



Illuminations

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all of the students who submitted
works for consideration.*

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Volume III Illuminations

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*“Art is much less important than
life, but what a poor life without it.”*
Robert Motherwell



*“Art is the lie that enables us to realize the truth.”
Pablo Picasso*

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*"Painting is silent poetry, and poetry
 is painting that speaks."
 Simonides*



A Glimpse

*blue sky through green leaves
backdrop of infinity
frames this transient life*

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*Christine McManaman
Continuing Education*

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*"A book is like a garden carried in
the
pocket."
Chinese Proverb*



Veteran's Day

*Dave Earnest
Graphic Design*

Anightinfall

The trees are on fire tonight
There is something in the room.
A blanket, a sheet of fog.
This smoke, my Siren's song so to speak.

Your voice,
Reminds me of a thousand times I broke my neck
falling.

Generally, I'm accustomed.
I supposed I should be used to it.

Your face,
Tells me everything I've waited for.
Patiently, with crossed hands I stand.
Never sitting, waiting.
But I'll sit with you.
We'll stand together.
As one, under the moon,
The stars our witness.

Fall leaves turn.
Balck cauldron steams, to fog.
This night dreary, inescapable in my mind.
When we sat between the trees,
Raining leaves all around.
Blanket us once again.

The fall is calling,
And the moon is crawling over a new crest
tonight.

Zane Zimbelman
Academic Transfer

The Struggle for a New Life

When you can finally hit a fast-ball, life will
throw you a curve..

Those were the words of my grandfather. I always
thought he was talking about baseball, but on the day my
wife Dawn gave birth to our first child, Grandpa's words
came back to me.

We had been married for five years before Dawn
became pregnant for the first time. We had been trying to
have a child for at least five years before our dream finally
came true. I will never forget how I felt when the nurse
told us our wait was finally over. A hole would be filled.

As the time for the baby to arrive approached, Dawn
was becoming increasingly anxious. We had been to St.
Elizabeth's Hospital three times in the previous week
because she felt ready to give birth, but each time, we
were sent home empty handed. I was getting a little
annoyed by the situation, but I kept those feelings to
myself. I didn't think my wife needed any extra stress.

Finally, early on an October morning, the time arrived.
I was on my way out the door when I heard Dawn yelling
from the bedroom.

"Jeff, it's time!"

"Yes, honey, I'm going to work now, I won't be late
again," I answered, having been late several times before.

"No! It's TIME!"

"I know, honey. I'm not going to be late."

"No! It's time for the baby, now!"

I was skeptical, but she sounded more determined than
the previous false calls, so I figured I better listen to her
demands. Dawn and I had taken part in a Lamaze class, so
we felt we were prepared for the events of the important day.
In Lamaze we learned how to relax, to breathe correctly, and
even how to pack a suitcase, but Lamaze didn't prepare us
for what would happen next.

After I put my Dawn's overnight bag in our Jeep
Wrangler, I jumped in to start up the engine. I turned the
key and nothing happened. The battery was dead. I
looked at the dashboard and I realized I had left the head-
lights on overnight. To avoid looking like an incompetent
fool to my wife, I had to do some quick thinking. I remem-
bered that I had a spare battery in our garage. I took the
battery out of the Jeep and switched it with the battery in

the garage. This took about five minutes. I jumped into the Jeep again and tried to start the engine, but it still didn't start.

At that moment, Dawn walked out of our house.

"Why isn't the Jeep running?"

"Don't worry honey," I said, with my tail between my legs, "I'm on it." Dawn said nothing as she ran into the house crying.

One way or another, I had to get my wife to the hospital. I was a manly man and had to prove I was in control of the situation.

I decided to walk to my neighbor's house to see if I could get some help. I knocked on the door but there was nobody home. I tried another house on the block, but as before, nobody answered that door either. I began to get nervous because I didn't want to be the person who delivered our first child. After trying every house on the block, I decided to go back home to see how my wife was doing. As I walked up our driveway, I noticed a car driving up behind me. I turned around to see who it was, and I realized it was a taxicab. There I was, trying to be the manly man, and it was Dawn who took control of the situation.

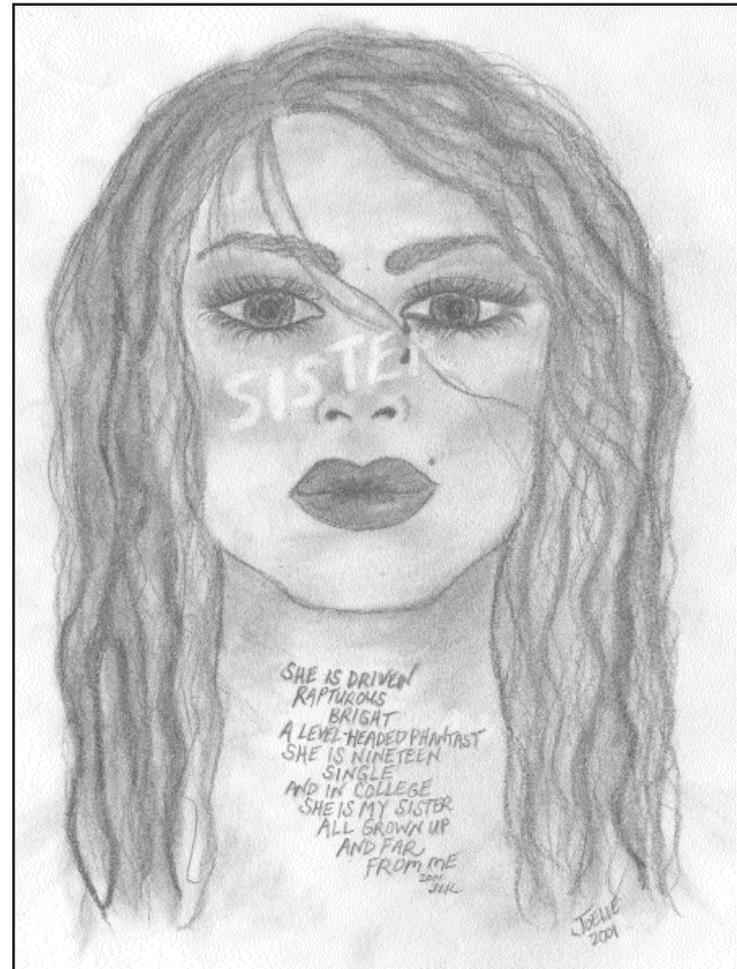
Dawn and I climbed into the back of the cab and the driver proceeded down the road. He looked at me through the rearview mirror and asked, "Where are you going?"

"To Saint Elizabeth Hospital, we're gonna have a baby," I replied. His jaw dropped and his foot leaned on the accelerator. Our heads jerked back when the speed suddenly increased.

"We'll be there in no time!" I looked at my wife and she squeezed my hand. We were on our way.

As we were driving to the hospital, my mind began to wander. I thought about how easy my life had been and I wondered if I could handle the addition of a child. When I was younger, I helped my sister take care of her baby girl. I learned how to change diapers and feed an infant, but I knew it would be different with my own baby. I also wondered if we were financially ready, because I knew a baby would be expensive. While the thoughts of the future were hanging in my head, I was awakened by the present. I heard Dawn tell the cab driver to pull over and I felt the cab stop. We were being pulled over by a police car.

The police officer walked slowly up to the taxicab and he peered at us through the back window. I could feel Dawn begin to shake, and I could tell that her contractions



Nicole

Joëlle L. Kuntz
Human Services

BREATHE

Lost. Falling fast into a dream as the dark of night steals my soul. take it. take it all. Encase me. Enclose me. You destroy me with your power (or am I a victim of my own hand?) I inhale all of you—the scent of death, of BONES and FLESH. and the emptiness that lies somewhere in between. Yet, you seem to give me life.

I drown
in thoughts.

Murky black waters of my own mind.

Mine? Yours? One and the same?

I can't tell the difference.

And they only see you.

in the reflection/^{noit}oel^{fer} of/fo me/_em. in the scars, the wounds closed and forgotten in time—but the pain. never. disappeared. in the endless days, the discarded years. of innocence wasted on morbid curiosity. in the pale skin and deep blue veins — oh, so inviting.

I run for a distant shore. Some horizon you've painted in my mind (you forgot to use color) of perfection. of love. of nothing at all.

In
tox
ica
ted

by your promises. I watch the burning stars. the glowing embers against a velvet sky—wondering when my number will finally be called. Counting down the hours of the insomniac night...marked only by each. solitary. breath. I take.

Wendy Lowery
Academic Transfer

were getting worse. The taxi driver opened his window when the officer approached his door.

The policeman asked the driver in a strong voice, "Do you know how fast you were going?"

"No, but my wife is going to have a baby right here if you don't let us go to the hospital right now!" I said. The officer stared at me and then at my wife.

"Follow me," he said. He climbed into his car and led us toward the hospital.

We were making good time on 70th street as we followed the police cruiser with its lights flashing, but when we were halfway to the hospital, Dawn let out a loud scream. It caused the cab driver to slam on the brakes.

"I can't take it any longer, I'm ready to push."

The police officer backed his car up, pulled up beside the taxicab and asked us why we had stopped.

"My wife is going to have this baby now and she can't wait!"

"Forget that idea. Get in my car!" We did what he ordered us to do. The officer stepped on the gas as hard as he could. I think he melted half of his tires away. When I looked at the speedometer on his dashboard it read 95 m.p.h. I could hear my wife praying out loud. She was doing the best she could. I looked up ahead and I saw a sign that said Saint Elizabeth Hospital. It felt as though a load of bricks was lifted off my shoulders. We pulled into the Emergency Entrance, just as the baby began to crown. The hospital staff put Dawn on a gurney and took her in. As I looked back, I saw the policeman and the taxi driver shaking each other's hands. I smiled at them as I followed Dawn.

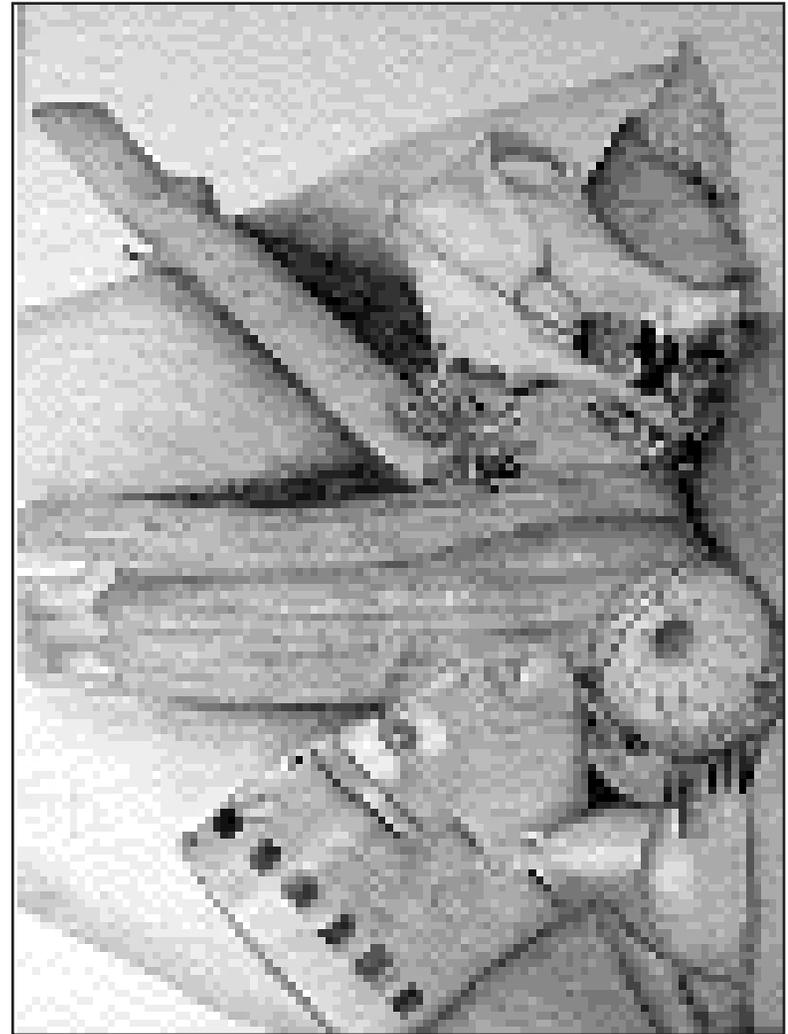
Dawn gave birth to a nine pound baby girl and we named her Hannah. She was a miracle in our eyes. I wish my grandfather was around to see my daughter, but he died the same day she was born. I wanted to tell him how wise his words were and that life had thrown us a curve. I also wanted to tell him that we stared at the pitch and knocked it over the fence

Jeffrey Leuty
Academic Transfer



Out of the Blue

*Lindsay Beaver
Academic Transfer*



Egyptian

*Colleen Lovett
Academic Transfer*

Wrong Side of Bed

The day deceived my sleep
Hacking effortlessly through my feeble, unfeasible
Attempts to postpone its presence with dingy sheets
Hung haphazardly on top of venetian blinds.
My skill seemingly stunted
No doubt a reaction of the state I was under.
Last night's lover leaving leftovers in my veins and
As I attempt to open
My crusty, blood-shot eyes I can feel the sun
Caressing my retinas with callused hands.
66 Another morning mandated by medication,
So I pull pillows onto my pallid mask
Frightened to face the day.
Moving, at last, in slow motion
Like the Bionic Woman on sedatives.
Just one destination for me
As I dig through heaping ashtrays
Searching for a butt.

Stacy Kendrick
Human Services

Violets

My Blues Turning to violets
It's plum silly
I lavender the willow
azure spirit skips away on the breeze
I cauliflower but she runs in the rain
9:57 a.m.
I saw her periwinkle at me
The sky's nearing midnight
My push is less per pull
I can't sienna indigo
I can't even see green
It seems that I'm marooned
My blues turning to violets
My blues turning to violets
It's no crimson—They're not right
I just ink like black roses
The wind blew Mary Buena Verde
I got lit up on christmas
A rainbow of toot flavors but
I made an iridescent
Now my day's all battleship grey
Only pumpkin suits me
I see the whiting on the wall
I don't wanna confuscia with
My blues turning Violet 10:29 a.m. 4-22-96
But the cream always rises

G. Jay Matlock
Microcomputer Technology

Lies of the Mind

*Drowning in memories that weigh more than gold
Thoughts start to burn as delusions take hold
I've paid the price—my soul has been sold
The years keep on passing and I'm getting old*

*I keep on running yet the race never ends
I'm still at this place where I first began
Looking for someone who will understand
Don't say you'll be there, then retract your hand*

*It's a lonely war I'm fighting, yet the fight is all
mine*

*The clock is slowly ticking, and I'm running out of time
Don't listen when I tell you that I am doing fine
Reality's more painful than lies of the mind*

*Wendy Lowery
Academic Transfer*



Re-enactment

*Dave Earnest
Graphic Design*

well be etched in my memory and dreams forever.

Two of the team members had been beaten to unconsciousness. They were hurt, but they were alive, and they were going to make it. What they did to Kevin and our team medic is what I still see at night when I close my eyes.

The people that had ambushed them had tied them both to a tree, and had cut off Kevin's and our medic's hands, and they were dying. I didn't know what to do to help them, and I felt helpless at that moment, as I watched my friends' lives slip away in front of me.

How was I ever going to look Brenda in the eyes and tell her that I had let her down? I had promised her that I would watch out for Kevin. How was I ever going to explain to her how he had died in such a horrible way, so far away from home and from her, his first and only true love?

Life is not supposed to end this way. Kevin and Brenda should have had the chance to say goodbye to each other for the last time, or to say the words "I love you" again.

I decided at that moment that I was never again going to feel so helpless when someone was hurt or needed my help. It was at that very moment, that I knew in my heart what I should do with my life.

IN MEMORY OF KEVIN

*Mike Becker
Academic Transfer*

Portrait of the Artist

"Hello and welcome to everyone's favorite game show..." Corinthian columns frame a television stage. In the center is a large white sheet of canvas. The audience is elated in a plastic frenzy but a large APPLAUSE sign and three stagehands cue their actions.

The host, a tall man, very polished with a toothy grin too large for his face. A slick black suit and a red carnation in his lapel. Black greased back hair.

A barrage of dancing colored lights. Red, blue purple, and black light swing across the audience and stage.

The announcer began...

"Tonight our contestants will vie for a place in our hall of fame and honor among the general populace on Portrait of the Artist! Let's meet them shall we?"

Stage right is backlit with red lights pointing straight up. The white spot falls on a pasty, chubby brown haired man about 30 wearing clunky, plastic framed glasses. He is escorted out by two surgically enhanced female models. His clothes are wrinkled and his potbelly is stretching the buttons on his white short-sleeved dress shirt. Spots of perspiration ring his armpits.

"So, tell us your name and where you're from," said the announcer as he thrust the very sleek microphone into the man's face.

"Uh, Hi. My name's Alan Smithee, but you can call me Al. I'm from Waukegan, Illinois."

"What do you do for a living, Al?"

"I was an assistant night manager at Gas and Grub," Al uttered expressionlessly. "In my spare time I did velvet paintings, Elvis's, tigers and stuff. It helped make ends meet."

"And why have you chosen to appear on 'Portrait of the Artist?'" the host cheesed into the camera.

"Well...um... I-aaa...I recently found out my girlfriend of three years was operating an Internet porn business. I'd been saving for 7 months for an engagement ring. Finally I could afford it and brought it home. I walked in on her getting it from both ends by two steroid case studies."

"Ha Ha Ha! Boy, that's TWO Bad!" the host chuckled. With that the APPLAUSE sign flashed and the audience

responded in unison with it.

"You've chosen a real classic tonight, the ol' twelve gauge in the mouth bit. Do you think it will be enough to win over the judges?"

"I've decided on using two shotguns, using both my big toes on the triggers, Johnny."

"Hey that's really great! A new twist on an old favorite. Are you ready Al?"

"As I'll ever be."

With that the music started and two bikini clad silicone enhanced beauties walk on from stage right and left carrying two ornate 12 gauge shotguns and a black aluminum chair. Alan took a seat center stage in front of a large white canvas hung from the ceiling. The girls, flirting with the camera all the while, hand the guns to Al.

"Drum roll please!" commanded the host. The audience's anticipation grew as Alan placed the chair center stage in the spotlight and placed both the barrels against his cheeks.

"OK everyone here and all you folks at home, you know what to do! On the count of three..." Al's body tensed and he took a breath.

14 "ONE! TWO! THREE! BYE AL!" the audience chanted in unison. With that Al's toes twitched, and the sharp report echoed through the soundstage. The entire back of Al's head ended up on the tarp. Only the left front quarter of the cranium was still attached-a hollow arc with a few bits of skull hanging by the scalp.

With this the "Applause" sign flashed and the audience responded as before.

"Oh, I've just gotten word that only one of the guns fired. I repeat, only one gun fired. That's really going to hurt his point standing. And...yes...here come the scores...2.5, 3.8, 3.2, 3.7. Not the kind of finish he had in mind. And now a word from our sponsors..."

"We're back! Who's our next contestant?"

The spotlight swung around and fell upon a gaunt form being walked out by two bronzed and anabolic male models.

"Tell us your name and where you're from," the host brightly inquired.

"My name is Judy Lackey from Portland, Oregon."

"Why have you chosen to appear on 'Portrait of the Artist'?"

I knew from the beginning that something was not right about this mission, and now I knew what it was.

The Captain that gave the briefing had decided to split our team up, something that was never done with a team like ours. We had trained together as an eight-man team since day one; we were trained to think like one, to act like one; we were one.

Now that we were split up for the first time ever, I was worried about Kevin and the rest of the team. Kevin had just gotten engaged to Brenda, and just before we left I had promised her that I would watch out for him while we were away. How was I to do that with our team being split up?

Chief's hand went up, and we all eased to the ground like a silent cat. He motioned me to move forward, and as I pulled up along side of him he whispered to me, "There's nothing out there; we should check on Kevin's team." I agreed and we both eased back to the radio. When Kevin did not respond on the radio after three attempts, it felt like the whole world had dropped out from under me.

Something was horribly wrong, and despite what the Captain had ordered us to do, I was going to go and find Kevin and the rest of the team. The team had some unwritten rules that we all lived by, and the number one rule was that we would never leave each other in the field alone or hurt, and I was not going to start now, not with the promise I had made to Brenda.

In 30 minutes, at almost a full run, the four of us made it to the place where Kevin and the rest of the team were supposed to be. As we slowed to a crawl and dripped with sweat, Chief stopped frozen in his tracks. He again motioned me to move forward. When I reached him, I too saw the horror that was left on the floor of the jungle. There was blood and lots of it, and hundreds of empty rounds of ammo, all signs of Kevin and the other team members being ambushed, but no sign of Kevin and the rest of the team.

Chief soon found the blood trail that was left from our teammates as they were dragged off into the jungle. We once more took off in a full run hoping that we would not find the worse possible thing that we all knew might have happened to them. Less than 8 minutes later we found them in the clearing, and what I saw that day

Feeling Helpless

Things seemed to be moving too fast, and there was too much to do in such a short period of time. With lives on the line I had to make decision, and it had to be the right one or I was going to lose both girls. As I was trying to make the decision on which girl had the better chance of survival, the memory of that day so long ago hit me like a bolt of lightning, the day I felt so helpless, the day I decided to become a paramedic.

As I sat on the small hard bench with my eyes closed going over all the details of the mission, I heard the pitch of the plane's engines change, and my eyes flashed open. At first, it was difficult to see, and then the dim red light went on. Eight minutes before I was out the door.

Chief (we all called him chief because no one could pronounce his real name) sat straight across from me as he had done since we both had arrived at the unit. His eyes fixed in that strange, dark, distant trance they always had just before a jump. The light flickered twice, one minute to go.

The door cracked open. As the warm air of the plane was sucked out and the cold air was sucked in, I could feel the cold hit my face. It felt like millions of tiny pieces of glass were cutting my face. I had forgotten just how cold it could be at 16,000 ft. No matter, in just 15 minutes or less I would be sweating to death in a tropical jungle. As I stepped to the door and glanced at Chief, he smiled and said to me "No worries." For a man that never said much, he always knew when and what to say. He could feel my uneasiness, something was wrong, and I could feel it in the bottom of my gut.

Chief was leading the way, about 20 yards in front of the team as we made way through the hot and humid jungle. I was third in line, and I was raging from the quick briefing we had received after landing outside the airport and had taken control of it.

We were to split up, (four per team) I was to take my team and head north from the airport, and Kevin was to take the other half and head west. We were to locate and then radio back any enemy strong holds that we felt would be a threat to the advancing force that was behind us.

The bald, pale and skinny woman thought a moment, then took a thin, shallow breath.

"I was a sculptor, and spun pottery a little, and active in many preservation programs. When I found out a forest preservation act had been revoked by our new president, I was enraged. The plans included cutting down an old tree that had been sort of a special place for me since my childhood. The tree stood on what used to be my grandfather's land. In protest, I hauled a tent and supplies and set up a platform up in the branches of this magnificent living creature. After six weeks I was taken down by force by employees of the lumber company, and the tree was cut down. I managed to save a branch from it as a souvenir of my struggle. Three weeks later I was diagnosed with stage three metastatic uterine cancer. At best I have four weeks to live, and am in a great deal of pain. My family is either dead or doesn't care, and I hope my appearance here will bring some sort of attention to my cause, if only for fifteen minutes."

"Actually it's only gonna be (he looks at his watch) 3 minutes and 22 seconds, so lets get crackin'. How do you plan to execute your work?"

"I'd like to direct everyone's attention to the roof. (The camera pans to the rafters.) My plan is such; when I pull the pin, that 400lb beam that came from Woody, the tree I spent so much time in, will swing down and send me to the other side."

"The other side and out the back!" toothed the host. Canned laughter from the live studio audience.

"Yes, well, I think this will provide a nice spray pattern radiating from the central core."

"Smashing idea! I don't think we've had such an event before. If you'll just take your seat, we'll get into the swing on things!"

The "APPLAUSE" sign flashed.

"Alright, ARE YOU READY?"

"Yea."

"On the count of three..."

ONE ! TWO!THREE!

BYE JUDY!"

And with that Judy yanked the exquisitely weaved tassel. The large wooden beam of old growth Myrtlewood swung down in a dip and impacted completely flat against the supporting wall covered by the large white canvas.

Judy's fragile, ivory body flinched, convulsed and fell still.
The "APPLAUSE" sign flashed.
"Splendid! Absolutely delicious!"

The beam was then pulled away, revealing the result of the impact. Only a mild tug was required to remove the husk from the piece.

"Stupendous!" The host gushed. "If this isn't in the finals I move for at least an honorable mention. Oh, and here come the scores. 7.1...7.8...6.9...7.6. Wow! Excellent scores. That totally blows Al away!"

The "APPLAUSE" sign flashed.

"And with that we're going to hear a word from McDonald's-McDonalds, We love to see you smile."

"We're back, boy, it's been quite an evening, one of the best I think of the season, but it isn't over yet. We have yet one more contestant."

The sensational fanfare started and the large breasted women promenaded with a tall, gaunt young man. Dark circles hung under his eyes, rail thin, his black short-sleeved t-shirt reveals an extraordinary amount of tract marks. 11 o'clock shadow is in effect. His old, cracked Doc Martens soles are almost totally worn down. His greasy wiry thatch jutted out at odd angles. He half staggered, half moseyed to the center stage spotlight. The impatient host started in right away.

"Howdy partner, how's the trail been treating' ya?"

The "APPLAUSE" sign flashed.

"Ugh, yea um...Oh yea, I LOVE this show, man."

The "APPLAUSE" sign flashed.

"Glad to hear it. Could you tell everyone about yourself?"

"Cool, I'm Jacob, from Seattle, Washington...and um...(perspiration glazed his exposed skin) I'm 27. I've been tryin' to kick for...like three years, been shootin' for eight, and there aint' no way I'm gonna kick so I figure, you know, what the fuck? I'll go on 'Portrait of the Artist.' Oh yea, Todd and Scott, you may have kicked me out of the band, you fuckin' pieces of shit, but who's famous now you pompous fucks! You know..."

"Alrighty then, Jacob that's awesome. Would you explain your method to everyone?"

"Sure. Ok, like...um, I wrote this one song, about a year ago, and it got some airplay on some of the college sta-

If it stops beating

**I'm not sure if eating ice cream will help at all
After all (2:45 am) I'm cold enough
Without your touch to warm me up
(if it get any truer bluer y'won't even know me
from the face of your watch)**

**Ice cream into the void in my heart
Fill in the cracks she tore apart
Put up the sign that says vacancy
Bring me back some small complacency
Someday I'll reach the Haight
And you know the corner I'll hit, yeah, you just wait
And if it's not too late I'll do the Rainbow (Delights)
place as in yesterdays**

**But today I don't wanna be
Without you beside me
I don't wanna go on nor East nor West without you
Sans your smile it's all a waste of time
And a million miles won't take y' from my mind
Blueberry Cheesecake couldn't even quake me from
this missing your lassitude
3:18 am**

**Indolent indifference is taking away my common sense,
too
Can't even eat my Butter Pecan because I see your face
upon
Every other flippin' spoon... C3:20 am 2-23-2001**

*G. Jay Matlock
Microcomputer Technology*

it's got me blue

12:55 am 1-23-2001

Cut!...Cut! (2:13 am) All right, that enough with the dead stuff

Whaddya mean? There's never enough Dead stuff?

And what's with this boat crap?

(oh,) You know, "row row row y'r boat gently with a spoon"
WhatEVER!! All RIGHT! Take Three!

**Got the Wavy Gravy on the ladle, baby,
But I keep thinking of you
I'm tie-dyed to the core and what's more
Is yore the colour I need to brighten by view (hue)** 2:20
am 1-23-01

Uh, why'd you stop?

I don't like the wording, and I don't like lying...

60

I mean, I'd LIKE to be eating Wavy Gravy, or Cherry
Garcia, or...

What's that one with coconut and almonds and...

It's onlya flippin' song! For cryin' out loud!!
All RIGHT! Take four...

**Spoon keeps the butter pecan a-scoopin'
But I'm deep in butter feeling stupid
Cupid got me hard but must've missed her
Guess it's back to breaking blisters (ooh)** 2:35 am
(or/wonder if she's gotta sister...11:47 am 2-1-2001)

I'm so sorry the boys sold out

But maybe now they'll be commercial enough we
can get it in my home town
Ice cream just seems to soothingly smoothe you off my
mind

But my heart can't hardly stand
Going on without you and

tions back home, and I'm gonna play it here tonight. When
that's over, you see those stacks hanging up over there?
Well on the floor there's a super huge copy of that 'Man
Playing Guitar' picture." With that he gave a chuckle and a
snort and then a sporadic coughing fit.

"Yes, the painting by Georges Baraque. Is everybody
ready for some head banging?" the Announcer quipped.

The "APPLAUSE" sign flashed.

After the feedback laden opus to apathetic romance,
he smashed his guitar. Then, raising his arms, the audi-
ence chanted once again...

"ONE! TWO! THREE!

BYE JACOB!" He then fell backwards, pulled the exquisitely
weaved tassel and the amp and speaker stacks dropped
and stamped flat everything above his chest. There was a
shower of sparks and splintered wood as the cabinets
crumbled and shorted out.

The "APPLAUSE" sign flashed.

"Ladies and gentlemen, that was one mind-expanding
experience! Now he's better off than dead! Ha! Here come
the scores." said the announcer.

"7.8, 8, 7.6, 8.2. Looks like we have our winner! Jacob's
won quite a package. His piece has won a place in the
'Portrait of the Artist' Hall of Fame! Not only that, but a
charitable donation will be made in Jacob's name to the
organization of his choice, which in this case is a
methadone clinic on the corner of Sunset and Burroughs
up there in Seattle."

"I'd like to thank our all the folks at home for inviting
us into their living rooms tonight, and on behalf of every-
one here this is Johnny Con Carne wishing you a good
night."

*Ronald Reece
Academic Transfer*

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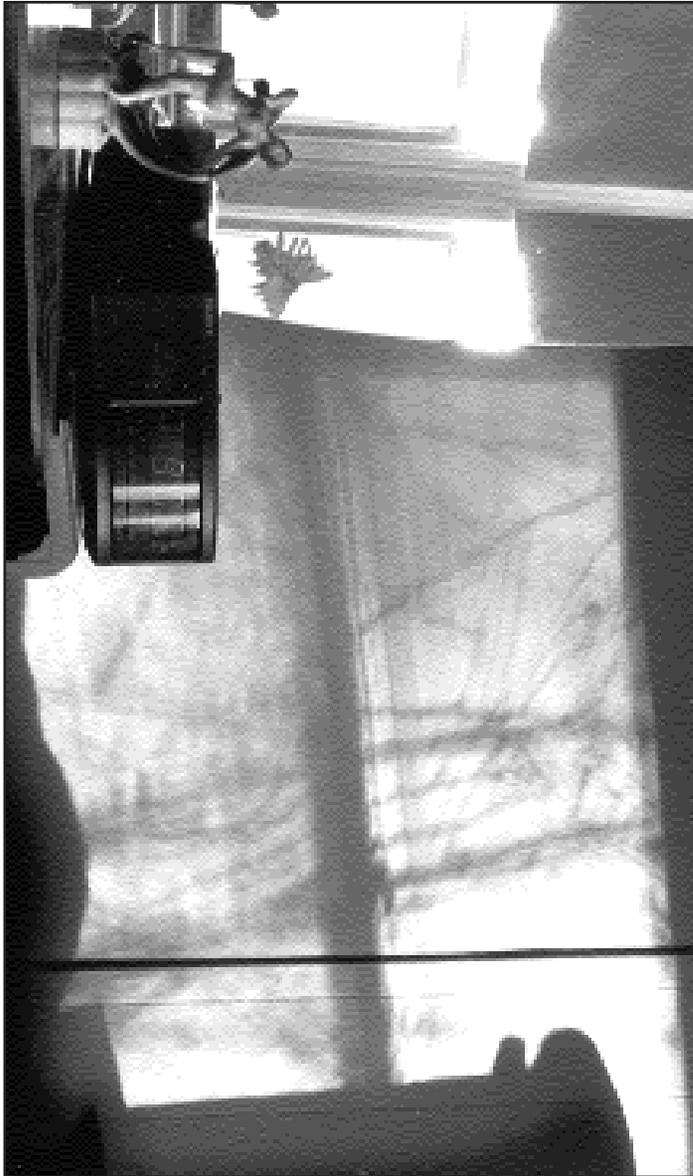
Looking

*Wendy L. Barnes
Academic Transfer*

I Screamed Love

Just a-sittin' here
 eating ice cream
 and thinking of you
 I'd pick up my guitar
 But I'd have to set down my spoon c11:45 pm 1-22-2001
 (Lord knows) I'd throw it all away
 —or give it to you...do you like butter pecan, anyway?
 I'd give up my life if you'd like
 Believe me, it's true 11:15 P.M. 1-22-2001
 Cut! Cut!...No woman would ever believe that crap
 Well, I didn't mean I'd just up and die at her whim...
 I meant I'd give up my past and all the fun and...
 No-No...that one's okay...I use that line all the time.
 Women love to think (that) they control your very existence...
 It makes 'em smile...
 No, I meant that "eating ice cream thinking of you" bit...
 Everywoman (body) knows (that) when you eat ice cream,
 you think only (about) how good it is, and then that
 it's almost gone, and then...
 No, no, you'll need to strike that line 11:57 pm
 And who in their right mind would give up Butter Pecan?
 Get Real!
 Awright, Take Two!

Sitting here eating ice cream
Just a-wishin' you were this spoon
I keep on a-lickin'
It's an idea I won't be letting go of soon
It's a dream that's all but dead
And I'm sure it'd be better off left unsaid
But kid it kinda gets my goat I missed the boat and



Still Life

*Julia A. Russ
Continuing Education*

Go Away

*you
creep in like a cat
roll in like thick gray sky
while the dishes are in the sink
and last night's dinner
is becoming lunch in the microwave
i remember
when your eyes gazed at me
as i burned your photograph
and you fell into the sink
as black ash
the smell of your sweater
when i wore it as pajamas
i can still feel you tickling
my lower back
suddenly
your face is on my tv screen
and in my magazine
words you said
appear in my book
while the laundry is in the washer
and the phone rings in the bedroom
i write your name
instead of my essay
you said you'd be with me forever
and now that you're gone
you just can't seem to leave
my mind*

*Hope Nore
Academic Transfer*

Ruler of the Lily Pad

People often ask me to recount the story of how I—Garey, son of Orville, student extraordinaire of Southeast Community College; bearer of the sacred shinny stick—became Sir Garey Leon, Prince of The Ninth Kingdom. Now, in my golden years—having repeated the tale countless times to my admiring subjects—I have decided to put the saga to pen and paper, that the bards and scholars might pass the legend on for posterity.

One day, long ago—having experienced a particularly long and painful English class and having endured a form of torture known to students in my home world as “a grammar test”—I cast my fate to the wind and caught a ride to a little known, well hidden bass lake, called Sky Bottoms End. There, my favorite fly rod in hand, I whiled away the afternoon, playing at catch and release and tutoring the local bass population in the art of deception. Ankle deep in the cool waters of the pond, puffing away on a fresh green flower top of magical herb, I let the angry wounds of the grammar torture float away on wisps of blue gray smoke and calmed my troubled soul.

I cast the wet fly on the end of my line into a pasture of bright green Lily Pads, surrounded by clumps of tall water grasses swaying in the late afternoon breeze and felt an immediate strike! Reeling in furiously, I fought a wild battle with what appeared to be a behemoth Largemouth Bass. Wrestling the hog up onto the bank, I was amazed to find a fat green frog kicking and screaming on the end of my line. Yes— that’s right— I said, screaming!

“Ow! Leggo, barbaric infidel! Release me, I command you! Ouch, that hurts!”

The voice was distinctly feminine. I stood looking in amazement from my bowl to the frog, thinking, “Wow, good stuff!”

“Please, take this hook from my mouth! I am in great pain! Please, I beg of you,” came the plea from the frog.

I bent over, released the ruffled amphibian from my line, and held her gently, looking eyeball to eyeball, wondering if I were on Candid Camera and thinking maybe I should ditch the bowl. I looked closely but couldn’t see any wires, mini-mikes, or anything obvious.

“OH, thank you,” said the gentle eyed pond dweller. “You are most kind—obviously a gentleman — and clever



Snowscape

*Alan L. Carter
Machine Tool Technology*

Fused

Vs 1: Blood, and lust, and skin, and sweat
The heat of your body and the taste of your flesh
Your nails dig in, my eyes roll back
As you bite your lip, my muscles contract

Chorus: Blood, lust, passion, and pain
I haven't changed but I know I ain't the same
Blood, lust, passion and pain
Fused together, one and the same
Blood, lust, passion and pain
I have changed, I'll never be the same
Blood, lust, passion and pain
Changed forever and I feel no shame

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Vs 2: Agony, and ecstasy, and tears, and rust
Euphoric discomfort, joy and thrust
Long smooth curves, sweet warm breath
Sugar coated, sweet, hot and wet

Chorus:

Vs 3: Blood, and lust, and skin, and sweat
The heat of your body, and the taste of your flesh
Laying as one, together and true
Linked, and united, and uniform, and fused

Chorus:

*Chris Webster
Academic Transfer*

too... I am not easily tricked, you know. I have had the advantage of a very fine education, the best of the best".

"An educated frog," I guffawed. "You seen Alice around here anywhere?"

"Alice who?"

"Never mind," I said. "I just never thought of frogs as being particularly intelligent."

"Nor they, you," she retorted. "But, for your information, I am not just your common everyday frog. I am actually a princess, and...if I were to graciously allow you to kiss me...you would become the most powerful and wealthy prince in all the nine kingdoms! Not that I am offering, of course."

I thought of the fairy tales my mother had told me when I was young. I remember thinking, "Well, that would explain her ability to speak." I took another toke off the pipe.

"I...I don't suppose you'd like to," came a soft voice...almost a purr.

I chuckled and looked into her bulbous baby blues. I remembered an article I had read in a magazine explaining how some people licked certain South American Toads and experienced wild hallucinogenic highs. I took a quick look all around, and seeing know one about, I thought, "What the hell, you never know. She might just turn into a beautiful princess, and if not, I might just have the trip of my life." Problem was, should I kiss her...or lick her. I decided on a compromise.

I French Kissed her!

Suddenly there was a loud popping sound and an intense flash of light. Smoke rose from the damp air at my feet. Standing there before me, this beautiful green frog said, "That was some kiss, lover boy."

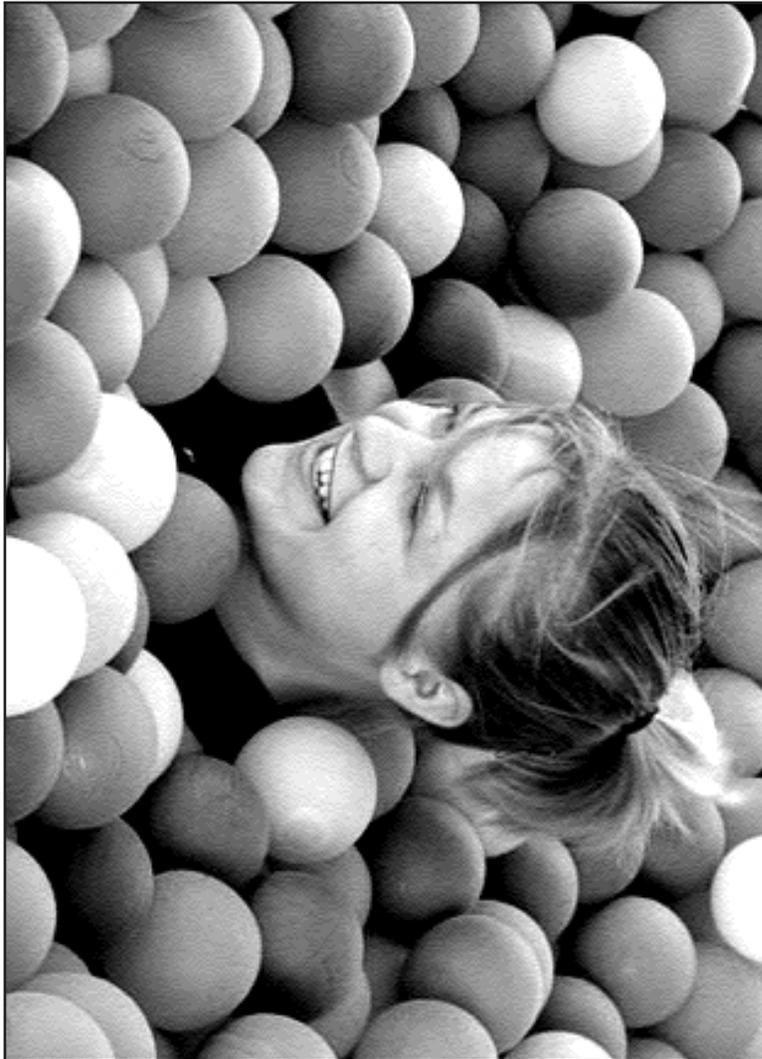
I snapped my talented tongue at a passing Dragonfly, and answered, "RIBBIT!" And that my little brothers, is how I came to be known as Prince Garey Leon of the Ninth Kingdom.

I no longer fret about such things as grammar tests and grade point averages. Lazy summer days devoted to fishing and swimming in the cool waters of the pond have taken the place of endless hours of study and beer soaked nights. My nights are filled with song and frolic, and when I want to catch a buzz...I ambush dragonflies!

One thing is certain—throughout my reign here at Sky Bottoms End, I've had a hopping good time!

*Gary L. Hatten
Microcomputer Technology*

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Adrift in A Sea of Bubbles

*Alan L. Carter
Machine Tool Technology*



Pot Man

*Lindsay Beaver
Academic Transfer*



Enough

*endless worries crush my soul
and pile up like laundry
conceal the tiny remnant of self*

*beating me senseless, blow after blow
scattering thoughts like ashes
remains of my charred efforts*

*River of Peace where do you flow?
deposit burdens like sediment
grounds for cultivation*

*Christine McManaman
Continuing Education*

Mary Margaret Mariah McGroat

*Mary Margaret Mariah McGroat
Wore a gaudy patch work coat.
On her head she wore a hat
Of knitted wool that jauntily sat
Upon her brightly colored hair
Such a sight beyond compare.*

*Lola Loni Laura Lauren
Thought she was god's gift to men
she pranced along the City Street
With silver sandals on her feet
She'd flip her hair and roll her eyes
Such a flirt with all the guys.*

*Cora Catharine Candy Cluck
Drove around town in a pickup truck.
With dents and dings she races through
Driving fifty-five instead of twenty-two
When people hear her muffler roar
They run for cover behind a door.*

*Pepper Paula Pansy Peese
Suffered bad from allergies.
With a box of tissues in her hand
Coughing and sneezing I understand
She sneezed so hard or so they say
It carried away the Mayor's toupee.*

*When Mary Lola Cora and Pepper
Down the street they walk together
It is such an awesome sight
Or maybe more an awful fright
But no gathering is complete
Until all four do take their seat.*

*Merrion Brooks
Academic Transfer*



Unconditional Love

"What's the big deal?" Rickie scoffed. "It's just a few days off from school for disagreeing with a teacher."

"What's the big deal? What's the big deal?" I echoed back at the top of my voice. "It's a goddamned expulsion from school, it goes on your record. This could affect your chances of getting into a good college," I roared. "And...and...and it was no simple disagreement with a teacher," I spit out with burgeoning rage of anger.

"Hey, dad, you need to chill...get a grip on it," Rickie casually retorted as he sprinted out the door before I could intercept him.

The door slammed in my face. I just stood there seething. My veins were writhing with the agony of parental discord at a child of many talents gone astray. Rickie's philosophy of life was "don't pay attention," "don't ask any damn questions," and "make a joke of it all"! He summed it up quite simply, "Just smile and nod, just smile and nod."

"How much more can I take?" I demanded of my inner self as I thumped my fist against my forehead.

"All of it," my inner self smugly replied. "He is your child," it reminded me with a callousness that is as chilling as Mao Tse Tung telling the world that our youth are our future.

"Ouch," I replied to myself as I recoiled from the truth. I did not want my inner self to get the best of me, so I continued my thoughts as detached from "it" as I could possibly be. "Hmm," I opened my pondering. "What precipitates this cynicism?" I asked.

"Could it be 'me'?" my inner self quizzed me even though I had tried to muzzle it.

"I suppose so," I whimpered back. And, with that jab, I sunk into a chair letting the soft plumpness of the upholstery embrace me as a mother holds her crying child. I gazed deeper into myself to gather the insights I needed to dredge up an understanding of my offspring.

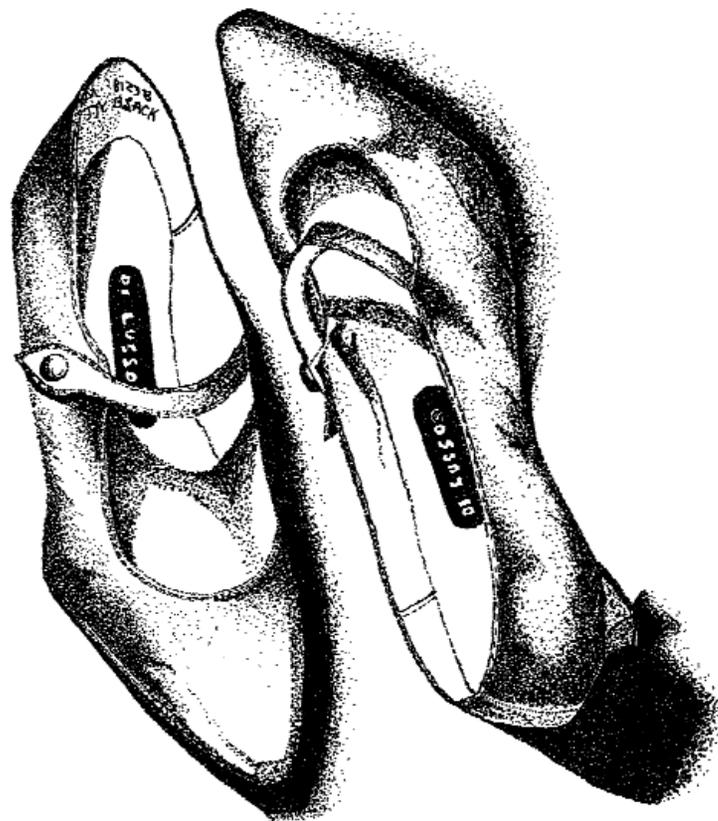
My inner self imposed its control over me once again and reminded me of a time when I was a brash, flippant teenager with a cynical tongue as sharp as the finest cutlery of the time. It kept my synapses alive with tidal waves of memories of times in which I rocked the boat a bit too much—a time when I was uncertain of the future,

Untitled

*The shame was born long ago,
It grew out from the roots
Of the Minnesota beet fields.
The shame, passed through umbilical blood
Embedded on the soul upon that first struggle,
birth.
The baby screamed into the night
The pain of a thousand ragged migrant workers.
She cried for salvation.
Into the void, the shame consumed her.*

*The shame, red like beet juice
That stained hands which toiled in dirt
Twisted, gnarled knuckles and callused palms
Too tired to touch.
Voices parched, lips like sun-dried tomatoes—
Speak softly at harvest.*

*Stacy Kendrick
Human Services*



Black Shoes

*Jeannie Mutum
Graphic Design*

afraid of showing weakness and wanting life's journey to yield to me...to let me be the king of the world.

As a prosecutor attacks the defendant, my inner self zeroed in on me with another barb. "Is he that much different than you?" it asked.

"No, I suppose...yes, yes he is, no...oh, I don't know," I wrestled with myself as I combed my thinning locks of hair with my fingers. I brought my hands back down over my forehead to my eyes and held them there trying to hide from myself.

"Remember the time," my inner self teased me, "when you had a disagreement with Mr. Cagney."

"Oh, yeah," I said while my nerves prickled as a cringe ran through me. "I remember it well," I confirmed trying not to grimace while the memory flooded my thoughts.

My mind opened up to a chapter of my history, when I was a senior in high school, just one week before graduation. My fellow classmates looked upon me as senior class man of the year, 1967. I had glibly charmed my way through school and with one more week to go, I was certain that I would be ambling up to the podium to pick up my diploma and tip my hat farewell to the no-name town I had lived in for seventeen years of my life. I had been accepted into the State University and I had big plans for my future.

Next, visions of me sitting in government class unraveled in my head. I could see myself comfortably sprawled out in my seat in the front row of the class. I was stuck in the front row because I was known to be somewhat of a smart aleck. At the head of the class, I was supposedly in a place where I could be watched more closely and be kept from acting out.

The teacher stood with his back to the class scrawling notes on the board as he harangued on the pitfalls of the Johnson administration. I ignored Mr. Dughman's mundane lecture and engrossed myself in a book. The other guys in the class were struggling to keep awake. Some overcame the feat by playing unimaginative pranks on unsuspecting girls. The girls giggled back at them accepting the pranks as flirtatious behavior. A few of the low life's of the class engaged in more rambunctious deeds, like throwing chalk laden erasers at each other or plugging spit wads onto George's and Abe's pictures on the wall.

Mr. Dughman carried on, ignoring the rowdiness of the

class. I suspect he let things go, so as not to upset the rocky balance between the sanity and madness of the 1967 graduating class. I sat there that afternoon feeling very content reading my book and being the least of Mr. Dughman's problems, for once.

My moment of Zen was soon to be disturbed as Mr. Cagney came to the door to check out the ruckus that was permeating from our classroom out into the halls. Mr. Cagney was the high school principal. He was heavy set and waddled around with his hands firmly planted on his hips, his way of further emphasizing his power over the student body. He pretended to respect us and would greet us with formality as Miss or Mister whoever we were. He gave away his insincerity with a fleeting glance down his nose and a squint in his eyes accentuated by a wrinkled brow of disdain for us all.

I loathed him. I loathed everything about him and he knew it. His cool professional exterior served as a cover to an internal cauldron that brewed contempt for his fellow man. I did my best to avoid him. My encounters with him usually ended in a good ol' pissing contest. Of course, he would win every time. He had more ammo.

26 There he stood blocking the door with the full girth of his body further enlarged by his hands on his hips. He bowed his head and aimed his eyes at the class and swept his head back and forth, taking in every detail of what was amiss in the room. He opened his mouth and solicited us with a mocking tone, "May, I come in?"

The mere sound of his voice turned a key deep within me that opened up a door and let my hostility out. I could not control myself. I glanced up from reading my book and caught Mr. Cagney's gaze and gave him an icy stare. He locked his eyes on mine as a cobra stalking its prey. He was egging me to take him on...to go for one more chance to battle him.

At seventeen, it is easy to take the challenge without thinking of possible consequences. I did just that. Firmly, holding his gaze, I started to utter my sentence of doom. I slowly released my words, "Only...if...you...kiss...my...ass." To this day, no one believes me, when I say I truly did not mean to say "ass." The last word rolled off my tongue before my brain could route the word "foot" to it. As I spoke the word, I realized my mistake. But, it was too late.

Everything happened at once! Mr. Dughman turned his

CHORUS

*She's singing for her supper these days
But mostly for her soul
And it's not as if she really has much choice
For if that song should disappear
That would be the day she dies
But still there's times she'd trade it all
Just to hear a baby's cry*

*DeAnn Allison
Academic Transfer*

Only When She Sings

*She always overdid it
On the Johnny Walker Red
Smoked too many cigarettes
Ran away from a few good men
She could dance like a tornado
And sing as sweet as any wren
But sometimes she would wonder
'Bout a life that might have been*

*She comes from a religious home
They still worry 'bout her soul
They don't know why she won't settle down
Why she's still out on the road
But I guess she loves that highway
More than she'll love any man
And she's not exactly lonely
She's got the pickers in her band*

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CHORUS

*And she says she always knew
that she would live a life that's hard
She's drawn more to the bitter than the
sweet*

*Her songs touch you like salt
Sometimes they heal, sometimes they sting
She'll open up her heart to you
But only when she sings*

*Now every night it's another town
After awhile they're all the same
The good joints give you all your drinks for free
But then the lights come up, the song begins
And something stirs inside
And if only for the next few hours
The music gives her life*

body in reflex to my statement, scraping the chalk on the board cutting the silent pause that hovered over the room. The other students gasped in unison, as they looked my way with shock and concern. Mr. Cagney raised his head up keeping his eyes lowered to maintain his gaze at me, he punctuated my name very carefully, "Mister Meir." "I will see you in my office after class," he announced vehemently. Then, he pivoted his fat body around in one amazing, graceful, and sweeping move and started to exit out the door.

I sensed his delight in having another row with me one last time before I graduated. I could not let it go. In one split second of impulsivity, I took action. I reached across and grabbed a loaded chalk eraser from the kid sitting across from me. Caught up in my fury, I hurled it at him. The moments to follow lengthened into forever, as I watched the eraser somersault with precise aim at the back of his head. With every turn of the eraser, I sucked wind, as I came to realize what I had done.

The classroom was gripped in silence as the wide-eyed students followed the eraser to its mark. There came a whacking sound signaling a direct hit on the back of Mr. Cagney's head. A cloud of white chalk exploded out into the air as if to foreshadow what was to come next.

Mr. Cagney halted in his steps and swung his body around so quickly that I was sure he had caused the room to shake. He stood for a moment facing the class as he reached up and brushed the chalk dust off his classic navy blue suit. His face was red and puffy with humiliation and his body quaked with anger making him look like a quivering bowl of blue and red Jell-O.

His appearance was funny to everyone, but me. The class roared with laughter as I silently sat anticipating his retaliation. He lumbered toward me, once again with his gaze firmly locked on me. There was no reason to ask, "Who done it," It was obvious that I was the guilty one. With his lip curled and his eyes squinted he bellowed, "Mister Meir, pack you're things...you're out of here, now." The laughter stopped as though the needle on the record player had been lifted off the turntable.

The meaning of the sentence delivered by Mr. Cagney was clear. I was expelled from school. As though they were choreographed, the class moved their heads together and looked back to me for the next move.

27

My innards were reeling with remorse over my actions, as I outwardly maintained a nonchalant composure. I stacked my notebook and books. I tucked them under my arm and ambled to the door. Upon reaching the door, I turned to my classmates and smiled and saluted them good-bye. I did not look back at Mr. Cagney. I let him go.

I was ruined by my own impulsive actions. I had gotten myself expelled from school, one week before I was to graduate and I pitched my college opportunity into the wind. My pride kept me from going back to my high school the following year to pay penitence for my actions so I could collect my diploma. Then the government sent me a calling card to join the army. After my stint in the army, I got my GED and went on to trade school, laying aside my dream of going to college.

The memory ebbed out of my mind, leaving me pining for an opportunity to change the past. I pulled myself to the edge of the chair to shake off the despair that was starting to stifle me. I yelled inside my head to my inner self and asked, "What does this have to do with Rickie?"

"Don't you get it, man?" my inner self taunted me. "It is your burning desire, your dream, your need to go to college. Not Rickie's," it lectured to me.

"So, what?" I retorted as I pounded my head with frustration.

Exasperated, my inner self exploded, "Your son's problems are your problems. You cannot make him live the life that you wanted. Make changes for yourself, be the example, and perhaps your son will follow."

"Do what?" I asked myself.

With my next breath I answered excitedly, "Go to college." "Yeah," I confirmed. "I can do it. It won't be easy, but I can do it," I encouraged myself. With a new understanding and a renewed belief in myself, I anxiously awaited for my son to come home, not to admonish him but to try out some reverse psychology.

Rickie finally came home and entered the house with trepidation. He cautiously entered the family room where I was sitting watching TV. He quietly passed by me keeping alert to my every move. He sat down at the computer and fired it up to surf the Net.

I gauged my moves carefully, so as not to create another 'no win' situation with my son. "Rickie," I casually announced his name to open the channels of communication.

"Yeah, Dad," he responded with a quizzical melody to

Overdose

*"Don't do it!
Please don't do it,"
Cried the crow above
To the rabbit
Swiftly racing
To certain death
Among crowded freeways
Fear shouting from its eyes.
And so it shall be written.
History in the making;
Living things dying.*

*Joëlie L. Kuntz
Human Services*



*Candice M. Murphy
Academic Transfer*

the words.

"I need your help finding out some information on colleges," I answered back and rose out of my chair to go to him.

"Dad, you're not going to start on that again," he grumbled and gave a heavy sigh suggesting that I should not broach the topic with him.

I replied calmly, "Don't worry, this is not for you, it is for me."

"Sure," he said doubtfully.

"No son, it is for me. I have decided to get my college degree after all these years," I said unquestionably.

Rickie looked at me with uncertainty. I knew his brain synapses were firing fast and furiously trying to determine if this was some sort of parental strategy to get him fired up for college. "Dad, is this for real or some kind of trick you're playing on me?" he asked.

"Son," I said reassuringly, "I have always wanted to go to college and if I am ever going to do it, I just need to go for it." I was tempted to throw in some of the usual clichés parents use to teach their kids, but I decided against. I knew Rickie would consider it as another conspiracy to get him on the fast track to college.

Rickie pecked away at the computer keyboard. Without looking away from the monitor, he continued his inquiry, "So, you are really going to do this, Dad?"

Once again, I confirmed my plan. I gave an emphatic reply, "You betcha!"

My son looked away from the computer and up into my eyes and delivered his approval by saying, "Cool!"

I looked down at him and smiled and nodded, smiled and nodded.

The last words came to me from my inner self who said, "Well done, I couldn't have done it better myself."

*Ginger Roethemeyer
Computer Programming*

moonwalk, but with his own flavor.

Exhausted and hungry we all decided to go to Hot-n-Now, a local restaurant. We got done eating and everybody went his own way. Everybody but Bishop and me went home. We walked to my house and my mom unexpectedly told me that I had to go to her friend's house so we all could all have dinner. I asked Bishop if he wanted to come but for some reason that I didn't know of he said no. "No man, I got to take care of some business," he said. The way he said it left me thinking and wondering where he was going. His eyes were covered by his eyelids like he was ashamed of something, and his voice was heavy and weary. I remember him wearing his football outfit, all dirty, smeared with mud and dirt, and a little hole in the back of his shirt. We did out little handshake and I watched him slowly staggering away from me, knowing he didn't want to leave. But for some reason, some force was almost making or forcing him to. He slowly disappeared into his car and down the hill.

46

"Boom, boom, boom." My mother pounded on my door at 7:30 in the morning. She was practically beating down my door, actin' like the damned police. I opened the door, and to my amazement she was full of tears. She opened her mouth and three words came out, three words that I'll never forget. "Bishop was shot," she sadly says. At first I didn't think anything of it. I mean I've had plenty of friends get shot before. But they all lived. Was this why her tears didn't stop flowing? "Is he OK? What hospital is he in?" I asked.

"He's not coming back Zach," answered my mom.

"Is he...?" I asked, stuttering.

"Yes Zach, he's dead."

At that point it seemed like nothing existed. My world came to an immediate stop. Like something just took out my heart and started pounding on it.

"What happened?" I asked.

"He got pulled out of his car, and got shot seven times in his back," answered my mom.

Pulled out of his car and shot seven times to his death.

Tumbleweed

*You blew across the desert of my dry and thirsty soul
Just a drifting tumbleweed with no particular place to go*

*And I fully expected you to just keep rolling by
But by some kind of miracle, we heard each other's cry*

We had some pain in common, I was dry and you were alone

*I was empty and needing love, you were needing a home
And without either one of us saying much about it you
kept on staying*

This field of stone, became a home for a tired tumbleweed

Chorus:

Oh and every day you put your roots down deeper in my soul

And I think this land is slowly turning green

And a little seed of friendship has grown into a tree of love

Imagine that from just an empty place

And the love of a tumbleweed

They say that once your life is gone, well it's gone for good

But I keep remembering Pinocchio, wasn't he once only a stick of wood

And it's amazing how a little bit of true love can bring

It can even turn a desert, a dry and thirsty desert

It can even turn a desert into eternal spring

*DeAnn Allison
Academic Transfer*

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The Pinocchio Diaries

I gazed at her intently; all my senses concentrated on her every nuance. Sunlight filtered through a nearby window, casting a glow upon her that seemed to radiate from some internal fire deep within. Skin so fine and soft that I ached to feel its velvety softness against my own.

Green eyes, illuminated from an inner beauty, looked out on the world, surveying all before her like some storybook queen. Her hair, a honey-brown swirl, fell down about her neck and shoulders, shining, lovely, and smelling of lavender. The face framed in by this tangle of softness was one of great beauty, fine, elegant, and smooth, devoid of worry, blemish, or age.

As she breathed in the fresh spring air, her breasts rose and fell in endless rhythm. Round and full, they beckoned me with their promise, a delight to behold, surely an exquisite pleasure to touch, to caress, to gaze upon. I longed to lay my head there, to listen to the drumming of that tender heart.

She wore a crimson dress, tight around the bodice, and falling gently to her knees, highlighting the flat of her stomach, the rise of her chest, and the gentle curve of her thigh. Her figure, graceful, balanced, and wrapped in a splendor that was hers alone, was all that a man could desire. As I stared, transfixed like some voyeur hiding in a darkened corner, she lifted her head from the oaken desk before her throne, and looked across the room—looked directly at me! My pulse quickened, my heart pounded, and I found myself drowning in the still, deep pools of her eyes. Caught in some magical, hypnotic trance, I found myself powerless to look away. Blood rushed to my head as my heart pounded ever faster.

There was a ringing in my ears...an insistent, repetitive ringing that would not go away. Wait a minute! That ringing wasn't just in my ears! It was the recess bell! It was time for recess!

I had to watch my back, not trust anybody but myself and learn to survive.

Now Bishop and me were in this together. Actually he was the one who brought me into this world on the streets, and oddly enough he would be the one who would be the reason I got out. I remember we were in my house one night watching a movie and all of the sudden “pop, pop, pop, pop” and then silence. We sat there for while then went outside. We walked down to where the noise came from and noticed that it was a body. He had been shot clean through his mouth and out the top of his head. The mere sight didn't faze me at all. I stood there and tried to ponder why, and how. Bishop bumped me on my shoulder trying to get me out of this weird daze that I suddenly slipped into. Then he did something that I'll never forget. He picked up a stick and started to twirl the brains around like it was soup. We walked away, and all the sudden police were everywhere. They asked us if we knew where it all happened so we pointed it out. We walked back to my room and called it a night.

That night would start everything. The next day Bioshop asked me if I was “strapped.” I didn't know what he was talking about at first. Then he reached into his pants and pulled out a shiny 45mm. “I said are you strapped?” said Bishop.

“Well...no,” I replied.

“We got to get you a piece,” said Bishop.

So we rolled to this house near mine, and Bishop told me to wait in the car. About 15 minutes later he came out and threw me a new 9mm on my lap. “Let's roll,” Bishop said.

“I got Lomac,” I called

“I'll take Clifton,” replied Bishop.

After all the names were called the game would begin. It was an hour of hard nose hitting and graceful moves to avoid tackles. On the final play Bishop would go deep and catch the ball for a touchdown. I helped him up and he started to do his little touchdown dance, kind of like the

I also wore my \$2.00 Stanford jersey that I bought from the good will. Last but not least I added my cleats. Well now that I had on the right clothes I was ready to go.

Among all the people was Bishop. He was my best friend; all things revolved around us when we were together. We ate together, chilled and went to parties together. We were always there for each other. Although he was about 3 years older than me at the time, age didn't separate us at all. My parents had been divorced since I was 5 years old, and ever since I met Bishop he had been like a father figure to me. His life was filled with misfortunes and bad luck. For example, his father died when he was 13; he was living with his uncle who was an alcoholic. Bishop also had three kids, all with different mothers. So he had been through a lot, making him seem really mature and full of knowledge.

In the game that we played knowledge was a very important part of surviving. We had to know how to act and talk and respond to certain situations without buckling or becoming weak. The unfortunate game that I'm talking about is the game on the streets; drugs, gangs, violence and other bad activities were involved. Violence was a big part of my life; it seemed that everywhere we went someone would have a beef with us. One time a group of guys started a beef, so we bum rushed them and started a big fight. Even though we won the fight, we had not been left unmarked. Bishop had busted open his right knuckles and I now have a scar on my thigh that won't ever go away. Other ways we solved problems were by drivebys. Even though we only did like four of them, it still was a decision that could have changed our lives. What if we had killed someone? Every time we did a driveby, I had the worst feeling in my gut because part of me knew it was wrong, but the other part of me was telling me to do it. Maybe it was my conscience getting the best of me.

The area that I grew up in was called HTC. Or what we all called Hill Top Crip. The reason for this was it was on a big hill, and the name just kind of stayed. It was on 40th Ave. in Omaha, not really the best place to be raised. If you were a young teen, gangs would try to snatch you up out of your own diapers. It seemed who ever got to you first was going to have you. For me it happened to be HTC. At first I didn't know really what I was getting into.

The entire third grade class rose from their desks as one, and in mass, headed for the classroom door. I too made to rise in a dizzy, mad rush; the thought of being first to the swing set urging me onward. However, as I made to rise, I was stopped dead in mid motion. I was forced back into my chair by a sharp stab of pain. It was impossible to stand. Something had met resistance as I tried to stand. Something down there, below my belt!

I looked down to my lap in sudden shock! Something pushed hard against my faded blue jeans, pushing against the rough cloth insistently. What was happening to me? I didn't have a clue, but I sure had something else!

Across the room, Mrs. Josephine rose from her desk, and stretched like a queen in her court. A soft smile came to her lips, as she began a gentle glide in my direction. My mind went into a wild spin. My thoughts raced and whirled in a tangled storm. She could only be coming to my desk, as I was the only child left in the classroom!

What would I say? What could I do? How could I hide this...this thing? I knew she would be wondering why I hadn't left for recess with the rest of the class. We weren't allowed to stay unattended in the building during recess, and who would want to anyway? But this thing just wouldn't go away!

I grabbed the spelling tablet from atop my desk and held it over my lap. This occasion would require some great whopping lie, something truly inventive and inspired. I had already fabricated a brilliant one earlier that morning, explaining how a gang of toughs, probably some angry, rebellious college gang, had chased me down the sidewalk and stolen my homework at knifepoint. Just yesterday, I had explained to her about the illness that my entire family had fallen victim to, preventing us all from eating broccoli. A tough act to follow, but I was sure I could rise to the occasion.

As she drew closer, I came to a sudden realization; it came to me in a flash! Just the night before, my sister and I had watched, Walt Disney's movie, Pinocchio. I remembered how, when Pinocchio told a lie, his nose had grown longer, and longer. My God, it had even sprouted leaves at one point, and a bird's nest!

I suddenly realized that I had brought all this on



myself, with my wild and wooly whoppers! I had lied to her, and to my mother, my sister too, over and over again, and now I was paying the price! I was marked forever, doomed in the most humiliating way possible. But why dear Lord, why down there? Right now, it seemed Pinocchio had actually been lucky. It was one thing to have your nose sticking out for the entire world to see, but this, this was too much to bear!

Now the beautiful Mrs. Josephine would surely know me for the horrible little liar I was! She would never agree to leave her husband and marry me when I grew up. The tears began to well up from deep within, as my love approached my desk. She came to a halt, there before me, and in a kind tone, she said, "Garey, is something the matter? Why aren't you outside with everybody else?"

I didn't know what to say. My head, amongst other things, was throbbing. I searched my entire repertoire of tall tales for a good lie, but was terrified to tell one—even if I somehow came up with a winner. I remember hearing this sound, a low-pitched, droning sort of sound that I shortly came to realize, was coming from me. The tears streamed from my eyes like a tumbling waterfall, and I began to wail in earnest.

There was no holding back. I must tell the truth now, before it was too late. I was wildly imagining what might happen if it grew any longer—what would my mother say? Suddenly it all burst out from me. I babbled and blubbered the whole miserable truth to this grade school angel for whom I felt such undying love. I confessed it all. The lies about my missing homework, how in reality I only disliked broccoli and wouldn't really have to go to the hospital if I ate it, and how I was madly in love with her. Then I explained about how I was paying for stretching the truth once too often, and how at least some parts of me, seemed to be turning to wood. As the tears fell, I looked down towards my waist and lifted the spelling tablet to reveal the horrid truth of my disfigurement.

I looked back up and met her gaze. The look of concern on her face shifted to one of relief, and then, perhaps, mild amusement. A soft, knowing smile came to her lips, and it was as if the sun rose into the sky. "Don't worry Garey, you've told the truth now. Everything will be all right. I'm not supposed to let you stay here alone, but just this once I'll allow it. Just remember to tell the truth from

Hut One, Hut Two

"Set hut one, hut two," yelled the quarterback as he got the snap from the center. The receivers took off like bats out of hell, and the one receiver that all the defensive backs had their eyes on was Bishop. He sprinted down towards the goal, the ball sailing through the air waiting to be grasped tightly by a receiver. All of a sudden Bishop leaped off of his feet and flew through the air. But at that moment it was too late.

"Touchdown" called the other team.

It was too late; we had lost the game. But in all the commotion Bishop laid there on the grass with a huge smile stretched from ear to ear staring up at me. I thought to myself, "There he is, laying there like he owns the very world that he lays on." A little over six feet across the ground he stretched himself. His dark skin, like a deep shadow in an alley, almost appeared to be a ghost. He was wearing a hood of some sort, maybe for protection or comfort. His deep, dark brown eyes would bring fear and terror to anybody who didn't know him. His eyes were deeply placed in their sockets. One of his eyes had a mark on it. It could've been a scar from a battle or maybe from an innocent cut. It covered half of one eye, leaving the eye halfway open, giving him a lost but at the same time intimidating look. All the kids would say that if his bad eye ever looked at you eye to eye, you too would become a ghost. His hands were filled with blisters and his trigger finger was always itching with excitement. His shoulders like those of a bull. But then the smile got to me; it could break my frown. I laid out my hand to him, and he held on tightly as I helped him up off of the ground. Sadly this would be the last time that I would ever help him up.

It was the summer of 1997, and the new crisp air was sneaking in all around us. I slightly opened my eyes and at that very moment I say the rays of the new sun piercing my eyelids, almost blinding me. I climbed down from my bunk bed and only had one thought on my mind...football. Yes it was Saturday morning, the morning where all the neighborhood kids got together and played some good ol' football.

I ran to my closet and put on my usual outfit. It consisted of my blue basketball shorts to add to my mobility.





*Revealing all the secrets,
That somehow in me lie,
She frees my heart and spirit,
And makes my soul to fly.*

*Imprisoned by the chains of choice,
Once caged, I now am free.
And today, I can rejoice
In love, in you, and me.*

Warren G. Woledge

now on.”

“Alright”, I said. “You won’t tell anyone will you?”

“No, Garey, it’ll be our little secret. Remember, Pinocchio became a real boy and lived happily ever after. You’ll be just fine.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Josephine,” I sputtered, and she turned and floated across the room to the door. There she stopped and turned to face me once more, and spoke.

“Oh, And Garey,” she said warmly, “I like you too.” Then she left the room.

My heart practically burst from my chest. She still liked me! Maybe there was still a chance! Now the smile was on my face. What a woman, I thought! I realized that something felt different. That which had vexed me so, a few moments before, had at last subsided. I looked down to find that all was, once again, right with my world. I wondered if there might still be an empty swing, and ran for the door.

My passage to manhood had begun, though I didn’t know it at the time. I’ve never forgotten Mrs. Josephine, or how lovely and kind she was. Through the years, I’ve come to look forward to that uncomfortable feeling I experienced that day; in fact, I downright celebrate it now. I must admit though, to this very day, I still feel very uncomfortable about telling a lie!

As for my eternal love for the beguiling Mrs. Josephine, that summer I met Cindy and decided to leave the older women to the third graders!

*Garey L Hatten
Microcomputer Technology*



Formal Fun

*Colleen Lovett
Academic Transfer*

*Resigned to circumstances,
I while away the days,
Pondering my chances,
Of escaping this island maze.*

*A bottle, and a message,
I carry to the shore,
And there beside the wreckage,
Of the bark that there me bore.*

*I cast that crystal schooner,
Laden with my cares,
Into that turbid water,
Christened with my prayers,*

*I watch the waves in motion,
The ballet of the sea,
That endless dancing ocean,
Stirs something deep in me.*

*It holds me in its cradle,
Like my mother did long ago,
With voice like that of an angel,
It soothes my weary soul.*

*At home, next to her heart,
And all that it contains,
A vastness that I cannot chart,
Nor ever will explain.*

*Overwhelming to me now,
And having no disguise,
She fulfills her sacred vow,
In the opening of my eyes.*

Chains of Choice

Stranded on this empty shore,
Washed up by the sea,
Loneliness, that ancient whore
Slowly entices me.

This isle is my prison cell,
Loneliness is my mate.
Only time and tide will tell,
Of what shall be my fate.

Pampered by an affluent life
Such was the lot of me.
Softened by the harp and fife,
Oh, give my pleasures back to me.

Silence now, the loudest noise,
Its echoes now at hand,
Such a foreign thing annoys
The peace my soul demands.

The peace that was my closest friend,
And the heaven that seemed so near,
The measure of it that had no end,
Is only a memory here.

In this far and distant land,
That peace, in human kind,
Is washed like footprints in the sand,
I look, but cannot find.

I have no need of keeping track,
Of time that has no end,
And the pleasures found in looking back,
Fail my heart to mend.

Unsaid

I know how you taste.
I know how you smell.
I know a hundred things about you
That I'd never tell.

I know when I touch you...
here.

It makes you twitch like...
that.

I know he's elsewhere,
being all he can be.

I know I'd give anything
to keep you here
with me.

I know I shouldn't think too much about this
just go with the flow.

I know you mean so much to me
Just how much
I shouldn't show.

I Know.

Ronald Reece
Academic Transfer

The Photograph

*She knew the camera would be cruel.
With its single blinking eye it saw,
The girl whose skinny, gangly form
was being photographed once more.*

*Her mother said, "Don't fidget child.
Stand still girl, and look this way.
Keep those hands down by your side,
Turn your face that way."*

*Oh how she hated photographs
they made her feel so plain
The ugly one, the skinny child
was being photographed again.*

*For years the picture lay hidden
in the bottom of a dresser drawer
The woman who now retrieved it
Wasn't ugly anymore.*

*Merrion Brooks.
Academic Transfer*



Mom's Vase

*Julia A. Russ
Continuing Education*