is blown apart.

There will be peace on earth when wooden rivers flow and the world wears caps of blood.



Shiprock

the tv screen bright

jon west

Sitting alone in the bedroom at night,
The carpet is soiled, the TV screen bright,
The remote in one hand, in the other a Sprite.
You just want somebody to love you.

Eyes getting tired from hours of junk,
With crust in the corners just oozing with gunk.
The eyelids are darkened, the eye sockets sunk.
You just want somebody to love you.

They cannot be bothered, the box is a blarin'.
The bookshelf is dusty, the kids are a starin'.
Mommy's on Prozac and Dad's not a carin'.
They just want somebody to love them.

Spitting out slogans like poor little parrots,
Eating the bullsh-- instead of their carrots.
Don't turn that dial, if you please, don't you dare it!
They just want somebody to love them.

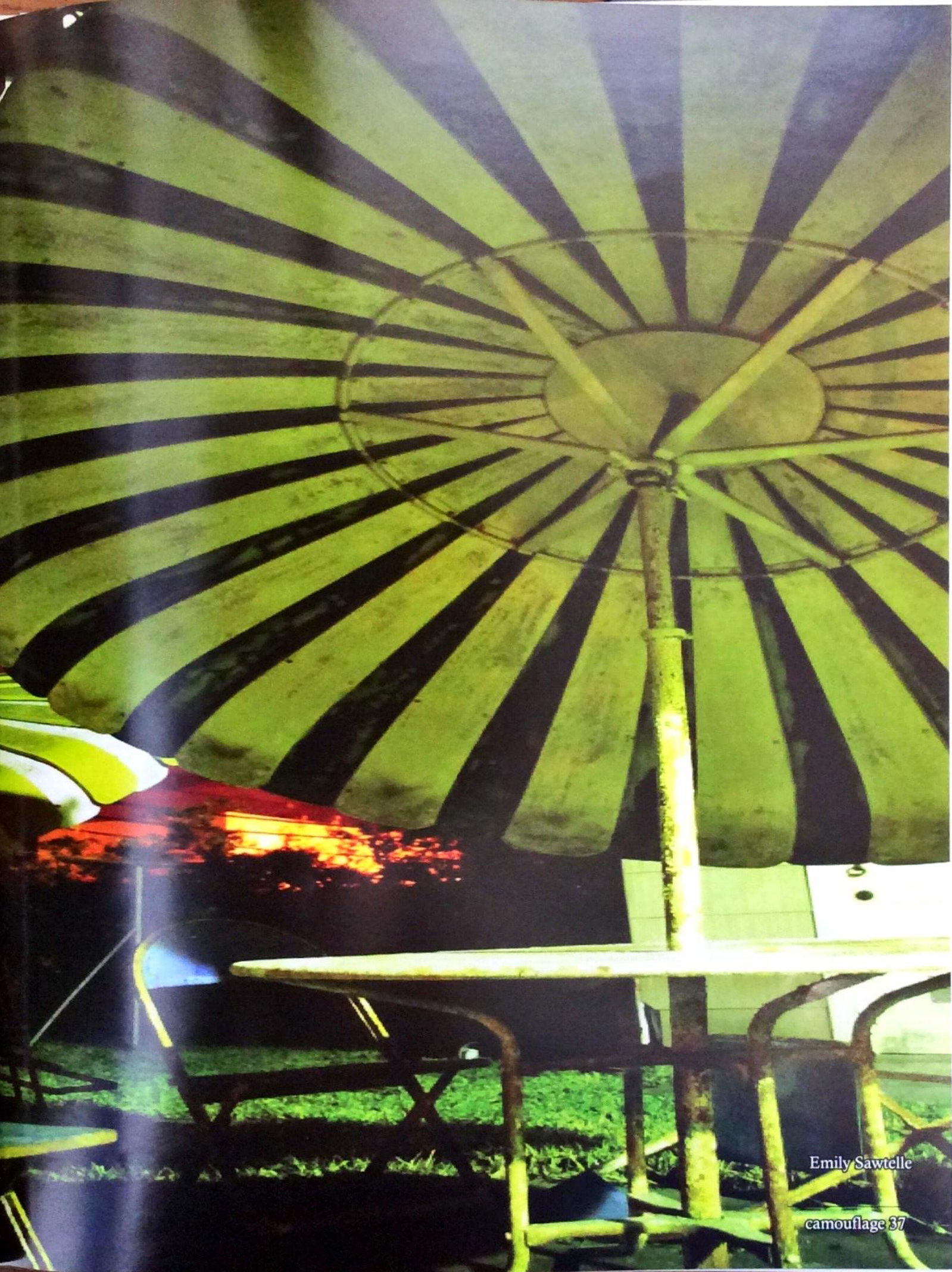
Don't fear little Jimmy and Suzy Q. Smith,
For TV will always be there.
It'll always respect you and never reject you,
And never make fun of your hair.

It won't make you sad like when Daddy gets mad,
And Mommy gets hit in the eye.
It's never as boring as homework or school,
And never makes anyone cry.

So scootch closer children and gather around,
Drink in the color and also the sound
Of the TV screen bright which knows pound for pound
That you just want somebody to love you.



Recreation



Emily Sawtelle

camouflage 37

love drunk stupor

marianna torres

The many forms of love are such as the many forms of liquor. They both drown out our conscience and lead us to do things that are out of our mind. There are so many forms and flavors, rituals and stories. How parallel the symptoms and the state of mind of a happy drunk and a love struck person are.

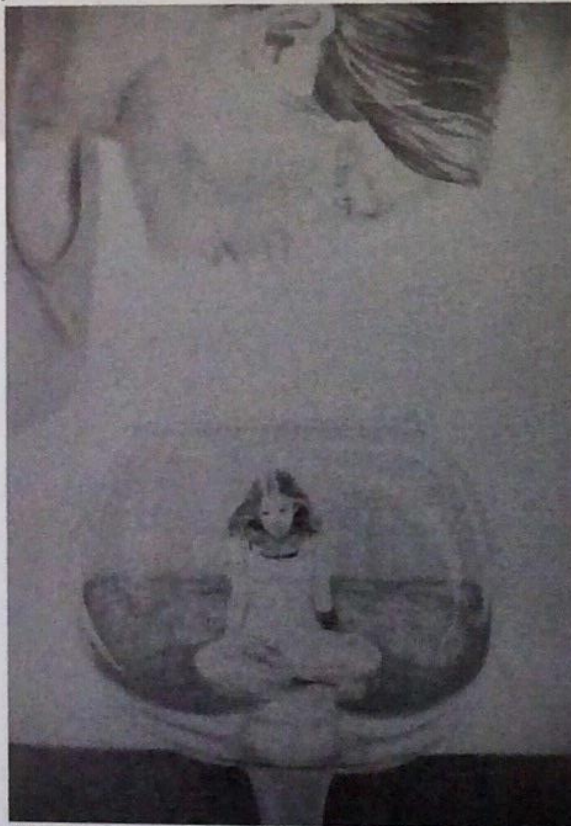
True love is a brand of choice that you are loyal to, but, of course, if it's not available, you could very well be forced to take something else, such to the extent that even true love can go astray. Many youths pledge loyalty to one, then in that one's absence, they stray because of the longing for the love drunk stupor. However, they cannot but help to return to their brand of choice and all the joy they know it brings them.

False love is the bottom of a tequila bottle when you wake up coyote ugly, and do the same thing again the next night with a different hard liquor that leaves you in the same predicament. Why else do you think they call them shots? It's wham-bam-thank-you-mama, and there it ends. What a love . . . or rather not.

Virtuous love is like wine, subtle, classic, and for the right occasion. A love that will stay true through the years, for time only makes it better. It may not be as fast to get you to that love drunk stupor as the others, but it's much smoother and much more personal.

The love of today is come-and-go like the kegs at the parties of the youths. Love is plentiful and can be given to someone at any age, though it isn't supposed to be. There are so many varieties to choose from--choose any brand from men to women and take as many lovers as you please. Can we return to the old days of simplicity? Then there was nothing more than rum, wine, and gin. Just simple: love or not to love.

Perhaps I am an ideal lover, for I have a brand of choice. Though I cannot help but stray on the occasion, I know I will settle down. Perhaps my brand of choice will get better with age, such as the best of wines. Please keep in mind, I have never even tasted an alcoholic beverage, but rest assured I have been drunk on love.



Brand of Choice

Marianna Torres



Sk8 or Die

Marie Duke

psychosomatic

michelle jones

I distinctly felt my liver trying to crawl its way up and out of my esophagus. My diaphragm coughed lightly in disapproval, but one cannot expect members of the urinary system to adhere to the guidelines of etiquette.

My lungs then pulled back in disgust from the runaway organ, prompting a quite claustrophobic heart to rattle against the bars for escape.

So this is what it is to be in love.



to where?

david w. bordelon

(academic dean of science)

To where have we led you?
To where have we come?
Whatever the fate,
Behind it has run.

Before you lies promise.
Hopefully, eyes peer
To beyond, to the future
Undaunted... no fear.

Youthfully shouldering
The dreamer's role;
The inheritor of mother earth,
Her hidden illnesses untold.

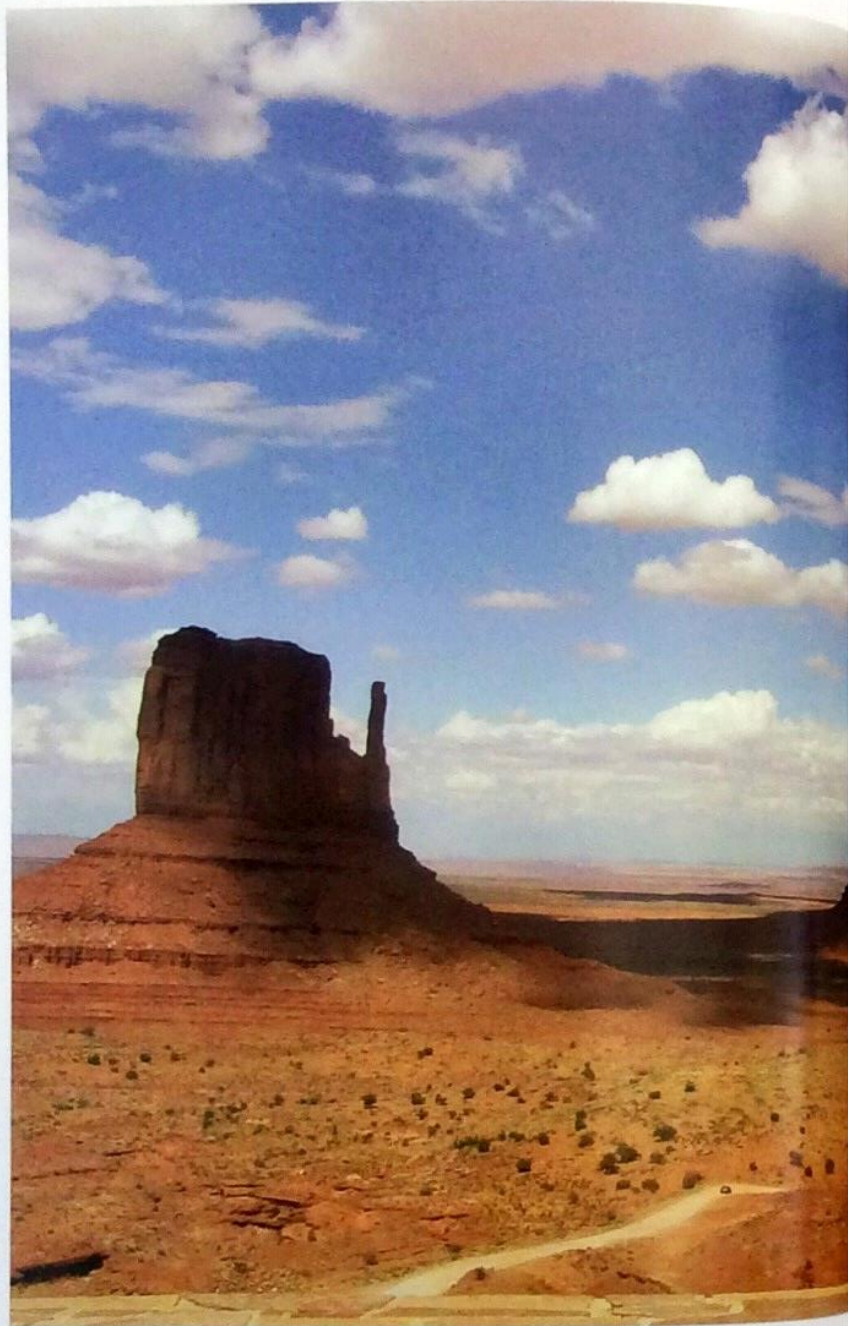
To reap a better world than shown
With nature we must share
A new life forged from virtue
From minds wrought with care.

For the plight of mankind,
For the fate of the world
Within your heart beats.
Unto history you are hurled.

Upon rocks of self-destruction?
Your destiny doomed?
You will answer the challenge.
Our future looms.

To where have we led you?
Into whom will you grow?
Into saviors of the forgotten,
Sharing kindness with those you least know.

To where will you lead us?
To where will we go?
Whatever the fate,
It is yours, you must know.



Monument Valley

hard to the body

eric hernandez



Joel Mayer, French & Spanish Teacher

I had to go hard to the body—
jabs, hooks, and uppercuts.
It was God, the Man,
nothing else was acceptable.
Jabs, hooks, and uppercuts.
I came out swinging.
“This is for the suffering of 9/11.”
Bam. Caught Him in the kisser.
I stuttered back.
He stood up tall and mighty.
“Ignorant fool.”
He caught me clean to the head.

I had to go hard to the body—
jab to the ribs,
hook to the face,
uppercut to the chin.
“For the third world countries
starving to death. Diseases!”
I felt a rib crack,
my cheek stung,
and my jaw popped out of place.

I had to go hard to the body.
I began wearing down,
my arms felt weighed down
and on fire.
I was taught to never give up.
So, cheap shot, below the belt.
My knuckles cracked
and my stomach got the biggest knot ever.

I didn't understand.
I was going hard to the body
and I was falling apart.
Why?
I threw in the towel and asked,
“How? How did you endure everything I gave you?
You hit me once and I am dying.”
God said, “You truly are ignorant.”
He pulled out a mirror
and separated us.
“Don't you see?
You're a reflection of God.”

tipsy parakeet dressed in plaid

rebecca simpson

I'm an anorexic angel;
I'm a demon in distress.
I'm a squeaky-clean freak monster
who's living within a mess.

I'm a lazy, turquoise lemur
'cause they kicked me in the femur.
I'm a wound; I'm an infection.
I'm a cynic seeing perfection.

I'm a liar under oath;
I'm a nostalgic runaway.
I'm a crooked-feathered arrow;
I'm a pin that just won't stay.

I'm a curse inside a blessing;
I'm a blessing in disguise.
I'm a question lost in the guessing;
I'm a picture blurry to the eyes.

I'm a model for stick porn;
I'm a bloated blubber blimp.
I'm so dead that some won't mourn;
I'm a super-human gimp.

I'm a linguist hearing gibberish;
I'm allergic but can't sneeze.
I'm a guide that's left and lacking;
I'm an atheist on my knees.

I can fight, but I can't fend.
I can start, but I can't end.



distress

morgan black

Sleep knock on the door
-Beckons-
His voice
Droning and droning,
On and on;
Concealing yawns under nimble digits
Calling me to join the fight against--
The sandman's armies are camping--
In my nightmares you love me
In my nightmares opposites thrive
My sense of reality is skewed

In my nightmare scenes of
Caring, passion, need-not want--
Enclose us in perfect lies
Fake imagination is the curse
Mutilating a once broken heart
Quiero cry quiero fly quiero run and start anew
But logic forbids and my nightmares
Are nothing but
Wanted dreams . . .

the new adventures of asparagustus, issue #7: evil blanches

Michelle Jones

Another day in the life of our hero,
The splendid Asparagustus the Third,
In her struggle for justice
For green beans and lettuce
'Gainst evils of which the world has not heard.

One day, while patrolling the grocery store
In the perilous produce section, she spied
Activity so heinous
That who would disdain us
For believing her very eyes were belied?

But lo, there indeed stood her arch-nemeses,
The Cauliflower Coalition,
By all vegetables, feared
By all villains, revered
Made of violence and white, raw ambition.

The peach they were torturing let out a scream
As they cut her sweet flesh to the pit.
The cape as it soared
When Asp leapt o'er a gourd
Is something those ruffians won't soon forget.

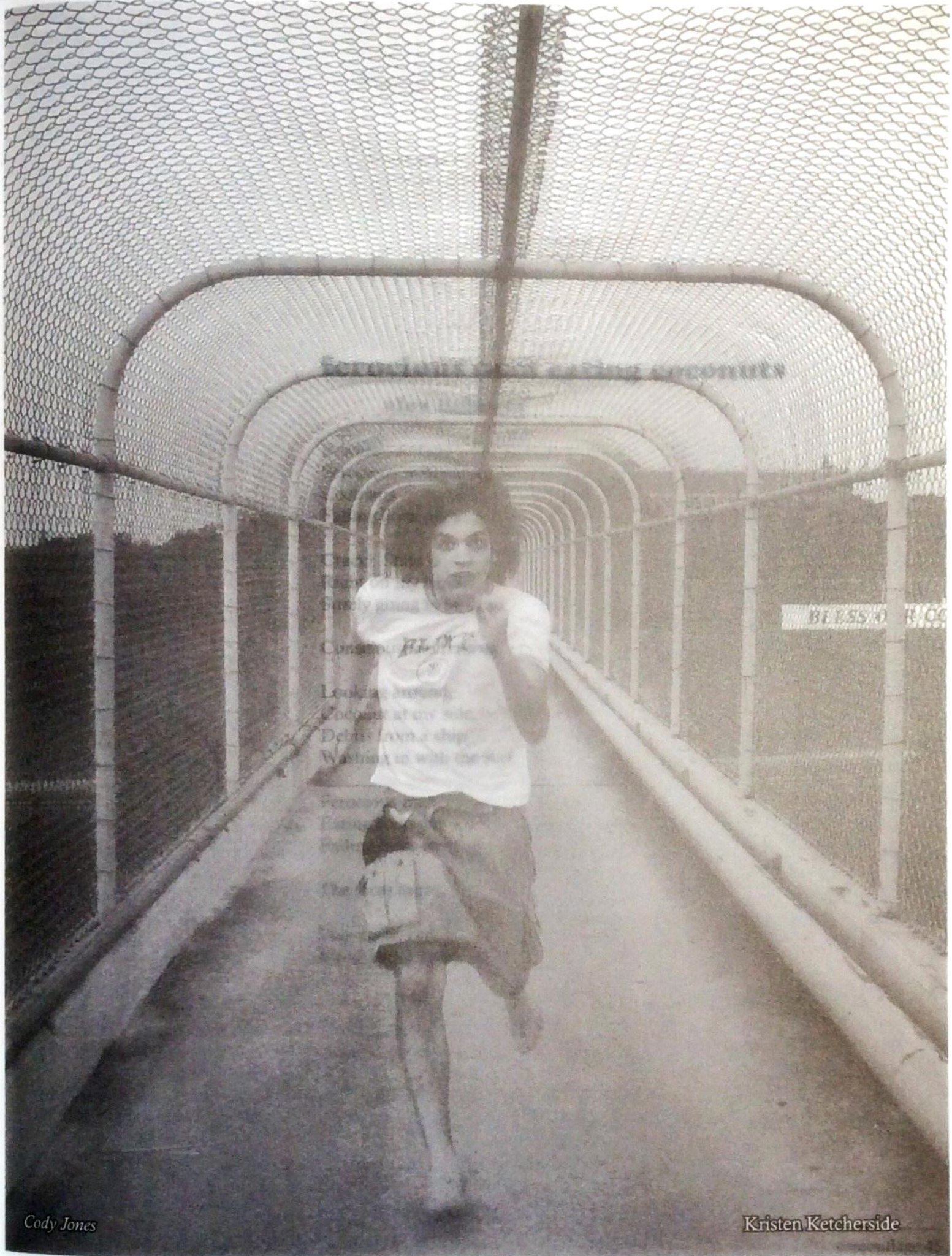
Within seconds the knavish gang was found sundered
Amid a great heap of over-ripe figs.
Some grapes in their bliss
Broke into the twist
And the honeydew melons did jigs.

Another day in the life of our hero,
The splendid Asparagustus the Third,
The world a bit safer
For rhubarb and caper,
Their faith in a steadfast guardian assured.



Asparagustus

Michelle Jones



THEY SAY I'M A RUNNER

THEY SAY I'M A RUNNER

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BLESS O B'CO

Cody Jones

Kristen Ketcherside

ferocious man eating coconuts

alex roberts

Beware!
Ferocious man-eating
Coconuts
Falling from trees.

Crack! Smack!
Right on my head,
Surely going to be dead.

Consciousness returns.

Looking around,
Coconut at my side,
Debris from a ship
Washing in with the surf.

Ferocious man,
Eating coconuts
Falling from trees.

The fever burns.

I lay in my bed.
It's all in my head.

eternal happiness

tiffany brown

She enjoyed watching him across the room talking and laughing with his friends. It was ecstasy watching every single change in his countenance, memorizing every move he made so she could replay it in her head at night as she lay awake trying to force her mind to sleep so she could dream about him caring about her the way she cared about him.

"I think I'd be willing to die for him," she thought as he smiled at something the blonde boy standing near him just said. "In a way, I already have."

She gave up all normalcy in her life for him. She sometimes wondered if it was worth it. By now, of course, she was used to living this new lifestyle. After all, it was almost two months ago that it happened—the two longest, most dreadful months of her life. She'd gone through so much pain since then both emotionally and physically. She'd felt as if she was the lowest form of existence hardly deserving the air she breathed. She'd felt pain far beyond human endurance. All for him. Just for him.

But no matter what she went through, he didn't care. He didn't even know.

"But that's going to change," she thought to herself. "Tomorrow it will officially have been two months since that night, and all I needed were two months."

She smiled a little at the thought of what was to come. The bell rang and the teacher started talking, but it was too late—her mind was lost in fantasy.

She didn't have many friends, but she was nevertheless a little surprised when no one noticed the changes. She came to school



the day after the night it happened even though she hadn't slept at all. She spent the entire night lying awake in her bed wondering if she'd just allowed some insane maniac to fulfill his insane desire or if the stranger had told her the truth.

She'd been out for a walk that evening, needing to get away from her aunt and that terrible house she now called home. She took what she thought was a shortcut through an alley. The stranger had come up from behind her and spoke near her ear, startling her.

"I know why you grieve. I see it all in your mind."

She still remembered lying on her bed in the pitch black, her neck sore. She had reached up and touched the tiny wounds lightly, hoping she was right in believing the stranger, hoping this would really end all of her problems.

"Who are you?" she asked, even though she somehow knew that this wasn't important.

"I can help you. Better still, I can give you the power to help yourself. You'll live in eternal happiness, never again suffering with the knowledge that he'll never love you. I can grant your soul's most desired wish."

When the sun had risen and light had poured through the window, spilling across her face, she could tell at once that it was different. It was so much brighter. She could barely keep her eyes open.

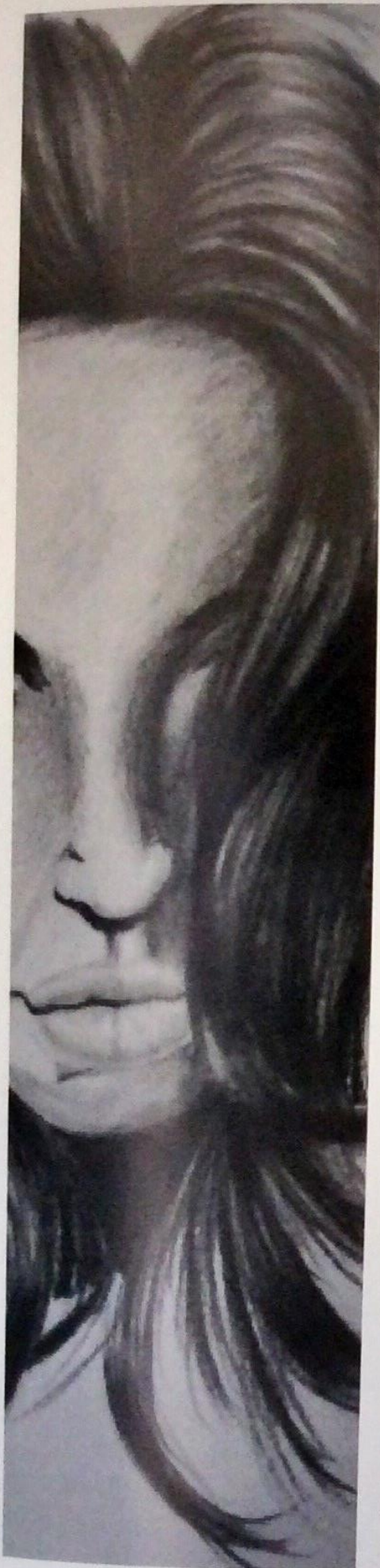
"What do you mean?"

She should have been afraid he was a serial killer or something of the sort, but she had the strangest feeling that everything he said was true.

"My offer is tempting you already. I can sense it."

"How do you think you can make my life better and give me 'eternal happiness'?"

"Why, do you not recognize me from all of your beloved books? Do you really not know what I am?"



A short pause followed this. She gasped as it all came together.

"Dear girl, I am a vampire."

She pulled the sheet over her head to shield herself, though it offered little relief from the burning light. The thought occurred to her that if she didn't go to school, her aunt would get suspicious. She never missed school before and she'd never been sick, so she couldn't use that as an excuse. She'd have to do her best to act as normal as possible. She summoned all of the energy she had and forced herself out of the bed. She dressed, ate breakfast, and waited at the bus stop just like she had any other morning.

He didn't give her the chance to decide. When she reflected back on this, she realized that was probably a good thing. She might have refused his offer if he had given her the option to.

He pulled her close, lowered his head, and bit into her neck. She barely felt it.

"Now, drink this," he instructed, pulling out a vial from his pocket filled with red liquid.

She drank it without any questions, ignoring the fact that it could have been some type of poison or drug.

And in that dark alley on that night almost two months ago, she was blooded and became a creature of the night.

No one noticed her suddenly pale skin. No one noticed that her eyes had darkened slightly. No one noticed she avoided the sun as much as possible.

But, she reasoned, people never notice much of anything.

They were in the woods. She could hardly believe it had only been two months since the night she became a vampire—so much had changed since then that it felt much longer.

After school that afternoon,

she cornered him in the hall. He looked a little confused at first, probably wondering why this strange, pale girl wanted to talk to him. She looked right into his eyes, forcing herself into his mind, using her hypnotizing powers to control it. She was a fast learner and became a master at mind control only a few days after discovering her new powers as a vampire.

His eyes glazed over and she knew she was in complete control. She grabbed his wrist and pulled him behind her, leading the way out of the school. The woods weren't far, only about a fourth of a mile from the school parking lot. She ran with inhuman speed, continuing to pull him behind her.

When they finally reached the refuge of the trees, she turned around to look at him, still holding onto his wrist. Hardly any light survived through the layers of leaves and branches above them, but she could tell that his eyes were still glazed—still under her control. She sat on the leaf-strewn ground and pulled him down with her. She willed his mind into a deep sleep. He fell back onto the ground and she leaned over him, admiring his dark hair, his perfect features.

She sighed.

Is it really worth it, taking him away from his family and his friends? Do I really have the right to steal his life from him?

She watched him sleep and thought about all the hours she spent day-dreaming that she'd get a chance like this, all the time she spent sitting in her room and listening to songs that reminded her of him, all the dreams she had of him.

She sat watching him for the next few hours. The sun fell and the moon rose; he stirred slightly. She'd have to make her decision now.

"He'll be as happy as I'll be. I know it."

eternal happiness continued

He opened his eyes and groaned, putting his hand to his head. He sat up and looked at her.

"Where are we?"

She smiled at him. "You'll barely feel it, I promise."

"Feel what?" he asked, looking somewhat fearful.

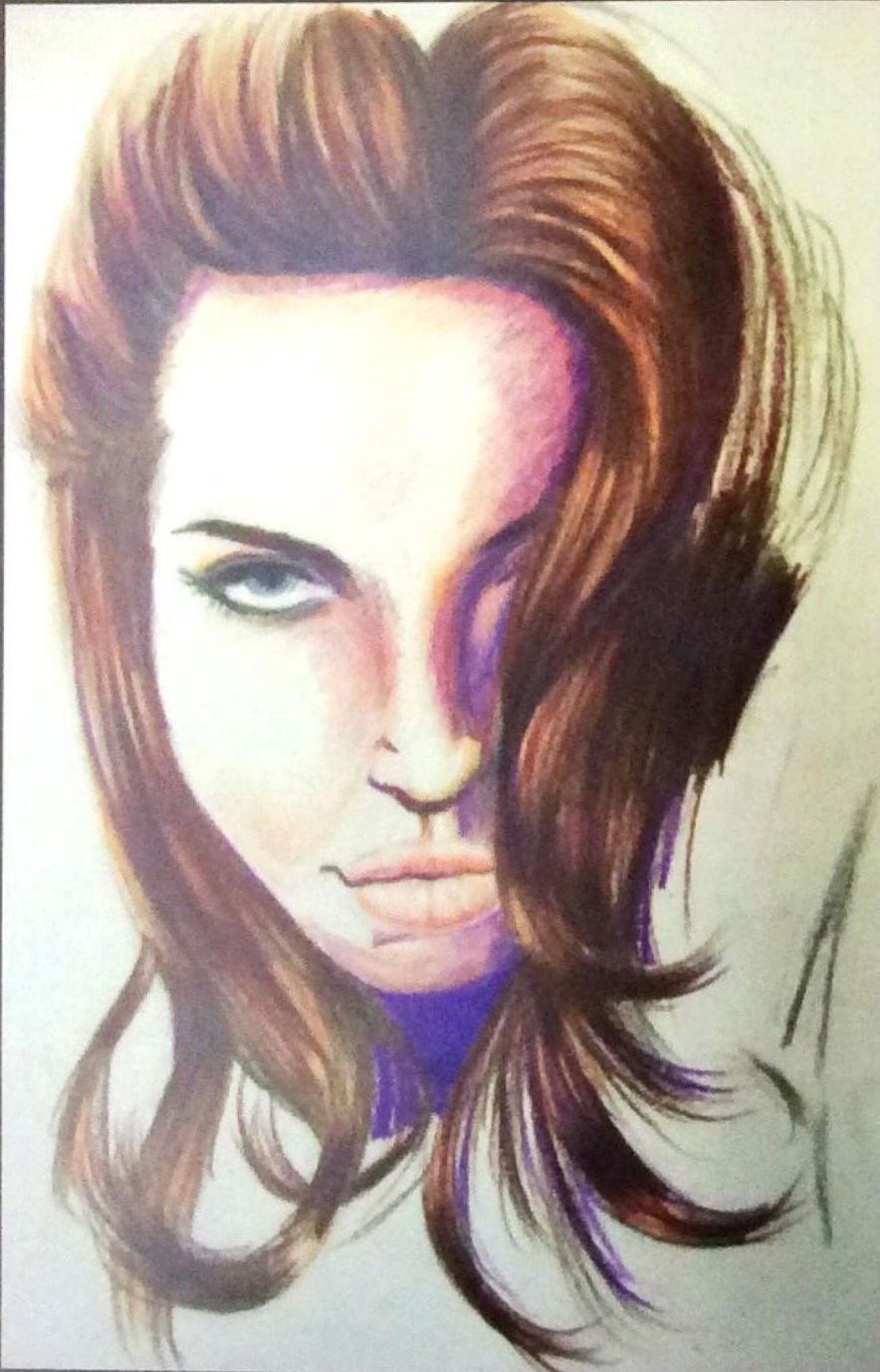
She put her hand on the back of his head and gently pulled him forward. Before he could push her away, she sunk her teeth into

his neck. When she finally pulled away, he stared blankly at her.

"What'd you just do?" he asked in confusion.

She smiled again. "I ensured our eternal happiness."

She leaned forward and kissed him lightly.



fading

kristen roberts

The bell chimes twelve
The tear grows deeper
A tear in the heart of a lonely soul

The light once loved
Is grown and gone
An empty space is left

The days drag on
The nights grow weary
The purpose of life is lost

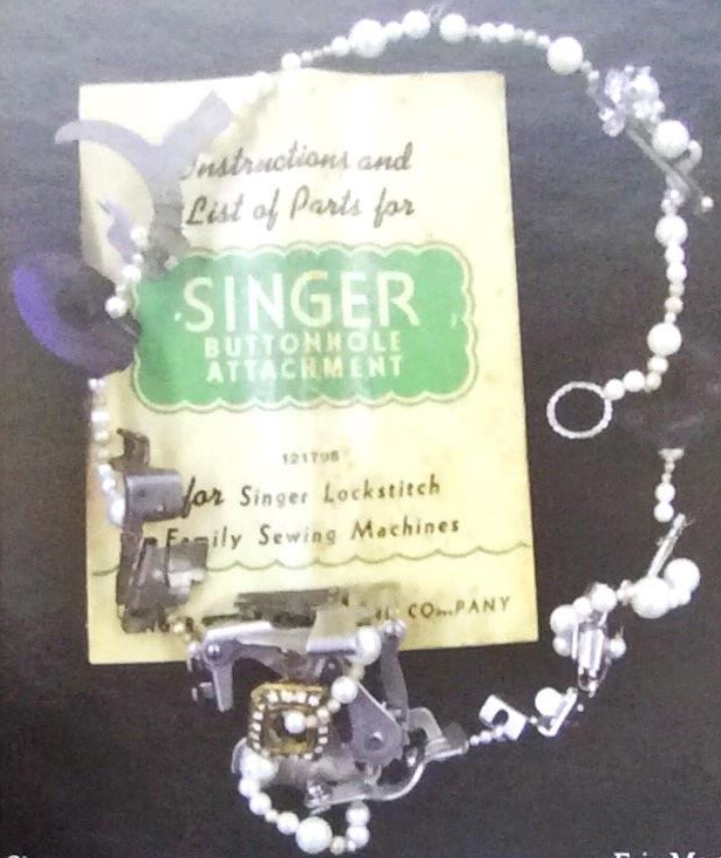
The lover and the loved
Are drawn apart
And the heart begins to bleed

Is this the end of the beginning?
Or the beginning of the end?
Love is the only thought

It was a decision made
"The best for both"
Yet somehow it seems to kill
The spirit of the one who made the choice
A deadly sacrifice

If all the life is squeezed from the heart
Why does it still ache so?

The light grows dimmer and slowly
fades away . . .



Singer

Erin Martin

six-eyed and homeless

hannah herzig

Six different eyes
 four brown
 two blue
stare at the burnt, barren, gutted house
which once held
 books
 beds
 clothes
 food
 pictures
all burnt, barren, gutted of everything
except the
 thoughts
 dreams
 hopes
 wishes
 memories
which hide behind
six different eyes
 four brown
 two blue
all looking forward



127 Burr Road

Emily Sawtelle

camouflage 51

excerpt from i, alexandra

william m. o'brien
(english teacher and
published novelist)

Stephanie? She thought.
Home early? It sounded like her.
"Stephi!" she called out.
"Hi, Roomy. I just got
home."

"My God, what time
is it?" Alex called out again.
"I must have slept longer than
I thought," she whispered to
herself.

When there was no
answer from upstairs, Alex
checked her watch. Two fifteen.
Only thirty minutes after she
herself had gotten home.

She jumped to her feet
and headed for the staircase.
"Hey, what happened to your
afternoon class?" Alex called
from the base of the stairs.

"It got cancelled," came
a reply from inside Stephanie's
room.

"Why, Stephi? You need
that class." She hurried up the
stairs to Stephanie's room.

"Now you're going to
have . . ." She stopped abruptly
in her roommate's bedroom.
There was no one there.

"Stephi," she said
bewildered. "Honestly, what
kind of bullshit is this?" She
turned and opened the closet.

Nothing.

Suddenly, she
remembered her roommate's
habit of putting her books on the
table in the entrance hall. She
didn't remember seeing books
on that table before she came
up, but before she could think
any more about it, the figure
had come out of the full length
mirror and was on her.



Alex screamed as loud
as she could as the skeletal
figure of Johanna grasped her
in both of its hands. Feeling
sharp nails digging into her
chest and shoulders, she
backed as hard as she could
into the closet door. The
face of the thing moved up as
close to Alex as it could and
regurgitated filthy liquid all
over her front.

"It's time, Alexandra,"
the hideous manifestation
said, in a slow, deliberate
voice, its facial features frozen.
"It's time."

Summoning as much
strength as she could, she
shoved the thing away from
her and bolted through the
bedroom door for the stairs.
Reaching the top of the stairs,
she glanced back into the
room she had left but could
not see Johanna.

Halfway down the
stairs, she remembered the
heavy baseball bat she had
left in an umbrella stand in
the entrance hall. As quickly
as she could, she retrieved it
and ran for the front door,
intending to reach Mrs.
Frank's back steps.

However, just outside
the front door, she felt a
pressure on her back and two
bony arms reached around her
to her chest and stomach. She
spun in the thing's grip in an
effort to break free before but
before she could, the head fell
on her left shoulder and sank
long dead teeth into her bare
flesh.

Alex screamed again
as loud as she could and
caught Mrs. Frank in her
peripheral vision coming down
her back steps.

Her left shoulder
bleeding heavily down the
front of her blouse, Alex again

pushed out of the grasp of the hideous entity and backed away about eight feet. Both hands on the bat, she raised it to strike.

Mrs. Frank had come close to Alex and, with wide eyes, was regarding the macabre figure.

"Oh my God, Johanna," the old lady sobbed.

"Mrs. Frank, go in the house!" Alex barked, her eyes riveted to the dead figure still threatening her.

"Alexandra, what in the world?" Mrs. Frank turned to Alex, who still carefully watched the figure, her bat raised in an instant.

"Alex, Baby, you're hurt."

"Mrs. Frank, please. Go in the house!" A tear rolled down Alex's face. Now the pain in her shoulder hit her, blood still rolling down her blouse.

Seeing that Mrs. Frank did not move, she carefully moved over toward her to get between her and the monstrous apparition that still stood motionless, its blank, dead stare mechanically following her every move.

Finally, Alex reached Mrs. Frank and stood just in front of her, facing her adversary, which had moved around with her.

"Come on you goddamned monster," Alex said through clenched teeth. "Come and get me now. I'll send you back to hell."

She felt a hand laid gently on her back. "Mrs. Frank," she sobbed. "Don't move from behind me, please."

While she watched, the apparition vanished,

Come and get me now. I'll send you back to hell!

leaving no trace that it had ever been there. Convinced that the thing was truly gone, she turned and the old lady took her in her arms.

"That damned thing bit me, Mrs. Frank," she cried, hugging her, blood running over.



Forgotten Perversity

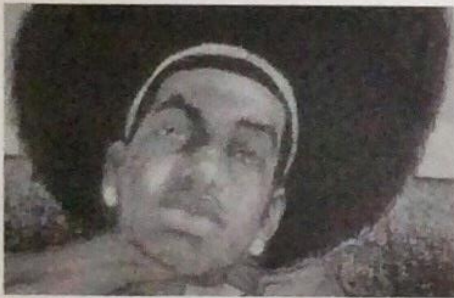
Matt McClain



what do you feel?

austin auth

Well, 1/27/06, the coffee, stairs.
Down the hall to the right is where you'll find my room.
Has the knot been tied or will it be cut?
Is it the end of blue but the beginning of brown?
I don't know my side of the story.
What will I get?
I see this white light.
Yes, I speak in rhymes.
Oh yes, I speak in rhymes.



I won't regret, I know I won't.
Over so soon but the waves still crash.
Off guard.
Instant real.
Too bad the clock still ticks and I'm alone.
Oh yes, I remember, I remember.
Anything, I just need an answer.
Silence isn't awkward.
Am I in or out?
Yes, I speak in rhymes.
Oh yes, I speak in rhymes.



The upward beating of our hearts.
The Moment.
The Feeling.
This is an instant classic, I can tell.
I need a voice, but not my own.
Yes, I speak in rhymes.
Oh yes, I speak in rhymes.

I will follow this north star.



POW!

Kenan Jackson

camouflage 55

song catcher eric mielke

It was some warm night, some time ago,
I doubt that you'd care when,
Back in my days of wandering
To lands I'd never been.

I happened on a thicket stream
In my search for food and housing,
And by this stream I saw a man
While I was berry browsing.

His face was old and wise as stone,
His hair was gray with age.
So tired was I way back then
That I sat down by this sage.

For a long time he was silent, still,
Sedate, and yet attentive,
And he hummed a strangely haunting tune
Without a clear incentive.

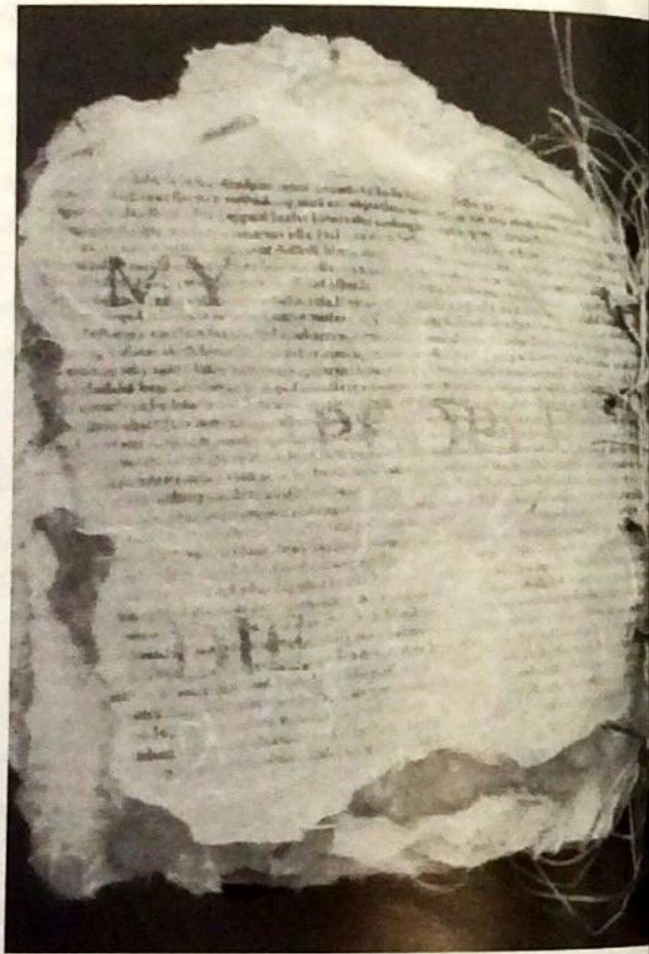
Soon my curiosity
Overthrew politeness.
"What are you doing?" I asked aloud,
Unwary of my triteness.

With a voice of kind tranquility,
And with eyes that were so pure,
He turned to look at me and said,
"I've heard that asked before."

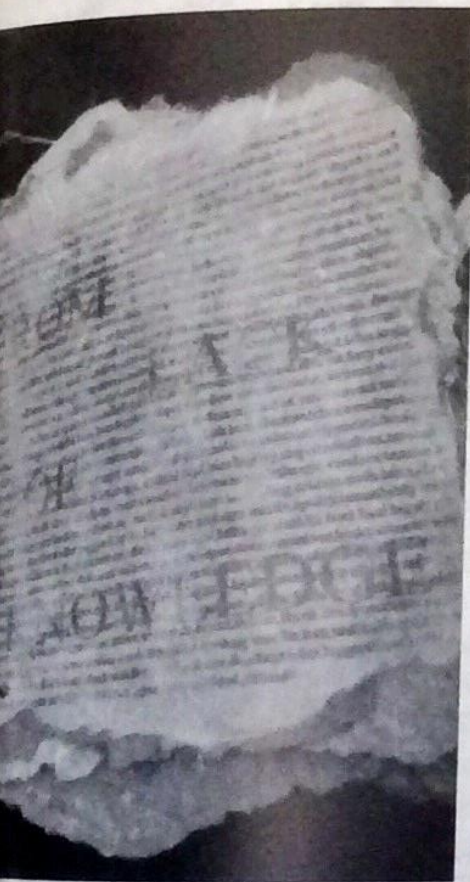
"I'm a Song Catcher, my dearest son,
And one of very few.
My ancestors were numerous,
Back when the earth was new.

You see my people catch the songs
That float upon the sky,
And learn their great celestial sounds
To share with passers by.

That's what you hear me humming now,
A wafting Eastern air.
So stay beside me if you like,
Good company is rare."



My People



Erin Martin

At first all that I seemed to do
Was sit and stare quite dumbly,
But as he started up again,
I listened very humbly.

The song he sang was a lilting tune,
But slow and full of sorrow.
It filled me with consoling warmth,
And with mourning for tomorrow.

For it was this way he sang to me,
His people's last goodbye,
Their race was disappearing now,
And their end was almost nigh.

He told me through his gusty notes,
And whistling harmonies,
How people had stopped listening
to the chorus of the breeze.

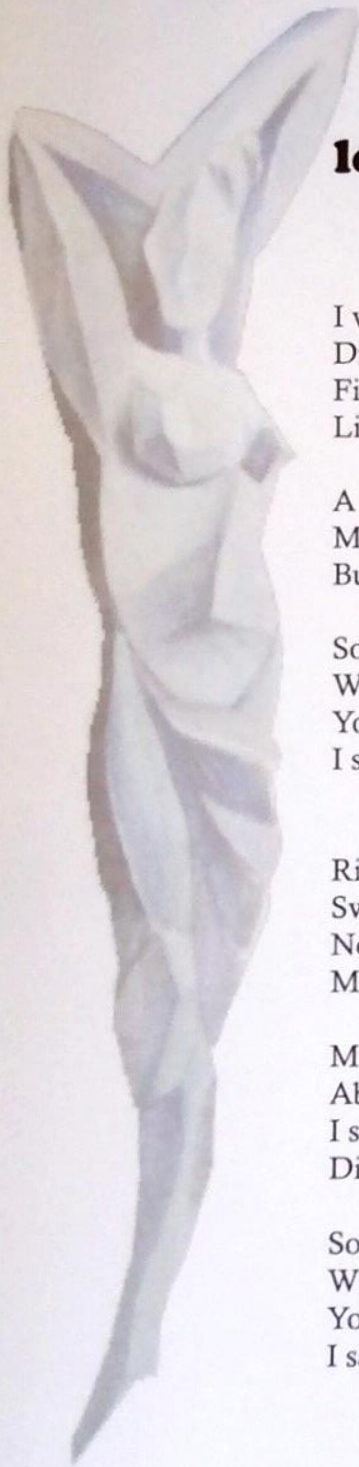
No longer did they care to hear.
"Too busy," so they thought.
Till Song Catchers were almost gone,
And everyone forgot.

And so the sage sang through the night,
And I fell asleep close by him.
When morning came, he'd disappeared,
And I never since could find him.

You may just scoff and say he's mad,
You may think I am, too.
But there is something that he said
Which certainly is true.

See, songs are powerfully magical things.
They can kindle love or fear,
But all too easy this power dies
If no one's there to hear.

So, since that night I've always walked
In silent observation,
Hoping that I'll one day hear
A song of exaltation.



love letters

zara matthews

I wasted my life here--
Dreaming and dancing.
Fire spread through my veins,
Like your sensuality pierced my heart.

A drop of color fell from my cheek.
My ink berries no longer tasted sweet,
But, oh, how they smelt as paper words.

So the light just fades
While we walk away.
You said I'm sorry.
I said I loved you
... I lied.

Rice fills up the envelopes,
Sweat licks the glue,
No more scent of morning dew in the air--
Mr. B knocked at the neighbor's door yesterday.

My inkwell has run dry,
Absorbed by the flakes of skin falling off.
I seem to blend in like camouflage,
Disappearing into the scenery like you.

So the light just fades
While we go our separate ways.
You said I'm sorry.
I said I loved you
... We lied.





my thought process after i do something stupid

avery moore

psychosomatic paranoia is brought about when I stick the Ticonderoga #2 up my nose and the smell of graphite lingers on thereafter

is it going to be there forever?

will I be cursed for the duration of my natural life

may eternity

only for it to be vanquished with the nasal inhalation of orange zest that lifts my

spirits and gives me that gusto

that eerie confidence

replaced by bed sores acquired from those long nights on *CB4*?

so I pose less threat than most, who's to say they can't recall feelings

of worrisome guilt?

the knowledge that what you've done can't be repaired with a lil' spit shine? a lil' razzle dazzle?

self-worth is a hassle

to keep up with body and mind when you seem to be thwarted by an institution's inability to provide?

take pride in your efforts, take pride in your inadequacies, your hesitance to please,

that certain something that earns you the title of eccentric, neurotic, maybe even melodic

not robotic, I assure you no.

really human from head to toe

although the more we learn about ourselves the more we wonder why is it necessary to plunder and pillage what's underneath?

pull the sword out of its sheath and stab it into authority



the work of a muse

amy c. butler

A muse at work is hardly dull.
Inspiration is hardly droll.
Be quick to listen and swift to learn.
Admire the fire. Don't be scared of getting burned.
A muse's lessons are many and good,
emphasizing what we can, and what we should.
A genuine muse is a gift to treasure,
one you will find only once in forever.
Her inspiration comes without reason,
no matter the time, place, person, or season.
A swift, sudden thought, a random idea—
signals that a muse of sorts is near.
A muse is a muse, a muse is amused
by the product of her work. She's not to be abused.
A muse is a friend, a muse is there to lend
a hand when you think creativity is at an end.





Fight For Your Right

Stefani Lackey

from dusk till dawn

avery moore



From dusk till dawn
the beat goes on
but nevertheless we're doomed to regress
I'd expect nothing less
than the downfall of patience



Children of age forced into indentured enslavement
The story is written on the pavement
The stress joints are holidays that cease to exist
on account of late payments



Contain it
This need to progress will soon act as a cushion for the future
Unwilling to take heed from the tutors of past generations
Unwilling to ignore the sensation of advancement

I wonder if we'll realize our lack of enhancement

blood

kristen ketcherside

Today I cut my finger, and it caught me by surprise.
The blood that dared to venture out reminds me: i'm alive.
Sometimes it gets lost under what i'm supposed to be.
If i try hard enough, i can't feel it.
But just for Curiosity
i'll pull the walls of skin open
and look for red within.

So often i
am told that black and white are all that've ever been.
And so often i forget, beneath the whiteness of my skin
Somewhere, in there,
There's suppose to be
a transcendental crimson.

but Something insists i'm alive.
and wants to know why I can't breathe
and Something isn't satisfied
when I reply
with what I think:

i'm too proud to be weak.
i'm too weak to be small.
i'm too old to be young and
too young to be free;

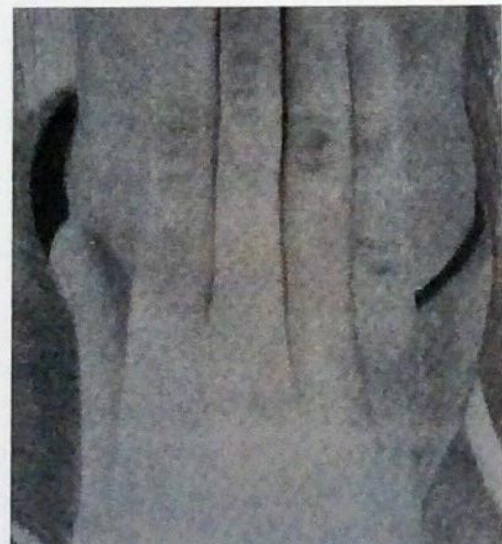
born in
a nation with a foundation on in
herent in
adequacy

i need something now.
i need it to feel complete
i need it to live, i need it
to feel red.

So everything's just fine.
We've got it right this time.
and who am i?

a proud product of Corporate
who has trouble telling refuse
from truth.

but i REFUSE
to think that i am INCOMPLETE
that i need MORE to be whole
i WILL NOT be sold to jesus freaks
or their martial pseudo-brother,
turning money into Blood



while,
somehow,
they still claim
to work for the common good.

Blood.

There's blood inside me somewhere
and i think it might be red.

but for now i'll turn my head
to face the wall; there's too much light
accentuating contrast
to make things black and white.

From my bed i look up at the ceiling, connect drywall dots
on the face of father time
the darkness hides his wrinkles and i pretend his face is mine.

THIS
is my favorite part of the day.
when eyelids drop, i fade away
and Abstract can come out to play.

so i wait.
and i wait.

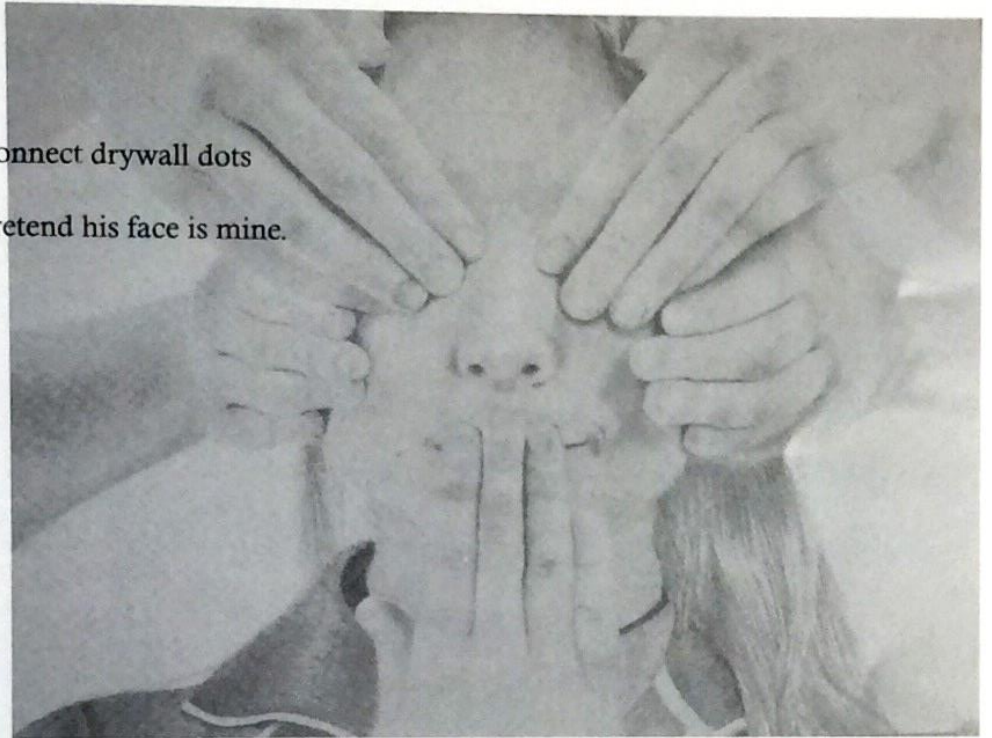
But she isn't coming, and
i wonder if she got lost
got caught in
traffic or some other obligation.

Maybe she's on vacation
with the truth and president . . .

nothing's going to change.
i've lost my hope in change.

but as long as we've spare change;
When the current sea of currency
and lies consume the quay
When we wait at sales to buy tall tales
with the special of the day
When our long-dead, papered presidents,
green and laced with our cocaine
are still far more effective than the Incumbent today—

i think that someone, somewhere,
should have something to say . . .



See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil

Timmary Ennis

a spectacular day in chicago

michael land

Moderato 112-120

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

mp Moderato 112-120

p *f* *ff*

mp Moderato 112-120

p *f* *ff*

mp Moderato 112-120

p *f* *ff*

p *f* *ff*

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

p

p

p

p

p

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

f
f
f
f
f

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

p
p
p
ppp
ppp

f
f
f
pp
pp

a spectacular day in chicago

continued

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes staves for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., and Cb. The second system includes staves for Vln. 1, Vln. 2, Vla., Vc., and Cb. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The first system features dynamic markings of *ff* (fortissimo) for the string parts and *p* (piano) for the Cb. part. The second system continues the musical material with similar dynamics.

Vln. 1
f

Vln. 2
f

Vla.
f

Vc.
f

Cb.

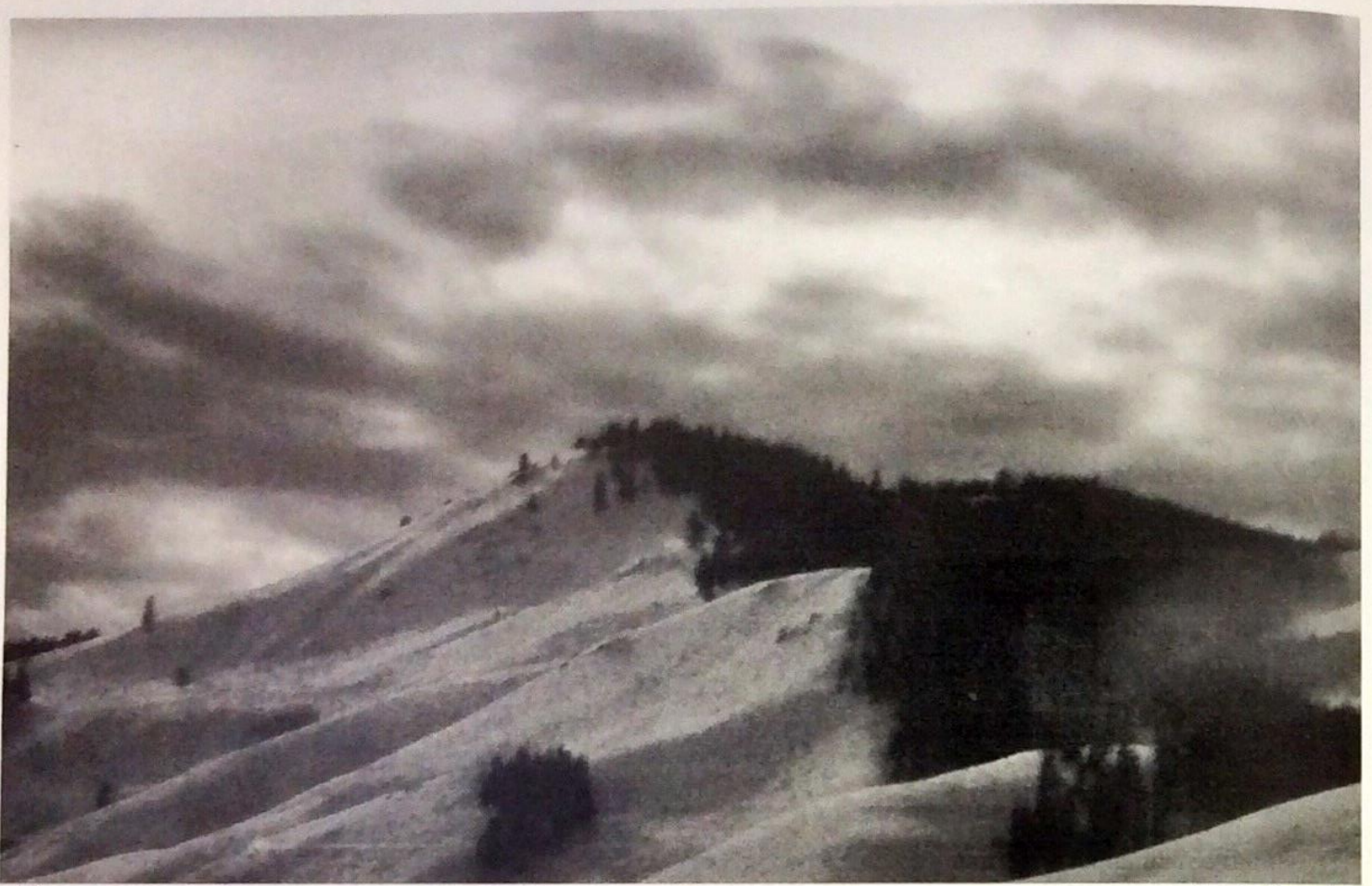
Vln. 1
ff

Vln. 2
ff

Vla.
ff

Vc.
ff

Cb.
ff

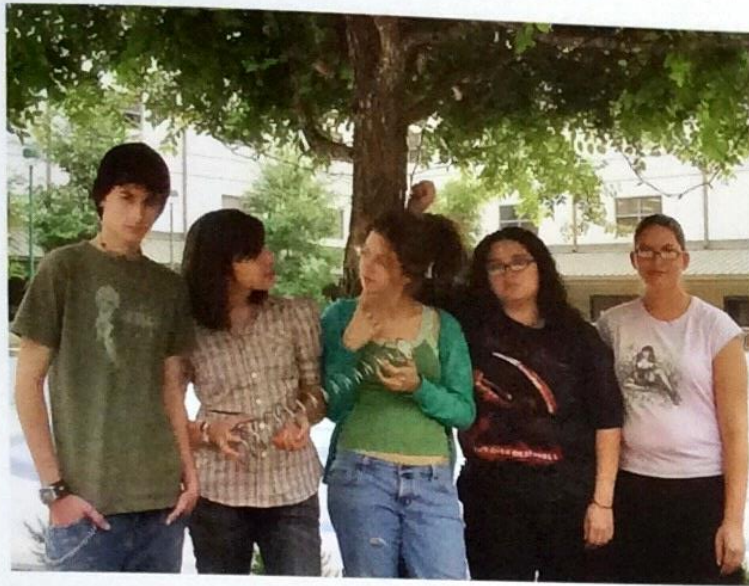


Momento

Sarah Bauml

colophon

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*Pseudonym

