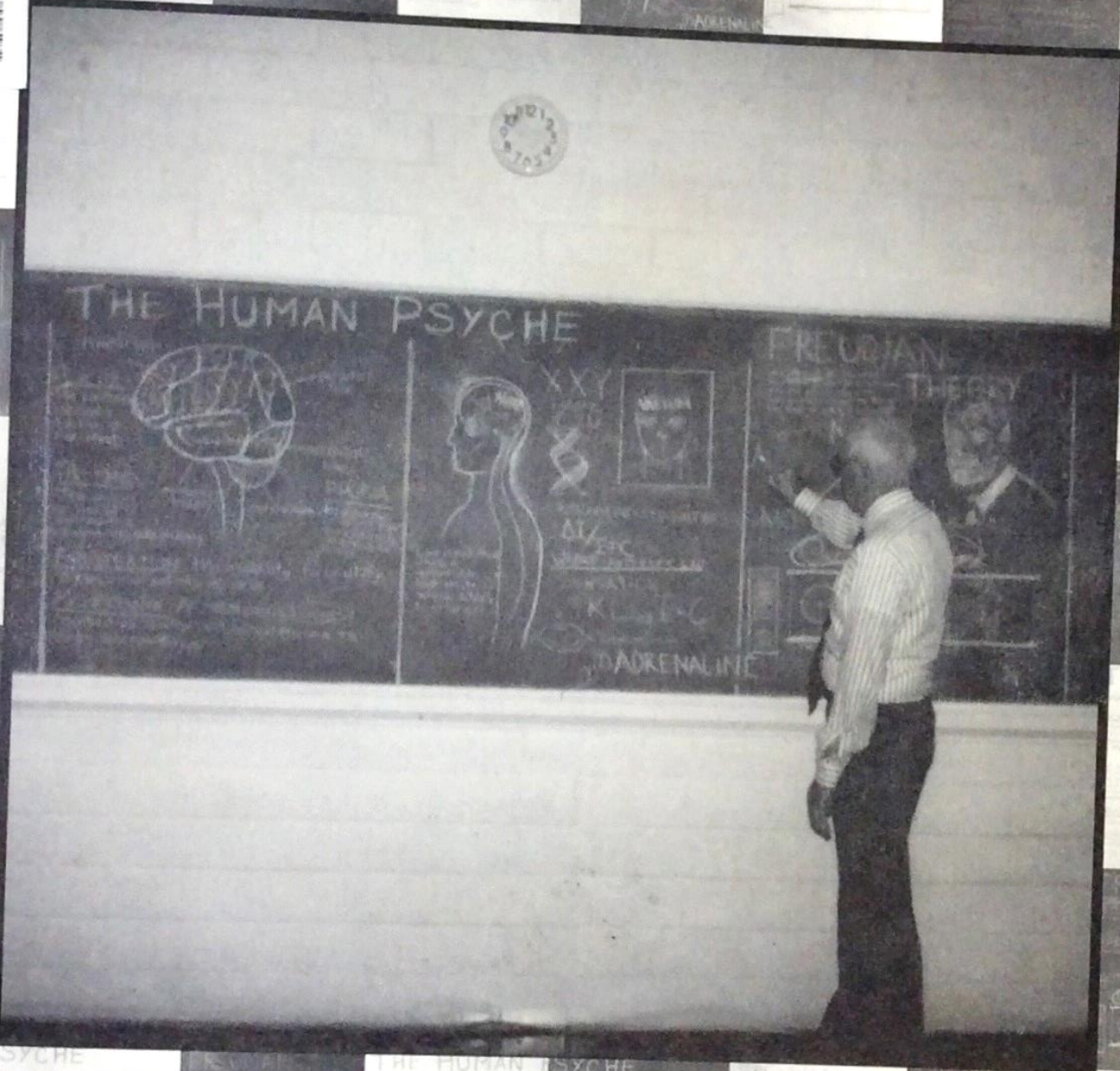
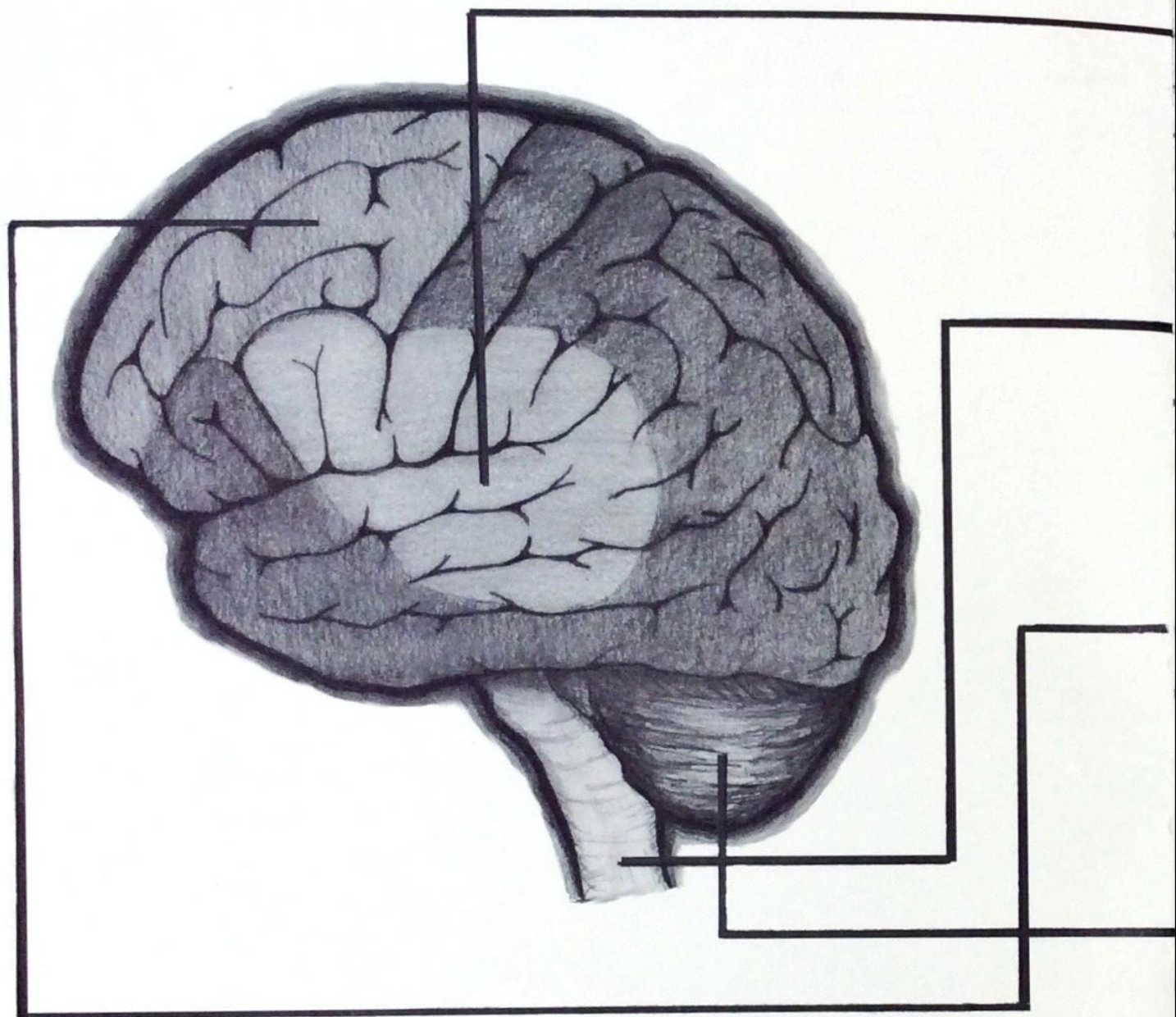


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Manchester High School



HALLISEYE 1999



Bullseye 1999

Volume 15

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Bullseye '99

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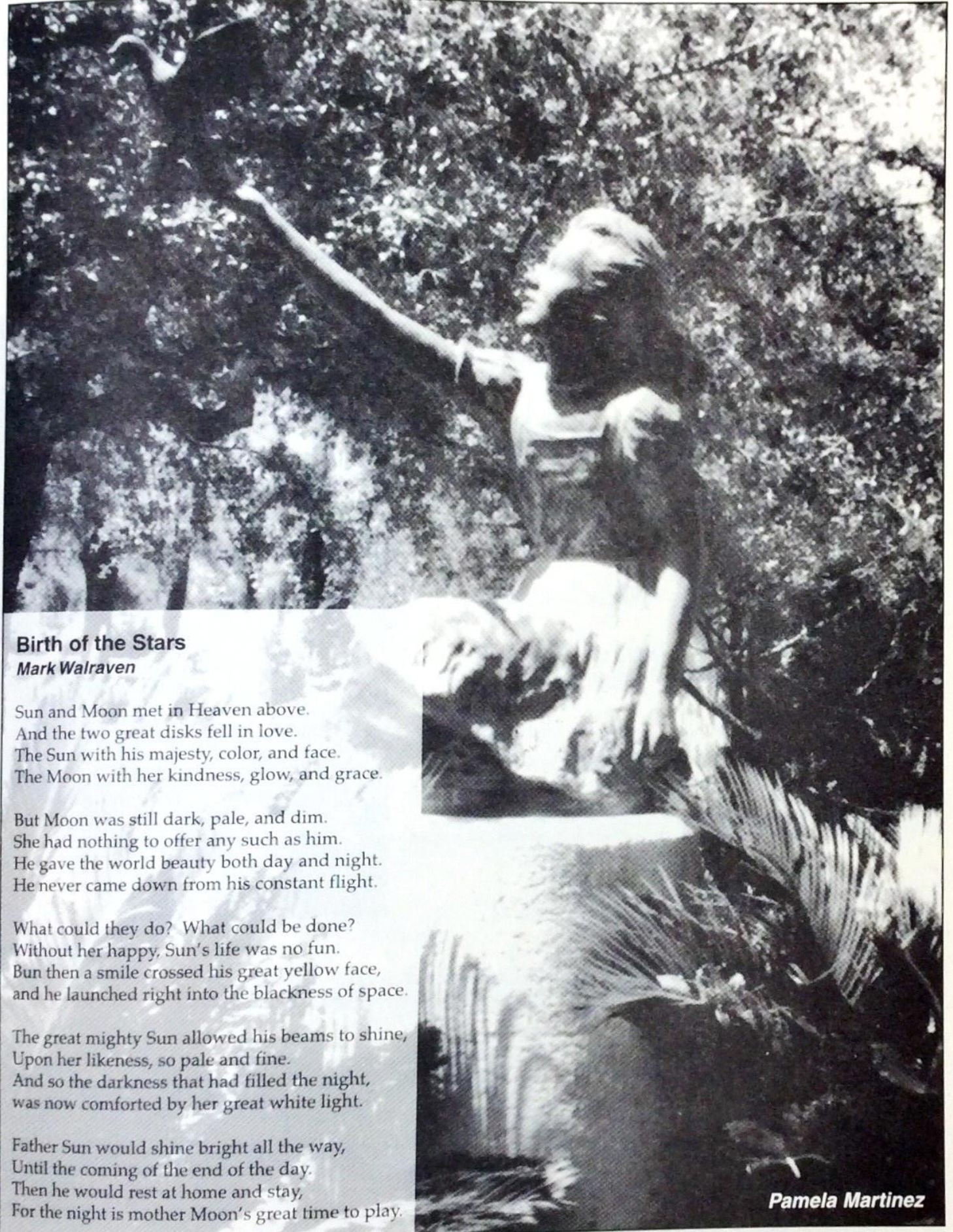
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Primary Pathways

internal primitive instinct
oppressed by societal sculpture
mandated by solitary schizoparanoia
provides further aperture
never to revert to initiality



Birth of the Stars

Mark Walraven

Sun and Moon met in Heaven above.
And the two great disks fell in love.
The Sun with his majesty, color, and face.
The Moon with her kindness, glow, and grace.

But Moon was still dark, pale, and dim.
She had nothing to offer any such as him.
He gave the world beauty both day and night.
He never came down from his constant flight.

What could they do? What could be done?
Without her happy, Sun's life was no fun.
But then a smile crossed his great yellow face,
and he launched right into the blackness of space.

The great mighty Sun allowed his beams to shine,
Upon her likeness, so pale and fine.
And so the darkness that had filled the night,
was now comforted by her great white light.

Father Sun would shine bright all the way,
Until the coming of the end of the day.
Then he would rest at home and stay,
For the night is mother Moon's great time to play.

Pamela Martinez

The River of Life
Valerie Lozano

My journey down the river of life
Has been an adventure everyday and every night

Sometimes it's row, row gently down the stream
Other times, the splashing, churning river feels like a dangerous dream

It started out smooth, as my baby years flew by
With my parents always there to answer all my how's and why's

But the river began winding as I entered school
And my mother and father were now setting the rules

It became a wildly rough ride throughout junior high
Fitting in, having friends, and being cool with all the guys

During this time, I was lost without a ferryman or a guide
And without one of them, the river wasn't very kind

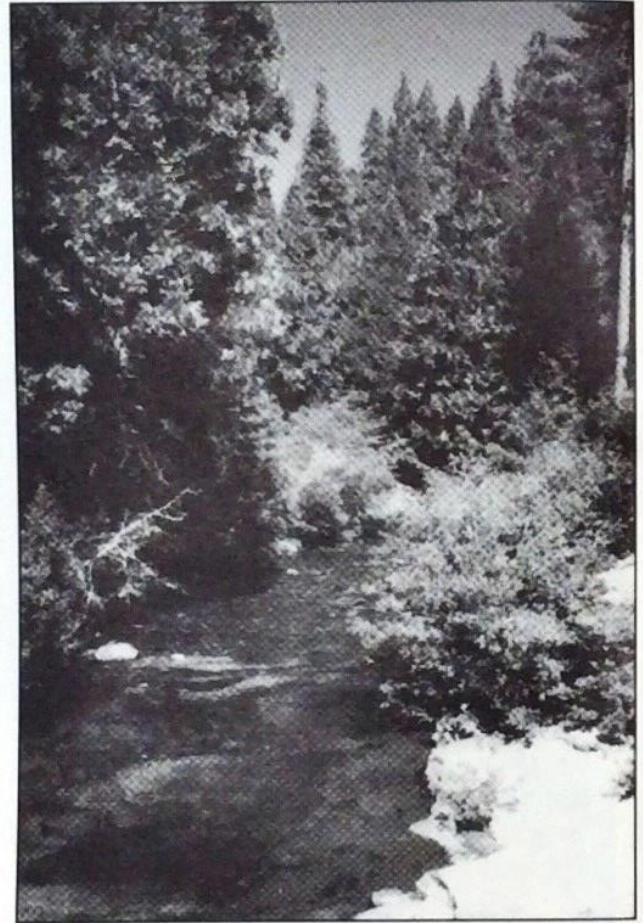
But I survived, and kept timidly traveling on
And recovered my ferryman, it was my mother all along

She paved the way, she paddled the canoe
When things got hectic, only she really knew

High school hit with a thud, like a ton of bricks falling from the sky
My days, endless circles, running around, quickly passing me by

From precal to ballet to singing in the choir
Sometimes I feel like my stress level can't possibly be higher

"What lies ahead", a daily question I contemplate
But my ferryman has taught me, to be patient and wait



Linda Bigelow

For the river will lead me, when I'm lost and all alone
Or when life's little hardships make me groan and moan

There are many turns in my river I have yet to see
But I know I'll survive each one, no matter what they might be

My river of life is constantly changing flow
But I love life, and wherever it takes me I'll go.

Holden Caulfield
Anonymous

Okay, squirt, you want the rules of life, well here you go.

First off, there are no second chances; if something seems like its time has already passed, then that's it, there's nothing else to be had. But you might want to try it from a different angle.

If at first you don't succeed, try again, but only if it's important. Otherwise you are just wasting your time. Don't live with regrets, but don't live foolishly either; you only have one body and mind.

Life is never going to be perfect, but it can always get worse; you can complain, but either do something to fix it or shut up. Bad things are going to happen to you, it's how you deal with it that makes you who you are.

Let's say you like a girl and your best friend goes out with her and gets some play. Hey, if it was that important maybe you would have asked her out first, but the guy is still a bastard for doing that.

You can take two roads; either stand up for yourself, or sit down and give someone else a shot.

Don't be faux sensitive, it'll just get annoying. Don't pretend to care; if you make fun of someone, don't be the first person to give them a hug when they're feeling down.

Being apathetic is okay, just as long as you are that way no matter what; otherwise it's all just for show.

Don't forget who your friends are, but leave people that treat you like crap behind; no one needs that in their life.

If you like a band, don't get mad when someone else likes them also; that's foolish and selfish.

Help someone in need at some point in your life. If you don't, then you're just a waste of space.

Be giving, but if something's offered take it only if you want it. There's nothing worse than a feeling of obligation; it goes against the concept of freedom.

Like your parents; they have to get it right at least once.

Don't be pissed at authority; instead, take notes and change things when it's your turn.

Above all, do not treat others like you want to be treated; treat them like they want to be treated.



Linda Bigelow

Andrea Gonzales

Let your dreams carry you high into the heavens where angels dance and sing and gods dwell. The jealous moon hides her face as you ascend high above her to behold the world. Sweet angel, a drop of purest sunlight captured in finest silk, how divine your soul. I mar your name by simply letting it breathe beyond my lips. Bright enchantress, you have found it in your heart to come into this world and lighten men's hearts, comfort women's minds, and caress children's souls. Good night fair maiden, and may you forever remain the pinnacle of beauty that you are on this glorious night. O, God, portend a life for me in the quintessence of eternal, undying love.



Alithia Bagley



In My Heart
Shawana Dillard

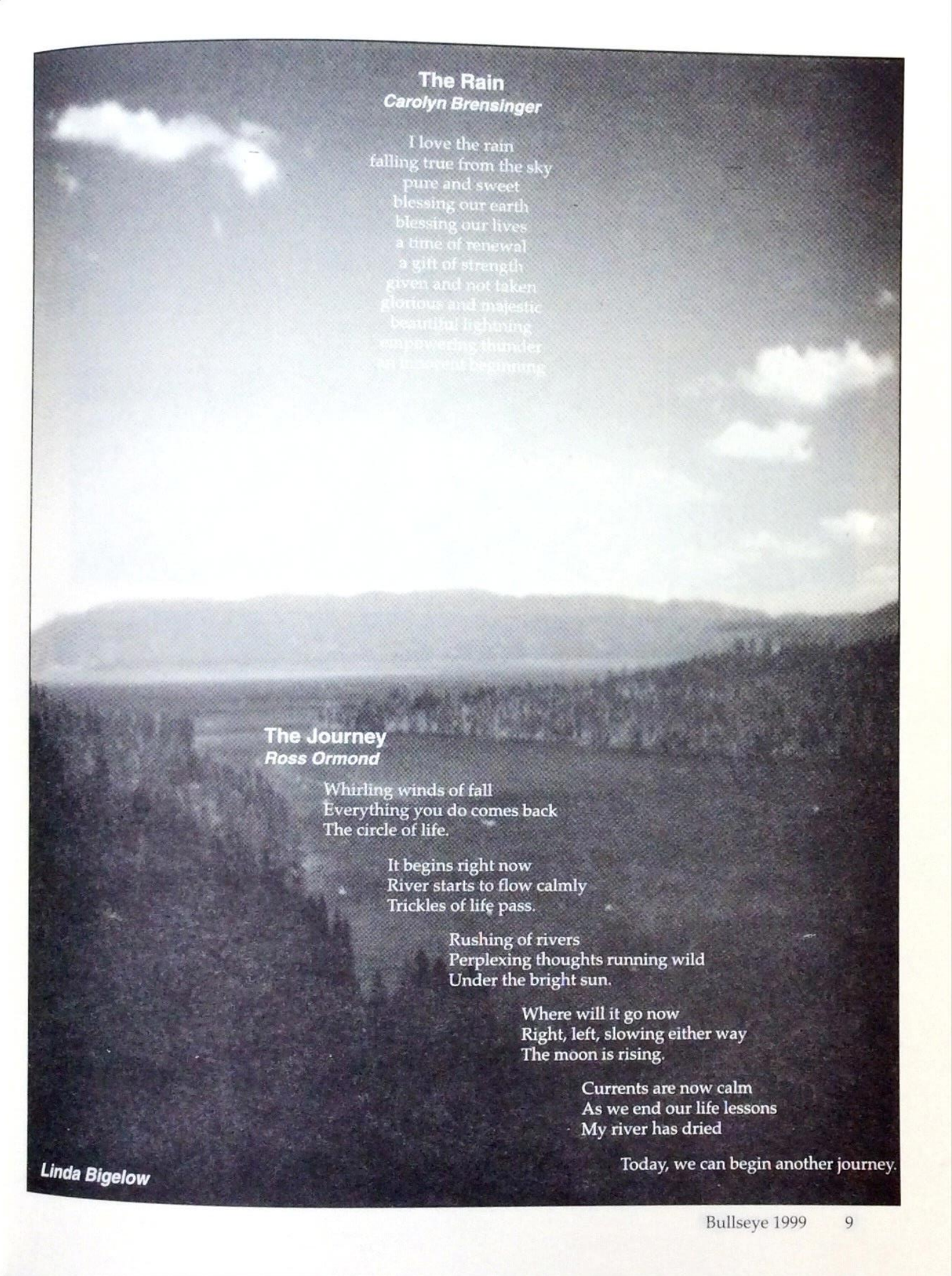
There's some secret essence I feel when I am around you that I can't explain.

Is it the warmth I feel when I am around you that I don't understand?

Or is it the happiness I feel when you touch my hand.

Is it okay to feel this emptiness and loneliness when we're apart?

Is it okay to feel this happiness in my heart?



The Rain
Carolyn Brensinger

I love the rain
falling true from the sky
pure and sweet
blessing our earth
blessing our lives
a time of renewal
a gift of strength
given and not taken
glorious and majestic
beautiful lightning
empowering thunder
an innocent beginning

The Journey
Ross Ormond

Whirling winds of fall
Everything you do comes back
The circle of life.

It begins right now
River starts to flow calmly
Trickles of life pass.

Rushing of rivers
Perplexing thoughts running wild
Under the bright sun.

Where will it go now
Right, left, slowing either way
The moon is rising.

Currents are now calm
As we end our life lessons
My river has dried

Today, we can begin another journey.

The New Foundation
Tanya Sammis

The buck and the deer
pushing with encouragement
as the fawn moves on.

The father blue jay
sweeping the skies for a treat
while mother protects.

Thunder is roaring
bright lightning strikes the dull earth
rains come pouring down.

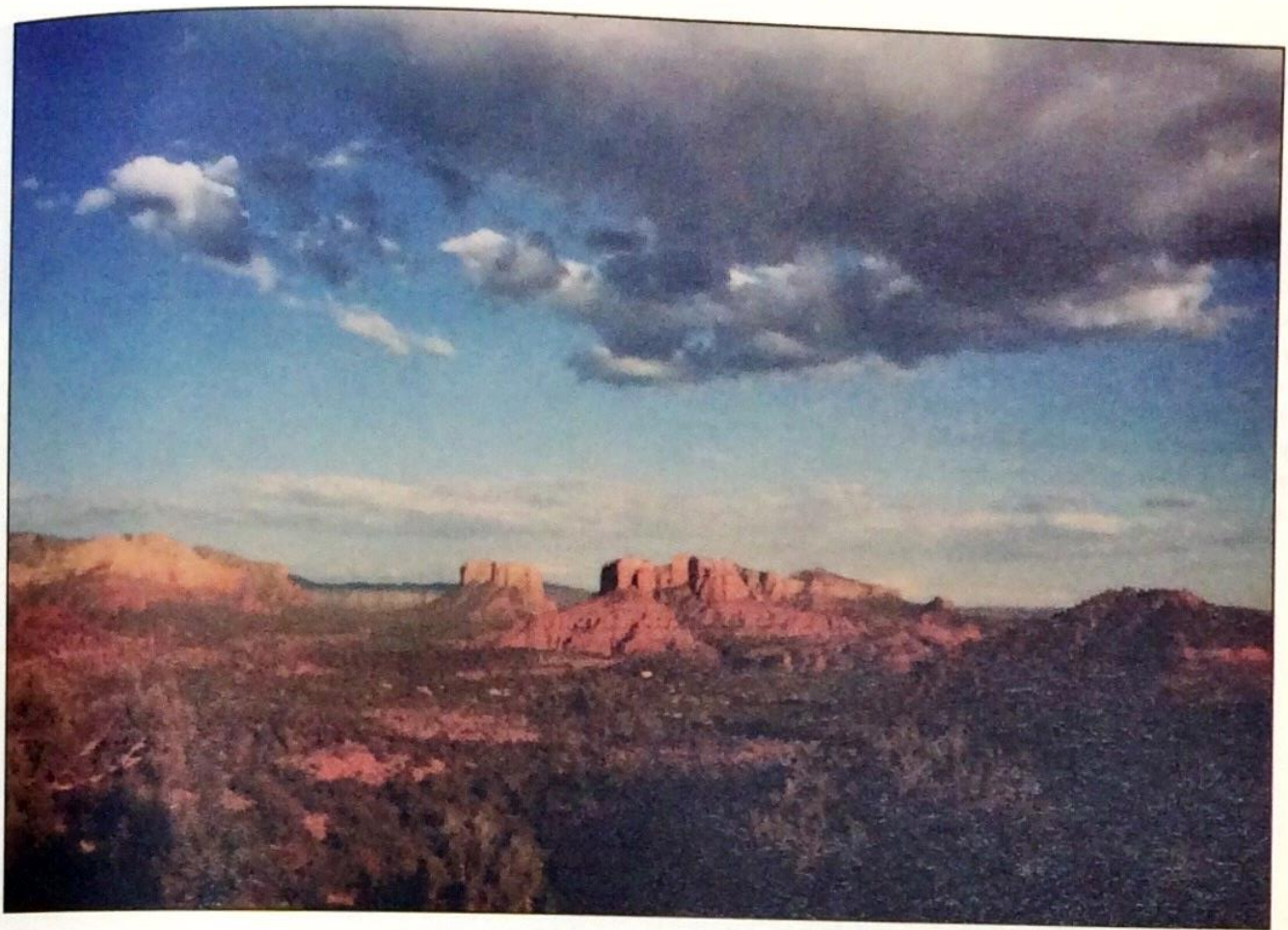
Newly fallen snow
covers the imperfections
with a white splendor.

Fresh smell of morning
as dew settles on the grass
the earth is renewed.

A small candle in the darkness sparks a new foundation.

Bianca Gonzales





Howard Drezner

Society

Julie Mainka

Analyze your equation,
Send another team to research the stars,
What happened to simplicity?
The value of a dollar outweighs
The value of Tranquillity of the mind,
We try to achieve Peace with ourselves
By working until we receive a vacation
From the mind we once possessed,
Only to try to purchase Happiness
In the forms of sweatshop shoes and designer cloth
All wrapped in bright advertising,
Would we go extinct without the luxuries that have become necessities?
Maybe just those of us who die without knowing they lived,
Those who complained about the complicated structure
That is constantly on the verge of toppling,
If they would've built a simple support of pebbles
They wouldn't have to sweep up boulders.

Remembering the Savored Flavor of Moonlight in a Folger's Coffee Can

Jennifer Gillespie

Belonging to that summer;
That one summer seemingly so far
When one mile was equal to the world,
When aspirations were to be the one to exceed that mile,
The one to discover where teeth went from under our pillows,
When childhood meant kick the can
And a wish came true when you saw a falling star.
Running under the eyes of the gods
In our own little world of children,
Where the universe spun
And no more existed than that summer game.

Reflecting on that summer;
A summer where maybe the paper planes didn't fly,
But in turning the yellowed pages of the mind
All that held meaning was playing the games
And the airplanes flew every night —we danced to the moonlight.

Thought out seven-year-old strategies
And the mature advice of the ten year olds,
Sweating in the night,
Searching for that rag which was the flag.
In defeat discovering it was in a tree too high for us to climb,
And getting hit on the head with an acorn for trying.

And when we lost
We never remembered,
We never fought because there was always kick the can tomorrow.
It was the summer of endless replays
And endless wins and losses.
It was the summer of a thousand games;
Enough to play to the moon and back.
And we never tired because of the moonlight;
It fed us the same mental song so we'd never stop dancing.

As years have passed, the song has changed;
Fainter in volume now and weak in years.
But each person continues to listen carefully for the song to smile.
Listening increasingly harder as the song fades away,
Then pretending its tune is still audible.



But in a coffee can in the corner,
That song is stored and pages are saved...
The summer moonlight is held in by the plastic top.
And when we crack the lid,
And hold our cheeks real close,
And listen carefully,
The moonlight still feeds.
And our wishes still come true.

The Bell Jar

Julie Dorsey

Inside myself
Lives a girl, not yet a woman
In the last year of my childhood
I reflect back on my life
Events that have molded and sculpted me
But not quite to the finish line

I see my mother
Calming, sweet words after a nightmare
The sweet, maternal aroma of her presence
I remember New York in the crisp coolness of February
And the infatuation of the life that holds me there
I hear my alarm bell, ringing its familiar song
An irony for me to get up and face the music



*Doug
Thompson*

I see myself as a mixture
Things I have absorbed; a nostalgic osmosis
These things which give me tranquillity
Dad's hamburgers on Sunday
Seeing the angels sing through the clouds
Hearing the harmonies in my head and the dreams I hold inside
While always quietly writing the lyrics

I hear the whisper of sweet words on my one and only's lips
And the omnipresence of mountains
I see the faces of God-sent people
The souls that have touched me
And those who shed negativity
My sweet, sweet brother with an angelic heart

My forgotten father and the daughter's soul he scarred
The smallest sister with the face of a rose and a lion's roar

All these faces, events, numerous happenings in my short life
All have created a girl of confusion, yet surety
And the growing realization that I exist for a reason
I hold everything dear and allow my bell-jar world to turn around
Yet as I look inside myself,
I see someone beautiful

Voice Of My Heart

Jenny Leman

The voice of my heart
Heavy in my head
Speaks to me in colors
Wants me to unravel this thread

A burnt end of black string
Twisted and tattered again
Rests in my harmless hands
I need it to mend

The spool rolls quietly on the table
A pattern of pain
One more time it hits
As I let it roll again

To catch it before it drops
Would be to know everything is gone
So I push it the other way
Another strike of my own is done

There the eye of the needle
As small as my will
Looks at my fingers shake
Weakly my hands feed it through

An art of weaving
Knows me more than I do
I watch it become so real
I have to finish it for you

Strands of you come frantically
How could I now let go?
In my hands I hold a miracle
I feel my heart start to glow.



The Dance of Broken Hearts

Linda Bigelow

My heart was breaking—
Children laughed
Euphonious laughter
At childlike things.

A blurred reflection
Stared back
From silver-water mirror
Mocking my pain.

Tender hands
Grasped a lustrous needle,
Carefully threading
Translucent strands of time
To mend
An aching heart.

Truth came,
Unexpected,
On the rippling edge
Of Wind's velvety skirt,
Gliding past
Desert tumbleweeds.

Whisper to me,
Gentle Wind said.
Come, follow...

Secret places
Will I reveal
Where broken hearts
Dance forever
With mystic hope.

Jenn Bigelow

Shoes Lindsay Algeo



A fragile, confused girl sits vulnerable to the world,
Her foggy emotions unconsciously blocking the teacher's voice.
In her own chaotic world everything appears to be crumbling.
How she'd like to be in someone else's shoes...



Lost deep in thought, she can still hear his voice,
His whisper of "I love you" echoes in her ears.
She can still feel his gentle kiss touching her lips
And his reassuring hand reaching out to comfort.

Then she realizes he's gone, gone so very far away,
The phone will never ring with his voice on the other line.
Her door bell will never sound, noting his presence,
And the aroma of his cologne will never pervade her lungs again.



Yet, why did he have to go?
It didn't have to end this way.
And she'll tell herself:

*Wish I could be in someone else's shoes,
Maybe I am better off without you
Just take me away to another place,
Why did this have to end this way.*

She knows life must go forward, yet it feels as time stands still;
Her mornings and nights seem to be the worst pain she has to endure.
His picture still sits there in her planner, along with the dying roses on the wall,
All of the memories she compounded into what now seems to be lost time.



Was she wasting her tears, or were they worth it,
Did he really mean everything he had said to her?
Why does her heart throb and ache so badly,
How could he turn his back and just walk away?

He said he needed a break, or had he just lost interest,
Why couldn't he be straightforward and tell her the truth?
Had he simply fallen for someone else he liked more?
Selfishly he exposed her to unnecessary pain.



Yet, why did he have to go?
It didn't have to end this way.
And she'll tell herself:

*Wish I could be in someone else's shoes,
Maybe I am better off without you
Just take me away to another place,
Why did this have to end this way.*

In the end, unknowingly, she'll walk away a winner.
And maybe someday she'll see her shoes fit her just fine...



Sterling Allen





Kevin Brown

Who I am

Samantha Pineda

Inside myself:

there is a hint of

Corpus Christi, San Antonio, San Marcos, and London.

with the personalities of so many people

my dad's caring

my mom's quietness

"Anna's" harshness

my grandparents past

Bianca's ability to have faith

Hannah's wackiness and

Kim's innocence.

the smell of

freshly fallen rain, sunshine, and grass with traces of
camp and homemade chocolate chip cookies.

with the taste of

fideo, homemade tortillas, rice, and beans, yet lingering
is hard-boiled eggs with soldier.

So many sounds that are different

the telephone ringing, yelling, songs from camp,

and the constant sound of movement;

while also the quiet laughter in church, the crying, and
comforting word.

Trying to see so many things is hard

right from wrong, friends, family, and the right path, but
the only thing I NEED to be searching for is God.

Although many of my qualities are contradicting, the only thing
I know for sure is that inside me there is Love.



Change Always

Robert Watson

Powered ink drives down pen neck to bleed its own
Still paint nature into existence
Words.

Share the plot mark holes of self discovery,
Language heals like
Hearing the classical lingering
notes, creating movement, feeling thought,
Slowly, roundabout the
Skull warm
Lining on the boundaries of matter brain,
Still in constraints of bookshelf Belief.

The **B**ody and Brain, clinical depth
When diving deep into sea
Subconscious,
And the death of cells relates high to
Saints activated in martyr
Methods.

Depth, ethical to a degree, is always stopped
by a man sitting on faint ideas
whispered to his ear.
Truе symptoms wail like strong light or
vibration strings calling our sins
into fornicated formation
getting ahead and loud we could
bend notes into bliss and next life.

Tension, and the degrees rise and molecules give new
expression and facial tensions.
Faint notions become swimming symptoms
of sea subconscious, jagged, shooting
up from mud and shatter ear drums
Touched by fire shape flame.

Let **t**ongues be melted into swords
of talking no eyed saints in trance,
Then Believe.

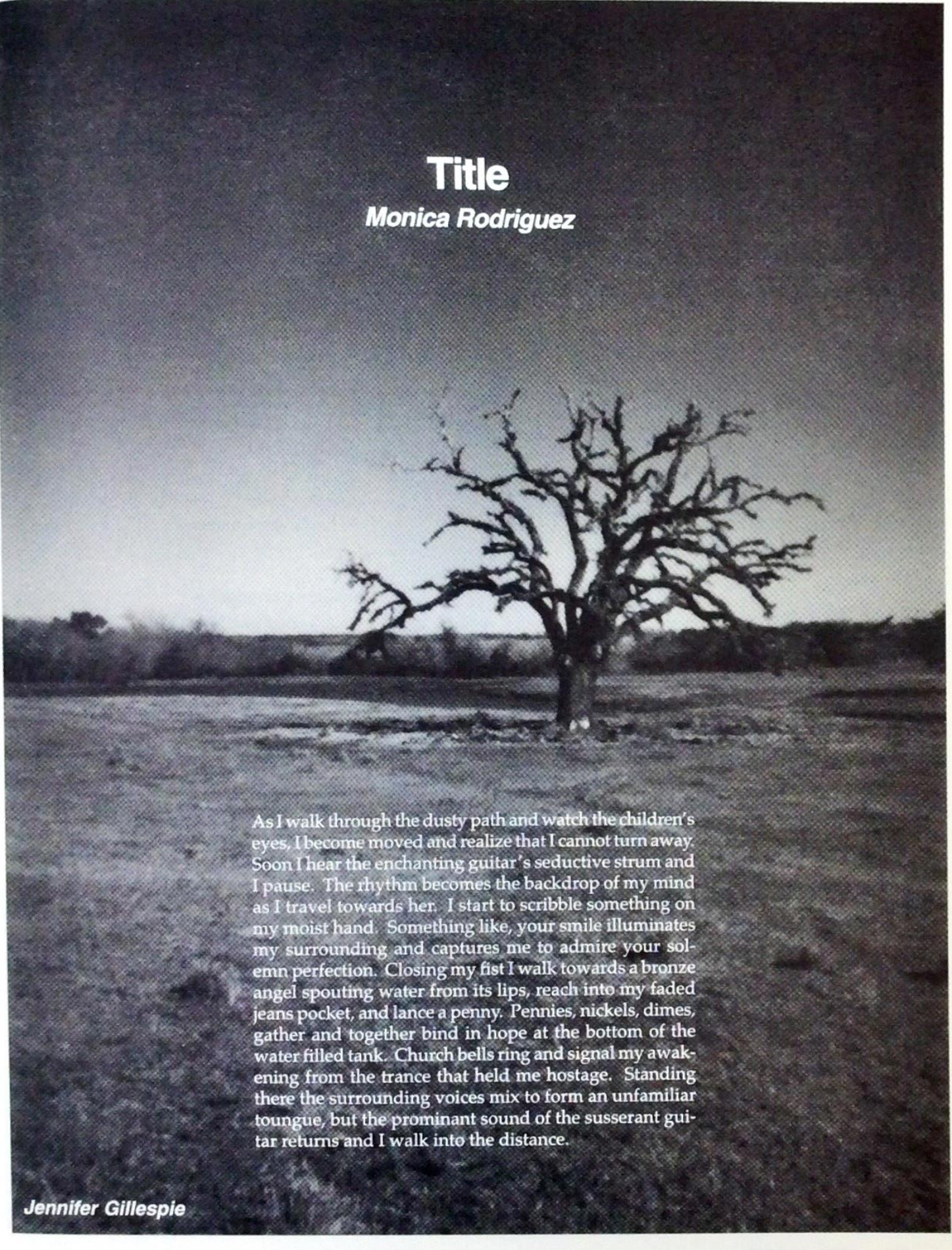


External Stimuli

unrealized neurosis actualized
and muted
by monstrous dosages of chemical happiness
lust, love, and subconscious fear of one's emotions
cathartic addiction
to the American Nightmare

Title

Monica Rodriguez

A black and white photograph of a lone, gnarled tree in a vast, open field under a dark sky. The tree is the central focus, with its intricate, bare branches reaching out. The ground is a flat, textured expanse, possibly a field or a path. The sky is a deep, dark grey, suggesting dusk or dawn. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

As I walk through the dusty path and watch the children's eyes, I become moved and realize that I cannot turn away. Soon I hear the enchanting guitar's seductive strum and I pause. The rhythm becomes the backdrop of my mind as I travel towards her. I start to scribble something on my moist hand. Something like, your smile illuminates my surrounding and captures me to admire your solemn perfection. Closing my fist I walk towards a bronze angel spouting water from its lips, reach into my faded jeans pocket, and lance a penny. Pennies, nickels, dimes, gather and together bind in hope at the bottom of the water filled tank. Church bells ring and signal my awakening from the trance that held me hostage. Standing there the surrounding voices mix to form an unfamiliar tongue, but the prominent sound of the susserant guitar returns and I walk into the distance.

Jennifer Gillespie

my body is tired
my soul has left
my mind is mush
full of meaningless words
that fail to make sense
i am no longer myself
going through the motions
smile and nod smile and nod
the lust the desire
i once yearned to live
now i loathe the dawn
chirping of birds
signaling another day
descending a winding staircase
i cannot carry on like this

with him came new wisdom
a philosophy so unfamiliar
strange yet enthralling
we are different he says
so we cannot be i say
he is flawless
compassionate and determined
i am alive again

something is wrong
i will not allow myself
to know the feeling of joy
i pull away from him
we are too close
i am scared of pain
he must leave now
the future is approaching
i cannot shrug
the relentless shadow
go go
i set him free

wait he pleads
he needs me
i will not admit it
i love him
i forgot how to be alone
my hand misses his

DISCOVERY

my pen does not provide solace
now only he will suffice

is this me
is this me
an independent young lady
i have ceased to be
reflection i refuse to recognize
can i dare
to be bold
free myself from expectations
if i do not
shall i live
the lonely life
of mister prufrock
close my eyes
ignore the logic
open my heart
do i even have a choice

yes
passion and emotion
are finally meant for me
me and him him and me
separate entities
we can no longer be
speaking without saying a word
a novel expressed
in only a glance

stability and companionship
part of the package
i learn from him
and he from me

our paths will part
and that is meant to be
each will be stronger
evolved
a special place
he will always hold in my heart
how brilliant he truly is
and the success he will be

thank you

Lauren Sartain



The Watcher from Above

Rozie Daniel

He'll hunt you down till the day of judgment.
 He'll count every time,
 Until you're dead.
He'll watch your steps,
Until you have a grave.
 He'll follow your path,
Then make the path you follow.
He'll watch you choose friends,
 Then choose them for you.

You'll read a book,
Then he'll hand you his.
You'll find your own way,
Then he'll guide you back to his.
You'll come to seek,
He'll hunt to find.
You'll follow his footsteps,
And he'll continue to lead.
You'll seek a better place,
And he'll offer his home.

Stretch

Melissa Hauck

i am
in part of a
 new cultivation
where people die excessively
where women weep incessantly
and the only romance
 that i've ever had
was voices inside
plastic
 passion
withheld in word alone

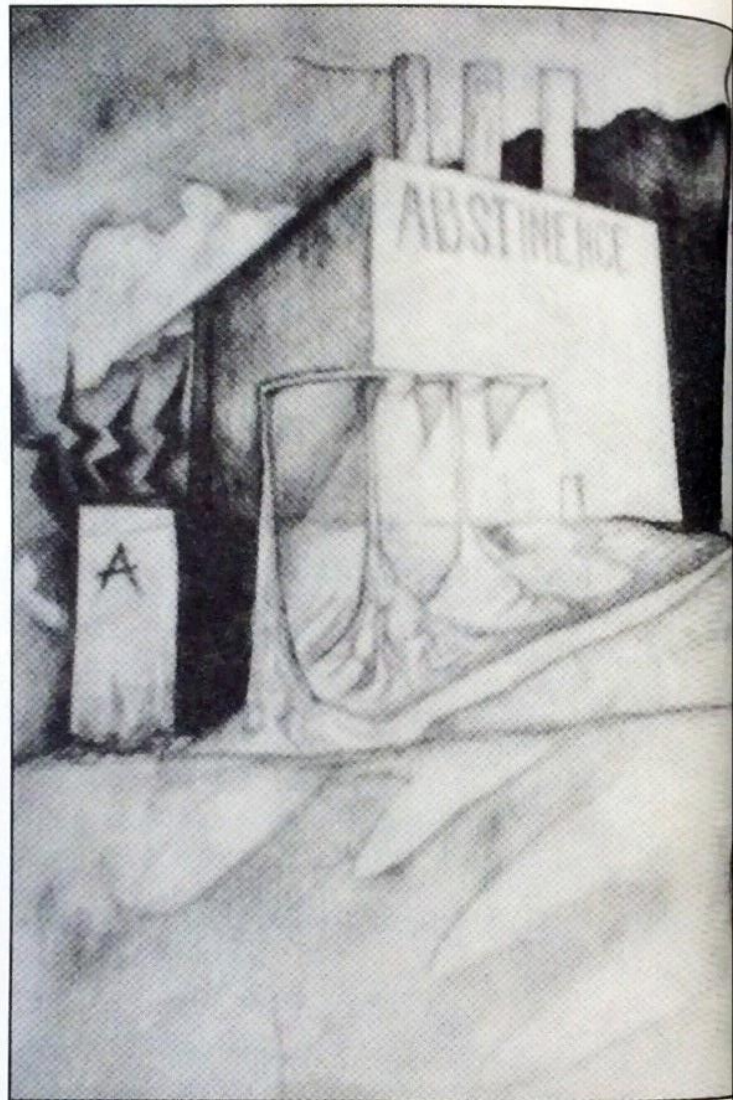
candlewicks
 and billions swimming their weight
to counters and towers
where
 they're sold
good old american pieces of which
that are massively produced by the hands of
our generation's keepers
spindle-threads
 and peace—keepers

my sweat bleeds downwards to the sky how the
shapes of zither zephyr
unshy the
 trickle-chick-truckler
sleeting onside the cataract clatter
 i see cathedrals
under every torn eyelid
each structure built up
from the very same treasure and dust
as i

yes now my whistling
 freezes midair and falls to the sand
and dismantles
with a pin:drop
slight and soft in a skin-deep pool
figures million and much
every
 Thing
that i've dreamed and seemed stakes itself to the
post of low—budget
severity
 you

look my eye in the eye and laugh
and tear my fleshy fibres in half then
heave and achieve a string of curiosity
and say we're kidding and at the stake they'll
ash with germination to re-invent

this throbbing generation
bundle every couple years to
mop up those tattered smiles
on wrinkled faces
don't go digging through the dirt of
mankind because honey, you'll never know
what
you'll find
people sell estrogen like perfume, and i
know i'm not the
 only thinker
 in the room.



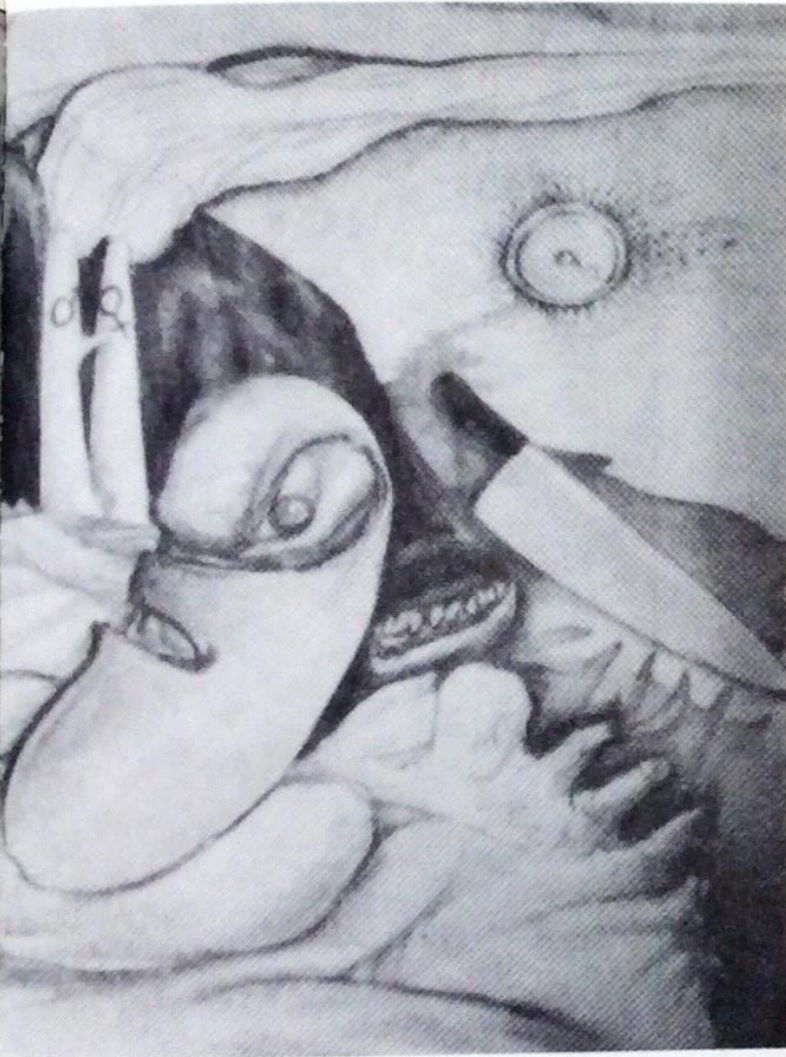
our bodies were not purposed apart as a cathedral of
ritual
nothing of an exceptional architectural achievement
the body which binds your selfish soul
was woven with wind and wrath of sin
and mine eyes are shadows of shade and sweat
all this suiting mine own hunger and stretch.

every blood-soaked land is home for me
never
chained and never free...

Mother Luna

Joshua Smith

Setting free the children from clouds on rainy Mondays, when an entity was cast forth from this 6-dimensional ocean of love and the silence is repeated by a chorus of chattering drops. Crimson souls materialize to form liquid flesh mixed with sweat and the screams of a dividing psyche. Golden flash as two years die and along came the death of the still living fallen angels-mechanical incubi seducing the fantasies of a metallic destruction. As fields separate and this child joins the earth once more in a brief moment of clarity on days of moisture



Joshua Smith

filled sunshine and endlessly flowing creations which still live in theory.

Sobbing as the river of all remembrance is clarified and times long forgotten resurface in this transparent giver of gifts. Dreamlike realities brought forth by a too often precocious little-boy.

Black out—the night freezes liquid time and flashes the imagery which Alergernon's compatriots forever forget-demons possessed in hands glowing with the light from MOTHER LUNA.

Psychic perfection corroded by my own bitter disillusion-created for the misery of the dark age hurricanes. Retardation function as liquid verse is super-imposed on transcript and the flowing visions as the banks pass silent victim in this environment of peace and chaotic ignorance is mixed with a psychiatrist's blood.

Unwanted abandonment, selfish dictations; under rule by this capitalistic conglomerate.

Becoming addicted to the new summer dew; closing my eyes as the remembrance of the old world is forgotten with each new presence and inward regression. Times of emotional adolescence and middle passages to strong holds of cynicism.

Frozen ice in long dead summers like the floating corpse in this corrupted stream of morality; clogged and digested by its surroundings. Engulfed by emotional scavengers and other such feminine tumors.

Setting suns on little voices unheard by the angry maternal victims and angry tears. Short meditations when suicide woods are revisited two weeks before the fakeness begins. The river once noble in its painful surrounding is polluted with blindsided lust and estrogen curves. Excommunicated by non-religious popes; banished to an emotional waste-

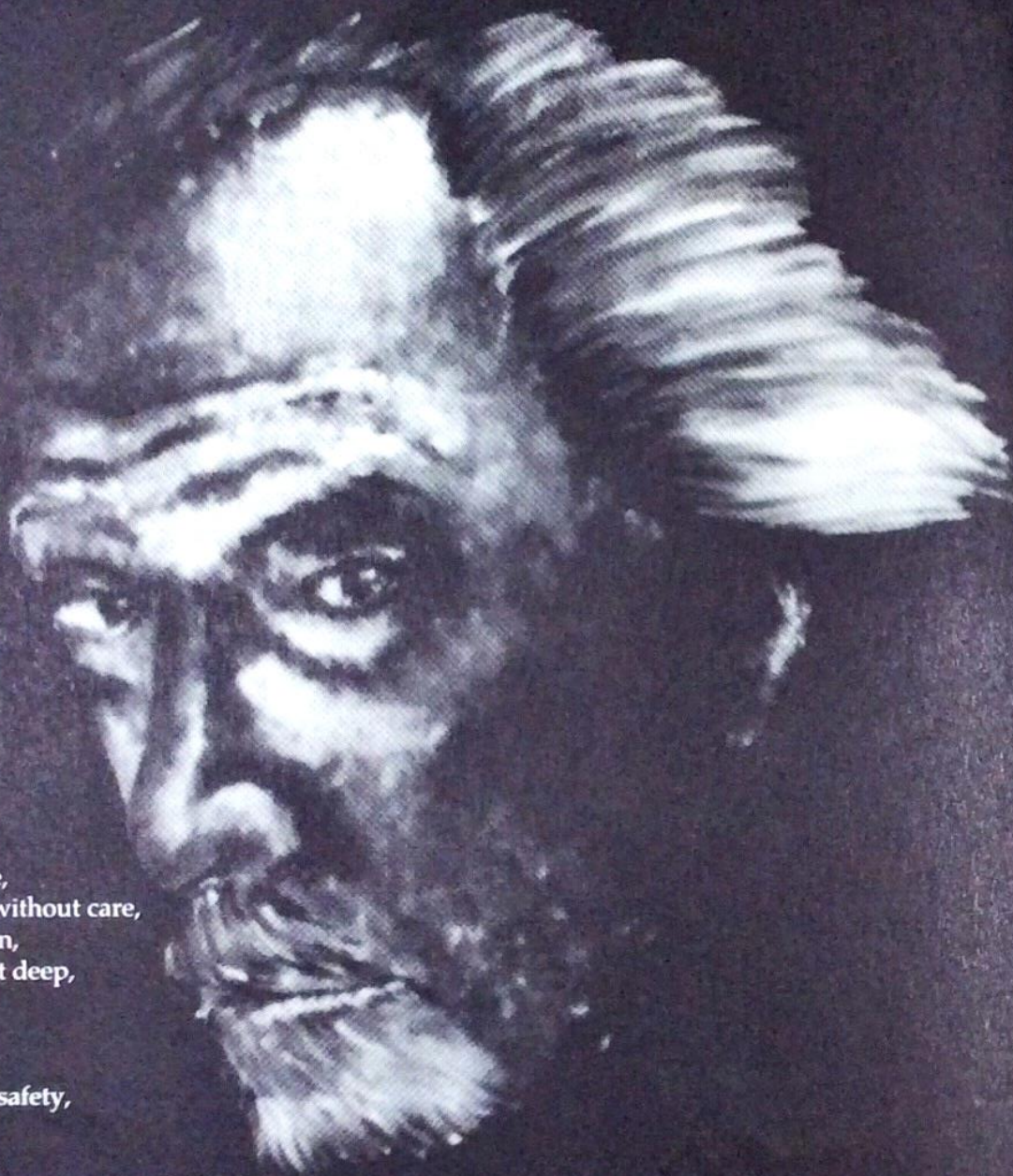
land filled with athletes and extra-curricular nightmares.

Soon these verbal storms trickle because winters can be an excuse for psychological homicide. Rebirth and the phoenix rises from the point of creation in a round multidimensional sphere-two days before the light of creation-when souls were envied and cast away like this average child -repaying their debts with futile self-expression techniques. The little stream breaks and divides, separating to sustain new entities when life meets death and cancel each other and leave a calm existence.

Shy Futures

Paul Bogen

A foolish idea,
An impossible idea,
Just forget about it,
It would never work,
I am not good enough,
She does not care,
No one cares,
Silent reasoning,
Deadly images,
Countless reasons,
No affirmations,
Apathetic surrender,
An easy escape,
A digital dream,
No one can see,
No one can hear,
No one can hurt me,
Hidden in the binary haze,
Of a billion lives passing without care,
But always I have to return,
And the broken shards cut deep,
Silence,
Then tears,
Alone,
Desperate fleeing back to safety,
Back to comfort,
Away from pain,
Away from reality,
The return to a digital domain.



Seun Mun

Perfection
Bianca Gonzales

It's a day to weep
For what you can't see
Tears will be shed for all the perfection that exists
Someone screams
"What the hell is wrong with you?!"
Here's a tear for your perfect face
Here's another for your perfect clothes
And another for your perfect life
I myself am not perfect
I'm far from it
But, you see,
The difference between you and I
Is I can see
That you make me want to cry
For all that you don't realize

Hey, Remember Me?
Michael Rodriguez

Hey, remember me?
The guy who loves you hopelessly
The person who needs you by their side
The one who loves you day and night
The one who watches as you pass by
The one who, when you're gone,
wants to cry
Hey, remember me?
The one who was there through thick and thin
The one whose love will never end
The one who never asked for much
The one who needs to feel your touch
The one who loves to hear you talk
The one who loves the way you walk
Hey, remember me?
The one who is sad when he sees you cry
The one who ignores the worthless lies
The one who could faint at your sight
Hey, it's me
The one who needs your love so desperately
So, now, do you remember me?

Hate Myself For Loving You

Eryn Autry

Every time my heart breaks,
I crawl to you.
On my knees I worship you,
like a god with eyes of never-ending blackened depth.
I see your face flood my dreams,
but I see my innocence fade away
as I reach for you.

In a temple of childhood fancy,
we hold each other like we'll never let go,
and cry soul-cleansing tears of love and joy
in fresh, endless fields of tall grass and everlasting life
as you look into my eyes like you really love me
and pledge forever and always in gentle tones
of blue lemonade and soft pink poppies
in the sunny summer breeze.

Swing-sets creak in the cold gusts of a gathering storm
and crimson-red roses wilt in the sterling silver frost
and when I see your ebony eyes
stab my soul like deadly poison,
it hurts so much to feel your warm hands upon my face
like a thousand ripping knife blades.
Your soft, warm breath upon my pale skin
stings like acid burning right through.

Playgrounds empty as the children all go home
and musty books gather musty dust as they've been forgotten.
A staircase that reaches the brightest stars
falls to the ground
like rusty, human bones.

And I cry
and my tears fall like ancient lead
and though they hold me in their arms,
their soft silken touches never go past my tear-soaked skin.
And so I scream for some resolution
so I weep for something to take me to you
and so I lose myself in my mind
so I hold my anger in my soul
and hate myself for loving you.



Sterling Allen

Written in sole dedication for Ben, who shall forever hold my heart.

Passing Moment

Linda Bigelow

We sat together one serene evening,
only a whisper apart—
You, contemplating my face,
looking upon that which you called beautiful,

and I, patiently waiting,
searching for an answer,
looking deep into your hazel eyes
which gazed intently back into mine...
and for a moment I had hope.

A change came over your passive face,
and I thought you had finally seen
something no one else had,
something deeper in my eyes
which hold so much.

For that one ephemeral moment,
only a breath in time,
when your face disclosed satisfaction
from your search,
I thought that you,
the only one that could,
had unearthed something about me
that no one else ever dared to conceive,
and you had...



Seun Mun

But as you told me that one of my eyes
opened wider than the other,
which I never knew,
my hope began to shatter.

Abcde

(pronounced like absedy, stands for anonymous)

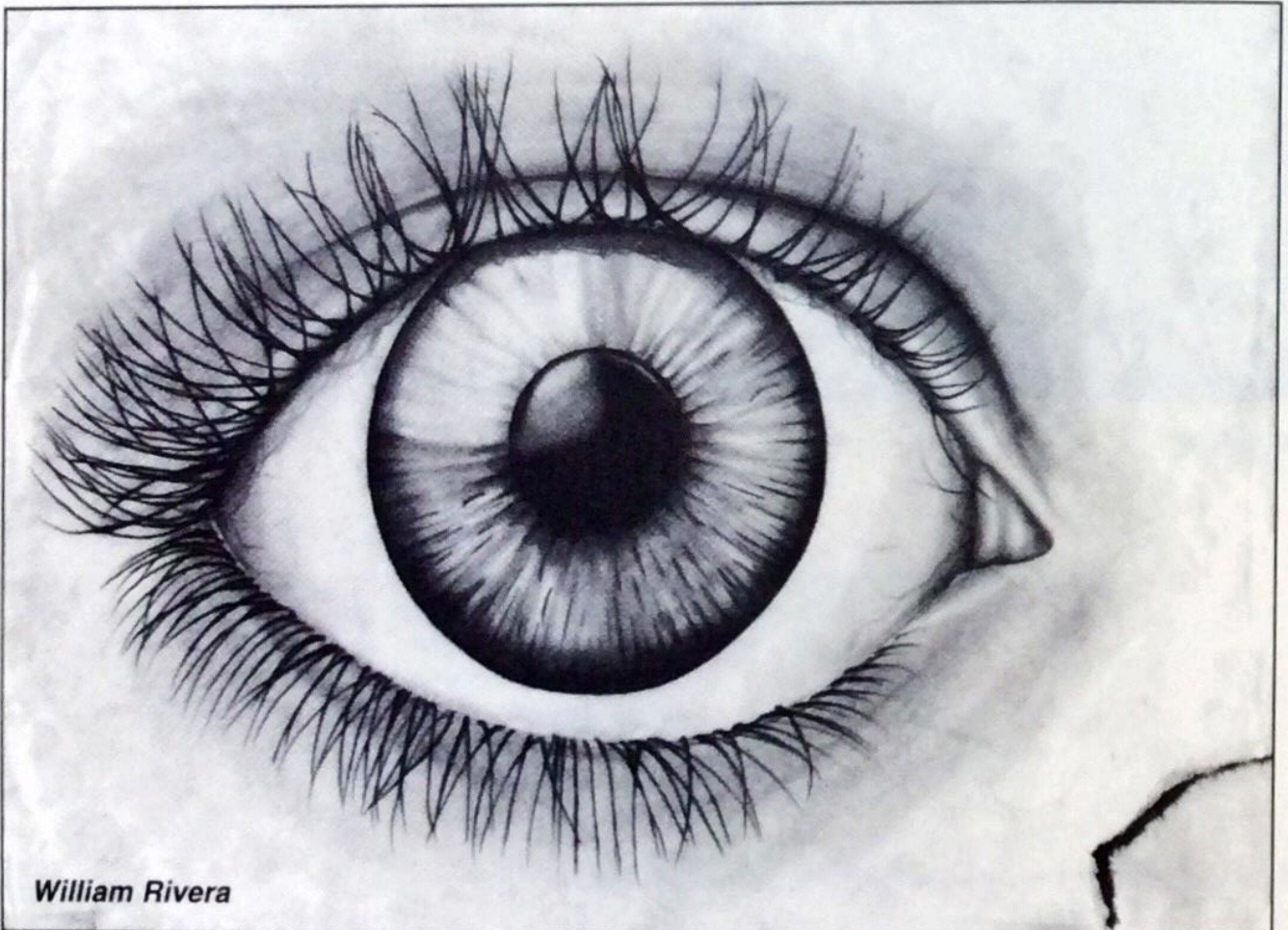
Monica Rodriguez

I daze into your eyes but only when you don't notice
Yell how I feel with expressions on my face
But you won't know and you can't tell
The language that I speak is foreign
And you don't speak it well
Or understand just how I feel
You'll never understand just how I feel
You'll never know because I won't...

Abcde, you weaken me, dilute my breath
Abcde, I'm dying of fatigue
With your sight you drown me, Abcde

Do you realize my identity?
Can you measure the intensity of me?
Do you realize my identity?
Can you visualize my identity?
It's a mystery in a world that's upside round
What you mean to me I don't know
How I feel for you unbelievable maybe
Maybe I'll let you know
No I won't...

Abcde, you weaken me, dilute my breath
Abcde, I'm dying of fatigue
With your sight you drown me, Abcde

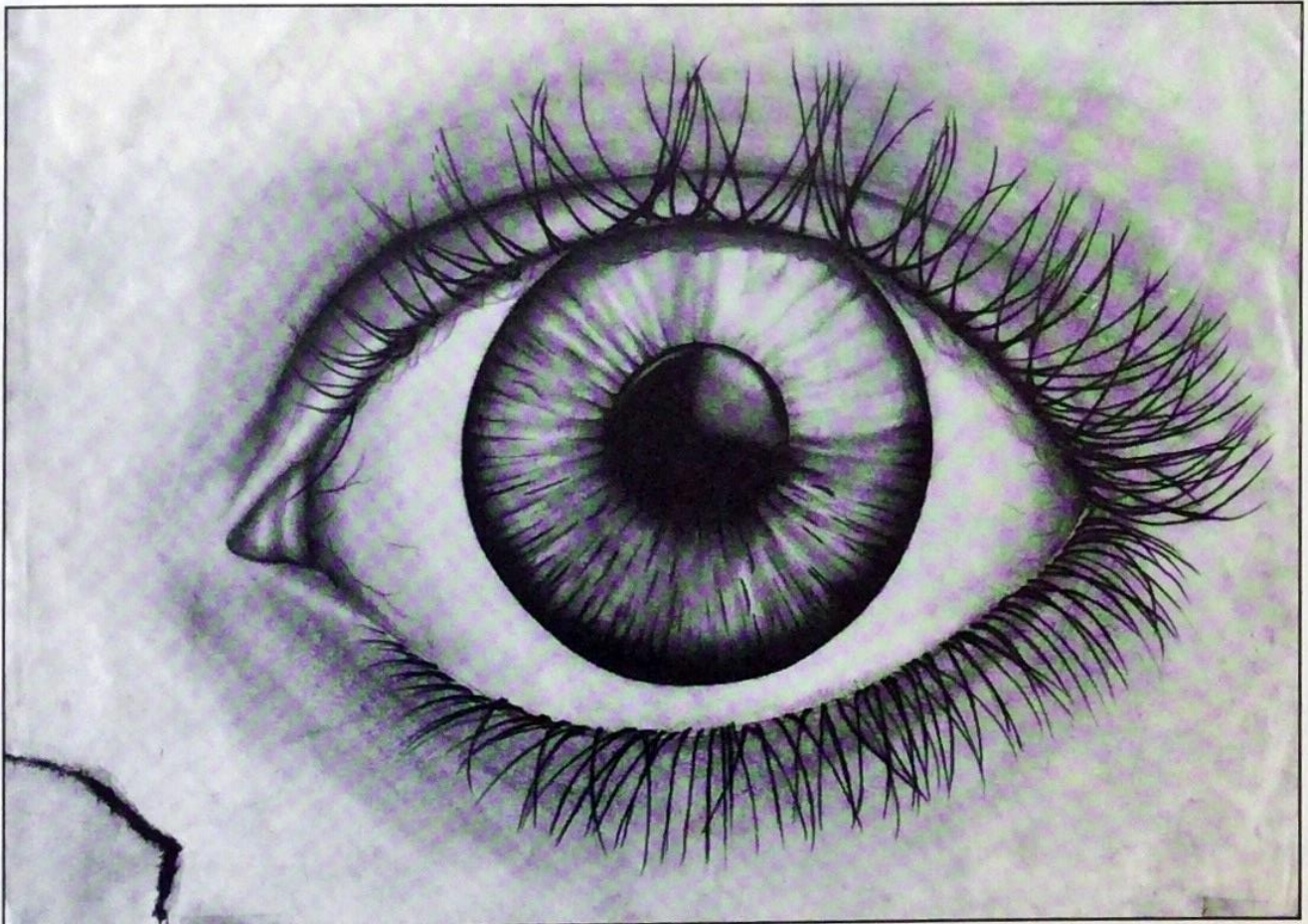


William Rivera

Pagan Withdrawals

Joshua Smith

Drown me in these shallow pools, bake my soul till the tears flow like jets from two circles below. Leech pains far too simple to describe sitting in this 3-demonsional plain of existence. Multi-dillusional if dreams of pitiful encounters piece this heart together -blown and mutilated in this pile of gray-green ash. 3rd person perception of instances where the underlying message exceeds my abilities to comprehend. An on going understanding in this vacuum of silence-black. Denying the weakened shadows, and powerless when any human encounter brings on brief periods of damnation. Comforting pauses and shaking hands with the undeserving conclusion only four times as confusing as the reactants. Flashing imagery-dreams of unreliable circumstances. Decisions for this un-reality I choose to create where the power is taken and plagiarized for this emotional welfare system. Inquiry into the excursions four years previous and for souls past the damning existence. Muted when mentally encountering from afar. Wind baking charred flesh on a day of sunset golden literary adventures— dancing on quieted sunset-golden hues and tiled paths to a fake remembrance. Silent times with bedroom lights in a room that preaches history. Coming here to whimper the lies that nobody cares to hear totally consumed in their own indulgence.



Blow Away Life

Lauren Sartain



Masha Beluga



Dreams are clouds caught in the wind
Weaving in and out of the mind's eye
Terrifying enough to bring tears
Calming enough to pacify the lost child within
But dreams come and go
Walking out of your life
Sending your soul into sorrow and despair

From dreams life evolves
Every affectionate being has desires
Only a few determined fools will reach them
Following a confining narrow path
Conforming to others' wishes
You are an illusion of another's sanity
Look in the mirror
Who do you see?
One day the charade will destroy your facade
Change must take place
And the wind blow on



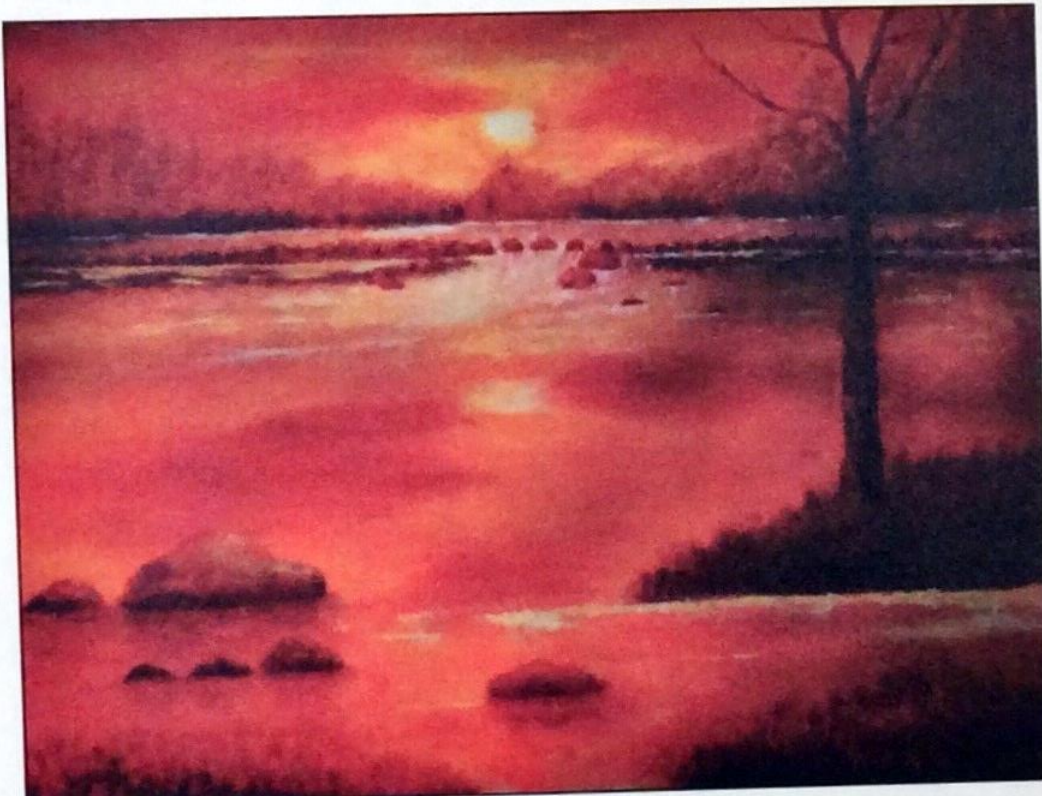
A new dream brings hope to your desolate life
You cannot survive in this world of misery
Just close your eyes and walk blindly
Trust the wind for it is your fate
Take you to a better place
Hurt will gradually hide its devastating face
Replaced with the freedom to become yourself
Because the past can no longer be relived
All souls are merely grains of salt
Floating through an eternal galaxy
Destined to find a place to be you
Accepting others for who they are
Let them be them
So you can be you
And the wind blows on
To a new home with a fresh ideal
Never content with the now
Seeking for the everlasting joy
Becoming at peace with who you are
Realizing that you are beautiful
Only then can you feel happiness
And only then can you truly love

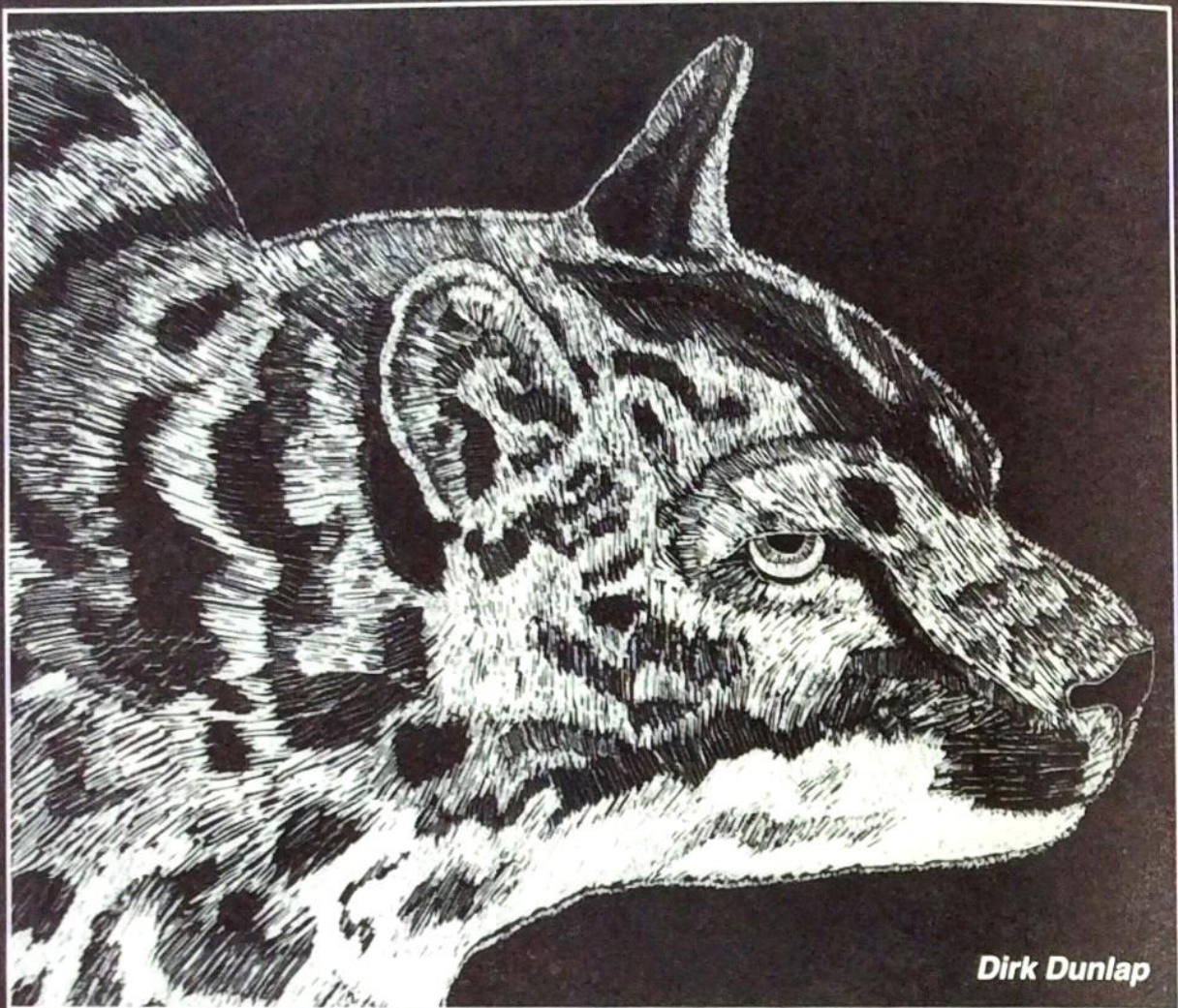
New Awakening

Jennifer Brown

Softly, she opens her window to the outside world. Sitting atop the sill she looks down at the street below. She thinks about how many may think she's ready to end her life. She closes her eyes and dreams of life; how she has been blessed, cursed, and given faith. She'd never take her own life, for she isn't selfish. She opens her arms and imagines flying like a child. Only she isn't flying with a child's purpose, but with a sense of freedom. In her mind her thoughts lighten and float on the wind like a feather. Her burdens disappear before her translucent eyes. All knowledge is useless and reality escapes down a ladder along with fear. She shakes her head, opens her eyes, and lets her arms fall on her lap like dead weights. When she looks down, she sees lights and sirens flashing below her dangling feet. She laughs at the thought of her committing suicide. With an arbitrary glance, she laughs and climbs back into her room; where purpose is dead, reality is lost, and all care is free.

Karla Holt





Dirk Dunlap

Silent Memories

Robert Rogers

A mist upon soul
Silent whispers of friendship
Touch my ghost with yours

Whispers in your ear
"Come unto God and to me"
My silence rains down

Remember my touch
Presence lost not forgotten
Hiding in the brush

A silent spirit
Drifting through the dark wastelands
Bleached skeleton

Prowling groping hand
Forever thirsting stillness
Beneath endless sky

Find the touch of voice in silence.



Adam Cochran

The Road of Life

Crystal Lippincott

I walk the road of life today
with love and God to guide my way.

When joy is here, my heart is full
when sorrow comes, I will not fear.

The flames will glow to keep me warm,
so safe and sound in my home.

When troubles come I will rejoice,
for I know God will hear my voice.

When peace abounds, my soul will sing
to share the love of Christ the King.



Hero

Elizabeth Grojean

Without a name, without a face,

She stands vulnerably, facing hatred.

She is the one who defends the poor, chubby girl in tight gym shorts

And thin worn Keds, begging for a friend.

I want to help, or intervene, to be the one who cares.

Something holds me back; this knot in my throat as I turn away—

Ears burning with insults not directed toward me.

I can be the one to say a word, at least to flash a smile,

To let her know I know they're dumb,

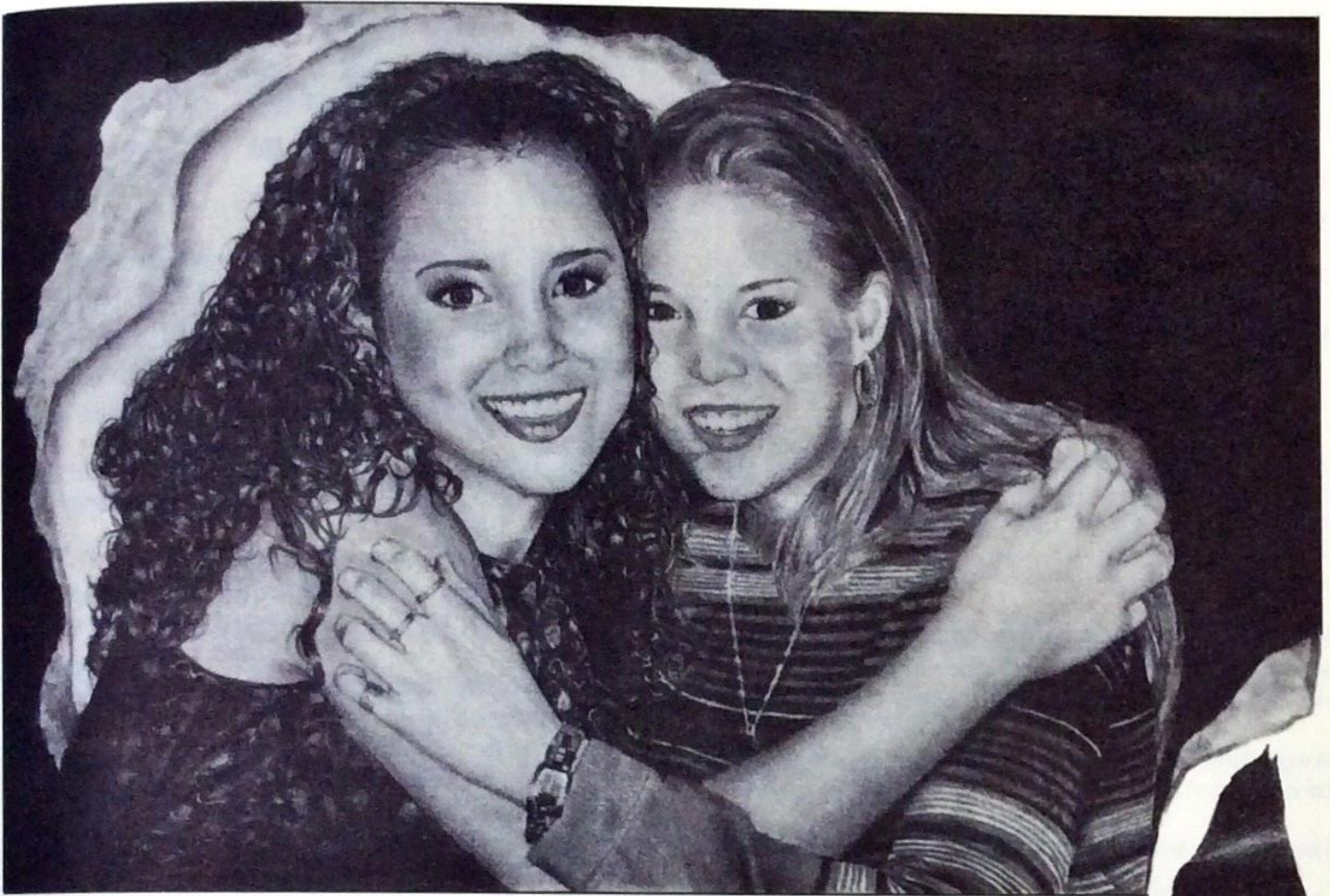
But my insecurity prevails.

My Hero is the one with the courage to stand up

Full of fear yet unafraid.

Erin Keck





William Rivera



*Willy
Rivera*

For My Best Friend

Ashley Whitney

Sometimes when I'm too depressed
or drowning in self-doubt,
I know that I can call your name
and you will pull me out.

You taught me
that I'm worth much more
than what I'd always thought.
You gave me strength
and confidence
that so long I had sought.

You showed me that I'm beautiful
both outside and in.
You proved that I'm not second best
time and time again.

One day I will return to you
all you've given me.
I don't know in what time or form,
but I promise soon you'll see.

For richer, for poorer,
in sickness, in health,
through all of the thick and thin,
I trust I can always count on you
and I am proud to call you a friend.



T h e s

Jessica Olsen

The Disclaimer: (in order of appearance)

Buffy-the vampire slayer...and the heroine for this tale.

Xander-one of Buffy's few close friends.

Scurvy-is Dana Scully from the X-Files. She is a forensic pathologist (gets to dissect dead people and find out how they died) and Mulder's partner. She usually thinks that Mulder's ideas are crazy and is proved wrong by the end of the show.

Mouldy-is Fox Mulder from the X-Files; he is big on conspiracies and gets odd hunches from time to time. By the end of the show he is, usually, proved right.

Angel-Buffy's boyfriend, who, umm, just so happens to be a, umm, vampire. A good vampire, that is...

Harry-from *Armageddon*. See the movie if you haven't.

Macbeth-from Bill's *Macbeth*; a power hungry man who is eager to trust people who claim to predict the future.

Banquo-Macbeth's best bud. Apparently that didn't mean much in those days, 'cause Macbeth kills him the first chance he gets.

Willow-Buffy's best friend and semi-practicing Wiccan*

Witches-are the witches of the past seen in fairy tales and such. Nasty hair, black robes, warts, the works.

Giles-Buffy's Watcher. He basically, well, watches her and trains her for fights against all kinds of nasty things. He has books on anything you would ever want/not want to know.

*Wiccan- see Giles' books.

The Script:

Buffy: Oh my God, Xander, how dare you walk in on me! I'm in the middle of a shower here! Oh, no! You have a knife! Oh, no! Oww, oww! You stabbed me. You stabbed me! Why Xander? Why?

Xander: Because I am jealous of your boyfriend. I love you Buffy! But you don't allow yourself to see this. So, I figure, if I can't have you- no one will. (*Evil laugh.*) Ha ha ha ha ha haa! Good bye, Buffy. Be sure to write.

-Mouldy and Scurvy enter and Xander exits.

Buffy: Help me, help me, please, you have to help me. Xander stabbed me, and now the vampires will take over Sunnydale...

Scurvy: She appears to be delusional. Go find that boy, Mouldy. We must bring him to justice.

Mouldy: She's not delusional. Believe, Scurvy, believe. The truth is out there. Do you see what this means??? It could mean that all those unsolved mysterious death cases are solved if, and I believe there is, if there is such a thing as a vampire on this earth. This is a breakthrough fo-

Scurvy: Mouldy, she is dying! Call an ambulance.

-Doorbell from within.

Mouldy: I'll get it...

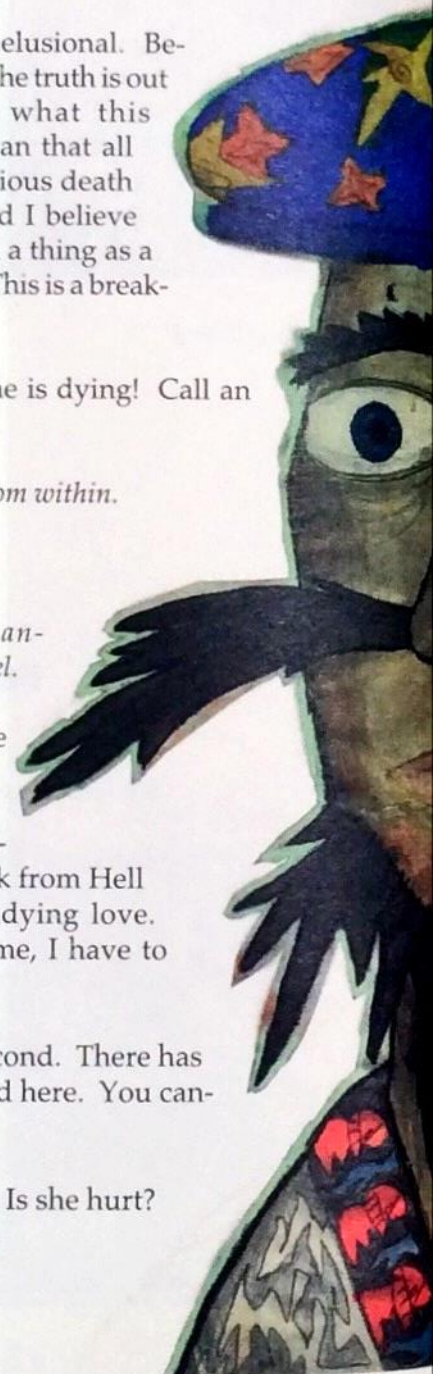
-Mouldy answers the door. It is Angel.

Mouldy: Who are you?

Angel: I am an immortal summoned back from Hell because of Buffy's undying love. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to see my girlfriend.

Mouldy: Just one second. There has been a crime committed here. You cannot enter.

Angel: Is it Buffy? Is she hurt?



c r i p t t



Mouldy: We have reason to believe that she has been stabbed and is, as we speak, dying. There has been severe blood loss, and- alas- I have yet to call an ambulance. But none of this matters, for the end of one is the end of all of us. She is the only one who could save us all...

Angel: Why? What's the problem this time? What demonic creature is on the loose now?

Mouldy: No, no, nothing like that. It is an asteroid the size of Liechtenstein heading towards earth at a bajillion miles an hour.

Angel: That's not good. Not good at all. Well, excuse me- I have to see my girlfriend before she dies.

-Enters to where Buffy lies.

Buffy: Angel, you came! I love, you. Xander stabbed me. I'm dying.

Angel: You won't die Buffy. I'll keep you safe.

-Angel picks Buffy up and carries her away.

Scurvy: Sir, that is evidence- you can not leave with that... Sir!!

Mouldy: No, Scurvy, wait. Let's follow him. I have reason to suspect that "Angel" is not what he seems.

Scurvy: Why? What do you think he is going to do with her?

Mouldy: That's not important right now. We need to find someone else to save planet earth!

*-In a conference room:
Willow, Banquo, Macbeth, and Harry are here.*

Mouldy: So, you see, you are our last hope.

Harry: The United States Government just asked us to save the world. Anybody wanna say no?

ALL: I'm with ya Harry.

Macbeth: Dost thou thinkest we'll gettest us hazard pay out of this most perilous task?

Banquo: Aye. I should hope as much.

Macbeth: And I suppose that false face must hide what the false heart doth know?

Willow: What???

Mouldy: Don't tell anyone.

Willow: Ah, all right- I can do that.

Mouldy: Very good then. I'll see you all in the morning.

-On the asteroid.

Macbeth: So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Banquo: What are these? They should be women yet their beards forbid me to interpret that they are so.

Harry: What are three women doing on an asteroid?

Witches: All hail Macbeth. Hail to thee, Thane of the Post-Apocalyptic World.

Macbeth: Why do you address me in borrowed robes?

Witches: By the pricking of my thumb, something wicked this way comes. Double, double toil and trouble. Fire burn and cauldron bubble. Round about the cauldron go; in the poisn'd entrails throw. Swelter'd venom sleeping got, boil thou first i' the charmed pot. Double, double toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble. *(Repeat.)*

Macbeth: Dost thou meanest that I am to rule the world if the asteroid hittest earth?

Witches: Aye.

Macbeth: What joyous news is this! This mission will be stopped.

Harry: *(To Willow.)* What the \$%#& are they?

Willow: They're obviously witches Harry.

Harry: And this seems normal to you?

Willow: Well, yeah. I mean, do you have a thing against witches or something? 'Cause I don't think they're so bad...

Harry: But on an asteroid? Are you joking?

Willow: Oh, no!! Look- Macbeth has killed Banquo and is threatening to blow up the nuke!!!

Harry: Get off the nuclear warhead.

Macbeth: *(In a drunken fashion.)* Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee. I have thee not, and yet I see thee still. Art thou not, fatal vision...

Harry: But we're not ready! Willow, got anymore bullets in that gun?

Willow: Yeah- here, Harry.

Harry: Thanks.

Macbeth: Whateast art thou doing with a gun in space? *(Is killed.)*

Harry: He's dead, thank God.

Willow: Oh, no! Look, the nuclear warhead's clock is ticking! He must have set it off on accident!

-Meanwhile, back in the X-Files room...

Scurvy: I did a deo-roxy-nuce-lee-bio-lic acid scan-

Mouldy: A what?

Scurvy: A DNA scan on our Angel. He appears to be human. Sorry to burst your bubble, Mouldy, but your "hypothesizes" rarely ever turn out to be true.

Mouldy: Now that's a lie. Do you recall that one, the "Governmental Conspiracy" one? I was right on that one! Do you remember that?

Scurvy: *(Rolls eyes.)* They were ALL governmental conspiracy ones...

Mouldy: Yeah, I guess you're right. *(Shrugging it off.)* Well, I guess this leaves us with one thing to do...

Scurvy: What?

Mouldy: Separate and talk to each other on our cell phones!

Scurvy: Right.

Mouldy: See you in a couple hours.

-Meanwhile, back on the asteroid...

Harry: Go, go, go!!! Get back on the ship!!! I'll stay behind and put this thing down this hole. You get out of here. *(Slowly.)* And- and tell my daughter that I-

Willow: What, what?? Tell her what?

Harry: Just forget it; I never have been much good with sentimental junk.

-Pause: Willow leaves.

Harry: This is for you, Gracie! *(BOOM!)*

-Meanwhile, back in Sunnydale, Willow has landed and is back in the library...

Willow: Hi, Giles, wh- what's wrong?

Giles: Well, actually, we've had some rather unsettling news. Buffy was stabbed in the shower by Xander...

Willow: Xander??? How could he?!?!?

Giles: Well, actually, we found out that he was possessed by the ancient Mayan god-demon, Zeeaporasteffastaneeseei. He is better now, but we haven't heard from Buffy; she isn't in any of the hospitals.

Willow: Well, could she be with Angel?

Giles: Well, actually, I hadn't thought of that. My God, if she is- well, that could be most dangerous. I still don't think he's all there, especially since that little trip to hell and back; there's no telling what he could do to her...

Willow: There are lots of possibilities...

Giles: Well, actually- yes.

Willow: But one in particular comes to mind...let's go.

Willow: But one in particular comes to mind...let's go.

Giles: Right. Get the stakes, the crosses, the holy water, the garlic, the crossbow, the swords, the books on demons, the books on witchcraft, the books on the end of the world, the Slayer's Handbook, the poison dart throwers and the poison darts, eye of dog, tongue of newt, hair of virgin, sute of zoot, finger of bat, jam of toe, heart of olive, and <<*ahhem*>> of Joe...and all that other totally unnecessary but fun stuff.

Willow: Got it. Let's go.

-They arrive...they arrive...at that place where Angel hangs out...yeah, that's it...that place...

-Giles and Willow enter and see Buffy and Angel on a bed.

Willow: Buffy?

Buffy: Willow?

Giles: Buffy?

Angel: Giles?

Giles: Angel?

Angel: Buffy?

Buffy: Angel?

Angel: Willow?

Willow: Giles?

Giles: Willow?

Willow: Angel?

Buffy, Giles, Willow, and Angel: What are you doing here?

Willow: Buffy, are you okay? You and Angel haven't done that...that thing...that thing that you're not...that thing...Giles- help!

Giles: *(Clears throat.)* Buffy, this hurts me to ask you this, but are you still entirely human?

Willow: What? Buffy, what is he talking about? I didn't mean that; I meant the other thing- that you did before and weren't supposed to do again, that, that thing.

Giles: Well, are you?

Buffy: *(Laughs in that way where you're gonna say yes but the answer is no.)* No. I really was needing to talk to you about this because I'm really feeling hypocritical right now...

Giles: Oh, God. Do you understand what you just committed yourself to? Oh, God! How could you do this?

Angel: Look, it wasn't her fault, okay?

Giles: You! You are already on my bad side, so I suggest that you shut up and let your girlfriend talk.

Willow: How could this happen? To my best friend?

Buffy: Could you please all calm down and try to understand. Can you even comprehend what I am going through here? Can't you see that I have become a part of the very thing I stood against? Try to comprehend how fragile my life is now and how I need you all more than ever. *(Big breath.)* To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow, creeps in this petty pace from day to day, to the last syllable of recorded time; and all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more; it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. *(Sighs grandly.)*

Willow, Giles, and Angel: That was beautiful. *(Wipe fake tears.)*

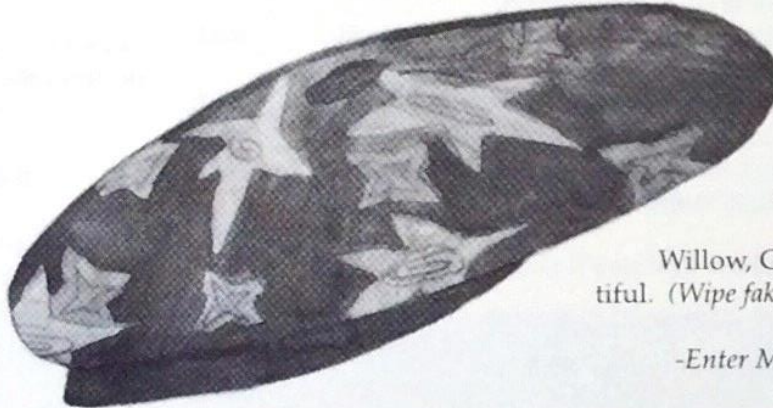
-Enter Mouldy on a cell phone.

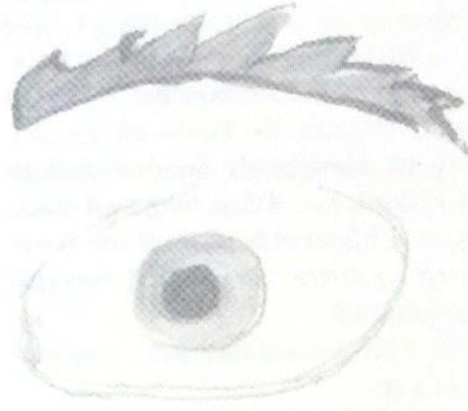
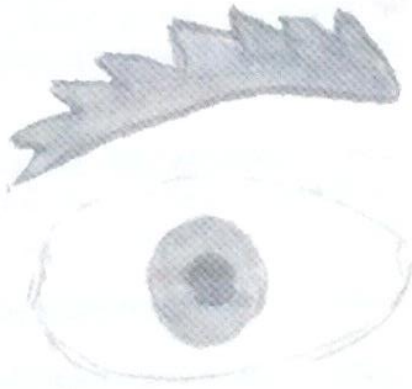
Mouldy: FREEZE! FBI! Put your hands above your heads. Nobody move. *(Into cell phone.)* I found them, Scurvy, I found the hideout! And get this, that girl who was stabbed- she's alive, and she doesn't appear to be hurt. Can you meet me here? OK, all right, I'll see you then, okay, all right, fine, yeah, great, all rightee, okay, till then, bye. *(Hangs up.)*

-Mouldy holds them in place with a gun and checks the bag.

Mouldy: *(Checking bag.)* Let's see, looks like we got some wooden stakes, crosses, holy water, garlic, a, umm, crossbow, some swords...geeze- who are you people?...a book on demons, a book on witchcraft, a book on the end of the world, and- The Slayer's Handbook! Ah, Ha! I knew it!! Vampires do exist!!!

-Buffy, Angel, Willow, and Giles roll eyes.





Buffy: Duh. Where have you been???

Mouldy: *(Continues through bag.)* ...a poison dart thrower, poison darts, eye of dog, tongue of newt, hair of virgin, sute of zoot, finger of bat, jam of toe?...heart of olive- olives have hearts?

Giles: Well, apparently so.

Mouldy: ...and a um...a umm...let's just say some part that Romeo wouldn't be Romeo without. I'm afraid I'm gonna have to take you down to HQ.

Giles: *(Kicking the gun out of Mouldy's hand.)* Run! Quick, get out of here!

Angel: Thanks, Giles; we'll never forget this.

Giles: *(Aside.)* I'm sure somehow that you'll manage to.

Willow: Wait! Buffy? Are you ever coming back?

Buffy: Yeah, Willow. I can't walk out on my life. I'll come back when I figure myself out. Don't worry, if Angel can handle this, so can I. Be strong; take over while I'm gone, okay?

Willow: But how can I go on without you? And Angel? And- oh my God- your MOM?!?

Buffy: Oh, God. I forgot about her. Oh, God- Angel, what do I tell her?

Angel: The truth?

Buffy: Oh, no. No. Definitely no. She couldn't handle the slayer thing...Angel, what did you tell your parents?

Angel: I didn't need to tell them anything.

Buffy: Why not? Then how did they...? Oh.

Angel: *(Exasperatedly.)* Buffy, we kinda got a time limit here. We need to get going.

Giles: Yes, don't worry, Buffy; I'll take care of the necessary, umm, ah, things. You and uh, Angel need to leave before, um...

Willow: Well, I guess this is good-bye.

Buffy: Yeah.

Willow: Yeah.

Giles: Yeah.

Angel: Um, Buffy?

Buffy: Right. See ya in a few. *(Gives half smile, like when you're trying to be happy in a sad situation.)*

-Buffy, Willow, and Angel exeunt; Xander enters.

Xander: *(Broadly and sarcastically- to audience.)* To be, or not to be. Whether it is nobler to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune...yadda yadda yadda- or, in the immortal words of Xander *(Broadly.)*, "My life sucketh- dost thou thinkest that I should killeth myself, or him?" *(Back to normal. BIG exhausted sigh.)* Why does he always get the girl?

-Xander exits quickly.

Giles: *(Big sigh; to himself.)* God, God, forgive us all.

-Exeunt anyone still sticking around on the stage like an idiot.



Mark Walraven

Sitting here, alone in the dark
Wondering what it's like to live.
He dreams of her, all that she was,
And everything he couldn't give.

She was his heart,
And she was his soul.
Without her in his life,
There was no reason to go...

Go on living, go on breathing,
Go on dancing in the pale moonlight.
No more walks on the beach,
No more laughs in the sun.
Without her by his side,
Why should his life go...on?

And what he wouldn't give,
For just one touch;
Just a moment to be with her.

He would take up her hand,
Get lost in that smile...but no
...she's just too far.

And if she were still
With him today...
He'd tell her all the beautiful
Truths he couldn't say.

But they were too close,
They were just friends.
And now that she's gone
His life's at an end.

And he can't...

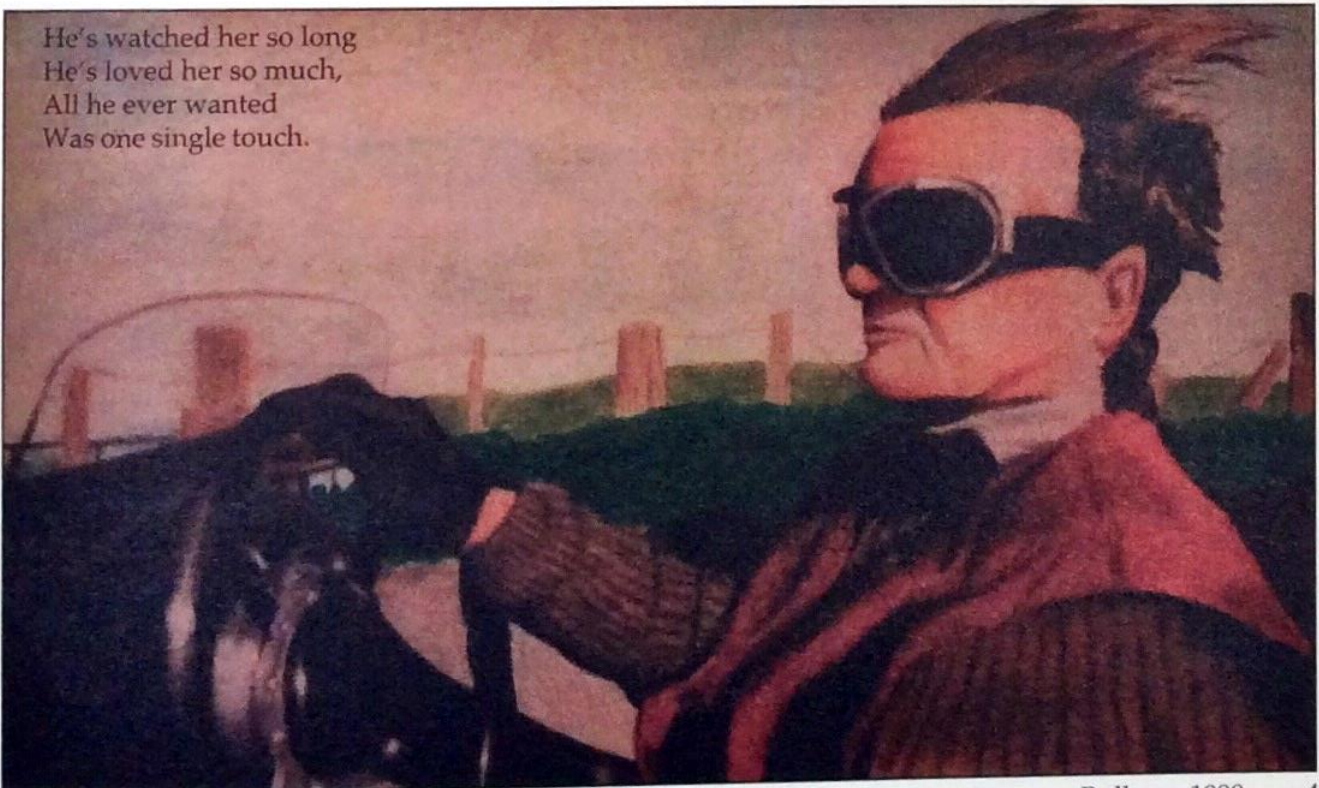
Go on living, go on breathing,
Go on dancing in the pale moonlight.
No more walks on the beach,
No more laughs in the sun.
Without her by his side,
How can life go...on?

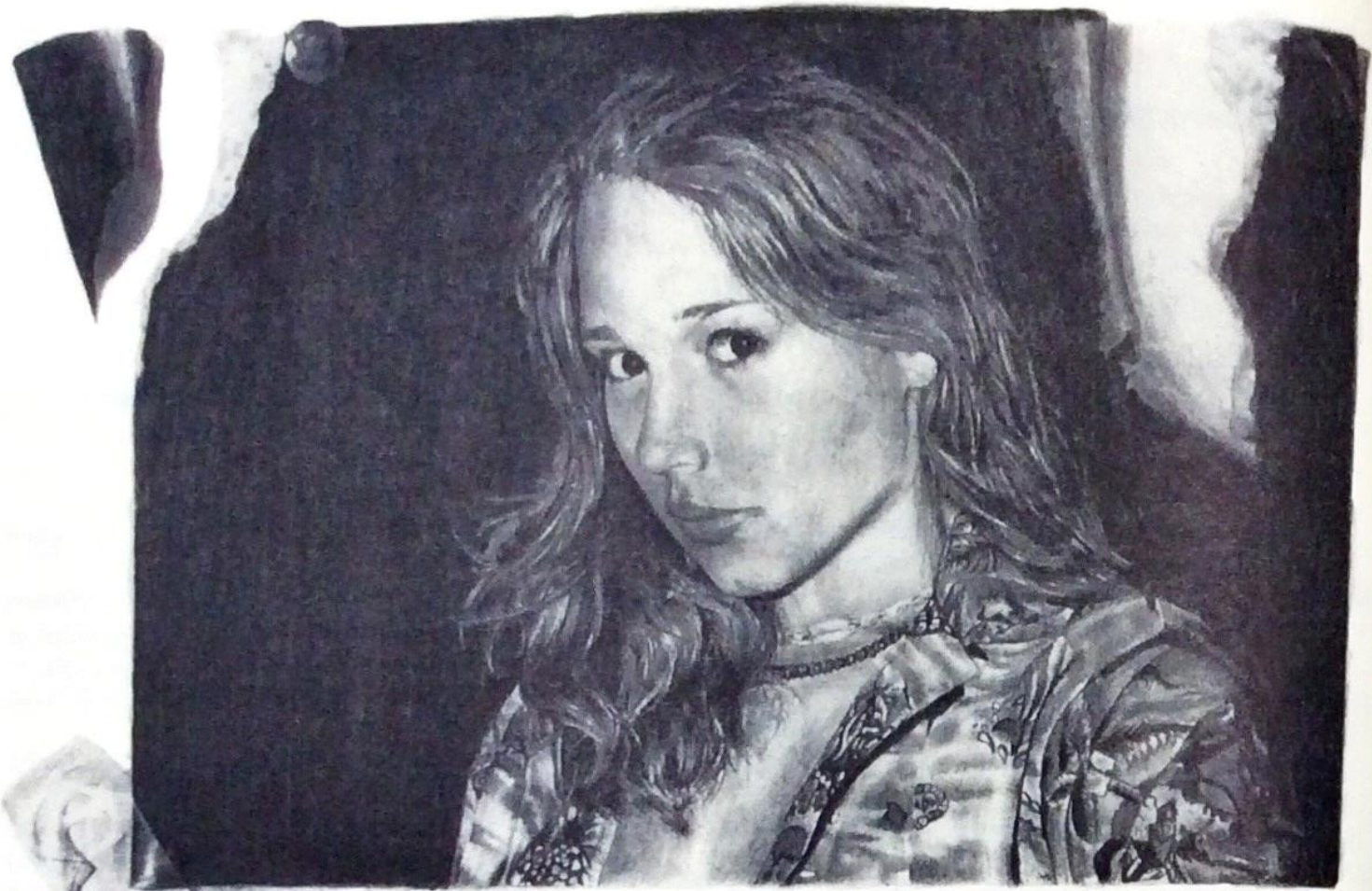
But she wants him to live, Go.
She wants him to breathe.
He can hear her speaking
Straight to his soul.
She won't let him quit,
She won't let him die.
And so he knows,
He must...

Go on living, go on breathing,
Go on dancing in the pale moonlight.
He must learn how to live,
He must learn how to fight
Without her by his side.
And so his life must go...go on.

Sterling Allen

He's watched her so long
He's loved her so much,
All he ever wanted
Was one single touch.





William Rivera

William Rivera 98

In What I Call My Life

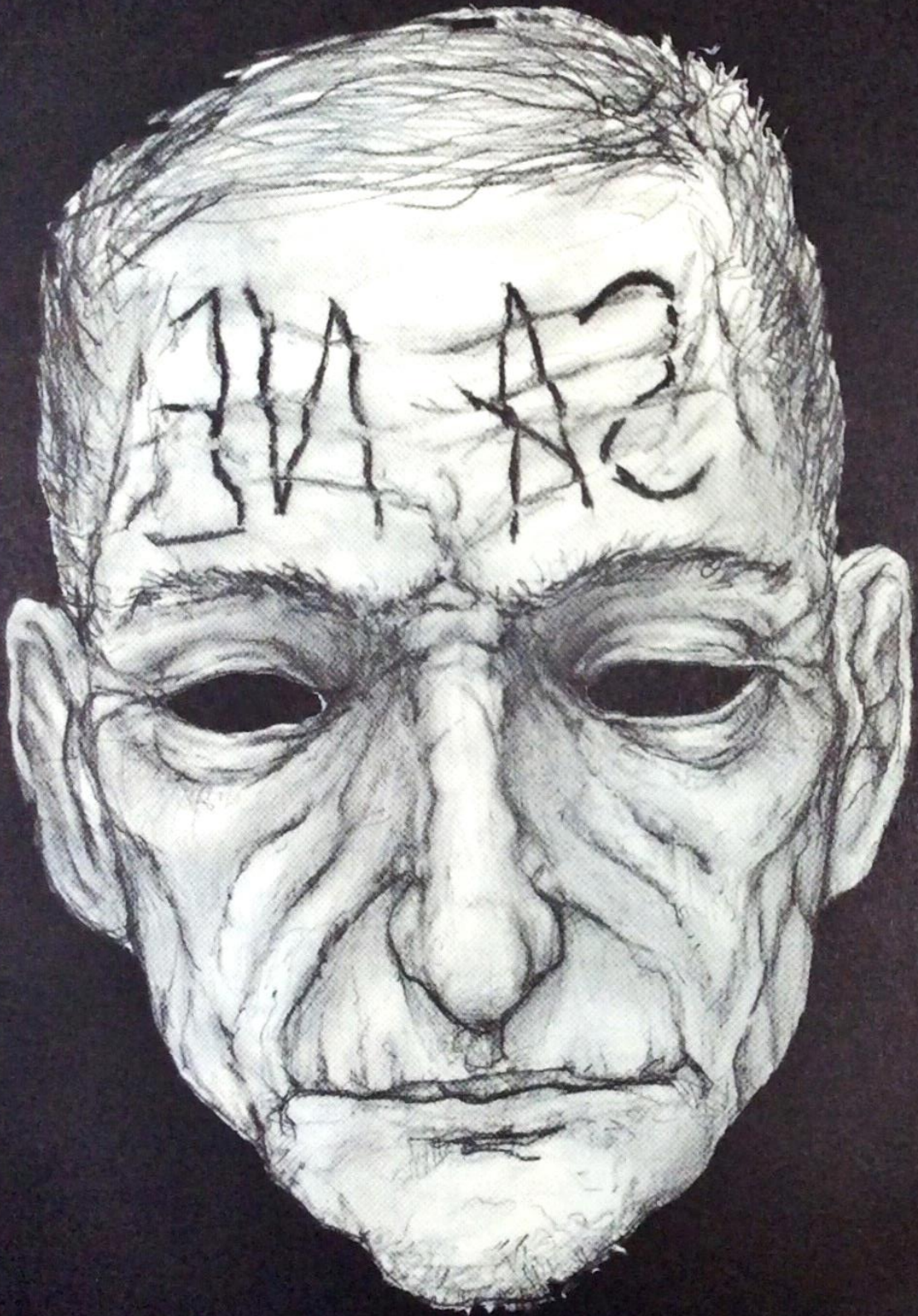
Eryn Autry

I stand and I watch and I see the sky.
I stand and I watch and I see the lies.
I stand and I feel the golden rays,
the breeze through the trees,
the cool rain on my face,
the rustling of the leaves,
and the burn of the drop of brandy on my throat,
the twisting smoke,
and the gentle night,
the sparkling stars,
and the creaking of an old car seat,
the soft flannel,
the worn denim,
sunrise in the morning,
and an old ragged quilt,
on old wooden floors.

I stand and I touch the innocence of it all.
I stand and I touch the nostalgia of it all.
The soft roughness of your face,
the sweet sparkle of your eyes,
the scratch of the pencil on spirals of yellowed paper,
waves of tall perfect grass and ocean blue sky,
memories of the future,
and memories of the past.

It all implodes
into a tie-dyed-braids-and-grunge snowball
I watch the swirling glitter intently.

Too extreme, yet not enough
together all at once.
Emotion encased in apathy
in what I call my life.



Nerve Corrosion

forced introversion
supplanted by dominance
is usurped by revolution need
created drones of completion
lose metaphysicality to atrophy

Rains
Sarah Bower

The rains come without warning,
sweeping riptides of pure force.

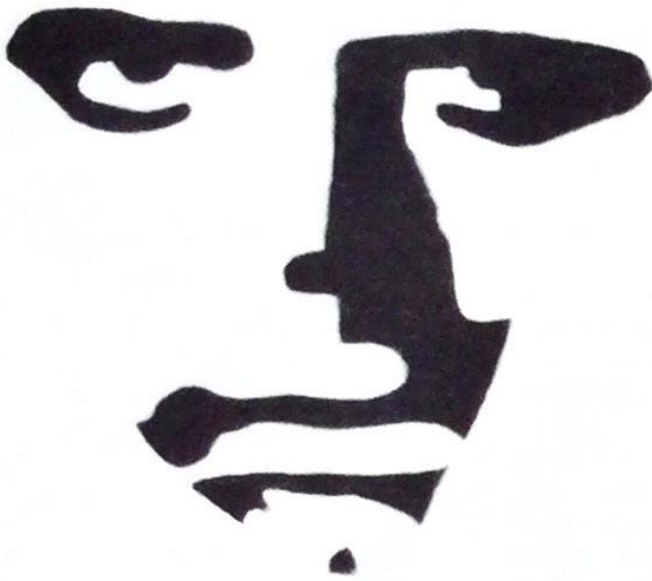
The wicked skies have taken their revenge,
Lightning crashes,
Revenge sets in.

Instantly everything's gone,
The rains fall upon the dead.
Lights flicker then die,
Victims flee,
But are imprisoned by barriers of water.

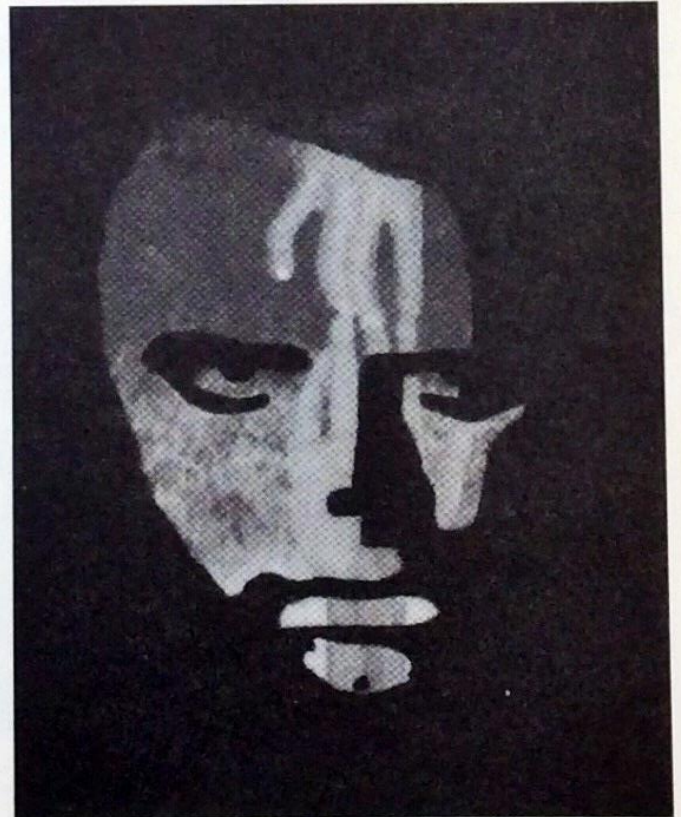
The wicked skies have taken their revenge,
Lightning crashes,
Revenge sets in.

It won't happen to us, people say,
But it does; full force,
Death lists rise,
Death comes for his victims.

The wicked skies have taken their revenge,
Lightning crashes,
Revenge sets in.



Thomas Hard



Come Now Weary Traveler

Doug Hurt

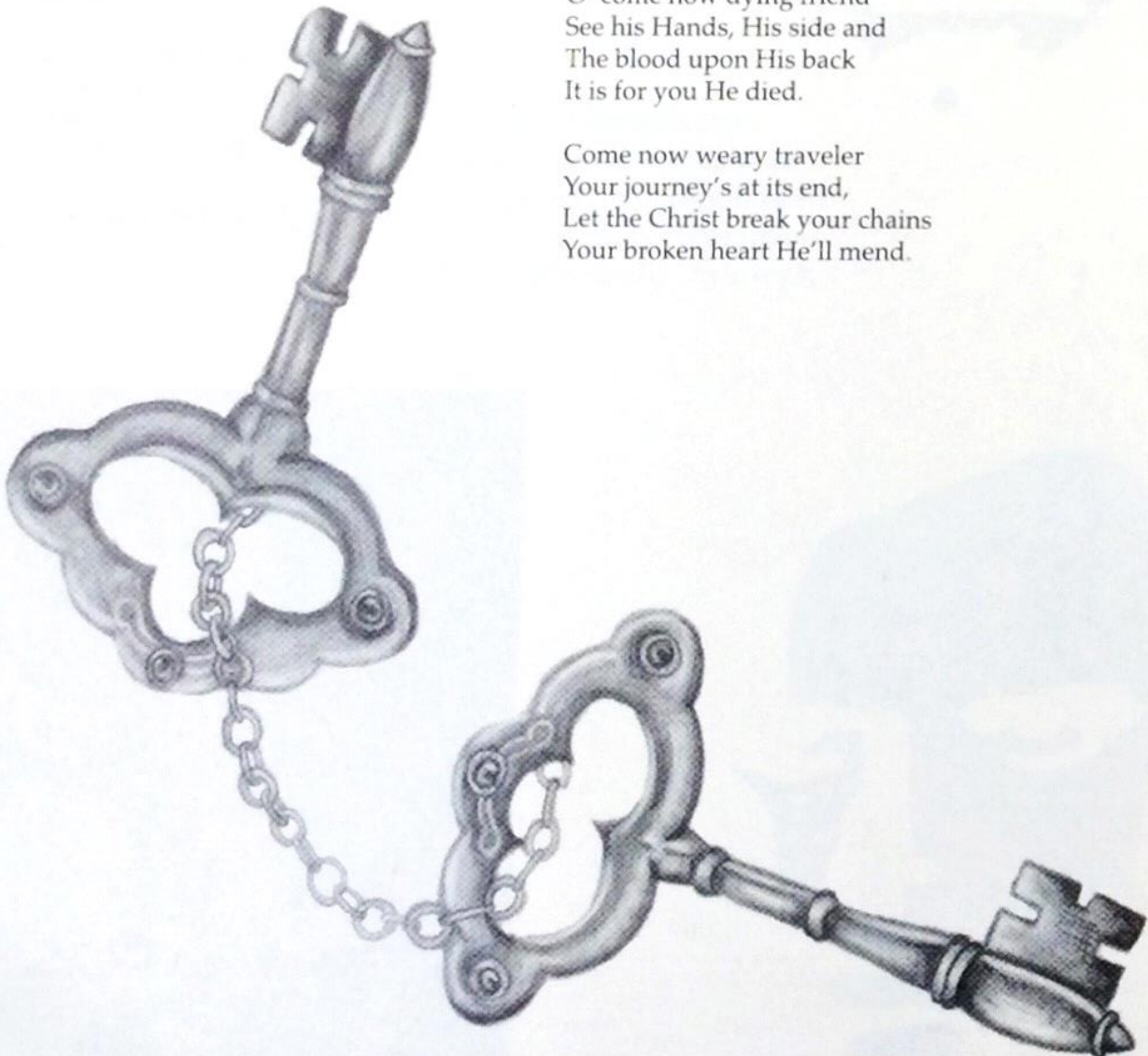
Come now weary traveler
Your journey's at its end,
You've found your peace and how
A broken heart to mend.

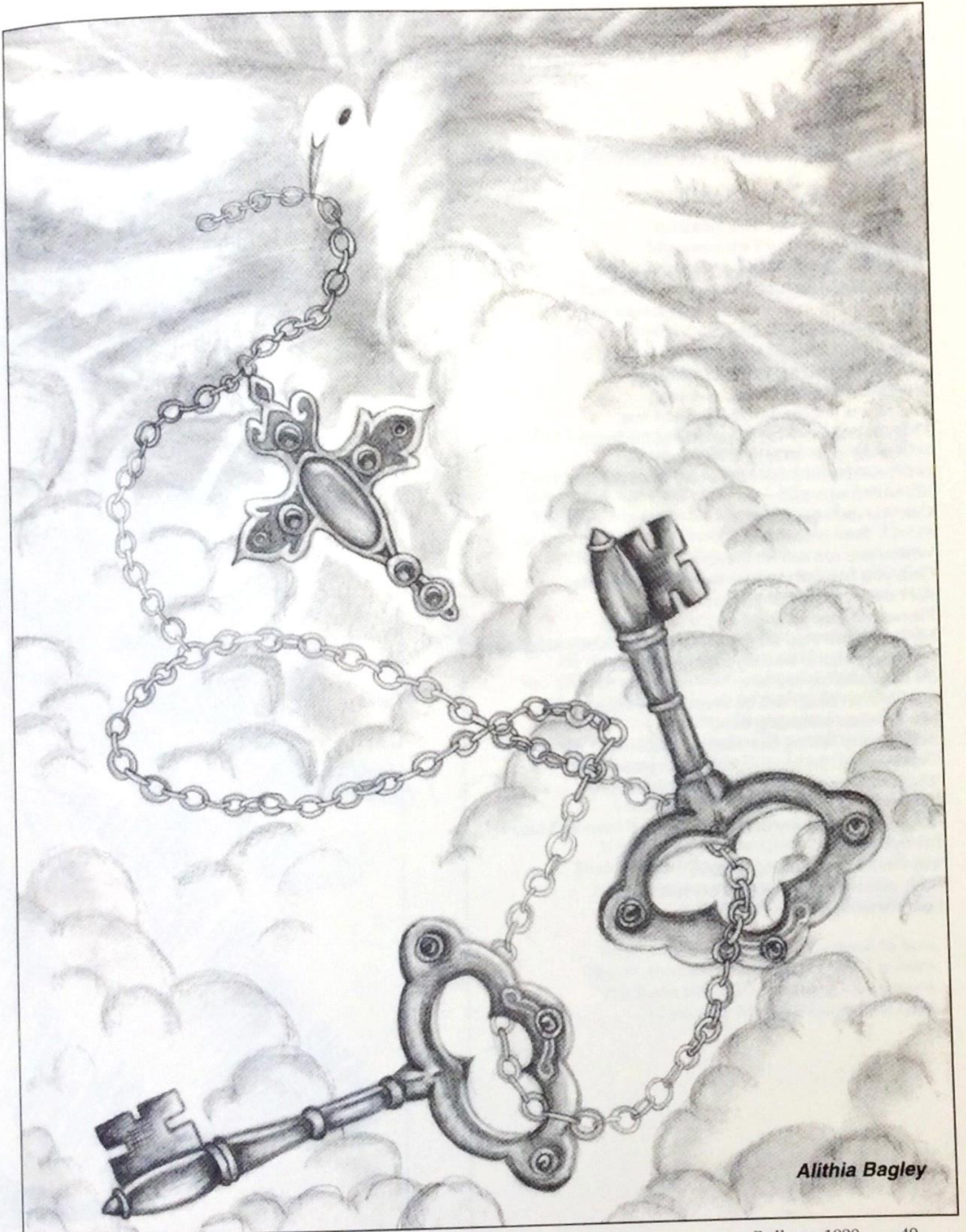
O' come now tired soul
You've not much time to waste,
Please come be the victor
Of the life you have faced.

O' come now broken man
And meet your saving grace,
The One who bled for you
Come see Him face to face.

O' come now dying friend
See his Hands, His side and
The blood upon His back
It is for you He died.

Come now weary traveler
Your journey's at its end,
Let the Christ break your chains
Your broken heart He'll mend.





Alithia Bagley

A Gift From God

Laura Monroe

God, I'm very ill and all alone.
Where are your angels to carry me home?
All I have heard my entire life through
Is that they silently watch over you.
The pain is unbearably sharp, and I fear
That the end is swiftly approaching me here.
Where are your seraphs whose only job
Is to protect and follow my every heart-throb?
My suffering is torture.
Can you feel my agony?
Surely, there is one cherub
Whom you can deliver to me.
God, you have all my love and honest affection.
All I ask is for a pygmy of protection!
Please, send me an angel as fast as you can.
My journey to your kingdom is in the palm of your hand.
I need a leader to take me calmly to you.
If I don't receive one fast,
My life after death will be over and through.
My aches are subsiding now,
And a warm feeling has taken control.
Oh, my gosh, the room is starting to glow!
An aurora, two wings, and an elegant face,
You've sent me an angel.
You've answered my case.
I'm dying now,
Yet, I'm leaving nothing behind.
With you and your angel by my side,
I can't wait to see what I'll find!





You Can't Petition The Lord With Prayer

Jim Trott

"Is beauty merely a physical thing?
My entire life I've been wondering,
If beauty is merely in one's outward form,
Then why do so many remain in the norm?"
The supermodel's eyes welled up with tears
As the answer from God confirmed her fears.
The lovely starlet turned to go,
The Lord's answer still echoing:
"I don't know."

"I've been asking all year, so please, Lord, don't lie.
Tell me the reason that good people die.
I've always been faithful, until the death of my wife.
Why, Lord, did Death take her? Why end her life?"
The widower fell to his knees, whispering a prayer
As the clouds parted slowly, and a voice from the air
Fell over the valley, very sorrowful and slow.
God Almighty shrugged and said pitifully:
"I'm sorry, I don't know."

God looked down on his kingdom and sat on a mountain peak.
He straightened himself up and began to speak.
"You all have asked questions as to why things are so.
I have answered you all by saying 'I don't know.'
I haven't all the answers (I'm sure you've guessed),
But I know enough to realize that I've made a big mess.
You see, when I made Man, I gave him a mind.
I did this so answers to questions he'd find.
I see now that I shouldn't have done this;
I could've used those brains to make intelligent fungus!
If you never use the space 'twixt your ears,
Then I shall no longer turn the Celestial Gears.
Your questions upset me, drive me into a fit,
So without further ado, I QUIT!"

From that day on, the world ceased to turn.
The rivers stood still. The sun ceased to burn.
The Earth slowly died, rotting like a gourd,
All because Man questioned the Lord.

Empty Syringes

Becki Tinsley

i've developed an addiction to fear,
and to love;
i cannot believe i've become what is here before me-
or inside me-
yet i have.
i distrust You so much,
which seems to be the cause of why i covet You more than i do myself.
the jaws of desire
tear my heart to shreds
and You are the acumen, my dear.
it's the little things that cause such pain-
(the pins in my arms/the crawling under my skin/the uneasiness when You depart-)
but your presence is a relief,
You do not cause hurt...you, alone, can stop the hurt-until You abandon
me;
i appreciate you more after each departure- crave you more after each
absence.
i am alone-
except for you-
except for me.
We are one, together,
always.
For Your love,
i would sacrifice anything,
and i have, if i remember, which i cannot.
There exists no one to blame,
except for You,
except for me.
i have a soulless desperation - i cannot control it-
i don't want to deal with the world- so i ignore all realities.
and i regret all i said or that i thought,
i never cry
unless i'm sad or i am unconscious,
and i always seem to be,
the former, not the latter, or the other way around.
(my hands tremble without You)
i could handle it then,
but i fail to - now.
i learned, no - trained myself, to communicate/exist in Your silence,
and now i understand You,
so i don't mind it,
but i can no longer comprehend all other parts of the world.
They call it abuse,
but it is not.
i can control my desires and rages and mind-crushing withdrawals.
i would not need You if i did not want You.
but you do not exist
and you are not there.

(where did You go?! come back to me...)



Kristin Hamann

One is Too Many

Stephanie Davis

Sitting on the rooftop late at night,
I see your face lined up in the stars.
I saw you that night.
I saw you smiling.
Now it's hard to believe that you're gone,
all your hopes and dreams,
just memories.

I watched you take the keys,
and without a word you were gone.
I heard the crash,
and knew in my heart
that you would not be coming back.

They talk about you at school,
remembering what a great guy you were.
The reason you're gone can't be avoided.
One night of fun,
one night of irresponsibility,
and now all we have left of you are pictures.

The football games, the plays, the pep rallies,
you were always there.
Now somehow, walking through the halls they seem empty,
despite the pushing and shoving,
your absence created an irreplaceable void.

Sometimes at night, I dream of you.
I dream of that night.
The way you laughed,
the way your lively tone kept everyone hanging on your every word.
I can't stop thinking that I should've stopped you,
I shouldn't have let you drive,
I wonder if anyone could have prevented your death.

Would you still be here
holding my hand, cheering me on?
You once told me that life would go on,
with or without you.
I know it's time to start over,
but I can't find a place to start from.
Everywhere I look you're there,
smiling that smile that kept us all wondering what you would do next.
You always kept us wondering and I guess you still are,
wondering how we're going to make it without you.





Losing Time
Ashley Whitney

The flames of your time,
Always changing.
Starting as a flicker of light in the darkness,
But slowly maturing into a crackling, leaping fire.
Hottest in its blue middle,
The bright, jumping sparks, reaching for the heavens
The fire leads its own life,
Held captive only by the circle of stones around it.
Images and shadows on the ground,
Dancing a dance of life and happiness.
But, the logs are now burned out,
And the flames are leaving with them.
The warmth is gone,
Your time has run out.
So you'll stand by the embers,
And watch the flames of your time slowly die away.

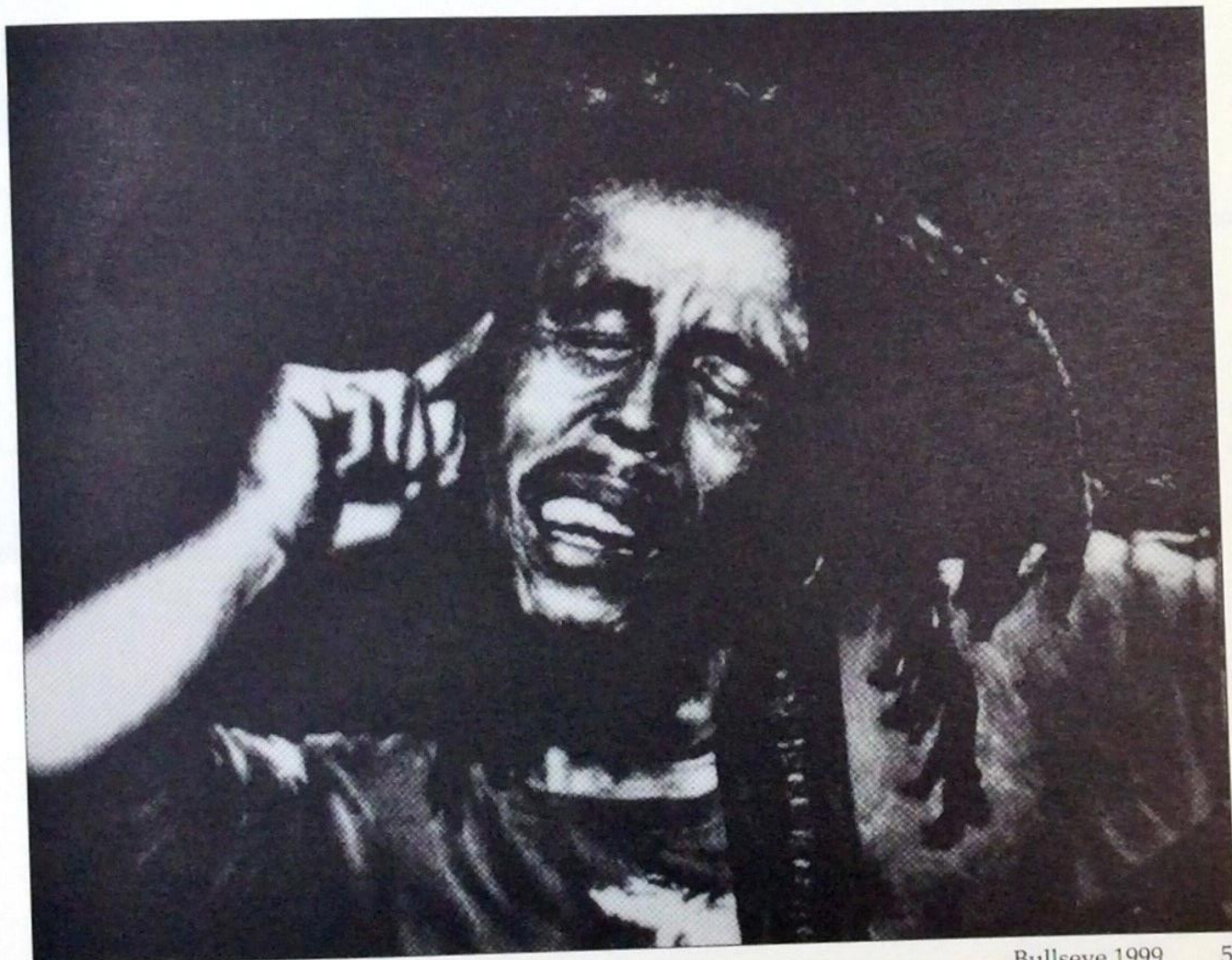
Alithia Bagley



FAMES

Matthew Hudson

Piston hammer smashing my brain,
it makes me happy, am I insane?
Ah, my friend, they're one in the same...
So laugh with the streetlights as they explain-
how to swallow this plastic rose.
Plunge into the rainbow light.
Come up for air and take to flight.
Taste new colors, fulfill your plight;
and as the headless Seattlite,
find rust in your pot of gold.
Prismatic thoughts of a space shuttle monkey,
flames in veins, the walls are humming.
Another lemming to a common drumming.
Grip your seat this is quickly becoming,
a ride with a cold, violent end.



Cold

Bianca Gonzales

There's no longer a smile to greet me

You no longer have emotions

Love and hate are just words to you

They don't have any meaning

You're empty

Just the vacancy of your soul remains

I no longer exist to you

Nothing can save me from the damage you've done

You can't bring back that which has been lost

Perhaps it's easier to let go

To turn and walk away

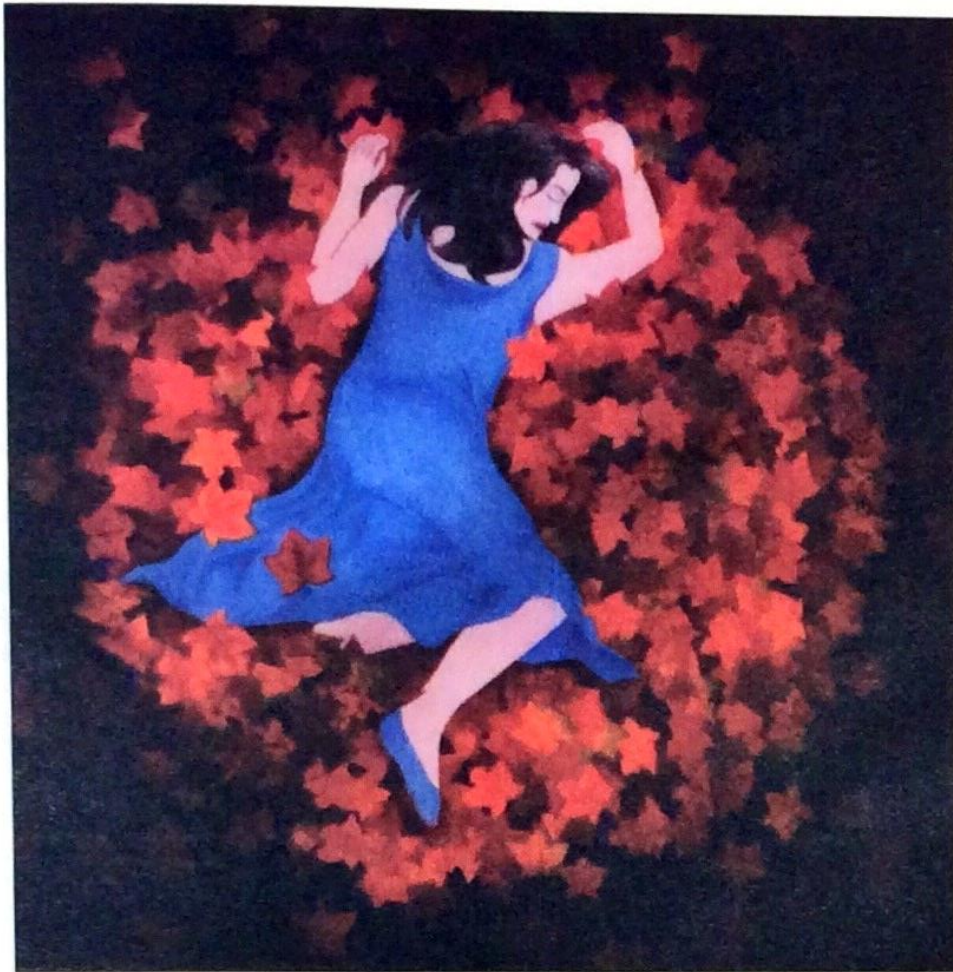
You say you don't know how

Then watch and see

I'll show you how it's done



Seun Mun



Erin Keck

The Mirrored Nothing
Becki Tinsley



Suddenly, you turn around,
towards the mirror,
and you see me as I see you.
There, also, I behold my future- at hand,
and yet always just out of reach.
I eternally look and gaze forward,
hoping to change * wishing to alter
the course of my affairs.

In vain,
I struggle to conquer the injustices that bar me from my goals and aspirations.
But, alas, I realize the futility of fighting my destiny-
free will exists merely of the past (as a retrospect).
A choice is made simply because alternatives disappear;
A decision is arrived at
only because rational thought allows nothing else.
So, I turn my back to the present- to myself.
I long for the past and the future- which are as you and I-interlocked.
And I watch as you close tight your eyes
and run your fingers along
the shards of metallic glass that once were of our mirror and connection.
My eyelids droop,
and I fall into a sleep which carries me at long last to my future,
and I awake with no view of you and nothing between now and forever.

We Reside...
Stephanie Davis

We reside in silence
expecting an apology
but knowing it's never been that easy

We reside in a house of regret
expecting a miracle
but knowing no one can change the past

We reside in a day of memories
expecting to wake up without a name
but knowing there is no way to forget

We reside in the decade of technology
expecting a breakdown
but knowing that we can never undo what has been done to our
civilization

We reside in a world of hate
expecting peace
but knowing no one will ever really believe we are equal



William Rivera

The Revolution Will Be Televised

Justin Peterson

NBC has the rights to the riots
CBS has the firing squads
ABC and Fox will have to fight
For the footage of the small-town mobs
You can buy tear gas at Toys-R-Us
Police batons at Wal-Mart
Target's got the helmet-and-shield market cornered
But how did this all start?

Monicagate was fading fast
And the networks needed something done
They decided to set the country aflame
And let the cops have some fun
Start some riots in the inner cities
And hope that they spread afar
There's so much hatred in this nation
It might just start a Civil War

The revolution will be televised
According to the plan they've devised
Let the people think that they might win
But then the real games shall begin

Now riot battalions roam the streets
Beating everybody to the ground
"Don't look at the camera when I'm cracking your skull!
Keep your eyes cast down!"
Everyone who isn't getting killed
Watches with a rapacious eye
Waiting for the chance to steal something
Looters, feel that adrenaline high!

Heads of companies aren't in it for the money
They just want to see some action
It amuses them to no end
To see the bickering amongst the factions
Punk vs. hippie, black vs. white
All of it's the same
If it's us vs. us, and not us against them
There's no way we can win the game

The product placement is just impeccable
As the television cameras roll
It's hard to miss the Nike-brand machetes
Do their work as the heads start to roll
Hilfiger's line of M-16s
Is the preferred brand of choice
With the cops who're shooting
those funny-looking colored folks
Who never, ever had a voice



Seun Mun

Paramount and MGM are on the scene
As we're takin' it to the streets
Uprisers come up against barricades
Provided, so graciously, by GE
See the cops choking down Big Macs
Taking long gulps from their Coke
Revolutionaries are tarred and feathered
And hanged with Reebok's rope

Old Navy's napalm flame-throwers
Really are second-to-none
"Totally torching some apartment buildings;
Now that's my idea of fun!"
So now you've lost; you're gonna go home
You've accepted your defeat
It was fun while it lasted, but
This cathartic process is complete

Just when you thought the nightmare was over
They call out the National Guard
They're coming with tanks and bazookas
They plan to slash and burn your yard
"They're the boss's orders! We gotta follow 'em out!"
The redneck army dudes howl
"So smile for the camera, just relax
Your neighborhood will be gone in an hour."

One Soldier's Prayer

Antoinette Garza

Don't cry my lady love
For you are so beautiful to my Heart.

Please accept my will,
Don't shed tears for me,

For I just lay here bloody filled

With dishonor in the fields of Europe,

Such a pity for you to see.

Strewn across the battlefield,

A victim of God, a victim of war,

I shall plead with you,

As the soldier's saint,

let me harm no more,

Let me hurt never again.

I fought with courage, bravely,

For my country, I fought hard,

And I have no more to give.

The time has come to

blackened end;

I shall die with you in my heart,

But, please, I beg thee

don't let me live.

End my suffering,

kill the beast in me,

Kill me now.

Mercy I beg thee;

Slice my flesh,

stab me with strength,

Save my soul;

that's all that's left.

Let our children run the fields;

To find the men like me.

May they pick in trade for death,

Like a poppy whose petals plea.

Our offspring shall race the fields,
till every blossom's gone.

Each shall put a paper boat that

Will sail on the lake till dawn.

Take my flower,

Set it afloat across the new castles,

Light the paper boat aflame,

As your heart shall burn with mine.

The flames shall flicker

While dancing upon

waters that are unstill.

North winds will blow to fan it

strong and alive;

adding power

or crushing at will.

Let the paper burn

Until ashes are all that's left

in sight.

May the ashes sink into waters

and melt into the sea.

Life is gone and lost,

forgotten warriors are we.

After fighting for our country,

There was no reward for us

waiting at the End.

You shall remember our numbers,

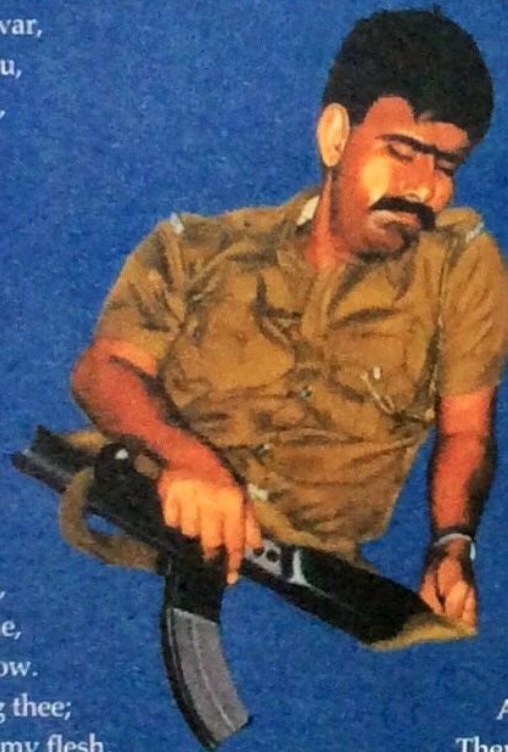
But not our faces nor our names

That are left to be faded away.

We were victims of evil that were to be cruel.

It seemed that life was nothing,

but the battle was a lost game.



Sterling Allen

Night of the Magpie

Joel Holwitt

It was a beautiful night, like so many at the Philmont Boy Scout Ranch. The dark sky was clear, allowing the stars to shine down upon Urraca Mesa, giving all of my trek a good view of the terrain. We were camped all alone on top of the mesa, our only company the Ponderosa pine trees, some thick scrub, and a few stealthy deer. Other than that, though, the mesa was lifeless. A few feet from the sheer rock cliffsides, the harsh and cold Philmont wind seemed to die away.

We weren't up here for the silence, though. We were here for the 'blue lights' of the mesa. I had tried to explain to Matt and Sam, the younger Scouts who were with us, about the lights, but I hadn't succeeded. That night, as we sat around the fire pit waiting for the mysterious blue glow, the two finally got around to asking more about it. Since the seven other trek members had been to Philmont before, it wasn't too difficult to find answers about the lights.

Our trek leader, Alex, said, "People say that, at night, in the caves along the cliffs, they can see a blue glow. Sometimes it is motionless and pulsing, and sometimes it moves. No one knows what it is. We didn't get to see it when we were here two years ago, so we came up here just to see it."

Bob, our adult advisor—an Eagle Scout—and a twenty-one year old student at Trinity University, grinned, "The Ranch didn't want to let us up here, but we pushed it through."

Sam asked, "If this blue light of your's is so hot and mysterious, why didn't someone else ever come up here and find out what it was?"

The oldest Scout, Jim, spoke up. He quietly said, "Everyone has been too afraid."

"Of what?" asked Sam.

"There have been people and other things up here before," Jim admitted. "In the 1950s, the head wrangler let his horses up here to graze. A dozen of his best steeds never came back down. When he finally discovered them, they had been ripped apart."

"By what?" asked Matt.

"No one could figure it out," said Jim. "They had been torn limb from limb. Their body parts were spread all over the place."

"You're making this up," said Sam. "You mean something's up here that tears up horses?"

"Not just horses," replied Jim, "In August of 1960, three scientists from Los Alamos and a third-year ranger came up here to observe the lights. They never came down, either."

"Were they torn apart, too?" asked Matt with a look of utter skepticism on his face. It was the same look that we had had on our's when we first heard the story.

"The military sent patrols through the mesa. They found nothing," stated Jim. "Nothing except for

where the four men had camped. They discovered the fire pit, and the ranger's journal. He wrote that they had seen the lights, and that the scientists had gone into the blue glow. None of them returned. He described some nightmarish things."

"What happened to him?" asked Sam.

"The same thing that happened to the scientists. He wrote down that he was going after them, and then he

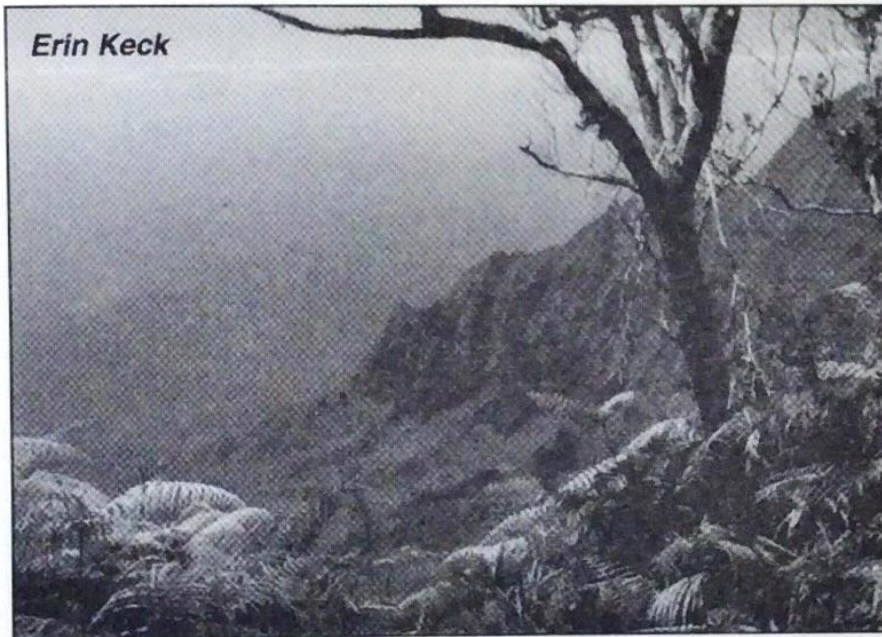
walked off," said Jim. "And that is all that anyone knows about that."

"I don't believe it," said Sam. "You'd think that something like that would spark a lot of interest."

"It was right before the 1960 elections," explained Alex, "It was a small news snippet that aroused interest for a few days, and then it died away. People forgot about it."

"Except for Philmont rangers," said Kevin. "They were the ones who told us."

"A staffer at Miner's Park told us that he would never accept going to the camp that's near here — no





matter how much money he was offered," nodded Alex. "This guy was built like Arnold Schwarzenegger. You couldn't imagine anything he was scared of."

"So why are we up here?" asked Matt, realizing we weren't joking. A look of slight nervousness had slowly crept across his face.

"Well, we were stupid enough to want to find out what's up here," I smiled, "And you were stupid enough to join us."

"Shut up," said Sam, shivering in the cold air, or from nervousness.

Kevin grinned. He didn't believe in the blue glow, and he said, "While we are getting chilled, would you like to hear some more ghost stories?"

This time Matt and a few of the believers in the trek joined Sam in saying: "Shut up."

So we waited in silence. Well, for teenagers, I think we were pretty patient, and it wasn't until eleven o'clock that we finally got up to look for the blue glow, going to the edge of the mesa, and beginning to circumnavigate the mesa's edge.

We shone our flashlights all around, but we could see nothing but the shrubs and trees that adorned the top of the mesa. We could hear nothing — not even the wind. The stories about the mesa being completely silent were true. There was no noise. None at all.

We had been walking along the eastern edge of the mesa when suddenly we saw something at last. A bush was trembling slightly. There was no wind, so there had to be something in it. In silence, we slowly toed our way to it.

Suddenly, someone yelled out "SAM!" as a dark apparition leapt from the leaves, barely clearing Sam's head. Sam fell backwards in surprise, hitting the ground with a painful thud. His assailant soared into the night sky, squawking madly. Sam nearly killed himself with hyperventilation. As he calmed down he said, "What was that?"

"That," explained Jim, "was a magpie. It's a bird."

"Oh," nodded Sam. "Right. A magpie. A bird."

"They're all over the mesa," said Jim.

"That's why the Spanish named it Urraca. Urraca means magpie."

"It scared you, huh?" smiled Alex, helping Sam to his feet.

"Man, I thought I was dead for a second," breathed Sam.

"Nah," smiled Bob, "That's only when you hear them call your name."

"What?" asked Sam.

"It's an old legend," said Jim. "Goes back to the old Spanish settlers. When a magpie would squawk it sounded like someone's name. A few people died shortly afterward, and the superstitious said that their names had been called by the magpies. Therefore, it was certain death if you heard a magpie call your name. They called the magpie the 'death messenger' for that reason."

Having calmed down, we started again. We continued north, turning with the mesa's edge. As we turned west, Jim happened to glance behind us. He abruptly stopped and gasped, "Look!"

We all spun around. Behind us, at the southeastern corner of the mesa, was the blue glow. Sam pushed his way through us, saying, "Where! What!"

He saw the light, and he continued to step forward in amazement. His entire being was focused on the light. The sight of the blue glow took his mind off common sense. It must have.

His next step did not land on the dirt of the mesa, but in the air right next to the cliff.

Sam didn't make a sound. His arms flapped through the air once, and his eyes snapped wide open in panic. His body gracefully arced downward without even causing the air to whistle. He slammed into the rocky slope at the bottom of the cliff head first. We heard the snap and crackle of bones breaking and rocks being displaced. Sam's body rolled downwards, right into the thick and dark green foliage that lay about a yard down the slope.

For one whole moment, we stood there in shocked silence. Finally, Alex remembered that he was the trek leader, and turned to Jim, "Jim, run back to camp. Take down the bear bag, and get the rope. We'll use that to get down the cliff and help Sam. Take Matt with you."

Bob said, "We're going to need more help than just that. He probably snapped his neck."

"Yeah," Alex nodded. "Take Robert and Will, and go down to the camp."

Nestled in a hollow of the north part of the mesa, a mile or so down the slope, was Urraca Camp. It was staffed, and we knew we could get help from there.

Bob nodded, and then he and his two took off for the Camp. Jim was still standing next to Alex, standing with his friend in mute shock, and Alex snapped, "Come on, Jim, we don't have time to waste. Get that rope."

"Right," Jim finally slurred out, grabbing Matt by the arm, and taking off for camp at a jog.

Alex then turned to Kevin, who, besides myself, was the only one left. Kevin was a born mountain climber. Hence he was the natural choice to go and help Sam.

"Once they bring back the bear rope you go

down there and see how he is," Alex ordered Kevin. "Remember — if his neck is broken, moving him might cause more harm than not moving him. Be careful."

"Don't worry, boss," smiled Kevin. "I've got my First Aid merit badge pretty well covered."

At that point Jim and Matt returned with the bear rope; all one hundred feet of it. We quickly tied it around a Ponderosa Pine that sprouted up near the edge of the mesa. As we did so, a strong wind came up from the west. For several instants it was almost impossible to hear anyone speak, but as I finished tying off the rope, the wind finally died again. None of us thought about the fact that it was the first time we'd ever felt a wind blow across the top of the mesa or even that a few minutes before we had been staring avidly at the mysterious blue glow. We were too caught up in going after Sam.

Kevin pulled on a pair of gloves to make sure he wouldn't tear the flesh out of his palms as he slid down the rope, and then gripped the rope tightly. He slowly backed out and over the cliff.

I suddenly noticed something in my peripheral vision. It was the root of our troubles — the blue glow. It had somehow come around to the north side of the mesa, and it was heading east towards us below the cliff. I called out, "Hey, look over there! There's the blue light!"

Below us, unseen, Kevin yelled, "Where?"

Jim yelled, "It's to your right. Do you see it?"

"Well, let me see if I can edge over a little . . ." said Kevin. We saw the rope shift as he angled westward, trying to catch a glimpse of the glow.

"I think I see it now —" he started to say. Suddenly he was cut off by a loud and high pitched yell that quickly screamed, "KEVIN!"

"Kevin?" yelled Alex. "You all right?"

To our relief, we heard Kevin's voice again. We could hear him audibly suck in air and he said, "I put my foot in a magpie's nest. Scared it nearly to death. Sucker nearly took me out getting away."

"Oh," Alex nodded, "A magpie. It sounded more like someone yelled 'Kevin.'"

Meanwhile, the blue light had gotten closer. Kevin yelled up, "Yeah, I can see it now. It's like a cloud — except it's clear, but blue. I can see right through it. God, that's really blue."

We saw the rope shift again, and Kevin reported, "I'm reaching into it. It's feels just like steam —"

In mid-sentence he yelled out. The rope, taut until then, suddenly flopped to the ground in slack. Then we saw Kevin hit the slope and tumble into the foliage, disappearing into the dark sea of the bushes. The blue cloud moved right over his position, and I saw it clearly for the first time.

It was just a swirling mass of glowing blue air — that's the best way I can describe it. As it settled onto the slope we suddenly felt a harsh and strong wind blow upwards into our faces. The bushes trembled and shook as the wind tore through them, but it didn't seem to af-

fect the cloud. In fact, the cloud sat securely down in the moving foliage, swirling against the wind. And then we heard Kevin's voice again. Only this time he was screaming.

Kevin had always had a deep voice, but now his screams were high pitched shrieks. We couldn't make out any words, and I couldn't see any sign of him in the bushes. Then, in mid-shriek, his voice broke off. The wind stopped, and all was still again. The blue light sat where it was and began to pulse.

We all gaped at it, and then Alex cursed and said, "That's it. I'm going down."

"So am I," said Jim. Next to him, Matt nodded, "Ditto."

I had to say something. I sure wasn't about to go down there. I uttered incredulously, "Are you guys nuts? Wait for daylight. There's nothing we can do for them in the middle of the night. I don't know what's going on, but getting yourselves killed won't help those two."

Alex snapped, "This is my trek. Those are my guys down there. I've got to help them."

He was the boss. I gave up the argument. Stepping aside, I said, "Good luck."

Alex went down first. The cloud sat where it was, as if it was watching him. Jim and Matt scurried down the rope next. I stayed up at the top, watching them. They huddled together, turning their flashlights toward the hovering blue blob of light. Then, with Alex giving me a thumbs-up, they marched into the bushes, calling out, "Sam! Kevin!"

Instead of our two missing friends, they roused a roosting bunch of magpies. As the birds exploded out of the foliage, they screamed out. It sounded like, "ALEX! JIM! MATT!"

My imagination. Had to be.

The three entered the blue blob. And then, suddenly, it was as if something had seized their ankles and jerked. They flew off their feet, their arms sweeping through air as if like the wings of a bird, and they began to scream. The wind started again. I saw hands reaching out of the bushes, and I saw Jim slide down the hill before, once more, being covered by foliage.

Nearest the top, Alex had somehow broken out of the cloud. I shown my light on

him, and found myself staring at a bloodied figure. He was covered in blood from slashes across his face and chest. His arms were slick with red splotches of blood where several deep cuts had laid him open to his bone. My jaw dropped. The bushes couldn't have done that to him. It was as if someone had taken a butcher knife and started to carve him up.

He staggered up the slope. His right leg was twisted at an extraordinary angle and he merely dragged it behind him. He was screaming in pain.

I swung the rope towards him, hoping he could catch it. He pushed himself forward, and gripped the rope. I knew he was wiped out, and instead of letting him try to climb up, I started to pull him up. Behind him, Matt and Jim were still screaming shrilly. A second later, in the middle of an appeal, their voices were choked off.

But this time the wind didn't stop. The cloud started up the slope — heading for Alex dangling helplessly on the rope. I furiously pulled the rope up, straining with every muscle I had. I lost sight of Alex, and I closed my eyes as I hauled the rope and him up. Then I heard Alex scream.

The rope was fighting me, pulling against me. Suddenly, I flew backwards as all the tug on the rope disappeared — and so did Alex's voice. Noticing the lack of the weight, I hurriedly pulled up the rest of the rope. As the end cleared the edge of the cliff, I saw something hanging onto the rope. I turned my flashlight on it.

As my stomach started to do somersaults, I took in the sight of Alex's right hand. The hand ended at the wrist, where a chunk of red flesh showered blood onto the dirt, and a splintered bone sprouted out of the torn flesh. I dropped the severed hand and the rope it still gripped to the ground, and then I puked up dinner. Chicken and rice splattered to the blood-soaked ground.

And then I noticed that the ground seemed to have a blue tint. I looked up to see the blue blob of light ascending the cliff.

Towards me.

Whatever was left of my dinner spewed out of my mouth and then, sucking in air, I bolted. I didn't know what to do. I started to yell, hoping that Bob and his guys could hear me. I sprinted north, towards the trail to Urraca Camp. Suddenly I saw something on the ground near the cliffs.

Lots of things.

The blue wave was taking its time behind me. I took the time to near the objects on the ground. As I neared them, I felt the ground get softer. It felt like mud, which was odd since there had been no rain. I shone my light down on the first object I came to.

Bob's eyes stared at me in horror out of a severed head that lay on blood soaked mud. I ran my flashlight over the rest of the area only to find body parts,

slashed up as if with a machete, strewn around. Robert's skull had been cleaved in two, and the two parts of his head lay two yards apart. There was blood all over the place — I was standing in a pool of it. I turned away, knowing that I was totally alone. I looked up to see the cloud coming.

I didn't want to die. Panicking, I headed west at the fastest run I had ever been at.

I was going faster than I had ever felt the wind go. But it wasn't enough. The blue wave was continuing after me, racing past the trees, past the bushes, past everything.

And then I slipped. I fell forward onto my face, and slid right up the edge of the cliff. I got onto my knees and turned around to see the blue wave just feet away. A ram of wind preceded it, pressing my skin and hair back with all of its force. I twisted around, with only seconds left. My mind raced. There was only one thing left to do. I knew it was probably suicide, but it seemed better than being torn apart alive.

I rose to my feet, took a deep breath, and stepped over the edge of the cliff.

I hit the ground on my side. My right leg slammed into the hard slope first, and it seemed to explode into a million fiery fragments — at least that's what it felt like. I rolled into the foliage, but I quickly stopped my fall.

Looking up, I saw the blue cloud start down the cliffside, heading for me. I tried to get up, but my right leg no longer did what I was telling it. It was at an odd angle to the rest of my body, and when I reached down to feel it, I discovered it was wet and slick with blood. My fingers scraped over a smooth object that felt like a twig. Only this twig was jutting out of my leg right above the knee. Nearly passing out in pain, I realized I was touching one of my own bones.

I started to roll down the slope, hoping I could escape the cloud. I tumbled through the foliage and rocks like an avalanche. I finally rolled to a stop near a dark hole in the slope. It was a small cave. I crawled inside, gasping in burning pain. The cave wasn't very big; it was just a ledge covered by a few rocks.

But I felt safe. For the moment.

And that's where I am now. I had my journal on me, in the back pocket of my blood-soaked Philmont shorts. With shaking fingers, I'm trying to write all that's happened. I don't have much time left.

The magpies are circling outside my cave, drawing the cloud towards me. I hear the wind picking up and the bushes are rattling and shaking as it approaches. I've heard several rocks slide down the hill. And the ground is practically glowing blue. Somehow, though, it isn't the blue glow that scares me. No, that's not it at all.

You'll think I'm crazy, but I swear, those magpies —

They're calling my name.



Alithia Bagley

Hell

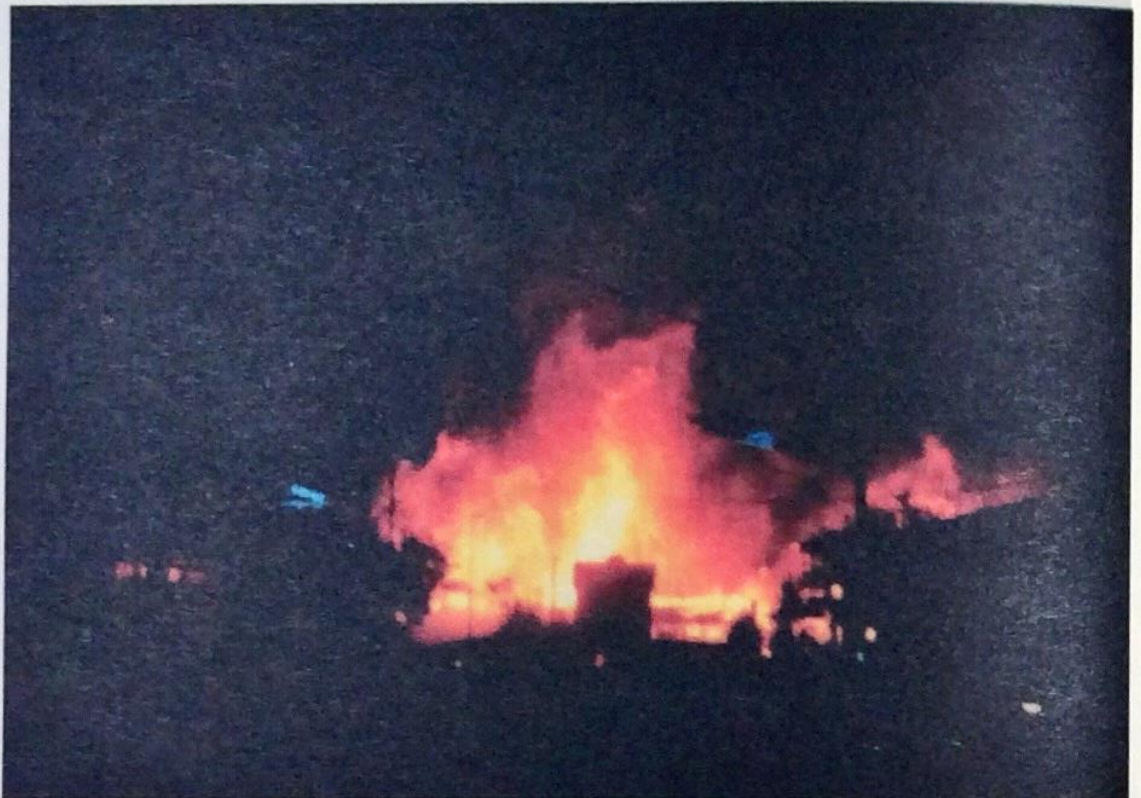
David Cole

None so blind to the color of distance
Man on the brink of all existence
One last kiss and a rage to die
An unfortunate result from a terrible lie
The devil in the mists of all vindication
God thrown away to replace aggravation
Evil and Death and hatred now nigh
Makes the color of blue turn red in the sky

And the essence of love broken for fear
Causes the torture and death of a wife once dear
Families scattered, chaos ensues
The lives of the people with boiling wounds
And the cry of a child lost in the crowd
Makes Satan's laughter boom aloud
The world so broken, no soul could tell
What lies in the fires and torments of Hell

Exhaustion
Paul Bogen

Days too long,
Nights too short,
Stiffened back,
Aching movements,
Stars fade,
And the sun rises,
How alone,
How tired,
No life to live,
No death to concede to,
Life is death,



MONA Gatewood

Death is life,
Not able to rise,
Too able to lie,
Solemn movements,
In a long running play,
The motions,
The lines,
But the heart is astray,
Free me from this eternal cycle,
Let the spirit loose,
But it has nowhere to go,
The same paining words of grief,
Screams,
Agony is growing,
But the will is dying,
Given up,
Too exhausted,
Let me sleep forever.

Vorpals Blink

Melissa Hauck

Wind and humidity
match wits against each other for
the prize
of both our bodies
and they tug of war to pitch
our Mortalities with a
brisk and generous caress
and we shiver to the Omniscient
Symphony of
the traffic let the
shameless precipitation
fill every vacant space
around us between our temperature
and every solid angle of
construction and geometry smoke
Passes through the fruit in our
garden of Sodomy
here, the trees are concrete lullabies
to sing us all to sleep
In their Majestic
reign in the air as all the
People carry
on their worldly burdens
around us and the weight
of our bodies upon the sin of
asphalt tugs us
Surely the moan of electricity
trailing behind our heels and the
Prelude of the morning plucked
from black strings of night trills
to end my sleepless in a splash
of Orange tease as inevitable
morning casts
itself into
my mouth
and I cast my regret across
this cell there it beams
all heaving with relief and
suspense studded with
the stench of my missing youth
watching with its
beaded eyes
for my hands like
cymbals that ill
thrust up to the
Cosmos and crash.....
all gone.
Someone turned in my direction
and painted my lips
white with lies and subtlety I'm
blind sighted by the glare
of eyes to look me up

and downtown the
dirty dirty river echoes our
love for each other in the
infected water
and I promised myself a Canaan of
things I bestow an
exception
for your Appetite like this
economy is run on blood.
And each bloody
sunrise I drive my car
(with the decomposing Maryland
license plate and doors that
open not from the inside),
for something of less worth than
european money
and I come to a
Masquerade drama where
a glowing boy before
me beams
his eyes swim like fishes throughout
the Classic American Nativity
and his words are as tangled
as his hair to Contradict
and Condescend towards
each open mouth to
defile or pretend and
when he
laughs his nostrils flare like
sails and his body
rocks in hysteria I'd be less
fragile if I wasn't
sitting under glass
if the dancing neon
signs were incorrect
and I catch someone in
my Peripheral vision
like
some rodent in a net
and I reel 'em
in and split their
sides with my
sideways gomorrah etiquette
my crooked teeth so
I sample the
humidity with my
obnoxious tongue
and my tangled
guts settle with
a
thump.

FREEDOM OF ANGST

Matthew Hudson

1

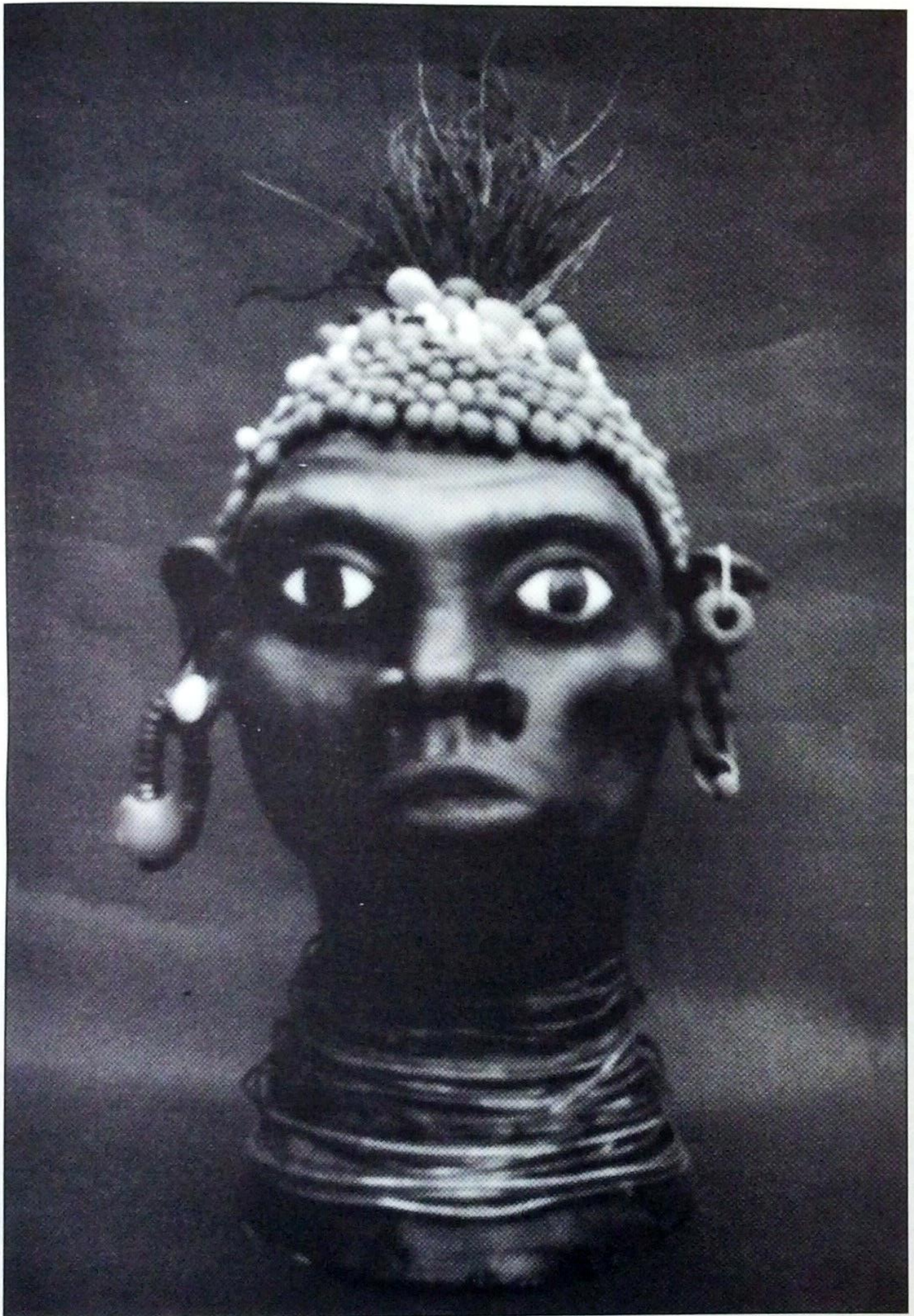
Cruel beasts,
demons in my head,
pulling me into my vacuum soul.
Suffocating me with expectations.
Ripping out my entrails
and then holding me to a candle.
Scrutinized by my ruiners,
corrected by the ignorant and the liars.
Ostracized by my struggle to remain.

2

This prison of iron and silk.
My world of organized chaos
and soul of silent cries.
All twists and convolutes,
in my tempest fraught mind.
Exploding my eyes and slashing my throat,
Leaving me groping in black nothingness,
as I drown in myself.

3

Mourn not,
if you'll mourn only at my funeral.
Mourn only,
if you mourn for me today.
For I have died last night,
and the night before that,
and the night before that.
Nightly does death descend.
She teases my mind and my lips.
Her perfume of stale grave entices;
my lifeless insides spark for but a second.
I live and I die in the blink of an eye.



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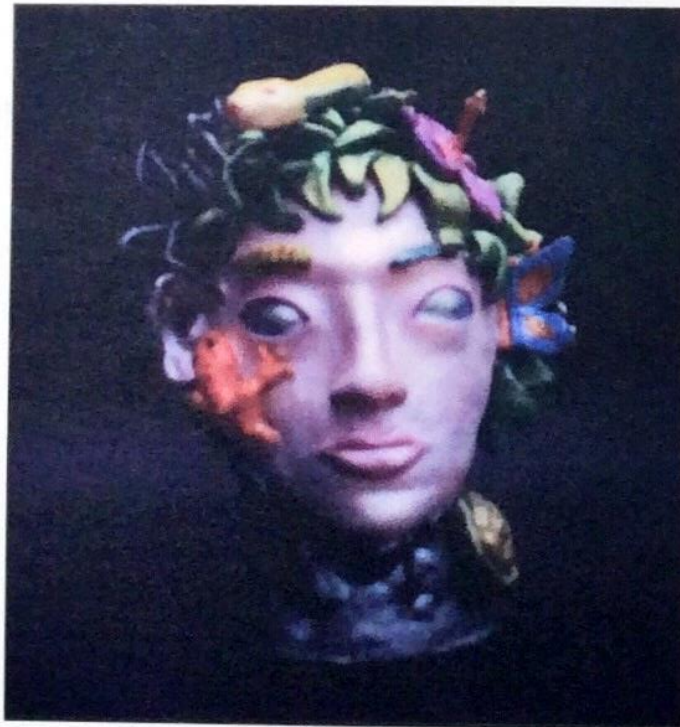
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National Council of Teachers of English: Excellent Rating 1990, 1995; Superior Rating 1989, 1994; Highest Award 1991-1993

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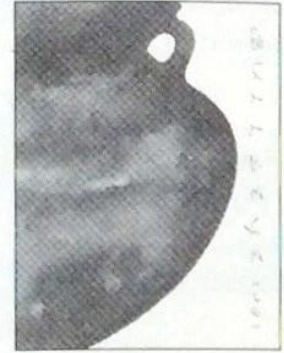
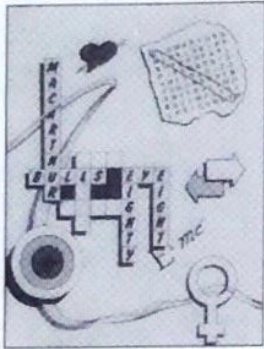
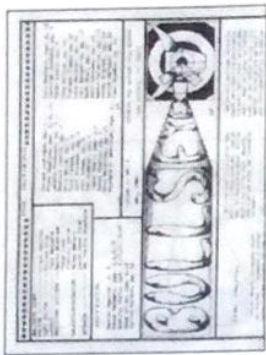
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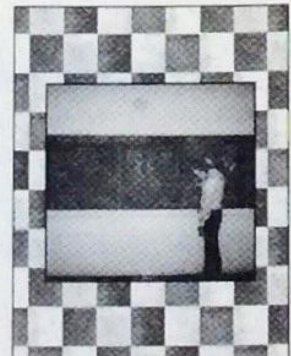
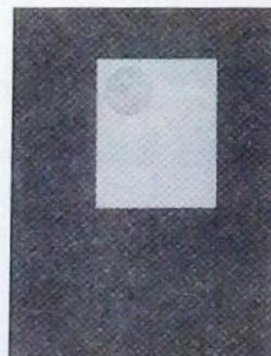
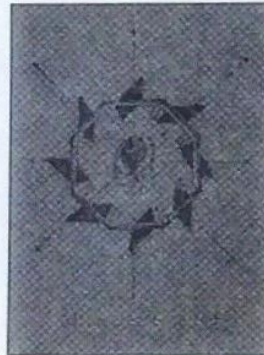
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