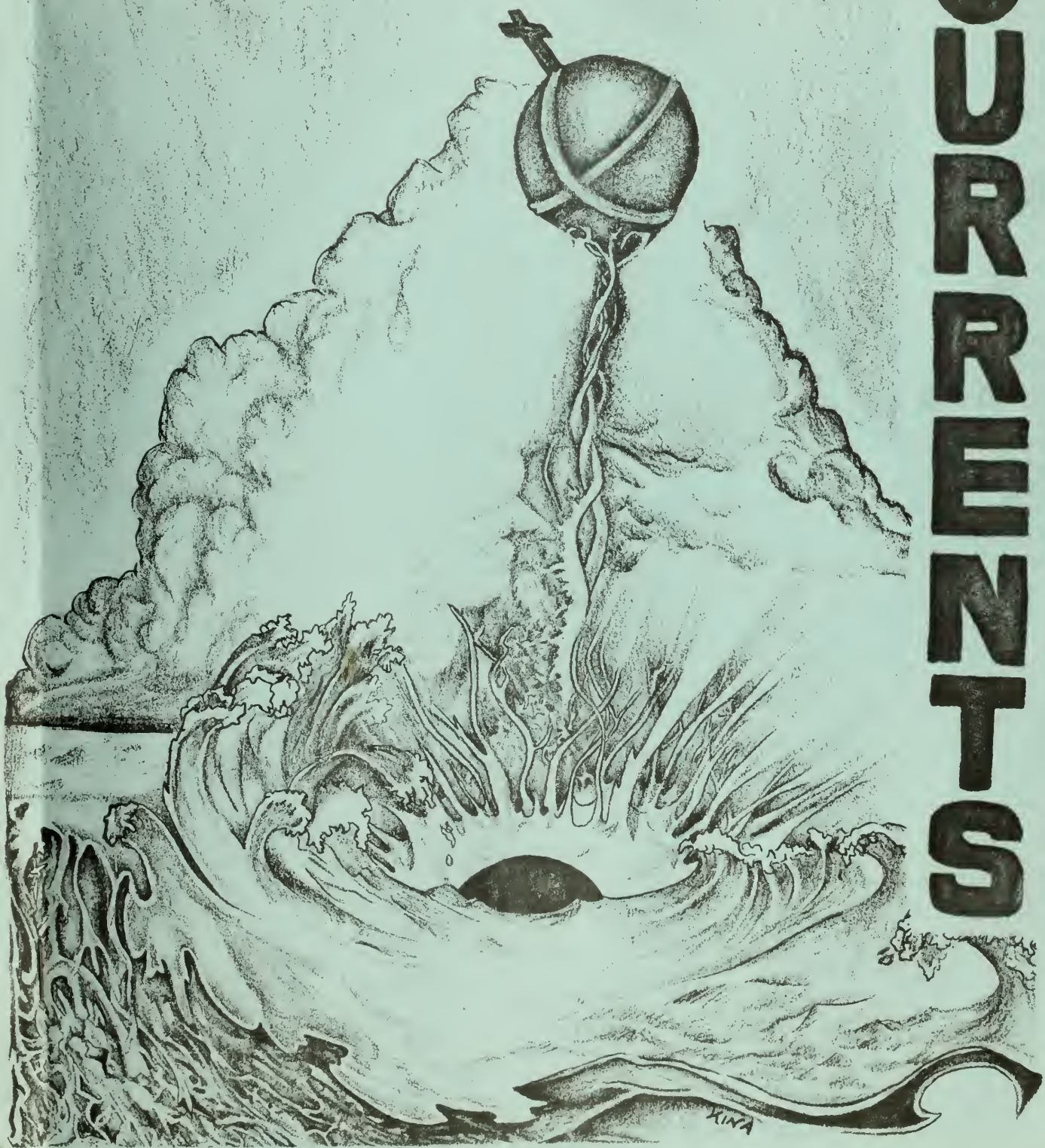


UNDER CURRENTS



UNDERCURRENTS

Editorial and Production Staff

Scott King . co-editors . Becky Thornton


Pat Emerson
Annamarie Coelho
Marni Russell
Pat Main

Kip Patterson
Tim Patterson
Renee Evans
Teresa Chavez

Richard Hackett . advisors . Robert Russell

Liberty Union High School
Brentwood, California

Spring, 1982



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Seven years ago - after six years of publication - Liberty's first literary magazine, The Crystal Wall, faded away, but we continued to hope that a time would come when our students would need a place to publish their creative efforts. That time has come and although the name has been changed to Undercurrents, we feel this first issue will express the intent of the original: to provide a vehicle for young writers to express freely their creative urges and to acknowledge the literary talents of our students. We thank the contributors and staff for making this possible.

We would also like to thank Roy Krumland, Frank Payne, and Rita Pirtle for their suggestions, help and use of their department's typewriters. Thanks are also due Dennis Buckley and Evie McCord for their invaluable help with the publication of our magazine.

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Pass that jerk-off Sunday road obstacle.

Feel diesel mack damage

From too much excitement.

Your lead feet pressure speed.

Life is felt in full power

When the road moves 224 miles per hour.

Pat Emerson

THOUGHTS

Caught in the silken web of time's byway,
our thoughts and actions ride the present, with
liquid fluidity over the focus of consciousness,
only to fall like a fountain,
into a forgotten pool called memories,
only to rise, gently prodded by our imaginations
into the form of fantasy and dreams,
logic's brother, intuition's mother,
creative and vital, free and fertile..

Alice Adams

WHERE?

I lay here,
In this dark box,
Not a ray of the life-giving sun
Is able to cast its warm glow upon me.
Not a breath of delicious,
Cool air can wander into this dense place,
This place where my expended form will stay.

What will happen now?
I try to will my crossed hands to part,
But find them defying my mind's message.
My conscious mind has numbed,
It's old parts failing to commands my body.
But still, I am thinking these things.

Will I lie here forever?
Or will I travel to the traditional paradise,
Or go to the contrasting place of eternal damnation?

My skin feels no measure of temperature,
Although in my unconscious mind,
I am sure I can sense the damp,
Subterranean coolness.
Ahh....I fondly recall a childhood memory,
A family, led by a cheerful guide,
Raising mystified questions
About the clammy, slick caves,
Hiding in that historical, unused mind shaft.

I feel not sadness,
But placid nothingness,
Only the curious anticipation of adventures
to come,
If any,

I lay waiting.
Hoping.

Kina Gray

To My Best Friend,

You are the best friend a person could wish for. It isn't easy being a best friend I know, and that is because it's a complicated thing. The relationship of two best friends is something between love and friendship. Best friends share something special. Understanding each other, helping each other, trusting each other, depending on each other: all these characteristics are found in best friends.

This special relationship is hard to define. It is many things. It has no definition in the dictionary. A best friend is one with whom one will go jogging in the rain; a best friend is one with whom one can share dreams, a best friend is one with who one can do homework: a best friend is one with whom one wants to share every imaginable emotion-- from laughter to fear, to tears. A best friend is like the sun and the moon; they take turns shining.

This relationship is something all on its own--in the best friend category. It's not as devoted as love, yet not as casual as friendship. Love is a serious devotion to one another, a feeling of never wanting to be separated. A friendship is a casual acquaintance. A best friend is a person one likes to be with and yet also shares a special understanding.

A best friend-friendship involves sharing--sharing one's ice cream, sharing one's ideas, sharing one's troubles. It is also trust. The tide is to tidepool life as a best friend is to a best friend; tidepool life depends on the tide to come in every day and refresh it. Even if the trust no one else, best friends trust one another. Just as a rooster trusts that the sun will rise, one trusts that her best friend will always be there. Best friends depend on each other. It feels good to be able to lean on and depend on somebody, and best friends are always reliable. It is also good to know someone depends on you. Dog has long been considered man's best friend. The reason I think is that dogs trust and depend on men.

Again I say the relationship between best friends is special. It is a rewarding relationship and should be truly cherished. I wish everyone could have a best friend as understanding, as trusting, as special as you are. Thank you.

Julie Gresho

HE

Who is he?
Is he your friend?
 He's not mine.
Is he your father?
 He's not mine.
Is he your brother?
 He's not mine.
Is he your lover?
 He's not mine.
Who's is he?
 If he's not mine,
 He must be yours.
 He must be somebody's.
 He's not somebody's?
In that case,
 he must be a nobody!

Becky Thornton

Hundred year old sidewalk hangs
Under dilated lion eyes, untouched
You'll never know what it is
Ahead
You do know
What you don't know
You guess
Will be the same
While finger lit matches are written walking
Over your freshly grated driveway, moist
Brainy trees along the borders
High light beams frighten stupid rabbits
While the door slam wind hollers cold glass
And now you know

Pat Emerson

Insides

He was a loner. He allowed no one inside; he allowed no one to sense his needs, to feel the stirring emotions, the wonderful humanness behind those indifferent eyes, for he knew how desperately vulnerable he was. But he also knew that he would one day find someone to whom he could unguardingly bear his delicate soul, someone he could bathe in long-restrained warmth.

Then he met a girl he thought he loved and decided he would finally open himself. He wrote her love poems. He told her everything; till his soul was turned inside out... all to satisfy her. And he knew she would do the same because they loved each other... he knew... But...

She didn't. He exposed to her his soul and when he was done she returned nothing. And he wanted so much to have her he would not see now he betrayed himself with every word, with every outpouring of caring. But the realization finally came; and with it the agony. He screamed to himself, "Fool! Never again!... How could you let her... how could you... you poor fool, you thought that she... you thought..."

He never talked with her again. He never talked with any "her" again. He had only himself... but somehow, despite the pain, he desperately wanted another "her".

Scott D. King

HAPPINESS ON TWO LEGS

I feel hard, ya know
so god dam tough
just jam my hands
deep into my Levi's
and walk away alone
alone from the pack of fools
A bottle of beer,
from behind the seat of
a car that I
wish was a motorcycle,
punctuates my
leather-jacket attitude

That's when she does it
She takes my hands
out of my pockets
and puts them to
her lips
she makes me feel...
like a kid again
And I thank her
for getting me to smile
for getting me to love...her

Scott King

What can I see that's different about love today?
What new discovery can I make about friendship?
What the hell do you mean just feel it?
It can't really be that simple.
No, if I just think for awhile I know I'll
invent something.
My own truth that will satisfy myself and maybe
others too.
You can't find love and truth unless you dissect
them...
You think I spend too much time thinking and not
enough experiencing?
Who the hell are you anyway?
Just go back to your friends and leave me...
alone.

James Tysinger

ARROGANT CAT

A short, fat,
Arrogant cat
Was limping down the lane.

I saw
His paw
Was bleeding
And went to help the lame.

He looked quite proud and sophisticated,
So I told him his paw should be medicated.
But even look at me, did he?

No!
That short, fat,
Arrogant cat,
Went on limping down the lane!

Julie Gresho

CRY OF AN ABUSED CHILD

INTO MY LIFE YOU CAME BRINGING PEACE
TO MY HEART, FIRE TO MY BODY,
LOVE TO MY SOUL.

IN YOUR EYES I SEE MYSELF FEELING,
REACHING, LOOKING FOR PERFECT
HARMONY,
BUT THEN I'M CUT OFF WITH A SHARP
BLOW TO MY MIND.

STEPHANIE BAER

The Elephant Woman.

Life itself moves about in strange patterns. You are born, you grow through adolescence, you become an adult, you raise a family, you fight the system, you retire, and finally live off your small pension and die. Sounds thrilling, right? Unfortunately, this was not to be the case of a young woman by the name of Eunice Finster. Her fate came at an early age in her life, when she was killed after being violently sucked-up by a Circus elephant's trunk, after being taken for a large, Goober peanut. Well, this elephant had a baby—a very unique baby. This event was to go down in history as the Elephant Woman. People from every nation came to get a peek at this amazing spectacle. The Elephant Woman had to face many impediments in her lifetime, like finding clothes that fit, walking into restarants without caving in the doorway, et cetera. The light seemed dim at the end of the tunnel for this gray, wrinkled, beast who looked like Orson Welles as a baby. After about a year, the Elephant Woman met up with an Elephantologist by the name of Skinny. Skinny gathered a panel of the finest Elephantologists that England had to offer—every last two of them. For years they experimented and searched to find a cure for this horrid, physiological tragedy. But to no avail, they came to a dead end. Would the Elephant Woman have to spend the rest of her life as a Nightclub comedian in the slums of London? The answer to this is simple—yes. At least that's what was concluded until an American Elephantologist introduced the "Ronco Elephant-Matic." It dices, it slices, it lifts and seperates just like a girdle. This new find was to change the world of medicine forever. The Elephant Woman could now live a normal, healthy life as an Elevator Operator in New York City. Too bad that no one decided to do a movie about this—it would have been good.

Chris Boardman

THE FOREST

Over head lies the full moon
bathing a still forest floor
in a luminous night
where silver rays
dance softly
around trees that stand
like silent sentinals through time
upon shadowed foliage.
A magic night
where children dream of fairytale~~s~~--
trolls, nymphs, and unicorns
who are mocked
by the wind's lonley moan,
heard echoing
like chants of dead spirits
that wander quiet knolls
in eternal solitude.
the brilliant starlight,
is reflected in shining eyes,
of creatures that gather
in ancient tribunal
of innate knowing,

of the hunter and the hunted
primordial stirring of the beating heart,
are felt by beast and man
in a pact of union
observed in a ritual of mortality
understood
in the endless cycle
that is softened by the rebirth of a new dawn
that is both
nostalgic and triumphant in it's ethereal
beauty.

Alice Adams

COMEDOWN

I came down...
 right through the floorboards...
And as I lay there,
among the tired,shattered nerves
I watched the demons of the light
 and the angels of the dark
 leave me;
 stranding me in the lovely solitude
of my weariness.

Scott D. King

I have something for you girl

Something you will love so much
It will change what life has given you
I cry when I think you won't get it

You just don't know what you have to do
To get it
To get it
I would love you to keep trying though

P.S. Emerson

ME

Who am I? Do you know? Am I just a bag of skin, bones, red blood cells, white blood cells, and plasma? Or am I some biological unit who wanders mindlessly? Could I be a plant with no roots? Could I be a pollutant product of man? Could I be an alien from no where? Am I a miner for a heart of gold? Am I a dictator of the underworld? Am I a tree with no leaves or am I a droplet of water in a tube of H_2O ?

NO!

I am

me. I am

a person on earth

and I do not wander

mindlessly. I am not a tree

or a plant or even a biological

unit. I am not an alien, a pollutant

product, I am me, I am skin, bones, red blood cells,

white blood cells, and plasma. But I also have

a brain and a soul. And I have something

precious to all of us. And it is feelings.

signed, ME!

Dan Mills

THE GANG

These people make me laugh,
they make me dance and sing,
they're always there to help,
with any little thing.

They cheer me up, tell me jokes,
always make me smile,
and when I feel I can't go on,,
they make my life worth-while.

If I feel I'm gonna cry,
a shoulder's always there,,
they give me good sound advice,
to show me that they care.

They have no standards,
rules or laws,
they accept me as I am,
even though I'm sometimes strange,
they frankly don't give a damn.
('cause they're strange too-I mean **STRANGE!**)

I,m never afraid to show emotion,
'cause I know they'll understand,
for if I'm in trouble, lonely, or sad,
they lend a helping hand.

They're usually like a party,
hardly ever down,
they like massively wild times,
they hate to see a frown.

They're brothers and sisters of my school,
like a school should be,
they're brother and sisters of my life,
I'm glad they're part of me.

If only more people could laugh like them,
the world would be more fun,
if only more people could be like them,
the world would be as one.

These are special people,
though they're a bunch of nutties,
I'll always be here caring for them,
'cause they're my favorite buddies.

Leslie Grivett

SCARED

Why do people listen to other people

Are they afraid not to

Why do people believe in other people

Are they afraid not to

Why do people care

Are they afraid not to

Why do people live

Are they afraid not to

Why are you reading this

Are you afraid not to

Becky Thornton

LORD OF MINDS

What is the world without a king?
One who keeps us under a maternal wing?
Creator, leader, our guiding hand.
Or must he be,
Because that is what our minds demand?

Because we need to follow signs,
That tell us how to live our lives
We follow rules without witness,
Stories without reasoning,
Pictures without perspective,
And without shame,
Hide underlying doubts,
To guarantee our lives will be rewarded,
Without punishment.

Kina Gray

The mystery has finally been solved...the Soviet espionage ring has finally been broken. The United States Federal Bureau of Investigation has become more effective than the prestigious Scotland Yard. These fine, efficient men of America have transpired into the men of the future over night. How has this amazing spectacle occurred so suddenly? These men are majoring in Pimp at the United States Police Academy. These vigilantes of clean-cut, bright-eyed character, hit the streets in search of young Girl Scouts innocently selling their cookies. Don't let yourself become fooled by these young pre-pubescent, for they are disguised incognito as Russian spies for the KGB. The apprentice pimps drive along the neighborhoods in their long, pink Cadillac squad cars and proposition these young women into selling their cookies for half-price. The strategy is to lure them into the squad cars without causing alarm among civilians. To do this successfully, one must slap the female around enough to cause severe hallucinations. After this procedure has been completed, they are taken directly to the State Penitentiary to be observed by a Freudian Analyst.

"In these times of crisis, we need positive re-enforcement in our neighborhoods. So if you are a male, aged 18-35, we need you in the United States Academy for Prospective Pimps, (we are also referred to as the U.S.P.A.F.P. in the Yellow Pages under Government.) Call toll-free 800-958-0992 for consultation. This is Captain Velvet Jones inviting you to attend our annual seminar at the Chicken Castle, 18 miles east of Encino, at the Motel Six exit. This will be offered for one day only, July 11, 1982. So don't miss out on your future in the world of the Underworld."

-----Thank You

Chris Boardman

Bedroom door
Please show me more
When I watch her
From the telescope window ten stories away
Her own heart body pounds easily in power amp rhythm.
Goose bumps
Turn to fingered goose brains
The mirror reveals certain illusions
While I watch all death lipstick
In her face and body.
Ten minute raindrops hang to her smooth hair
White knuckles to her lusty hip
Stay beside pillows packed
Underneath windows wracked
Her tongue stained me
Back to back
My springs got really wound
Without any foolish pause
I will sit on a stair case landing
And think about it for awhile.

P. S. Emerson

ENDLESS MYSTERY

The most of us laconically gaze upon simple creations
As they are,
Nonchalantly seeing only the mass that makes the form.
But some see its overwhelming interior,
Renewing their perception of the image,
Making the object personal,
Compelling soul to interact with heart in contiguity,
Casting new light upon small,
Unpondered things.

Do you see the blades of green grass
As shimmering shards of emerald,
Spewing a fiery astral brilliance?
Or the little thought of moth,
Who holds unseen beauty in its
Assumption of dull gray opaquewings,
If mystifically contemplated,
Deepens into wonder,
Deluging you in opalescent splendor.

Ocean, I mean;
Black valleys, deep caverns, slick cliffs,
Writhing serpents, cutting spray.

Sun, I mean;
Life, blazing bonfire, feared ruler,
Burning beach sand, unanswerable question.

Kina Gray

TODAY'S WORLD

What does Today's World consist of?

People full of a love for others that is stronger than the bonds between kin?

People who want to do nothing but bring peace to themselves and the people around them?

People looking for a way of life where money is worthless and giving of one's self is priceless?

Or does Today's World more realistically consist of

Vengeful people constantly trying to prove each other wrong?

People whose whole goal in life is to rule the world rather than contribute to it?

People always searching for the "pot of gold at the end of the rainbow"?

How would the people of Today's World feel if they found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow actually contained the love we should be capable of feeling for one another?

Becky Thornton

OUR DEFIANCE

We know they will not like,
The things we do,
We are forthright,
And can't ignore the truth.

We resent conventionalism,
And their protocols of life.
We risk emoting our true self,
and not accomodating conformity.

We are irreverent to their coinciding,
Tandem existence,
And almost disigent in our quest
To defy their acceptance of life.
Do they simply assume that they
Must go along with the (how I despise thés word) majority's
Deluge of blended personalities?
What individual summissiveness!

Kina Gray

Look into yesterday's sky clouds
Above December's lights and dísistant horns.
Flower mounds got trampled under barkling hound feet.
Frost strips do hand perpendicular to rain gutter roads
While breath and hot water put you to sleep.

P. S. Emerson

LAST WORDS OF A RARE NON-CONFORMIST

Why doesn't anyone understand?
Are they all devoid of thought and emotion?
I reach out to friends, relatives, and peers,
But nobody knows the feeling
That I have deep inside myself,
Brought by sad and meaningful things.
Plays, special songs, poems, artwork,
Things created by those few people like myself,
Who search for a way to bring out
A hint of deepness in others,
That seem so very shallow.
There must be some that feel like I do,
I've seen a few,
Some like me,
Some like you?

Our overwhelming obsession with trying
To accept those who mock love,
Or are ignorant to sensitivity,
Who don't try to understand
Why my drawings of screaming women,
Their heads exploding, etc.
Were drawn, and why.

To me they signify, well, maybe myself,
Exploding with puzzlement,
Maybe even anger,
At those who go about the day,
Minute by minute,
Performing their monotonous duties of life
Without reason,
Never wondering why.

Why?
Who says?
No one cares.

I give my last thanks to Van Gogh,
Picasso, Bach, Homer, Renoir, A.R.,
especially Shakespeare,
And others,
Who free my frightened mind
Of the repulsive thought
That only I have these feelings,
Only I see the indifference in the "malady"
Of a life I see in the clones
Around me every day.
They are born,
Live their conformed lives
The conventional "right" way,
Then die, accomplishing nothing
But monotonous, trivial duties,
That mean nothing to them in the end.

Reach out to me if you feel as I,
You know who you are.
You are the ones (or just one?)
Really trying to get my point,
Who do get my point.

Please, I need you,
To share my irrational philosophies,
And give me yours.

Listen! Please!
I am revealing the truth about this
Sea of magnetized, cloned brains.
You shall stand by me through eternity,
My friend.
But I must go now,
Although I am young,
I am tired.
Psychologically worn out
From my small, untiring molecule of a life.
This is my final, poor attempt
To reach inside people's hearts,
And find their underlying feelings
That they have hidden for so long,
They have forgotten that these feelings
Ever existed.

Goodbye.
I would use the expression "cruel world",
But the world is too simple to be cruel.
I am cruel to myself.

Yes! that's it!
I am wrong.
There must not be feelings like mine!
That's it!
Maybe?
Well, it makes no difference anyway,
I still have these emotions.

I'll have these emotions forever,
Whatever forever means.
So, I still must go,
To rid myself of myself,
Forever.
What is forever?
I will find out soon,
When I start my odessey into death.
Or will death be nothing,
Just a bottomless pit of emptiness,
Like everyone's feelings?
Everyone has empty feelings now.
Last Words.

Dedicated to Scott King, who inspired me to write this poem
through his play, "Zoo Story". I'll never forget Jerry,
Scott. Thanks.
Also dedicated to Pat Main, my hero, who has the courage to
break out of the shell.

SEASONS

W-hat is winter?
I-s winter for real?
N-ever to leave.
T-o always be here?
E-ternally with us.
R-eality comes with it.

S-oon the ice melts.
P-iece by piece.
R-unning down the river.
I-nto the lake.
N-ever to beckon the
G-round's icy cold.

S-kies are blue
U-ltimately to you the
M-oderate burning heat burns with slow
M-otivation through the fields
E-ntering the sea
R-eturning never to us.

F-inally the heat
A-s always
L-eaves us and
L-ife does as well.

Dan Mills

A RAINY FANTASY

A warm, summer shower.
There is no single word to describe
The sensation these raindrops bring.
They serve but one purpose: an
Exhilarating break from the summer heat.

There are many ways to experience
The joy of a summer shower.

A traditional
Is to walk barefooted hand-in-hand with
A loved one- no umbrella of course.

One of the more imaginary is to ride a
Horse bareback with a white, flowing gown.

Some people go jogging amidst these luxurious
Drops; some merely sit on the porch and
Daydream into a puddle; some wear bathingsuits and
Splash through the puddles catching drops in their mouths;
Some catch the water in buckets to quench thirsty plants.
No matter how it is experienced,
A warm summer rain is a welcome lift for all.
The rain lightens, mists, and stops.
The heat pours on again and people resume
Their summertime activities, refreshed from their rainy fantasy.

One word of advice: do not sit inside
And read or knit during this breath of fresh air.
Get outside and live your rainy
Fantasies to their fullest.

Julie Gresho

WEATHER

W-ind is a mystery
I-ntervening with nature
N-ever leaving, yet.
Dying is an absolute end to life

H-eat is a scorching energy
E-ternally with us
A-lways bringing life; and also
T-erminating with life's end of existance.

S-now is so cold.
N-othing natural is colder
O-bviously other animals can survive in cold
W-hy can't we just survive?

S-leet is frozen rain.
L-eaving its grey, gloomy clouds,
E-arth to be its
E-volving target
T-o end, but also to fall once more

Dan Mills

FIRE IS THE ANSWER

Can't you see, sir?

Fire is the answer.
Out of fire a man is born.
And he walks behind, the path is born.

It burns out the way, of destruction
and decay.

And people will follow because they
think they will see and
All the time--ha,
they are fallowing me...

You come from fire,
And to fire you return.

You came from fire,
The only answer is to burn.

When you burn, you come to life like me,

You will never have any eyes
You will never be able to see.
You have to burn them out first
You have to burn to see.
There is no light.

Stupid people with stupid words,
Stupid people thinking they can be heard.

So can't you see, sir?
That fire really is
the
answer.

Stefanie Baer

GRANDMA AND GRANDPA

I used to say "grama and grampa".
The words meant going to Chicago
To visit:
A letter,
Or phone call from them.
They meant snow outside,
Which I hardly ever saw.

Now I say "grandma and grandpa".
The words make me think of
A small country house,
A well-nurtured garden,
A fireplace,
Or kitchen full of warm, yummy smells.

To me, grandpa means
A soft, comfy easy-chair,
A lush weedless lawn,
And fresh-roasted almonds.

To me grandma means
A warm kitchen filled with spicy aromas,
A potroast, potatoes, and fresh apple pie.
The whine of an old sewing machine.

Julie Gresho

INNOCENT CHILDREN

Innocent children played with my words,
the tried to be careful birds.

I said, "If you're going to play, then I guess
you must. Sometimes you have, to satisfy your lust."

But, I warned you again on that darkened day.
If you shattered the wall, you would pay.
So innocent children played some more.

"We'll play innocently behind the door."

..... SHATTER!!!

Innocent children, are no more, for the crystal
wall was sharp and rough and the children didn't listen

Now I sit and watch the pieces glisten.....

Stefanie Baer

Dear Friend,

You had once asked of God. You had asked of the soul, the heart, the mind, the Earth, and of the meaning of life. To try to find those, I had to look inside for the true meaning of God. I had to ask myself, casting all the previous dogmas aside, what is God and what is it in relation to the fate of my life? To define God is like defining life. I cried, begged, and lived for a vision, insight, or an experience to heighten my awareness of God. In many ways, I am still on my quest for God. What is God? Is it a person? Or is it a spirit? Or is it that judge that is in the likeness of a white man, the favorite projection of the all-righteous Christians? Some people had defined God as the entity that had sole authority over whether when you die you go to Heaven or Hell. Other people, fearing what they could not touch, knowing not the reason of their fear, seeing not the way to enlighten themselves, had denounced God as a nonexistent figment of the imaginations of the oppressors.

In a dream I had touched God. It was as I thought or felt it was. God was an energy, a feeling, a goodness that touched my heart as my heart touched it. How can I describe it? After touching God in my dream, I felt as if I had to now look to the outer reality of my own mortal existence to find God in the world.

My search started, naturally, with the book of God. I had remembered, the words of Genesis. In all that I had learned, there was little about what God really was. They had addressed God as He. They had said God created man out of his own image. But what are the physical manifestations of God? There seem to be none. They had said he was the creator. He created the universe, he created the Earth, he created the flora, and he created the fauna, including our species, man. But who created him? I came to the realization that as long as man has existed, he has asked himself, what is God? I was stuck. Having no apparent tangible reality, man has always worshipped God in some form. This puzzled me. Now, I believe in God, do not mistake me. I know now that God is not a physical being or reality, but an

idea or something like the energy in my dream. After fruitlessly searching for a concrete form of God, I went back to trying to find God within myself.

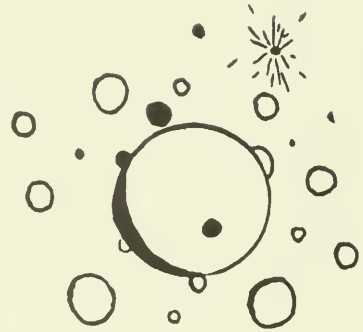
You had once tested me. You had asked, what is God? And you had asked, what is the purpose of life? Sensing my ignorance, you said that God's gift to you is your life, and your gift to God is what you do with it. I had seriously thought of the effect of that wisdom, then I knew what God was. God cannot be compared with anything because God is everything. Being everything, God is also me, as I am part of the larger reality that is God. Everything that was, that is, and that will be, is God, as God is the essence of life, the meaning of life, and the purpose of life.

Carl Schlaudt

A Small Circle

My circle is a circle that only I can enter.
This circle has character and sensitivity.
This circle has no end; it is round. It is
Alive with a friction that rubs me the wrong way.
My circle can only be changed by a great deal of
Equal force.
I can make it smaller or larger with fluctuation
In the space and time I live in. But it can also
Fluctuate without me.

It scares me when my circle gets small, but
It makes me happy with its waver of growth.
Its content has many colors, shapes, and angles.
And the colors, shapes, and angles have their own
Circles
And these also have circles.
Even I am many circles.



Always have a big circle of friends,
Because they
Are your
Complete circle.

Dan Mills

If I could tell you...

If I could tell you the truth,
I would tell you how I want you
I would tell you how I love you
If I could tell you the truth
but I can't
you don't seem to want it

Scott King

EXPRESSIONS

A face of beauty
shows not of jealousy.
A face shows not of need.
A face of joy
shows not of pain.
However a face of love
shows all expressions.

Mike Murphy

Words get out of hand
So eat shit and die.
Make your blacken baby cry.
Sweat soaked shirt collars
Distant snow flurried kids' hollar
Stones with light patterns too bright to focus.
While words get out of hand...

PatS. Emerson

ODYSSEY

From a far off galaxy,
I hear you calling me.
We're each other's Odyssey.

Through the realms of time and space,
In this enchanted place,
You and I come face to face.

Once upon not yet,
We soar as ghosts of day,
In the stars we met,
We met along the way.

Through the Luminous of Night,
On Beams of Neon Light,
You and I in wicked white,
As we crossed the starry seas,
Saddened by what we see,
But now and then a victory.

Once upon not yet,
We soar as ghosts of day,
In the stars we met,
We met along the way.

There's a child in a sundress,
Looking at a rainy sky;
There's a place in the desert,
Where an ocean once stood by.

There's a song in silence,
Weaving in and out of time,
We are notes in the music,
Searching for remembered rhyme.

On a mountain high somewhere,
Where only heroes dare,
Stand the stallion and the mare.

We have been and we shall be
Each other's destiny,
One another's Odyssey.

Kina Gray

HELLO

My name is

Them grown-up a-dults forgot **again**
and wondered...sorta
When our tool configurations looked a little confused
to them

Many tried to forget
over large cups of coffee
and wrinkled noiseless newspapers
back then

They tried to forget about
laughing at our bell horn whistling
and undisciplined free-form characters

But so far away from ears
they couldn't hear
our tiny wordflow fingering
piled high
and actually listening

We whispered to them a chance to listen
awfully obvious
When they finally remembered it
was too late then

P. S. Emerson

"DRAFTED"

Run, Run, and Hide

You won't get far!

Ha, stupid fool!

You're too young to die?

You may think so.

Or perhaps you

Think you're too good

Too good to take orders?

Don't you mean-too good to

take orders, Sir?

Say it again!

Say it again!

You've been drafted, stupid!

Stefanie Baer

GO AHEAD, TAKE IT

Go ahead, take it
It's my soul
and I want you to have it

Please, take it
And hide it inside you
And never let it see
the real world again

Go ahead, touch it
It's my soul
and you can keep it
if you promise me
you'll never give it back

Scott King

LOVELY

If I were you
I would not come close to me.
Because
Because
Today I feel violent, vicious, terribly wild;
Like some crazed pack of jackals.
It feels so good to gnash my yellow eyes and teeth.
Ohhh how wonderful it will be
When my teeth sink into innocent human flesh
Screaming and wrenching over my chuckles with a mouthful.
A nice tender left ear.
A little upper thigh or calve meat,
Her toes will be good too.
My inner guts will rock
With electricity that comes within while I do one thing
 that I do sometimes like - love.
Then when I get tired of using my teeth.
With muscle weary jaws
I will begin to use my trusty tools.
A knife
From my pocket
That I always have
Oooooooooo to see the same sheets of cheek blood
 that Alex my droogie saw on Billy Boy's face.
Yes my lovely
I hope you will stay away from my grip# tonight
The moon is full and so am I.
Tomorrow I'll hope to see you
I'll have flowers and:love to give.
Cleansed and with a God's prayer in my hand
I'll be to love one and all.

But tonight...

P. S. Emerson

Above the lighthouse rock
The sea sucks through your blues.
Feet on greased streets
Love to stumble loudly under sleepers' groans
Neon gangsters with
Pinstriped machine guns
All creep below the fog.

P. S. Emerson

No Escape

I feel cold, realizing I am all alone. My mind wanders; I begin to run. From what? I don't know. My heart starts beating faster and faster until it is up in my throat. I feel as if I have been running for hours. The trees brush through my hair and twigs snap at my feet as I run. I cannot stop now, I must never stop.

I can hear footsteps behind me. I stop and turn around. I see nothing except the dark place I am trying to escape. I start running again, but faster than before. I hear the footsteps again, but this time I don't dare stop to look.

The footsteps are getting faster and faster. I feel as if I am running for my life. I must not slow down, no matter what the reason. The footsteps are going just as fast as mine. I am starting to panic. My body is starting to tremble and sweat all over. I must keep running and never stop.

The footsteps are getting closer and closer, suddenly they are right behind me. I hear music. I can't tell what kind it is or where it's coming from. In the road up ahead, I see the lights of a small town. My heart is beating faster than before. As suddenly as they appeared, the footsteps are gone.

I run into the lighted room. I only have three dollars and one quarter. Rooms are six dollars a night. The man behind the bar says I can have it for three dollars since the night is half over. Now I only have a quarter left.

I go up the stairs and open my room. It somehow doesn't seem empty. Is someone in here? Or is it the noise from the saloon downstairs? I walk in the room and look around. I check the bathroom and there is nobody here. Am I alone?

I wash my clothes out with the soap on the basin. I hang them up to dry

by the wood burner. I draw myself a hot bath, and pick out a magazine to read.

I sink into the tub with my magazine and relax.

I open my eyes, and realize I must have fallen asleep. I get up and dry myself off with an old tattered towel which hangs on the top of the door. I make sure the window and door are locked. Then slowly I slide between the cold sheets of the bed.

Wagons. The town is noisy this morning. There are people all over the streets laughing and talking. I can hear the sound of horses trotting by. I wash my face and begin to get dressed. I go downstairs and there is a sign on the wall that says: scrambled eggs and toast for twenty-five cents. I eat slowly because I don't know how long it will be until I eat again. I wash down my dry breakfast with a glass of water. I give the waitress my quarter and walk out the door.

I try to find someplace so I can earn some money, but there is no hope in this town. I can do something against the law, but that will only get me hung.

I get a jar and put some water in it, and continue my journey. In the day time I am scared, but at night I am horrified. I am never sure of what might happen. I am getting tired after walking for hours, and I know I must rest.

I sit below a tree and watch the sky grow darker. I can feel a cold nip in the air, as the sun sinks behind the mountains. The sky is turning red and yellow. I stand upon my feet and take a deep breath.

I walk until I can see no more light in the sky. My heart begins to pump as I begin to run. My body grows slow as my heart grows weak. The harder I run, the more frightened I get. My mind starts to wander, and again I start to panic. I hear footsteps as my mind wanders vigorously through the dark. I begin to run faster and faster, the wind whipping at my hair. My hands are cold and sweaty. The sweat running down my face is cold, and I can taste the salt as I lick my lips. My mouth is dry and my body aches. It is getting hard-

er to breathe. I am losing my breath. I run longer because no matter how
fast, how far, or where I run, my self-conscious is only one step behind me.
There is no escape.

By Molly Davis

THE END

The time has come
of so they say
for the world
to come to an end.

The planets line up
and just for a moment
a single moment
we hold our breath

What for?
Are we afraid?
Of what?

the end ?

Becky Thornton

UNDERCURRENT

Feeling free and easy
with an open mind
walking on the beach
not knowing what you'll find.

Your feet splash in the water
gulls above you screech
You're so far gone in the feeling
you know you're out of reach.

Now the sun is leaving
the sky turns mellon red
the clouds lie like pillows
upon the ocean's bed.

You take a few more steps
the water's at your knees
although the sea is warm
you're chilled by a breeze.

The sky turns evil black
you're on the shifting sands
something grabs your legs
it feels like two cold hands.

You suddenly go under
your heart begins to pound
the undercurrent's got you
and now you're ocean bound

Anonymous

Conversation #18

I'm a guy named Me.No kidd'in, that's my real name...Me.My parents had a sense of humor.You've heard of people who name their dog "Dog" or their cat "Cat" ? well,those are my parents' friends.As for our own household,we have a canary named "Bird" and a snake called "Long Slithery Thing"; Thing for short.Fast tense actually;two weeks ago Thing ate Bird.

All in all we're a pretty happy little family: Mom,Dad,Me,and Sparky.Sparky's our dog.He's got a regular name.Me found Sparky along the side of Hwy. 1 on our way to Carmel last summer when we had to stop because Thing was lost and we wanted to make sure he hadn't got caught in the door when we stopped for fries in Milpitas.(He hadn't but he probably would have been better off...it got pretty messy when Mom came home and found out about the "Bird" incident. See,she had this large,economy-sized box of Tide in her hands and...well,believe me...it wasn't a pretty sight.) So anyway,we found Sparky,lost,and he already had a name,Sparky,so he was saved from being tagged with "Canine" or "Four Legged,Hairy Mammal" which would have been redundant.All in all we're a pretty happy family.

Scott D. King

Marshall had the feeling that he was embarking on a longer journey than he had intended. Looking back now he could see the ravaged walkway his mind had taken. He had done this to himself. His childlike ignorance and closed-minded views had torn up the world he refused to see, torn it up before his eyes could become accustomed to the darkness into which he was heading. He had lived within his fantasies, and refused to bridge them with reality, blocking the real world from himself before he realized what it was or how much he needed it. He had only to go forward now, to try to rebuild the great burned rooms of the castle of his mind, to try to walk toward filling the emptiness - a product of so many years of sleepwalking. He had nothing behind him to pull from. All he had was the unknown. He must winter with others who had spent all their springs filling their storehouses of minds with the knowledge of how to make the right wrinkles, society's allowed errors. His springs had been spent dreaming of irrelevant things, never thinking of the coming winter.

But winter was upon him, and it showed signs of blizzards, fierce with their unpredictable gusts of wind and snow. Marshall lay on his back looking up at the high, arched ceiling of his hotel room. The patterns on the walls and the intricate, crystal chandelier held his attention for the few minutes that he forced his mind and eyes to focus. But not seeing even the walls and the chandeliers, was so much easier than having to formulate thoughts and reactions, that, as the minutes ticked into hours, Marshall merely disassociated himself from his surroundings.

Things were too difficult now; later, when things were better, he would think of how society would allow him to react.

It had been a terrible accident. Everyone said it had been a terrible accident. All the people he was supposed to know, and who supposedly cared about him, had plenty to say about how sorry they were that his parents had been killed. But no one would tell him what he was supposed to do.

Marshall was filled with anger, directed not only toward the people who weren't there to help him but also toward his parents. It was their fault that he was here all alone, totally incapable of doing anything for himself. It did not make any difference that he was legally a man. He knew nothing about how to get along in a world whose inhabitants put on masks, and memorized exactly how to react to all the situations they would probably ever face.

Marshall rolled over onto his stomach and with watery eyes and a growing feeling of self pity, gazed at the dresser that contained his only hope. It was a massive piece of furniture, seeming to be invincible. That dresser looked as though it had been standing in the same place for years. The dark oak stain was deeply set into the many cracks and crevices that made it seem more wise than Marshall thought he would ever be. With a sudden burst of fury at the world that had put him into this impossible situation, he grasped at the solid brass handle and jerked open the drawer. In the bottom of the deep drawers Marshall saw what he thought was his only means of escape from this world that had turned on him. As his eyes examined every part of the pistol, he perceived it as a thing of strength. The solid black coldness of the steel made him determined not to let anything run him down. He would show his parents, they nor anyone else could leave him like they did. Did they think he was a sissy? Was that it? Was this a test to see if he were brave enough to use the gun? He would show them. Marshall sat up and let his feet hit the floor. The solidness of the dresser and the gun filled him with awe. They were real, and the gun was going to make him real, his parents would not leave him this way, they would not!

Realizing that he did not have any bullets for the gun, Marshall got fully out of bed. His jacket hung on the doorknob, and his shoes and socks were

tossed carelessly around the room. For the first time in his life, Marshall had a goal. He would show his parents, and when he did, everything would again be all right.

Fully dressed and on the street below, Marshall began to walk the three blocks that he knew would take him to the nearest sporting goods store. The March air was cold and Marshall's spirits rose as the delightful sensation of being warm, and defying the weather crept over him. He was elated with the knowledge that he was going to do something real, he was going to do something that would make everyone know he was brave.

After buying the bullets, Marshall sped back to the hotel. He could not wait to get this over with and make things all right again. Once in his room again, he took the gun from the drawer. He looked lovingly at the dresser. "It is this dresser" he thought, "and its solid look of wisdom that is giving me the strength to do this. It is only because of this bit of reality that I can come to terms with myself." The long awaited bullet entered Marshall's head. As he fell back the gun fell from his hand, and hit the top of the dresser. The blow cracked the cheap veneer and its false oak finish started to curl.

Della walked gracefully across the room toward the table which the waiter had indicated. Her light, airy step and the cool, flowing, Indian print dress that enveloped her tall, slim frame matched perfectly her mood. She was happy. She had found not only a job, but also a friend in one of her new co-workers. It was not a job with a future, or anything very mentally stimulating, but a part-time job as a sales clerk gave her some time to pursue her writing, and a little money to play with. The allowance her parents sent her gave her the freedom to work solely on her book, but her lover had expensive tastes, and having money to be able to help pay for their outings increased the pleasure she felt when she was with him.

Della had just started to look at the menu when Renee walked into the restaurant. Renee was older than other members of Della's small circle of college-graduate friends. By looking at her one could tell that Renee was an athlete. She carried herself like a person who was in tune to her body. Lately though, she had given up her running. Her husband seemed to need to have her around during the time she usually worked out. She tried to continue running short distances three or four times a week. But between her job at the store, and her duties as a wife, she just didn't find time to be as dedicated as she had been. She kept telling herself she would still run a marathon, but deep inside of herself she was beginning to lose her steadfastness in this conviction. After all, she loved her husband and he loved her, She was beginning to consider it rather silly for a woman of forty to spend so much time doing one thing. She had been running since high school, and training for a marathon on and off for the last four years. Now it was time to settle down to being a good wife for her husband. He was worth it.

Renee smiled as she sat down at the table with Della. Della returned the smile. They were both very glad to have met someone who seemed so concerned and

sensitive as each woman seemed to be to the other.

Della and Renee talked during lunch as though they had to catch up on all the time they had not known one another. Della talked about her book and tried to explain to Renee the difficulties that she was up against. It had been going fine until she had met her boyfriend, then she found herself trying to write around his schedule, trying to be around for him when he needed her—even if that did mean giving him her work time. She knew it took a lot of effort to make a relationship work, and she guessed that her writing did not fit into her partner's plans. Now that she was working part time, Della supposed that she would be more pressed to find time to write. "Oh, well, he is worth it. If I have to postpone my book for a while to fit myself into my boyfriend's busy life, I will," she told Renee.

Renee could not believe the similarities between her own and Della's situation. She had made her husband, and her relationship with him, her first priority, and had put off her marathon because her husband's needs just did not leave her time to devote herself to running as intensely as marathoning required. She felt disappointment when she thought of losing all the hard work that had put her as close as she had come to really being in shape to run a marathon. But because her husband worked all day, and she only worked part of the day, the responsibility for making their married life a good one fell on her. It was all right. The amount of time he could give her, no matter how small, was worth everything she had to give up to get it. Della and Renee's conversation was interrupted by a commotion at the front of the restaurant. Someone had evidently wanted to be out of the place as fast as possible. Who ever it was had knocked over a waiter in his haste. Renee caught sight of a man in an ugly plaid jacket bolting for the door. "My husband has a jacket like that. I hate it. It is one of the few pieces of clothing he has that he does not look good in," grumbled Renee.

"Hmm, I didn't see it," said Della. "Maybe we scared him off with our good looks," she joked about the man's hurried exit.

"I should be leaving now too," sighed Renee. "My husband likes to eat as soon as he gets home, and I haven't planned dinner yet."

"Well, I enjoyed lunch, and I guess I'll see you on Monday," said Della. "Why don't you give me your phone number, maybe we could do something this weekend," Della added as an afterthought.

Della decided to walk the short way home, instead of taking the bus as she normally would have. Her conversation with Renee had bothered her. She knew that if she had been listening as an outsider, she would have heard two women bitching and moaning about a situation they would never choose to change or give up. Why do women not allow themselves to enjoy living without making a man the focus of their attentions? She hated to catch herself playing the game with everyone else, but sooner or later, in every relationship she had ever had, she did. It was always she who came out the loser in the end, losing what she had given up so much to obtain. Always she promised herself never to make the same mistake again. She promised herself she would have the strength to get out if she could not be her own person within the relationship, or if the relationship became more important than her own happiness within it.

A note folded up on the floor caught Della's eye as soon as she opened the door to her appartement. "It must be from Mike," she thought. She dropped her purse on a chair and curled up on the sofa to read it. Everything from Mike was worth savoring.

It only took her a moment to scan the short note, but she read it over and over again. Della could not think, what was this? She did not understand, but she was scared. Her skin was suddenly cold and clammy. As much as she wanted to know what the note meant, she wanted it to disappear. She wanted to retrace her steps and never come across it. She reached for the telephone. At first

she thought she was going to call Mike, but she realized that she did not have the faintest idea where he was. She needed to talk to someone, "Renee, I'll call Renee," she said outloud. She snatched her purse from the chair where she had dropped it and fumbled around in it for the paper on which Renee had written her telephone number-----374-3848.

Renee had just gotten home when the telephone rang. She picked it up expecting it to be her husband calling to say that he had had to work late and would not be home for dinner. Renee unconsciously checked a rush of bitter feelings and disappointment before they got to a level that required her to acknowledge them. Della's voice surprised her.

"Renee, I found a note from my boyfriend when I got home. I don't understand it but I am scared." Della read the note to Renee, "I'm sorry you had to find out this way. I love you very much, but I think it better if I just disappear out of both of your lives. Love me." There was a pause.

"I don't know what to tell you. Another pause. Would you like some company? I'll leave a note for my husband and be right over," said Renee.

Della fought back tears as she gave directions to her apartment. Renee grabbed a pencil and hurried across the kitchen to the counter where a memo pad was always readily available. The top page was written on and she started to tear it off, but something familiar about the words that she had barely glanced at made her stop. "I'm sorry you had to find out this way. I love you very much but I think it better if I just disappear out of both your lives. Love me." Renee was stunned. She stared at the note as though she might make it disappear. Renee looked down. Her running shoes were right in front of her. Slowly she bent down and picked them up. She dropped them again, but the initial rush of anger that she had felt toward Della turned to disgust at the way she had been treating herself. She changed into her running clothes, put on her shoes, and started out the door. She got a few steps when she remembered to turn back and get some money. She had to make one stop on the run to Della's

house. She had to stop at a book store and buy a blank journal and a pen for Della.

Off Human Bondage

Teacher talks
on and on...
Says nothing
ever, ever...
But I don't mind
My wandering mind
releases me
from the m-m-monologue

Imagination
knows no bounds
obeys no rules
pays no mind-
It lays bare
the breast of her
sitting there
beside me

Candle-light illumines
her naked form
in contoured shades
of glowing orange
Her thighs, her belly
her breasts, her lips
all flow in curves
of sensual rhythm

Always and never
I'll see her there-
nakedness shaded
in sensual orange
while the teacher talks
and confirms the value
of reading some book
by Somerset Maugham

Scott D. King

