

















MUSE

1980-81

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Raleigh, N.C.



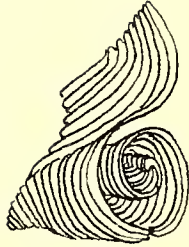
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On these bleak climes by  
Fortune thrown,  
Where rigid **Reason** reigns alone  
Where lovely **Fancy** has no  
    sway,  
Nor magic forms about us  
    play—  
Nor nature takes her  
    summer hue—  
    Tell me, what has the  
    muse to do?

*Philip Freneau*  
1788

The 1981 **Muse** is dedicated to Elizabeth Marlowe in loving memory.  
Elizabeth Marlowe was a member of the **Muse** staff, and part of her is in these pages.



Gigi Taylor

The Wait

I caught a glimpse in the dappled drizzly dawn  
of a Falcon  
Hovering in quiet solitude over a withered brown  
cornfield, waiting on his prey.  
Brute beauty, valour, and pride rode the air  
in rolling unison.  
Stirred for a bird, my heart stood in  
loitering anticipation—  
The Prey sauntered slowly, innocent of the  
talons that marked his life.  
Suddenly, wings buckle! Down in fiery fury  
the Falcon dropped  
Exquisite beauty and horror in undaunted action.  
The fire that broke from him, a million times told  
lovelier, but dangerous.  
Wonder in it—the innocence, the horror,  
the gashed scarlet vermillion.

*Anna Tate  
Third Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*





## The Miracle

There's almost no sound  
as we walk along the path  
towards our destination  
The tents and campers are still  
a dog barks disturbing the silence  
We hear a steady crashing of water  
Up and back, up and back  
Atop the sand dune we stand arm in arm  
Looking into the black curtain  
We hear the beating of the waves but only  
see them in our minds  
There we stand hypnotized  
only a few moments  
Still the constant crash goes on  
Soon a glimmer of light  
and we see our sound  
Then the sky is inflamed  
with day  
Showing us the miracle we had been  
listening to.

*Mary Dixon*

*Janet Berkeley  
Third Place, Photography  
Muse Contest*

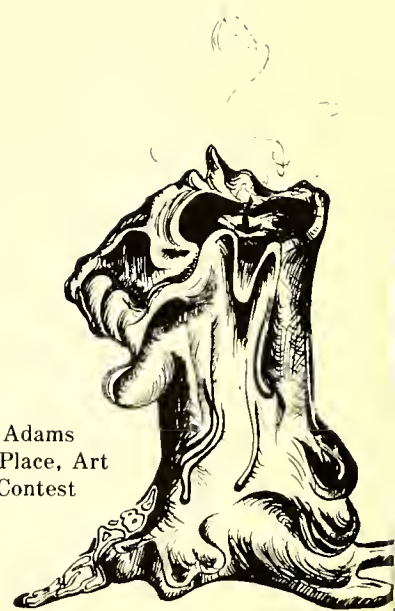


Mindy Russell

Pyro –

Sunrise lights the fire;  
luminous  
clouds like embers  
burn, then, fizzle  
out in the watery sky.

*Mary Grady Koonce*  
*Second Place, Poetry*  
*Muse Contest*

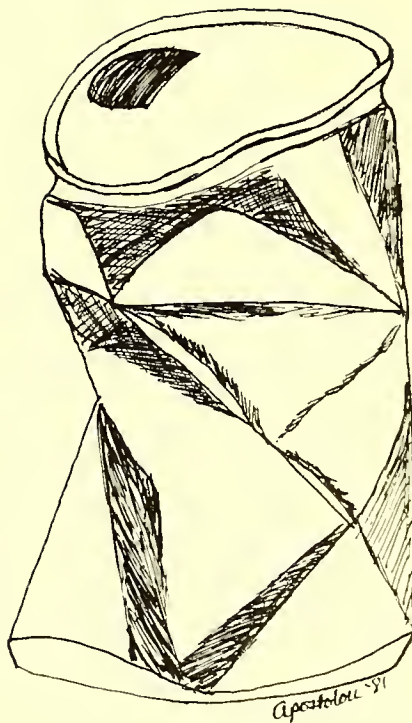


Susan Adams  
Third Place, Art  
Muse Contest

During One of Those Hard Times

If you were a beer can,  
I'd bend you back and forth  
Until you broke in half.  
If you were a car,  
I'd total you and  
Send you to the junk yard.  
If you were a piece of paper,  
I'd ball you up and  
Throw you in the nearest trash can.  
But you are a Person.  
You have feelings the same as I.  
I don't know what to do.

*Becka Caldwell*



Petals

Walking through meadows  
picking daisies  
plucking their petals,  
Giving them names  
talking to them as though  
they are who they are named for.  
But the rain comes  
falls on the daisies

one

by

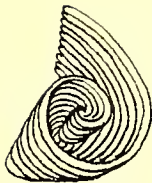
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sparkling diamonds on white velvet.  
The flowers and I  
understand one another.  
Why then can't we talk like the flowers?

*Elizabeth Jane Archer*



Julia Ridgeway  
Second Place, Art  
Muse Contest

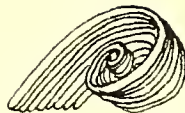


Gigi Taylor

### Garden of Eden

A fraternity party  
(a group on a terrace)  
without any brotherhood  
proceeds under colorless  
purple sunset clouds,  
sunlight casting its afternoon  
farmhouse warmth  
across the doorsill  
sparkling on  
hollow kegs  
and a muzzy rug.  
Evening silence  
plays back-up  
for bluegrass bands:  
out under the Chinaberry tree  
Love, fine as Sevres,  
cracks as a tongue falls heavily;  
then, comes the silence,  
knowingly, with fraternity.

*Mary Grady Koonce*



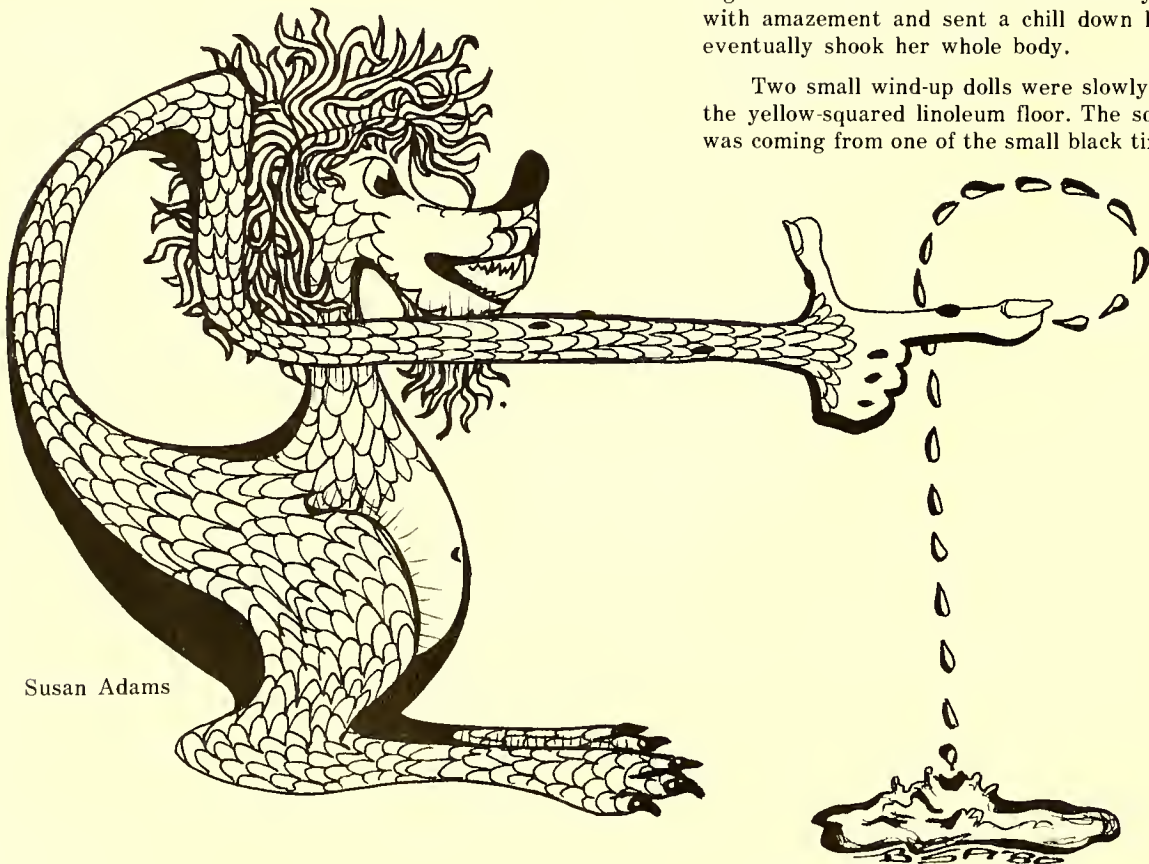
### Click

The serenity was broken by a loud RING RING! Nicole shot up. Her eyes popped open and her heart seemed to skip a beat because she sat up so quickly. Nicole managed to find the small button of the alarm, turn it off, and the ringing sound stopped. She instantly dropped back to her pillow and pulled the sheets around her neck, her heart considerably slowed down after being startled by the ringing alarm.

Nicole opened her eyes again and glanced at the round face of the clock. When she realized she was late for work, she shot out of bed and started to the bathroom.

Before Nicole got to the bathroom, she heard a small squeaking noise coming from the kitchen. "I better not have to get out those mouse traps again," Nicole muttered to herself. When Nicole got to the kitchen, she did not find any mice making the squeaking noise. What Nicole saw made her eyes grow wide with amazement and sent a chill down her spine that eventually shook her whole body.

Two small wind-up dolls were slowly rolling across the yellow-squared linoleum floor. The squeaking noise was coming from one of the small black tires on the bot-



Susan Adams



tom of the dolls. Nicole shivered again as she wondered what crazy person might have put the dolls there. As Nicole looked at the dolls closer, she saw that one of the dolls was a man wearing a white suit, a black shirt, and a miniature white tie. Nicole thought that the way the doll was dressed was unusual because most contemporary men never wear white suits and black shirts. This wardrobe was reserved for the gangsters of the 1930's who shot people to death with their machine guns.

As the dolls squeaked closer to her bare feet, Nicole's heart jumped as it had earlier when her Big Ben clock had wakened her. Nicole was startled because the other doll was a small version of herself dressed in the nightgown that she wore now.

At that moment, the dolls stopped in the middle of one of the yellow linoleum squares. Nicole stared at the dolls and finally laughed when the dolls remained in the same place for a minute. "I am so silly. That crazy boyfriend of mine must be playing a practical joke on me," she said to herself. Nicole approached the two immovable little creatures so that she might place them on one of the yellow plastic-topped counters and give them back to her boyfriend later.

When Nicole reached down, the little gangster wind-up doll began to make a small purring noise as if its motor was still running. Then Nicole saw the little gangster pull out a gun. The doll let out a definite *click* as the gun was raised, pointed, and cocked at the other doll. With another purr of the motor, a bang was heard as if the gun had been fired. Nicole smiled and said, "My boyfriend keeps me so amused."

However, the next instant Nicole's smile faded as a pool of red began to seep out of the doll in the nightgown. The pool grew and grew until it had begun

running between Nicole's toes. "This little practical joke is getting out of hand and is getting too grotesque," she thought balefully.

Nicole then went to the sink to find a cloth to wipe up what she supposed was red-colored water. "My boyfriend sure was able to get a deep rich shade of red. It almost looks like real blood," she thought. As she started across the kitchen, she noticed her toes were sticking to the floor as she walked, as though the water was clotting like blood.

Nicole stopped. Shivers ran down her spine and legs. She screamed when she heard the click of the gangster doll as he dropped his gun to his side and squeaked back across the kitchen floor. She looked back at the doll which was dressed in the nightgown like her own. It was lying in the middle of the pool of red with streaks of the color on its nightgown and hair.

RING! Nicole sat straight up and turned the Big Ben alarm clock off. "What a horrible nightmare," she groaned. Then she realized that as she had jumped up to turn off her alarm clock, her bed had squeaked like the sound of the uncoiled wheels of the doll in her nightmare. Nicole laughed to herself. "I must have been half awake and just heard my bed squeak."

However, after such a bad nightmare, Nicole was still shaky and cautiously went to the kitchen to have some orange juice to calm her nerves. As she closed the refrigerator door and turned around, Nicole heard a squeak and saw the same two dolls of her dream heading toward her. She swallowed hard as a pool of red spread toward her. She thought she heard a squeak as heavy feet ascended the steps to her upstairs apartment and then, close to her ear, a click like the sound that was made by the miniature gangster doll.

*Anne Perry*



Florence Norris



Laura Culburtson

### Breaker

Long ago you took my hand  
Pulling me towards the sea's outstretched palm.  
The waves rose and smashed before my eyes.  
I was afraid.  
Though one swelled dangerously near  
You held my hand  
And I was brave.  
Suddenly I lost the ocean floor  
Twisted and somersaulted with the breaker  
Which came crashing down on me,  
Tossing and tumbling until I knew not  
Where I was.  
Oh mother—I cried, I panicked,  
Where did you go?—  
And why did you drop my tiny hand?  
I thought that I might die—  
Opening my eyes all was void and empty.  
Green and hazy, the water stung  
And I could not understand.  
I longed to squint at the sun  
And sit on the warm, sandy shore.  
Then I felt the strength of your arms grabbing me  
From behind, lifting me above the void  
Towards the sky  
Giving me life again.

*Jocelyn Lynch Davis*

The Lake

The place where I live  
Has a lake  
In summer the ripples look  
like glass.  
In winter the thin ice  
Looks like tape  
trying to hold the water together so none  
of it will run away.

*Penney Lide*



Caroline Brown





Ernest Norris  
1st Place, Photography  
Fair Contest



Robin Naiswald

Poem

Remember falling down the Rabbit Hole and slipping into Wonderland or a time of laughing, crying, singing, caring, and giving?

Mostly do you remember the times we lived together here beneath the trees, beside the running brook, under the warm sun, and shining stars?

Take your Rabbit Hole and Wonderland with you, wherever you may go.

*Ashlyn Martin*

Flesh, Not Tin

Hand in hand,  
Walking in the rain.  
Some people think  
That we're not quite sane.  
Maybe we're not,  
But sometimes I'm glad,  
For sanity, sometimes,  
Can make you go mad.  
Cold and wet,  
Soaked right through the skin.  
I'm glad I was born,  
Of flesh and not tin.  
Think about rusting,  
Just taking a walk.  
Can you imagine,  
How the neighbors would talk?

*Sally Ryon*



Mary Jacque Holroyd





Dimensions of Time

Sand in an hour glass  
can never trace  
the footfalls of minutes  
wandering through a mind;  
whether they hasten on or  
loiter along the way —

    a grain of sand can never say —  
in what dimension  
the mind and minutes walk.

*Mary Grady Koonce*

Laura Culburtson



### A County Fair

I sat down disgustedly on the sticky bench and wondered why I even bothered coming to the Zetella County Fair. Every year it gets increasingly worse. The people do not improve either. Their beards get longer, their breath fouler, and their fingernails dirtier. It is a miracle people even bother to come anymore. The air stays heavy with the odor of corndogs and burnt popcorn. If I had not wanted a stuffed animal so

badly I would have stayed home cuddled by the fireplace reading *The Shining*. But I was drawn by the thought of a stuffed animal, so I plied myself up from the glue-like bench and headed down the fairway.

My head began to swim just watching the rock-planes and the rock-and-roll. I was proud of myself when I managed the ferris wheel without that usual

queasy feeling. Glancing around at the various games I immediately spotted the stuffed animal of my dreams. He was a huge teddy bear with big brown lazy eyes and a cute pink tongue. I named him Sam and attempted to break through the crowd towards him.

I laid down my fifty cents on the counter in exchange for four featherlike baseballs. I simply refused to smile at the ugly man, though he persisted in winking and showing his toothless grin to me.

"Now sweetheart, this here's the easiest little ole game 'round these parts. Just knock over dim dere bowling pins and you can have any ole stuffed critter you want!" he said.

I could not help but laugh at his back-country accent but most of my attention was focused on poor old Sam. He seemed so unhappy hanging from the dingy beam. I was determined to be his knight in shining armour and rescue him.

I reeled back and threw the little ball. It did not take me long to figure out that the bowling pins were

made of no less than lead. But that did not stop me—I had three balls left.

Smiling sweetly I asked, "Don't you have any heavier balls, or perhaps lighter pins?"

He smiled that awful smile and grunted, "Naw."

I jumped back because it was the first time I had smelled his breath. I reasoned that without teeth there was no reason for him to brush, so his breath was far less than satisfactory. I threw two more of the precious balls and missed again. I was becoming exasperated. Sam was really looking sad too.

At that moment from the other side of the stand I heard the excited squeal of a young girl. My heart skipped a beat as I saw her pointing to my Sam. I tried to protest but the bratty little girl disappeared into the crowds with Sam over her shoulder.

I dropped the last ball on the counter and headed for home. Silently I vowed never to come to the Zetella County Fair again.

*Emily Shapard*



Catherine H. Davis

Seasons

February jonquils,  
Now kittens play among the dead stalks;  
White petaled apple trees  
cast shadows where the

final

apples  
fall  
and  
wither  
among the now grown cats,  
lying near a ripe  
persimmon tree.

*Mary Grady Koonce*



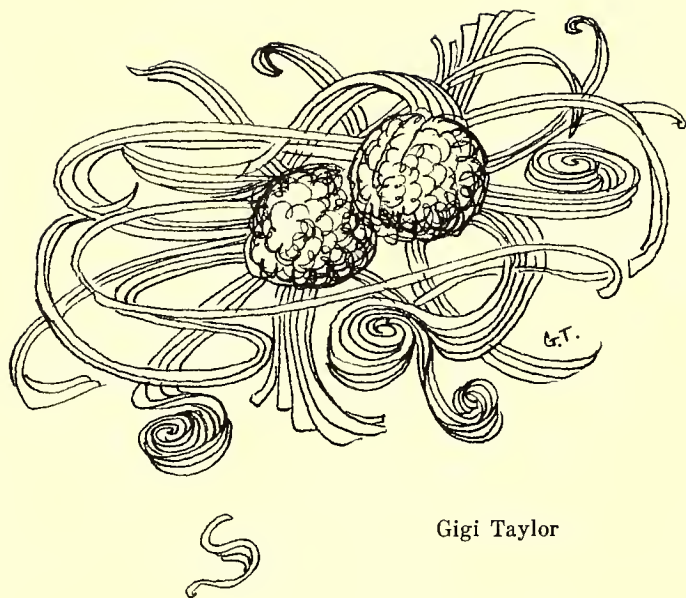


Margaret Norris  
Second Place, Photography  
Muse Contest

A Phantasy  
St. Mary's Chapel 1981

White under green, sacred, past and present.  
Drawn—by its serenity into its enchantment.  
Seated—on its sixth pew, midway.  
Alone—but not alone.  
Silent—amidst the historic pattern of sounds.  
Perhaps 1881. A soft, dusty sound  
Of cotton dress brushing on oaken pew;  
The movement transmitting itself to my awareness  
As lightly as an anticipated touch.  
A voice. A song not meant for my ear,  
Pleasant as its pensive tone  
Reveals its innocent source of young womanhood,  
An invisible presence that creates a current phantasy  
That dissolves a century, influencing today.

*B. Wick*



Gigi Taylor

### As A Stag

As dusk began to close in on them, the biting night air stung his fingertips and the end of his nose. Slowly and cautiously he moved his cramped legs, carefully trying not to snap a twig or crackle a leaf. They had been out hunting in the woods since dawn, and this was his favorite time of the day—the air so cold it hung heavily from the trees all around him; his breath sent out clouds of frosty smoke, and the silence . . . so deep and penetrating. Weston felt an inner peace at these moments, binding him to nature in a way he never experienced with people. It created in him emotions of humility, awe, and yet power.

Strains of the moon's beams streaked softly through the trees, filtering into the small clearing he faced, like spotlights on a stage. Instinctively he was aware of a presence near him—the smell and change of air that occurs when something moves against the wind. Weston heard the rustling of branches, and felt an alertness surging through his veins. He felt Eleanor tighten her grasp on her shotgun beside him—both of them waiting, watching, and listening. Abruptly, into



the pool of light, stepped a stag. The beast was huge—tremendous antlers, massive shoulders and neck muscles that rippled as he slowly turned his powerful head. His coat was of a soft brownish hue, glistening and shining. He carried the mark of a deep black streak down the center of his large back. Weston's father once said that a stag with a black streak was the purest line of deer—regal and beautiful. The creature stood totally still, absorbing the light through the trees, absorbing the light through the trees, and the tranquility of the moment. As if in a trance, Weston never let his eyes leave the stag. And quietly, gently, he raised his rifle to his shoulder . . . took careful aim . . .

"NO!"

Weston jumped, the stag started, and with a rapid bound sprang into the darkness and was gone.

Weston turned angrily toward his younger sister Eleanor, and found himself looking into her furious eyes. Eleanor was sixteen—tall, long-legged, possessing a beauty enhanced by her unawareness of it. Her dark hair tumbled around her shoulders, and her startling light blue eyes expressed an anger and disbelief at Weston. Of all the people in the world, Weston loved Eleanor the most, for she understood and believed in him.

"Weston!" she hissed. "How could you even think of shooting that beautiful animal?"

Weston felt the color drain into his face. "But Eleanor, you know we need to bring in all the game we can. That was a perfectly clear shot! I can't believe you shouted and ruined such a perfect chance." Weston stood up, feeling the tension drain from his body. He too was dark-headed, but his eyes were more grey than blue. He had a big chest and neck. His strong jaw and chin line gave him a look of control and coherence. He was very much like his sister.

He looked down at Eleanor, half-hidden in the shadows. "Come on" he said, "it's getting late." She slowly rose up. Gathering her equipment, she began to walk home without a glance at Weston.

"Hey Eleanor," he called softly. She halted but did not turn to look at him. "I'm glad you stopped me. I don't think I could have done it anyway. He was a sight I'll never forget."

Eleanor turned, and gazed at Weston, pausing. "I know. Let's go now—it's late."

The pair began to walk home, both lost in their own thoughts. Drifts of snow crunched under their feet, and Weston listened to the sounds of the forest animals

in the distance. Soon he saw far ahead of them points of light from home. He was sure Mother was waiting dinner for them, and he felt content thinking about the downy bed and warm meal that waited. As he and Eleanor entered the large log cabin that was home, he smelled the aroma of stew and freshly-baked biscuits, making his mouth water. Father was sitting in front of the fireplace, reading the paper and smoking his pipe. He was a man of great size and standards—a disciplinarian in the strictest sense to the boys, but far more gentle with his only daughter, Eleanor. Both of the older boys, James and Richard, were involved in a game of checkers. As Weston and Eleanor entered, they called a greeting to them, and headed for the kitchen. Weston felt the same feelings of alienation creep up his spine that he always felt in the presence of his brothers and father. They were all so hearty and boisterous. As children, they had teased Weston unmercifully about his love of dancing. They had never understood the feelings he experienced when he heard strains of music—a feeling of wanting to move and expand and be with the tempo and the melody. So he was detached from the rest of the men in his family—an outsider among them, always ill-at-ease. Only Eleanor knew what he felt, for she danced, too. But for Eleanor, the family approved. How proudly they sat and watched her dance in recitals as a child. How proud they were that she now studied at the conservatory. How proud they were that she had learned to be like them too—to hunt and chop wood and ride a horse. Weston felt the sting of envy, and was ashamed of it. He was ashamed that he could feel this most base of emotions, especially about Eleanor, for he adored her. And yet . . . it pained him to hear his father ridicule him about his attending the conservatory. Last spring he had secretly auditioned for the school, and on hearing of his acceptance hid the fact all summer. He was bursting to tell someone, but he knew they would never have allowed him to go. So when the fall came and all the children went off to school, Weston had packed and

pretended to go to the state university as the family had planned. He offered to take Eleanor to the Conservatory on his way. Father had given them blank checks to fill out once at school for their tuition. Weston, however, had stayed at the Conservatory with Eleanor, rather than going on to the state university. Weston had written the check to the school, been admitted, and had attended classes—dancing, dancing, dancing. Father never knew until he received the returned check. By then it was too late to enter the University, so Weston had to stay at the Conservatory. His father found it hard to forgive, and was disappointed in this son.

The holidays ended, and Weston was relieved to leave home and return to school. He and Eleanor traveled there together. The day was crisp and bright, and the two talked of the holidays and the coming ballet auditions for the annual festival. It was the highlight of the year, for the parts were assigned only to students who danced very well, and the rest given to professionals. It was an exciting opportunity for the students, for they would receive direction from some of the leading dancers of the day. As the car rounded the bend to school, both Weston and Eleanor ceased speaking to stare at the main building of the Conservatory. It always created in him the same thrill and electric charge. The building was graceful and large—white stone columns holding erect the white marble of the place, the span of the many steps that led to this haven of hope and dreams. There were forty of those marble steps—Weston had counted them many times as he went to and from classes. They symbolized this place to him. They were the steps that led him to the only refuge he knew—dance.

Classes resumed and Weston and Eleanor fell into the routine of the Conservatory again. It never really was routine for Weston, for he loved the feelings of consistency and security the schedules provided. Auditions for the parts in the ballet were posted. The whole

company of students became increasingly tense as the date approached. All practiced for hours every day, trying to perfect their flaws, envisioning themselves on the stage. As the day of tryouts dawned, Weston met Eleanor at the rehearsal studio. As they warmed their muscles up, Weston watched Eleanor practice. He noticed the fluidity of her movements, and the emotion that shone from her body and face. She was very good . . . she was excellent.

Weston walked onto the stage for his audition. Sweat broke out on his face and back. His heart pounded, his stomach churned. Then the music began. It was low, floating, entrancing. He began to move—to feel the music and to express that feeling. He thought of the cold and the still of the air at dusk. He thought of the woods and the smells of nature he so loved. The music rose and the beat became more powerful. His mind focused on a moment in the past. He thought of the stag. He danced as if he were the stag—the power, the innocence, the beauty. He remembered the way the stag breathed in the moonlight, how he forced his presence on those that beheld him. The music became louder, it became more intense. Weston let his mind guide his dancing. He concentrated on the stag, and the keenness of the beast. Suddenly, the music hit a high tension, and Weston recaptured the emotion of the moment that he had prepared to shoot the animal that night in the woods. Then a loud crash of symbols startled him—he sprang in the air, he leapt aside. He was the stag in flight in the surprised moment of that night.

The strains of music became softer and then faded. Weston opened his eyes, abruptly aware that he had been dancing his audition. There was complete silence as he left the stage, confused. No one moved; they all stared at him without speaking. Weston walked out the door in a dazed state, unseeing, but vaguely aware that something magic had happened. Eleanor stood in the

hall, and as he emerged she ran to him and held him. Tears slid down her face, and she did not say a word. No word needed to be said.

The parts were eventually cast. Weston won the lead student role for males, and Eleanor coincidentally won the female role. Both were astonished and pleased. The ballet was an old one about the trials and tribulations of a family. Practices were long and difficult, requiring the performers to be unyielding in their endurance. Time swiftly passed until all was ready for opening night of the production. Mother and Father were coming for the show, as well as James and Richard. Weston felt a knot of nervousness inside him at all times now—more from the apprehension of dancing before his father and brothers than from dancing before the whole audience. The family was coming because of Eleanor, and because his Mother had demanded they go. His Father said he felt ashamed that his son would be dancing for all to see. He did not want to face the “spectacle” Weston would make of himself. Weston would prove him wrong. He would make no spectacle of himself, but make his father see how good he was. He would make them understand. He would make them as proud of him as they were of Eleanor, by being so spell-binding that they would be speechless. This determination drove Weston onward. It was what gave him the strength to sustain those rigid rehearsals. It possessed him so totally and completely that he ignored the protests of his body in his effort for perfection. He urged himself to the point of collapse, and diligently continued.

Performance night shone bright and lively. Weston felt a tingle in the air born of anticipation and adrenalin. He was silent behind the scenes, putting on make-up, costume, and concentrating on his part. Eleanor looked vibrant as she prepared to perform. Mother, Father, and the boys were out front, waiting with the rest of the audience. The auditorium was

crowded with people who came to see the show, and view this young man and girl who were reputed to be amazing. The overture began, and the lights dimmed. The curtain rose, and the magic of a performance underway arose. As if in a dream, Weston made his entrance. He met Eleanor at their spot and together they danced. They danced with the company and then melted into their duet. It was so perfect, so right. The pair danced as one, and kept the audience breathless and alert. Eleanor began her solo as Weston held his pose. She radiated as she swept along with the sorcery of the moment. As Weston watched her, he caught his father's face in the audience. Weston saw the pleasure and approval for Eleanor that gleamed in Father's face. It would be there for him as well, Weston believed. His solo began, building up, up, up. He wanted with a want so deep and crystal clear. He felt strength and power in his dancing, in his mastery over the audience. In a moment, after his sequence of climactic spins, Eleanor would perform the dramatic leap into his hold that would bring the audience to its feet. It was a very difficult exchange in mid-air, and now Weston needed to create the proper concentration to be able to time the moment. The music began to mount furiously; Weston began to match its intensity with his spins. He completed the final turn, and prepared for Eleanor's entrance. Then, in an instant, he spied his Father again. But this time, he was walking from the auditorium with a look of sheer disgust and shame on his face—for his son. Weston felt numb, cold. Vaguely he saw that Eleanor was beginning her motions for the leap. He felt hollow, empty, and forsaken. His father despised him, and Weston felt betrayed. Father had left the performance. The injustice of the situation consumed Weston. He was doing his motions of the ballet out of blind mechanical habit, and he was strangely aware of Eleanor flying through the air. With a jerk, he focused on her. She was loved and admired by Father, who preferred her dancing to Weston's. In a moment of emo-

tion, rivalry poured into his veins. In front of him flashed the thought of how she had always been given support—by himself, by Father . . . the audience now. As he began to reach out for Eleanor in the catch, he swiftly realized with crystal clarity what he would do. He did not think, only reacted. He placed his arms by his sides, and then waited, watched, and listened. He viewed, as if from the woods again, Eleanor, and she was falling, falling, falling. He heard in the distance the shocked gasps of the audience, and the dry thud of Eleanor hitting the ground and remained still. He turned his head slowly as the stag had done. He was regal and beautiful—he was the stag. Sounds of applause broke into his thoughts and brought him to reality. He saw Eleanor on the ground, and in a fit of comprehension he saw his betrayal of her. Horrified, he realized he had hurt her, and he looked deep inside of himself and saw the envy there and was repulsed. He did not hear the bravos from the audience, but ran from the stage in shame and mortification. He ran from the Conservatory. He ran to be free like the beast had done—he ran to escape. He ran like the stag. He sprang from the building and to the smooth marble steps that had been hope for him in the past. He sprang in fear as the stag had done. Weston fell, plunging, as if in slow motion, down the cavalcade of white steps, and felt himself tumbling, tumbling, tumbling down. He saw the white of the steps all around him, and they began to darken. The bright gleam of the stairs in the moonlight began to blacken, as his heart had done—as his soul had done. The wind rushed in his ears, he felt as if he was floating. The darkness crept into his mind, and as it got deeper it seemed that he was staring at the black stripe down the back of his stag. He got closer, the stripe enlarged. It grew, it engulfed, it consumed him totally.

*Sarah C. Rice  
First Place, Prose  
Muse Contest*





Cabala

Veil layered over veil  
And we draw them aside,  
Believing we have penetrated to  
That innermost preserve,  
Yet we are uncertain  
Whether we have reached  
And encountered  
The all or  
Nothing  
at all.

*Mary Grady Koonce  
First Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*

Catherine Davis



Liz Wills

Frozen Scar

Snow flurries thrashing down, wind yelling in our ears  
But no, the sun shone, the gentle breeze,  
Death waters, arms reaching, a hand grasping,  
His scarf still hugging my trembling shoulders,  
Quiet, a lonely pair of skates,  
Breath frozen forever more.  
Give me back the icicles of his beard.

*Kathryn MacDonald*



For A Freshman English Class Reading Whitman

You enter and sit  
As always  
Waiting to be fed ideas  
You will never consider

Understand  
This once  
We are not mutual antagonists

Just once  
Hear what I say  
It affects us

Both  
Since we share more than you can suppose

We reach through time  
And our souls mesh  
Everything that has gone  
Before  
Becomes a part  
Of us

The bloodiest crimson of each October maple  
Fuses into our beings  
And lights an eternal flame  
Of recognition  
That transcends lifetimes

Our children  
And theirs  
Know us  
As we know  
Those  
Who preceded us  
By centuries

I can never put you aside  
For you are part  
Of me  
As we are part  
Of all  
We experience  
Yes  
We understand  
The promise  
Is fulfilled  
We give of ourselves  
Gleefully  
Toward a larger  
Soul  
Our silent communion  
Is complete  
Our understanding  
Is infinite

No  
Jamie  
Crazy Walt will not be on the exam  
I'm sorry  
I've kept you  
Four minutes  
Late

Tom's Swans

on the lake's cup Tom's swans float  
on the shape of perfection,  
remaining after the car rounds the curve  
and elemental bonewhite flashes  
in the eye's flank. Like a wish arcing  
or Blindman's Fog, it takes one's breath away  
to confront much virtue suddenly, and have  
it slide out of easy sight. As carelessly  
as a Ford leans into a road or iris  
in a parched summer bow to ponder drought,  
Tom's swans round the prayers  
of the brimming roadside, beyond our ken,  
as we pass on.

*Anna Wooten*

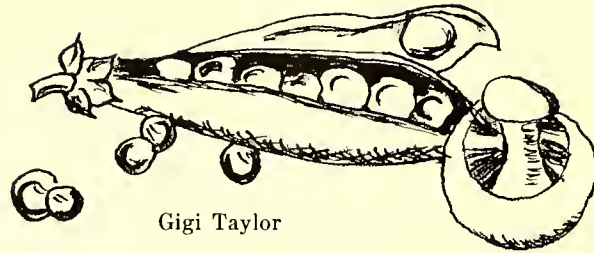
*Raising Children*

*As early as the nursery  
hearts palpitate, bump  
their white blankets,  
so many hearts laid out like fists.  
Everywhere you step is ego ego ego  
like tripping through a minefield.  
You must be a wizard to know  
where not to walk.  
You must be a genius and  
nurse genius not to trip  
upon those hearts  
whose chambers are cabal.  
Whichever way you step  
will never be right.  
No one will ever ask what way  
you meant to step,  
or if this is the way to be born.*

*Anna Wooten*



Ridgeway  
Place, Art  
Contest



Gigi Taylor

### The Star

Leaving the old woman's house the carolers trudged happily through the snow, carrying in the pockets of their torn coats her last three dollar bills and a precious book of matches. They were warmed in body and cheered in soul, for the old woman had taken them into her home, hung their cold, wet socks in front of her fire to dry, and fed them the best meal they had seen in months . . . thick slices of turkey smothered in dark, rich gravy, lots of deep red cranberry sauce, plump green peas, and mounds of steaming sweet potatoes laced with nuts and raisins, but best of all were the desserts . . . mountains of cookies sprinkled with brightly-colored sugars, a huge, downy coconut cake, and a tremendous tray of assorted candies.

As she closed the door and pulled the threadbare shawl closer about her bony shoulders, a loving smile lit up her wrinkled face at the memory of the three

starving children ravenously devouring most of the food the church had given her for Christmas.

The bent old woman crossed the dimly-lit room to the tall cupboard. As she stood on tiptoe to pull down the worn hatbox, a childlike sparkle appeared in her eyes. Her shoulders seemed to straighten a little as if a heavy burden had just been lifted from them. She gently placed the battered box on the floor beside a tiny tree that was resting in the corner. Opening the box carefully, she gazed at its contents with rapture. She lovingly fingered each ornament as if it were made of spun glass, instead of paper, wood, pine cones, and rocks. Then she withdrew a small pile of tiny candle stubs which were obviously going up for their last year.

A wistful smile passed from her lips to her tired eyes as she lifted from the box the one extravagance she had allowed herself to keep after her husband's death. Ever so gently, she pulled the tissue paper away

to reveal a glittering star. She tenderly placed it at the top of the tree, and as she did so, its shimmering lights were reflected in a single tear coursing down the lines in the old woman's cheek. Her husband had chopped wood for three weeks to pay for the star and had given it to her on their first Christmas together. The star had become a symbol of the love they had shared for three short years before his sudden death.

Her decorating finished, she began slowly to prepare for bed. Fatigue and age bent the old woman as she unpinned and then brushed her sparse waist-length gray hair. She carefully hung up her faded dress and climbed wearily into bed.

As she was falling asleep, a sharp rap at the front window jolted her wide awake. Rising fearfully from her bed, she pulled the worn shawl about her and went to the door. She opened the door to find a small, shivering girl. She brought the coatless child in and tried to wrap her in a blanket. Shrugging it off, the girl whirled around to face the old woman. Tears now streamed down the small, anxious face.

"Please, please, help me!" she sobbed. "My mother just had a baby, and I can't wake her up, and the baby

just keeps crying and crying. Please, can you help me?"

Assuring her she would, the old woman left the weeping child by the fire to get warm and returned to her bedroom to dress. After she was dressed, she quickly gathered up the remainder of her Christmas dinner and placed it in a basket. Over this she placed a hot water bottle and two thin blankets, the best she had to offer. Although she had no other wrap, she placed her old shawl around the thin girl's heaving shoulders and headed for the door. Then, as an afterthought, she thrust the basket into the scared child's arms and returned to fetch the tiny Christmas tree.

"Maybe this will cheer up your mother and the baby," she said, closing the door after them. "A baby is a wonderful gift and should be welcomed into the world in a very special way."

Arm in arm, the old woman and the little girl plodded in the deep snow for miles with the wind blowing them about and the sleet lashing their faces. Just when the old woman felt she could not take another step, the little girl shouted, "We're here!" and much to the old woman's relief, they turned up the walkway of a broken-down cottage.

Tears sprang to the old woman's eyes as they entered the house and she saw the utter desolation of the cold, frightened little family. The young mother lay semi-conscious on the floor with nothing to cover her but a frayed blanket. In her arms lay the bawling baby. The wind knifed through the broken window panes, and snow was beginning to pile up on the sills. Four small children huddled in the corner trying to keep warm. No wood for the fireplace or stove was in sight.

The old woman sent the children to search for dry sticks, while she struck out to find straw to make a bed for the mother and her child. She remembered an old barn a mile or so down the road and retraced her steps there in hopes of finding enough straw for her needs.

She finally reached the barn and was elated to find several small piles of musty hay. Casting about for something to carry it in, she finally came upon a moldy piece of burlap. Gathering as much as she could possibly carry, she tied it up in the burlap and dragged it through the snow back to the little house.

Stumbling through the door, she pushed the hay over to the place where the mother and child lay and quickly made a bed for them. She then covered them up with the blankets she had brought and placed the hot water bottle on the baby's chest.

By this time the children had returned with their cache of sticks. She helped them kindle a fire in the stove and another one in the fireplace. Half-frozen, she warmed herself by the small fire and then began to prepare some food for the starving family.

After the mother was warm and nourished, the old woman could see that her mind was gradually clearing. Though the mother was still too groggy to speak plainly, her eyes blazed with love and appreciation. Satisfied that the mother was better and the children were warm and fed, the old woman slipped quietly out, leav-

ing behind her food, her blankets, her shawl, and her beloved little tree.

After what seemed hours, she finally reached her own home and climbed wearily into bed. For a long time she lay awake mourning her star and the things it stood for. Finally, satisfied that her husband would have wanted the destitute family to have it, she fell asleep.

Through the night and the following day, the mother and her child continued to improve. As the last rays of sunshine filtered through the window, she felt she had the strength to get up.

As she was struggling to her feet, a light from across the room nearly blinded her. For several minutes it shone so brightly that she could hardly open her eyes. When it finally dimmed, she thought it seemed to have radiated from the star on the old woman's tree.

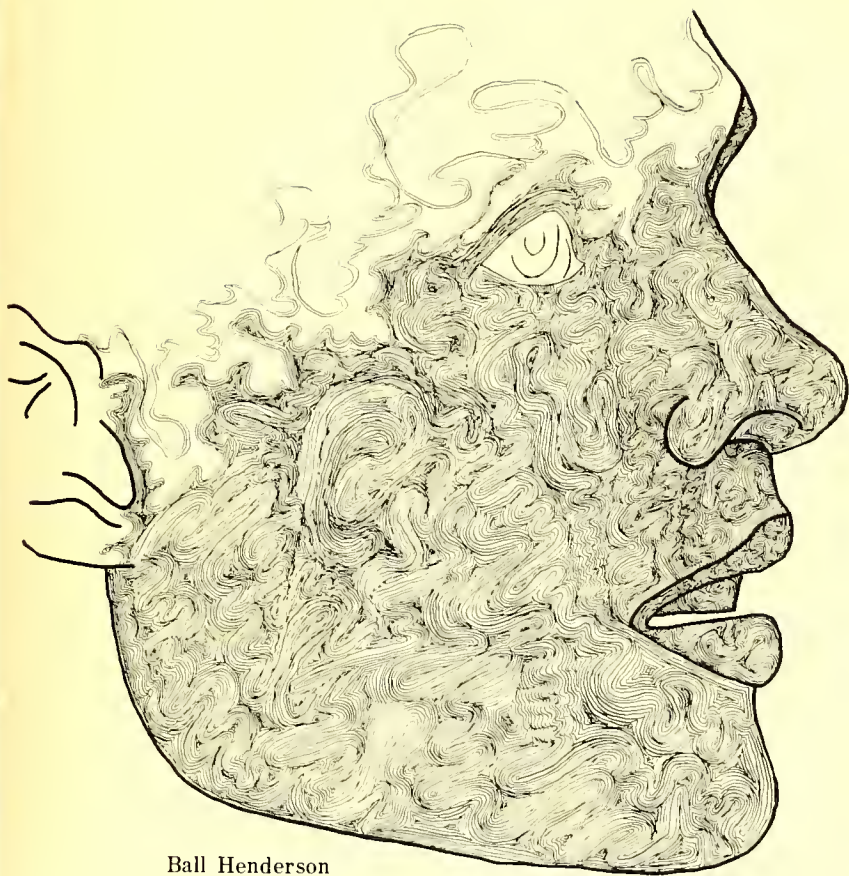
The sight of the tree brought rushing back to her the horrors and blessings of the night before. Although it was almost dark, she hurriedly sent the little girl to the old woman's house to invite her to come share the meager Christmas dinner that was rightfully hers.

When the old woman did not answer the little girl's first knock, the child became frightened and rapped a little louder. When the old woman still did not answer, the little girl pushed the door open and walked in. She found the whole house dark and the fire burned down. Deciding that the old woman must be resting, she tiptoed back to the bedroom.

In the bedroom, she found the old woman lying motionless on the bed, a tender smile on her lifeless lips. Through the window over the head of the bed, a blazing star threw its light on the old woman's face.

*Jean Schaefer  
Second Place, Prose  
Muse Contest*





Ball Henderson

Day Dreamer

Listen to the sound of your mind  
Ocean waves and seashore winds  
Comforting solace in your head  
Oblivious to us outside  
Change the scene at fantasy's whim  
Places you would rather be  
Feelings only felt within  
Grasping all yet grasping none  
Only in the windows of your eyes  
Can we guess at what's inside  
Glassy, oscillating balls  
tell us nothing, tell us all

*Ashley Dimmette*

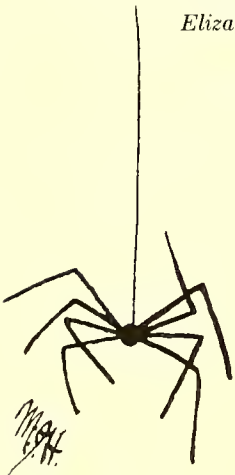
Lonesome Walls

The wind  
mournfully blew gray curtains  
of sand  
over the weather-beaten boards  
of the lonely house.  
Another bleak winter had passed,  
had left the house  
alone and empty.  
Another spring,  
the curious people would leave  
as suddenly as they had come.  
Why did they leave?  
The forlorn house knew,  
but wished to forget  
the haunting reasons for being  
unwanted for so long.

*Elizabeth Jane Archer*



Susan Adams



Autumn's Child

I am autumn's child,  
Gusts of purpose urging  
Me along like a leaf being  
Blown from a branch.  
I am autumn's child,  
Pencil gray loneliness  
Casting shadows over the  
Warmth of sunshine.  
I am autumn's child,  
Winter offers no comfort —  
Only a mocking challenge,  
A challenge not taken lightly.  
For I belong to Autumn,  
And I am autumn's child.

*Jocelyn Davis*



Gigi Taylor

Hurt

Hurt is like a hot coal  
That will never die.  
Burning fiercely so long,  
Then smoldering down  
Into a dull ache.

*Ellen McCown*

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**Poetry & Prose**—Suzanne Britt Jordan  
Michael Matros

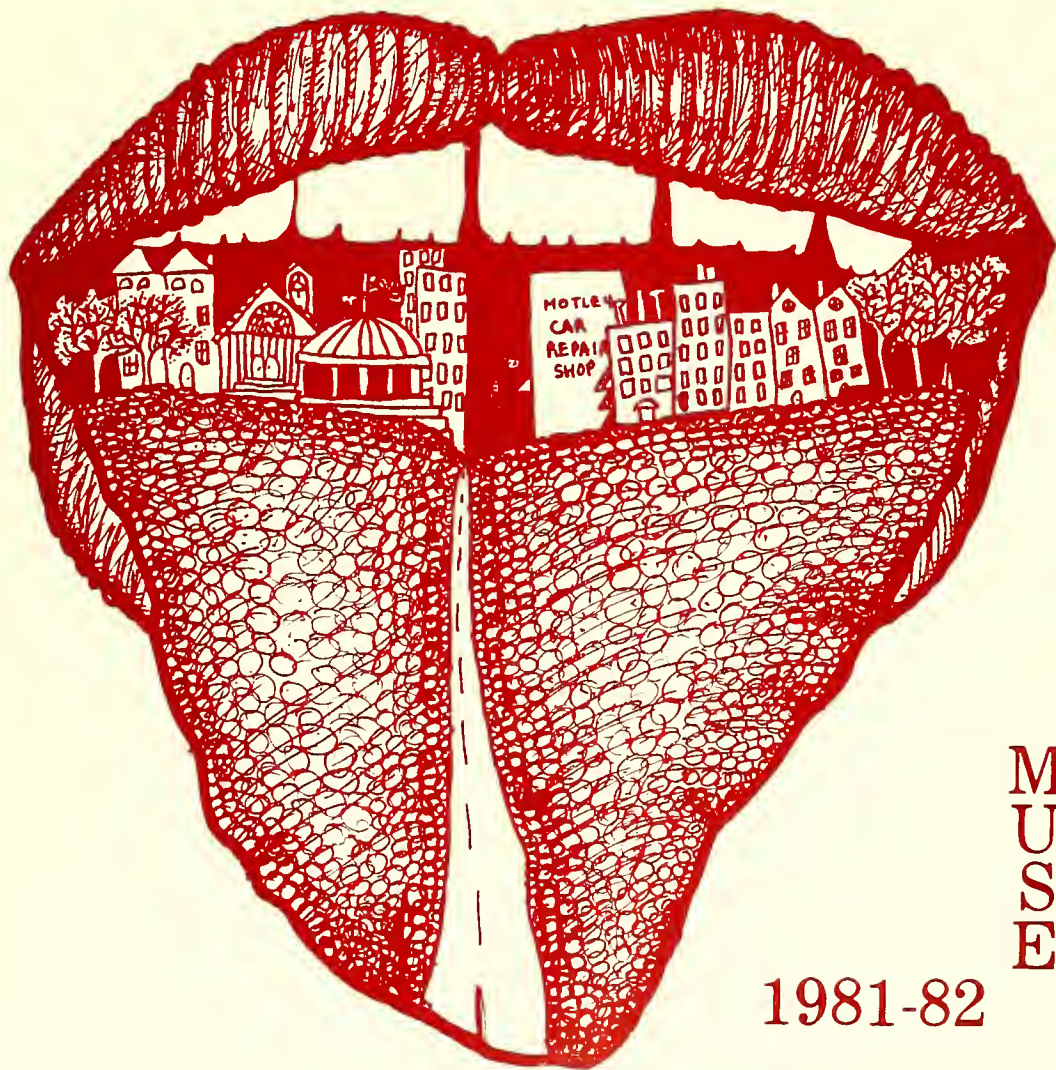


MAH.









MUSE

1981-82





The 1982 **Muse** is dedicated to Dr. Marcia C. Jones in honor of her services as former Advisor to the **Muse** and as present Dean of Students. This year the **Muse** staff recognizes her commitment to St. Mary's and its students.



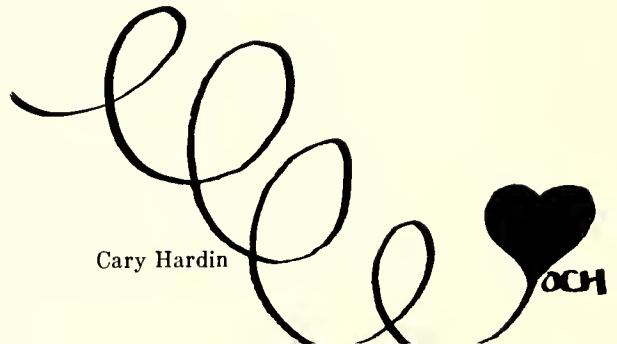
Cary Hardin

Hope Chest

Aged cedar clinging to hold together the past . . .  
Filled with Teddy Bear buttons,  
musical sea shells,  
and keys to doors I never saw.  
Postcards with pretty pictures,  
lace from my dress, my favorite dress,  
and hope, hope filled every corner  
And the aged cedar allowed none to seep out . . .

*Angel Archer  
First Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*

Cary Hardin



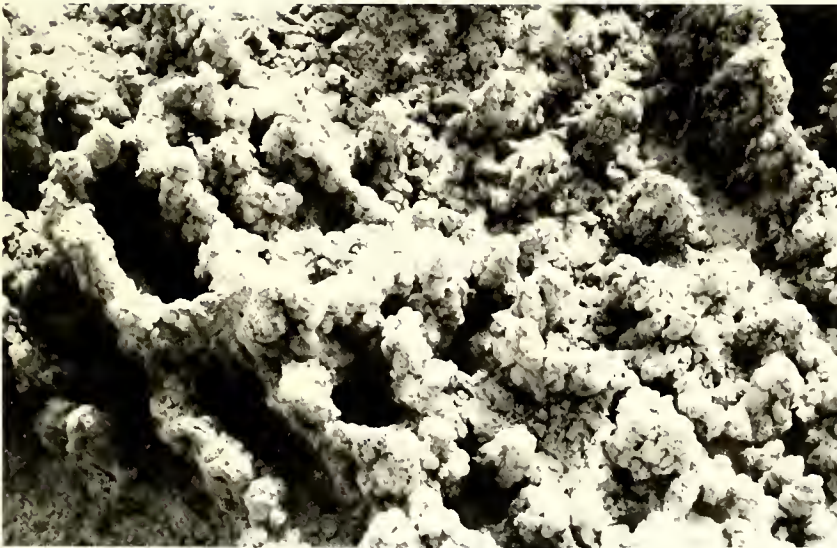
Star

Oh tiny diamond far away,  
Oh star in evening's sky,  
How small your worlds they seem to me.  
To them, how small am I?

As sun, oh star, to other earths  
How brightly you must shine.  
And as they look at other stars  
Do they notice mine?

How strange to think of my own sun  
As just a speck of light,  
Unnoticed in the darkened sky  
Of someone else's night.

*Rebecca Rogers*

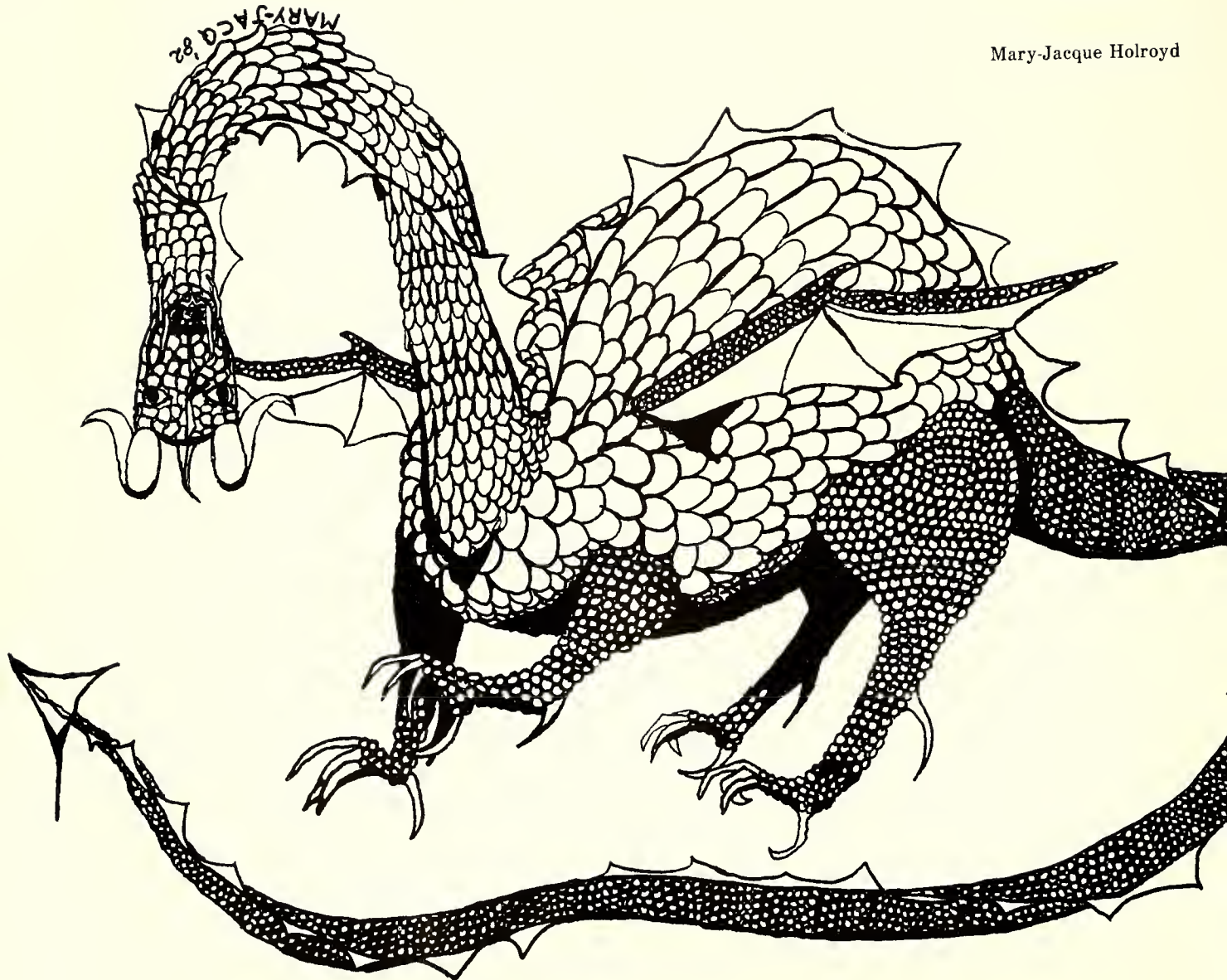


Catherine Williamson  
First Place, Photography  
Muse Contest

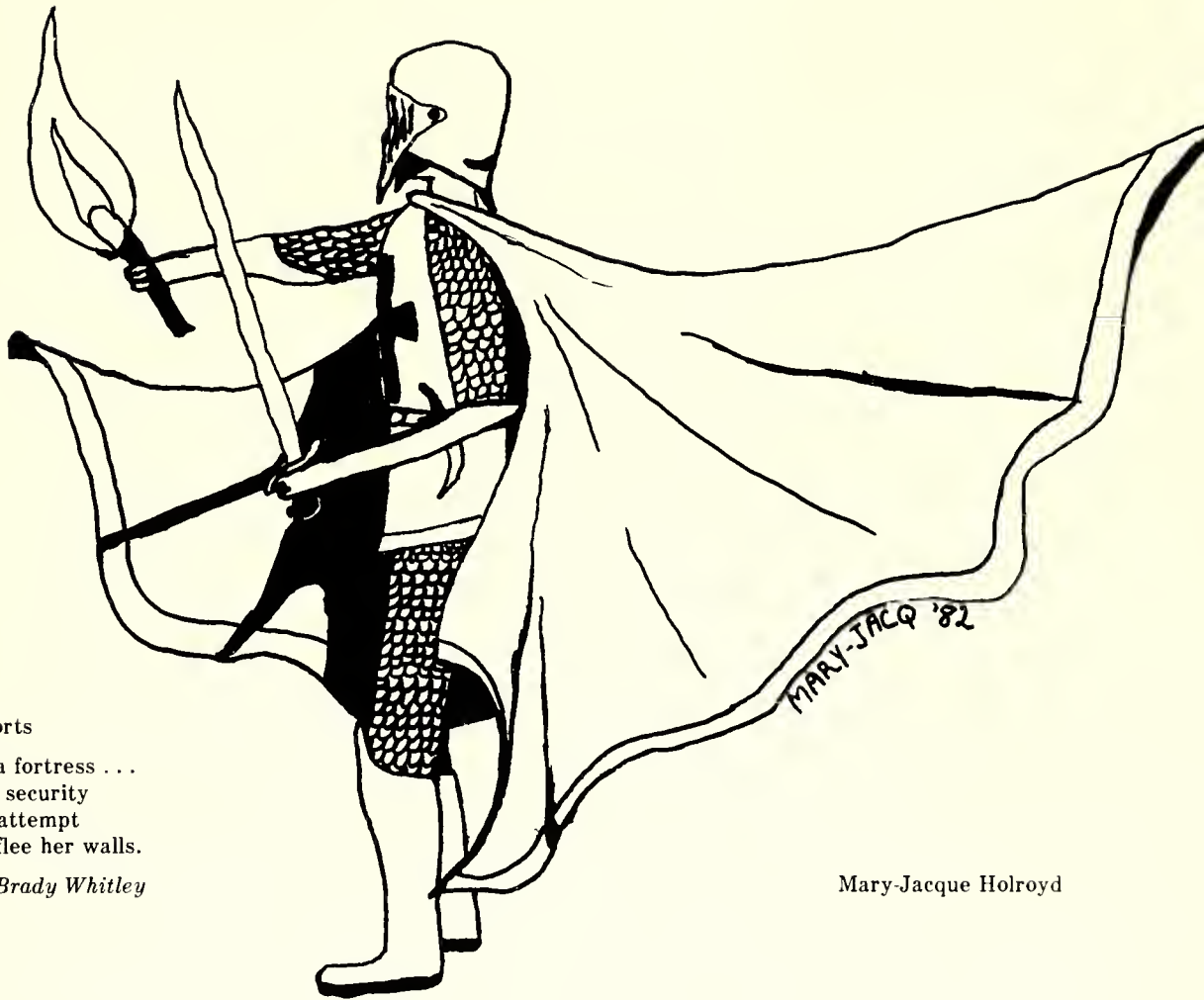


MARY-JACQ. 82

Mary-Jacque Holroyd







Comforts

Freedom is like a fortress . . .  
we seek her security  
yet we attempt  
to flee her walls.

*Brady Whitley*

Mary-Jacque Holroyd

Snow

Everything turned white outside  
like an innocent child.

Everything turned white outside  
like the pure Virgin Mary.

Everything turned white outside  
like a lamb.

And I am praying to be white and pure,  
looking at the white world.

*Ho Sook Yu*



Catherine Williamson

Jewel

In the snow, a lake,  
A sapphire on white velvet,  
Winter's own jewel

*Susan Brown*

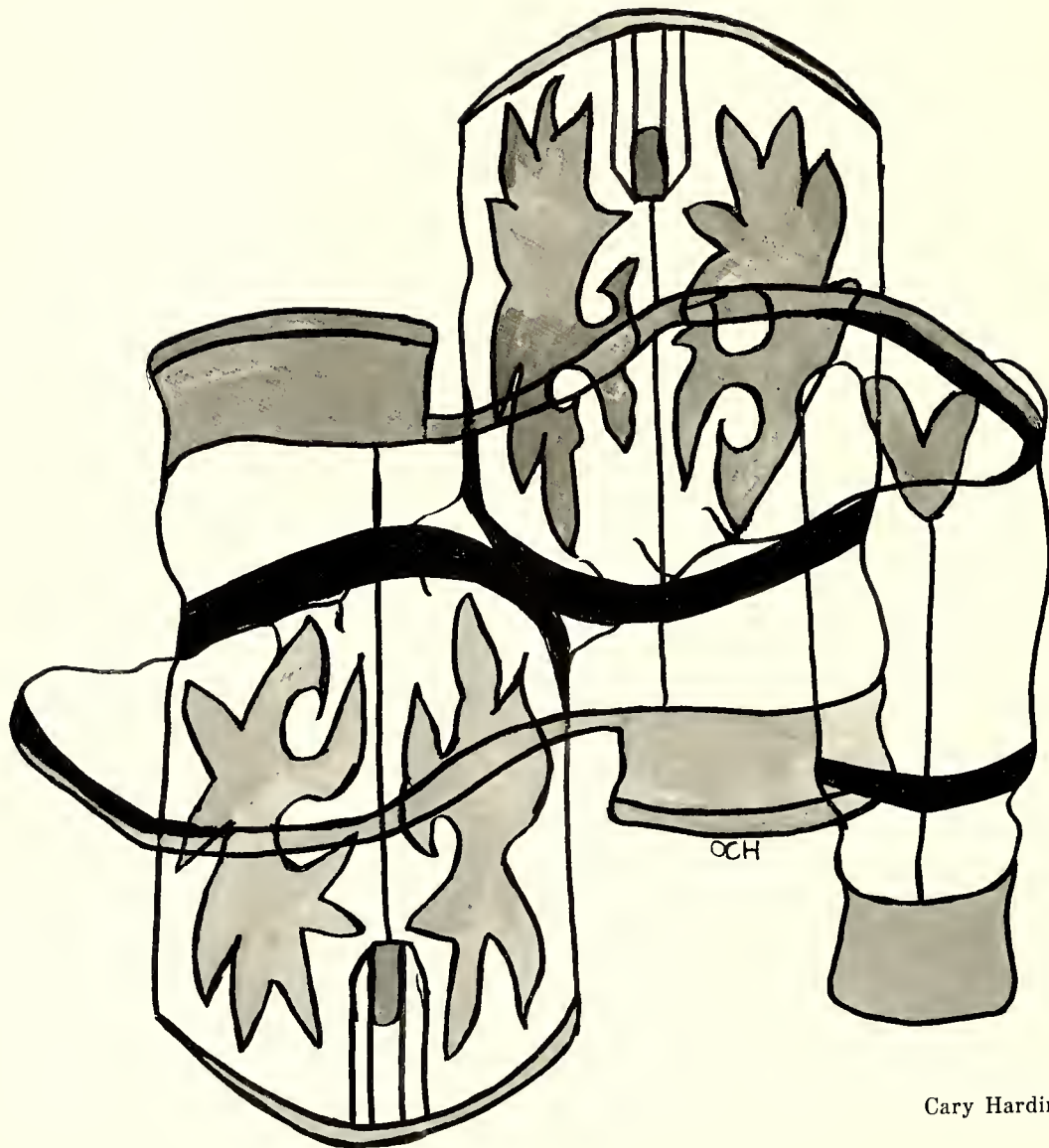


Cary Hardin

A Dream

Who is a dream really true to?  
Only to its holder.  
He cannot feel or touch it.  
Yet he feels it touch his heart.

*Cynthia Rouse*



Cary Hardin

## Coming Home

The airplane's engines buzz loudly in my ears.

The stewardess announces, "We will be landing in Houston soon. Please fasten your seatbelts and place all seats in upright position."

Looking out the window, I recognize the city at once—Houston, Texas. I remember the first time I arrived at this airport. I was only eight years old. My mother had died and I was coming to live with my father and step-mother. I felt so scared and alone in the huge airport. A nice stewardess who had been on the plane with me waited with me at the gate.

"How old are you Sarah?" she asked.

"Eight," I said as I watched the people in the airport. I wondered where all the people were going. I saw my father. She was with him. I never understood why he married her. She had been so different from my mother.

The airplane hits the runway with a thud. It is very bright outside. I'm sure it is hot and humid as well. Being born in Georgia, I cannot get used to Texas weather, landscape, and people. This is one of the reasons I moved back to Atlanta for college and have been living there since. Leaving the plane I remembered what Laura, my step-mother, had said when she called yesterday. She had said that father had had a heart attack and the doctors felt he had a good chance to live. But Laura felt I should come right away. I had not seen him in about eight years. Suzanne would probably be there—my half-sister who never could stay out of trouble. I remember the night she was born. It

was nearly nine o'clock on a rainy Sunday night. My father was in his study working on one of his cases. He was a dedicated lawyer. I only wish he had been more dedicated as a father. Laura was in her room. She had not been feeling well and she had gone to bed early. I had been playing in my room. I liked my new room. It had pink-flowered wallpaper. In my old room when I lived with my mother the walls were just white. But this room had a canopy bed. The canopy and bedspread matched the draperies which were green, matching the green stems of the flowers in the wallpaper. Daddy said my baby brother or sister would come soon. I wondered if it would be a boy or a girl. I wanted it to be a girl because my friends said that little brothers could be pests, breaking your dolls and messing up your room.

I heard talking in the hall. I walked over to the door. I opened it, peeking out. Daddy and Laura were standing in the hall. He had her blue suitcase that she bought for her trip to London last summer. Seeing me standing in the doorway, he said, "Laura is going to the hospital, Sarah. It is time for the baby to come."

"Can I come?" I asked.

"No, you must stay here with Martha."

Martha was our housekeeper. She also took care of me. She was very kind. She was heavy, with gray hair pulled back, away from her face. We waited up very late until the phone rang and my father said, "It's a girl!"

"Taxi," I called loudly. A bright yellow cab pulled up. The cab driver loaded my luggage in the trunk and

we were off. It would be about a forty-five minute drive to the house, which probably hadn't changed much. It would still be a big white colonial with a circular driveway. When I was twelve we had a big party on the back patio. I remember the smell of the barbecue in the air. It was a bright Saturday in April. A warm breeze was blowing. I was wearing a blue and white sailor sun dress with white sandals. Laura was playing the gracious hostess. My step-mother and I seemed to be getting along better. Suzanne, my sister, was now three. Laura had told everyone that Martha would bring Suzanne out after she woke up from her nap. My father was conversing with some of his business friends.

"Sarah," I heard someone say.

I turned around. It was my Aunt Margaret. She was my father's younger sister. She was married but she didn't have any children. She looked very nice. She was wearing a blue-green silk blouse with white pants. Her thick blond hair was pulled back with combs.

"Sarah," she repeated, "My, don't you look pretty today."

"Thank you," I said smiling. "Are you enjoying the party, Aunt Margaret?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," she replied, "I just love these outdoor get-togethers. The weather is just perfect for it too."

"Laura said that you and Uncle Frank might move to Dallas," I said unhappily.

"Well, I doubt very much that we'll leave Houston. As you know I was born and raised here. Houston is my home."

"The traffic is really bad today," the cab driver said, jolting me back to the present. I didn't reply. The traffic *was* bad and this heat unbearably hot. I looked at my watch. It was almost four o'clock. I would soon be at the house.

"Suppose to rain tomorrow. Maybe it'll cool this place down," the cab driver said.

"Perhaps," I replied staring out the window at rows of cars.

"Are ya here on vacation?" the driver asked.

"My family lives here. I used to live here before I went to college."

My mind returned to the time before I left Texas. My father and I had not gotten along during my last years in high school. We were constantly arguing about little things mostly. I felt I had to get away. Maybe in some way, in some silly way, I blamed him for my mother's death. After he left and they got divorced she died. All these years I blamed him but . . . but it wasn't his fault. Perhaps he sensed my hostility.

"We're here miss. Hey, are you okay?" the cab driver asked. Looking up at the house, the house where I grew up, tears appeared in my eyes and I said, "I'm home—I've come home."

*Tracy Young*



Lavender

Awakening lull of the lark  
and lackadaisical lip-lapping sea,  
Persuade graceful ladylove  
To lift the veil of dawn.

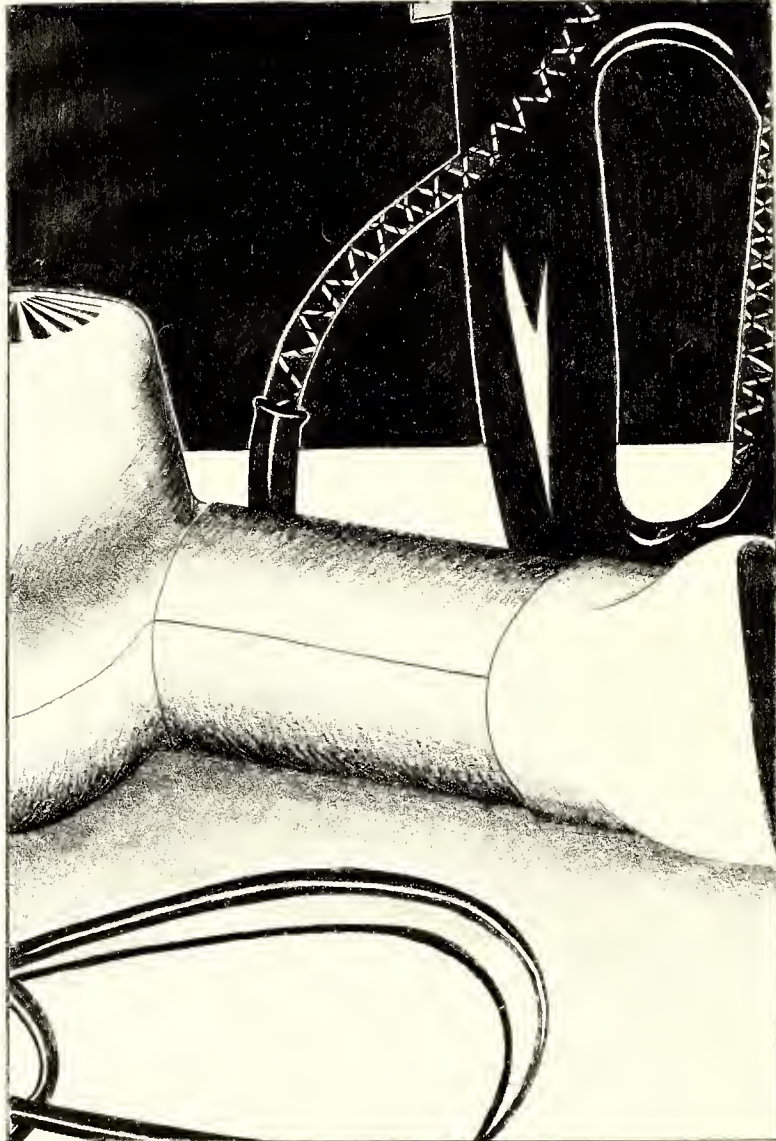
Dress in lace,  
Bend and breathe a lilac calm,  
Amethyst mist and velvet.

*Jennifer Twiggs  
Second Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*

Cary Hardin

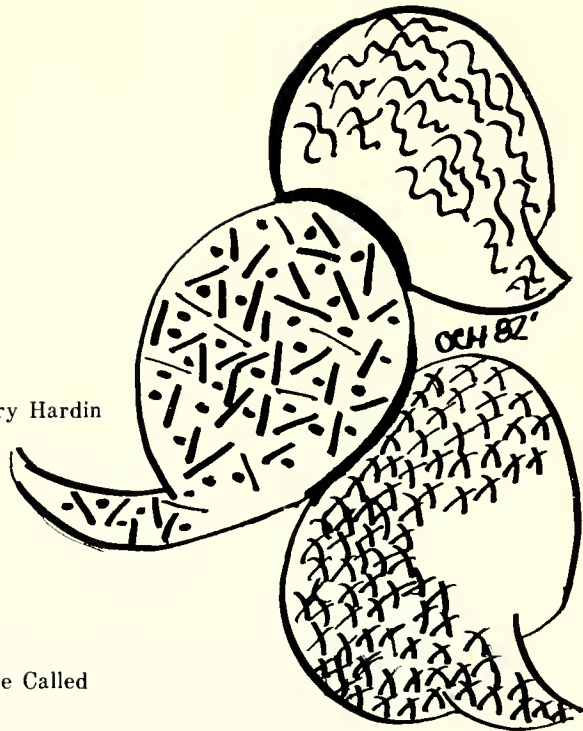


St. Mary's College Library  
Raleigh, N. C.



*Allyson Rowland  
Second Place, Art  
Muse Contest*

Cary Hardin



You Should Have Called

Okay –  
Now I'm really mad!  
You could have called but you didn't!  
    I'm not that hard to talk to,  
        not that hard to reach . . .  
I get mad when I start to  
    feel this way.  
I hate dependency!  
I shouldn't let you get me in a place  
    where I begin  
        to doubt myself.  
Damn it!  
You should have called  
    but I shouldn't have waited.

*Brady Whitley*



### Stream-hug

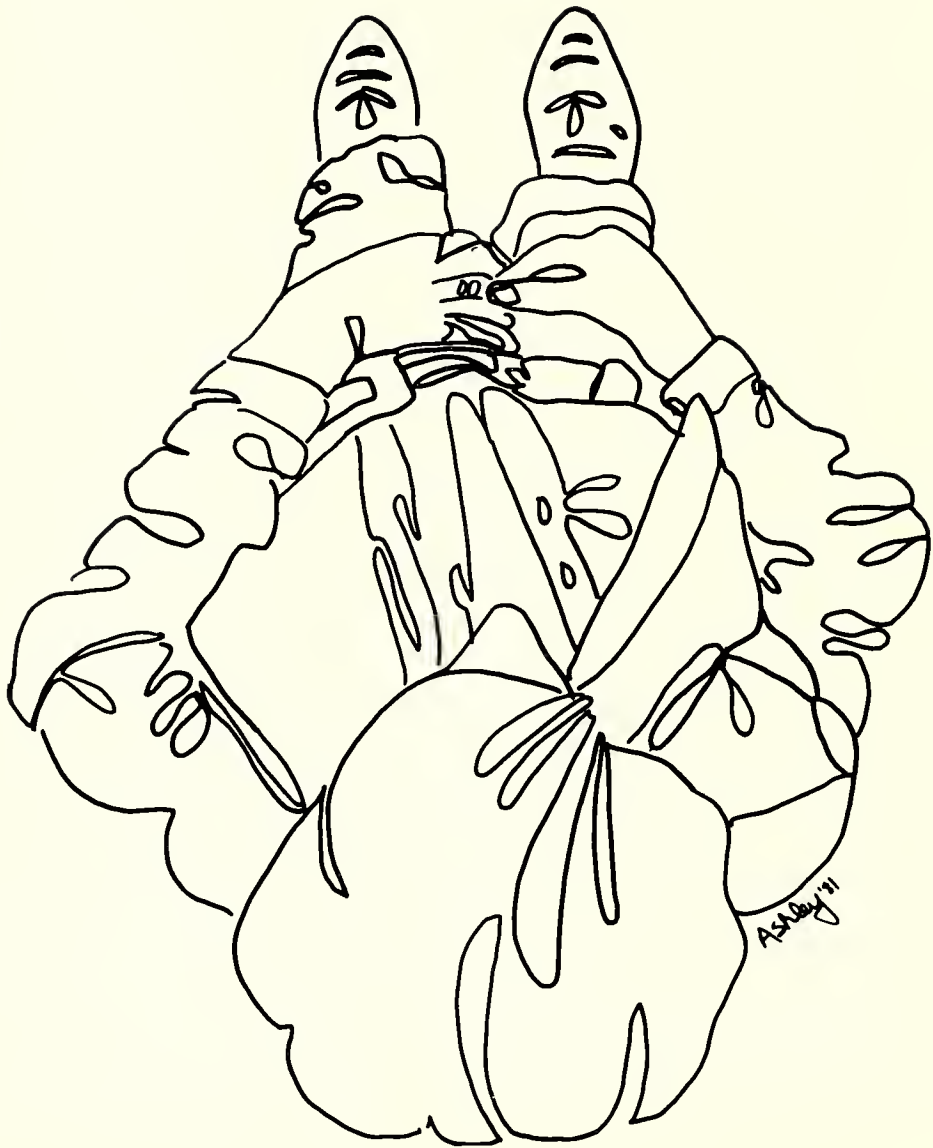
The stream opens her arms and  
hugs all within reach  
She touches the banks with wet  
fingers  
First stretching then reclining  
As if she longs for just one  
moment to stop her ageless  
running . . . and lie still.

*Beth Roberts*  
*Third Place, Poetry*  
*Muse Contest*

### What Augustine Did With Sunlight

He turned it a particle at a time  
(amoebas of light beneath the fingernails),  
the whole growing sphere into a vine,  
each spine of light a star,  
each star a woman,  
each woman a huge wonderful bulb  
of walking sun.  
To turn and watch an action building rings  
must be to listen to the water of a deed  
washing other deeds, the whole  
spectacular plant swaying on a stem  
slight as breathing.

*Anna Wooten-Hawkins*







*Ashley Campbell  
First Place, Art  
Muse Contest*

When The Moon Seems Somehow Brighter

The moon seems somehow brighter when hung in summer skies,  
As a Pennsylvania evening closes tight her sleepy eyes.  
The peace I feel here speaks to me of life, love, and friends,  
And I find that I am wishing that this time would never end.

I sadly think of leaving, the moon fills my eyes,  
I fix my gaze above into starry summer skies.  
There's an aching filled inside me made of sadness, love, and pain;  
I know the Magic Something another heart has claimed.

*Angel Archer*



Pip Johnson



Mary-Jacque Holroyd

#### The Life Of Leaves

the leaves begin to turn  
from spring green, to autumn brown and rust—  
one by one.  
they rumble to the ground  
falling peacefully,  
they form a circle of warmth,  
a soft breeze picks up a  
few strays, carrying them to a foreign home—  
they fly gracefully,  
melodically like the lyrics of a song,  
float one by one out of sight—  
only a few remain  
huddled like frightened  
children searching for love.

*Amy Chandler*

*Kathryn MacDonald  
Third Place, Art  
Muse Contest*



## Virgins

Pecans fall from the trees here. They litter the amazingly thriving grass along with rotting acorns and just-browning leaves. Squirrels live in these trees. Birds nest in them, outnumbering the hornets. Crickets call to each other during the night. These things go through their life cycles without thinking. Ignoring us.

I live here with them, but I live away from them. I live in a private school in which most everyone has nice clothes and an unstrained checkbook. Their parents have sent them to Europe at least once because it's a pilgrimage everyone who has money has to make. It's something to talk about when they come back to school in the fall.

They're wealthy and I'm poor. Yet I feel sorry for them as I feel sorry for everything stagnant and unchanging. Life will apparently go only in one direction for 470 of the 500 of us—in the direction of monetary comfort. Unless of course bankruptcy rears its ugly head, in which case chaos and emotional instability will strike. But that's not likely to happen. Not before the Second Coming anyway.

Once, a long time ago I wanted what they have. I don't want it anymore. I don't want to spend money because I'm bored. I don't want to write checks left and right and laugh hysterically because I'm overdrawn at the bank. I don't want to be useless because I get everything that I want.

I live with useless people—useless would-be

women. Girls who don't have the slightest inkling of how to use an iron or how to wash a cotton blouse. They make me angry most of the time. Offend me in the most intimate ways by giving their arrogance and conceit precedence over courtesy.

I withdraw into my silence, afraid to open my mouth lest I say something they may regret. Holding my tongue is perhaps the hardest part of being here. Outwardly taking their bullshit while burning internally. Remaining abject takes all my strength sometimes, but it keeps me sane.

The alarm went off an hour ago. I've slept through the deafening buzz and an eight o'clock class. I sit up straight in bed, pretending to be awake. My roommate is curled up in her bed, her eyes squinted shut. Yesterday's make-up is smeared on her pillow. Her hair is in tangles. I can tell by the expression on her face that her dreams are self-indulgent. I begin to dress very quickly. I hate her most in the morning.

I put on the dirty jeans I wore Tuesday and the sweater I bought in Hyannis. My roommate yawns and I leave the room before she can open her eyes or utter a greeting.

The bathroom floor is wet and slimy to the touch of my barefeet. A cockroach crawls up the wall as I place my bath towel on the metal rack. The girl standing next to me says, "Oh, gross"—and continues to spit toothpaste into the sink. I turn on the hot water that only runs cold. The roach disappears behind the

mirror into which I am staring. I look like death warmed over before and after I wash my face, but there's no one here I want to impress.

The girl standing next to me releases her last string of blue spit into the basin and wipes her mouth with the back of her hand. "Are you going to breakfast?" she asks me. "No," I mutter inaudibly, never taking my eyes off the goo in the sink. I feel sick.

My roommate has her face thrust into her two thousand watt make-up mirror, her lips drawn into a permanent pout. Her ears have been pierced seven times to conform with "punk". Each day she looks more conspicuous. She exudes foolishness.

She looks at me out of the corner of her eye. She sees that I see and continues to disguise her natural features. She is a very pretty girl yet she is pretentious and conforms to unwritten rules. We turn our eyes away simultaneously. We hate each other most in the morning.

The Italian-looking girl who sits in front of me English is playing with her wet hair. Twisting and pulling it so that it looks painful. My eyes never leave the back of her head. There are fifteen of us in the classroom, each looking in a different direction. The teacher, someone else's back, the blackboard, the window, the ceiling.

I'm looking at Allison's wet uncomfortable hair; my eyes are glued to it but my mind is miles away. Somewhere in Massachusetts. Cape Cod to be precise.

It is just beginning to turn nice there. After Labor Day the tourists leave and peace returns. I'm sure the temperature has not risen above forty-five degrees in several weeks. I love cold weather and I'd love to sit on the deserted beach in Dennis, wrapped in wool, watching the frigid waves roll up to the shore. I went to the beach last December when the snow covered the sand like a carpet and the waves were frozen in suspended animation. I miss Massachusetts.

A fly buzzes in my ear. I jump at the sensation, on the verge of making a queer noise, but then I remember where I am.

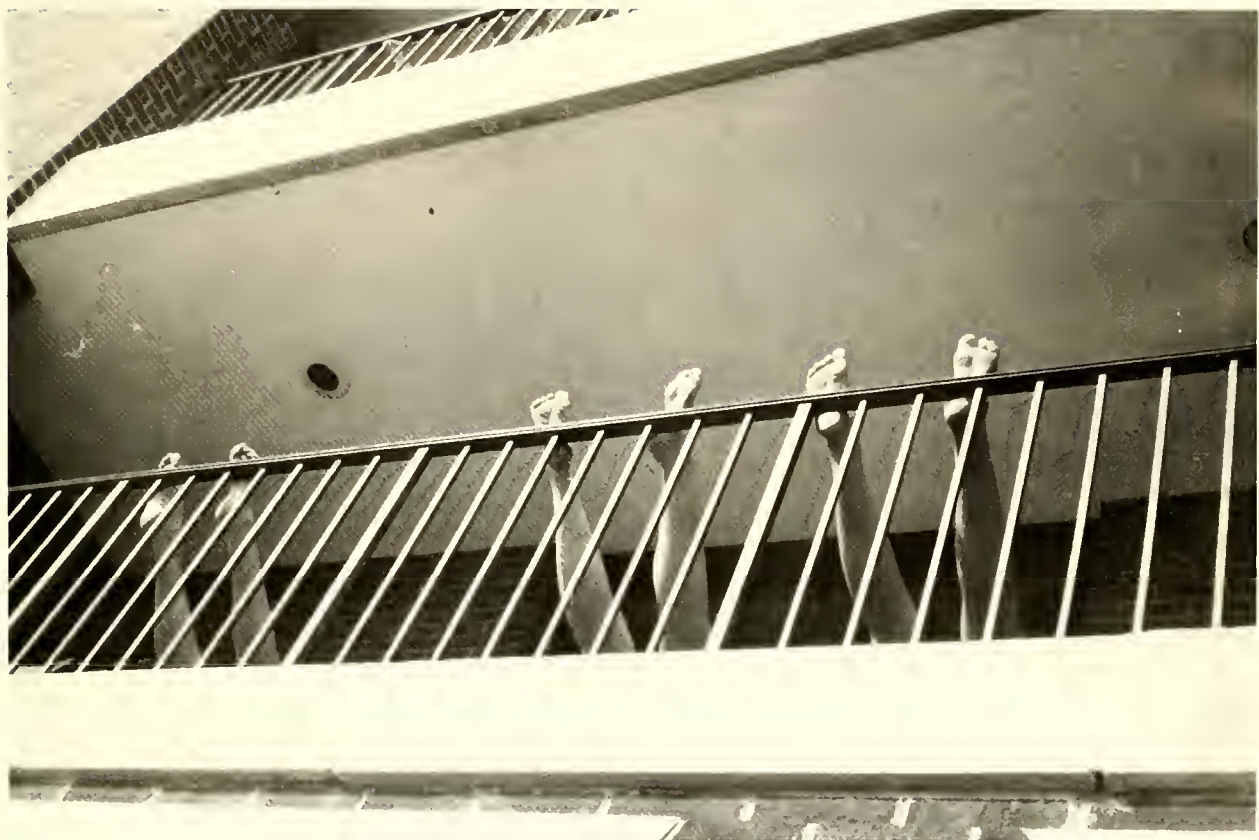
I bring myself back to the apathetic classroom, away from Allison's hair. I search the walls for a clock but there is none. Counting minutes only makes the time go slower.

I finger dirty Kleenexes in my pocket. I've caught a cold because my roommate insists on sleeping with the windows open. The temperature here is almost lunar. Searing heat in the daytime and near freezing at night. I'm naturally cold-blooded and can't adjust.

The teacher is dictating vocabulary words. The lethargy has lifted around me as I watch the others scribbling desperately to keep up. I stare at the blank sheet of paper in front of me. I know I'm behind and will never catch up. And I don't care.

*Laurie Garlington  
First Place, Prose  
Muse Contest*



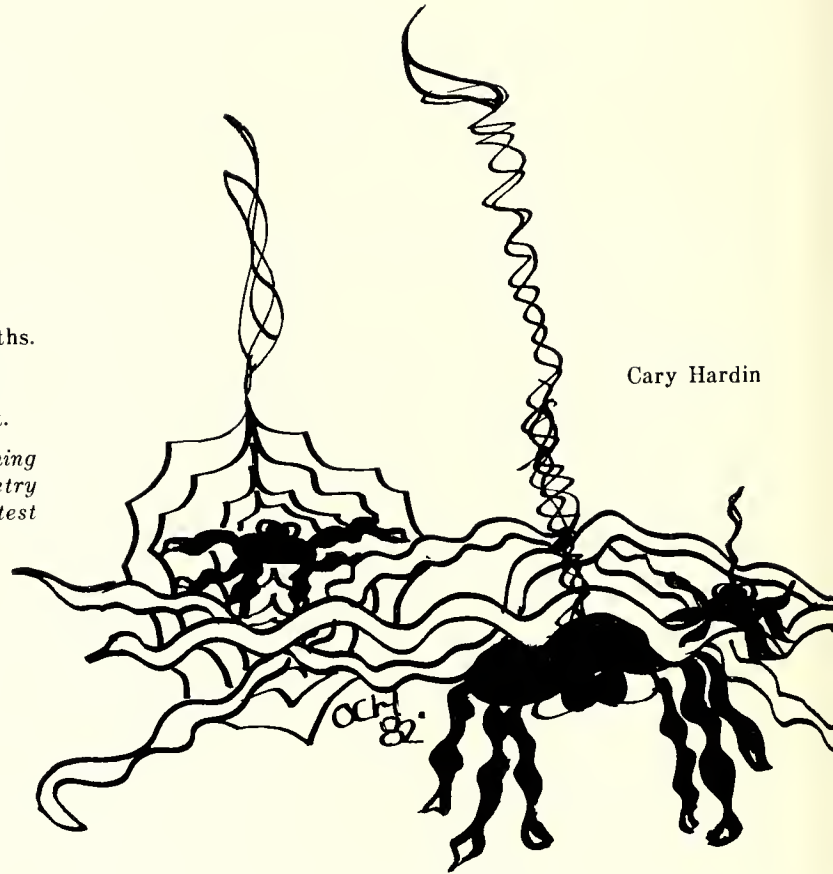


Foo Vaeth

Buildings . . . 1868-1981

As symbols of better times  
The buildings still stand,  
Vacant, grey, sacred, cold.  
People come to pay homage  
Looking for smiling, familiar faces  
But finding none there.  
Echoes of yesterday, walking gravel paths.  
Laughing, roommates play in the field  
While leaves flirtatiously swirl away  
On winds carrying shadows of the past.

*Kiki Glendening  
Honorable Mention, Poetry  
Muse Contest*

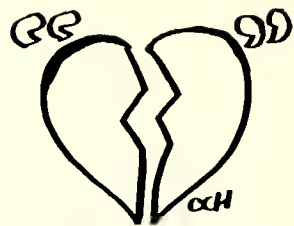


Cary Hardin

Just A Glance

Walking into the path the nameless stranger stole it  
He didn't know the value  
didn't realize the crime  
With just a polite hello he captured it  
smothered it without a pillow  
stabbed it without a knife  
Drowning the victim's deepening dreams he freely fled  
His image replacing the stolen possession.

*Kathryn MacDonald*



Cary Hardin

### Remember Me

Inside the green eyes grows chaos.  
Watch me, feel me.  
There is no love lost.  
My friends no longer wait for me.

I caught my tears, squeezed them dry.  
The stars took my hand at noon;  
I saw the future fade with blueness in  
the sky.

Now see my body, feel it.  
Wait for the warmth to return.  
For even death can't steal it.

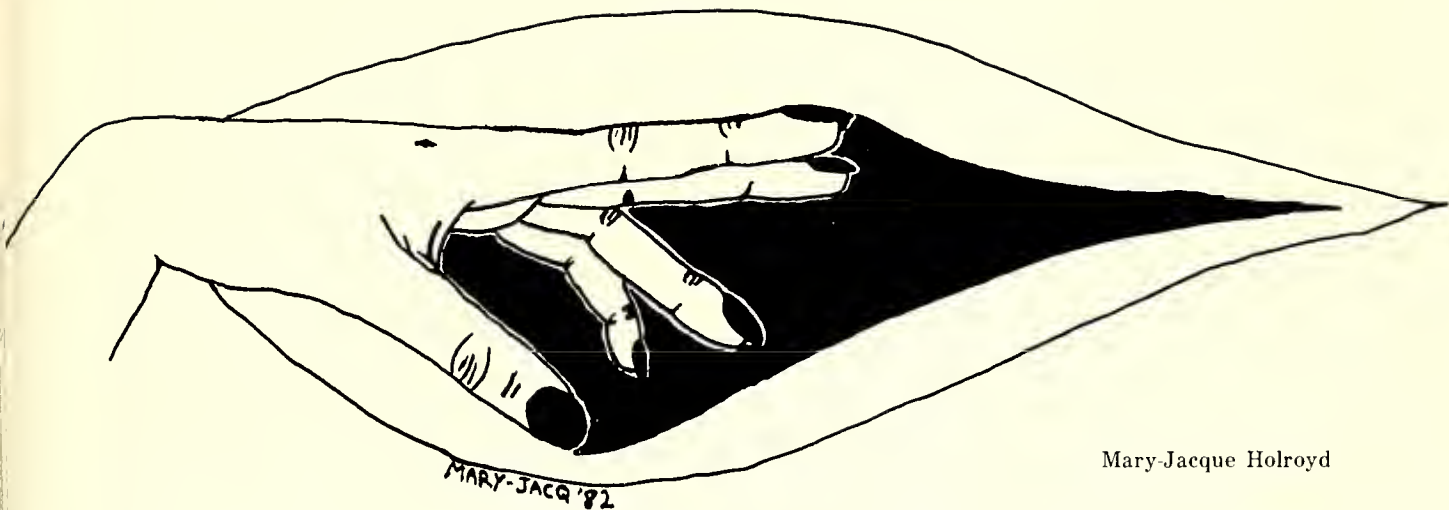
Open my eyes, tear away the green.  
Take from me my shroud of sadness.  
Cleanse me with a kiss.

Although I leave you, you must catch me  
in your eyes.  
Look for me where you do not expect to see me.  
I am there even in your doubting.  
Yet worlds away, I am asleep.

*Laurie Garlington*



Kathryn MacDonald



Mary-Jacque Holroyd

Julia

Silent strangers  
took time  
to look,  
and listen . . .

But they never reached  
far enough,  
For the chilling wind  
whispered her laughter  
in the distance.

The strangers,  
forever silent,  
never really listened . . .  
They could have  
never understood  
her laughter.

*Brady Whitley*



Kathryn MacDonald



### Beginnings and Endings

The cooling wind lifts  
And blows across my dozing body.  
I am in another place  
Where the lifts of the cooling wind are familiar.  
I am there for a minute,  
In the dusk that fades  
Everything to dark.  
But the minute has passed  
And I get up to see  
Myself and the tall blinds reflected in the mirror.

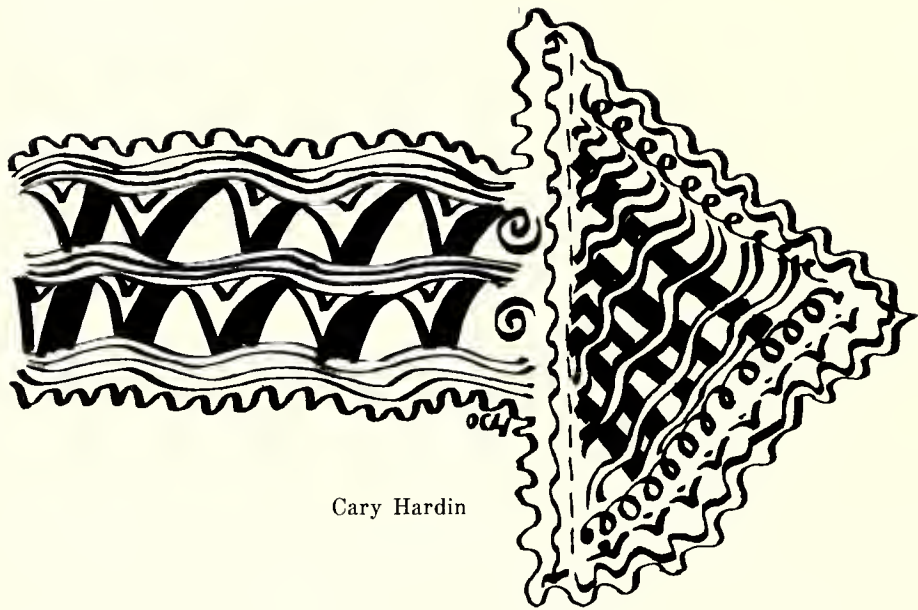
I remember watching the circle out front,  
The cars coming in  
And the ones leaving—  
People coming and going.  
Each inch of the ride being different from the last,  
As in life  
The people in their cars being alone  
Or with someone else.  
As in life, where we ride alone sometimes  
But know that at another time  
There will be someone else to share the ride.

We all made a new beginning  
When we rode into that circle for the first time.  
We all made a new beginning

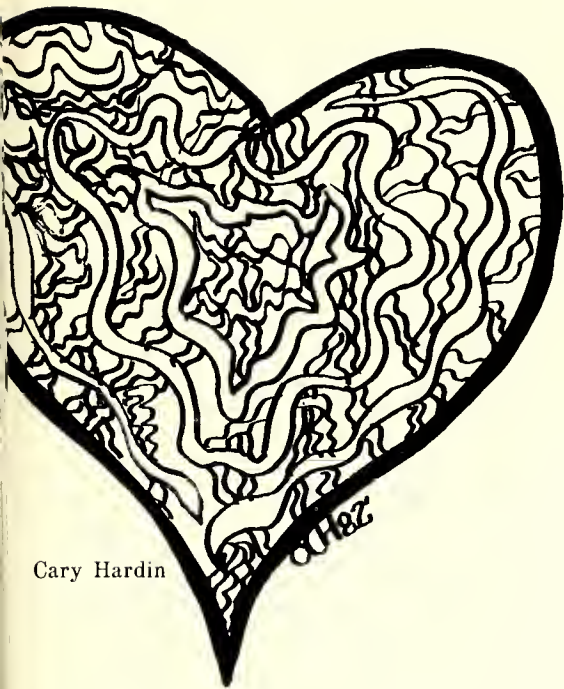
When we rode into our circle of life.

Birth is the beginning,  
Death is the end.  
But there is the circle which  
Has no beginning,  
Has no end.  
I do not understand,  
No one truly understands life.  
When we invent,  
Think,  
And breathe,  
We start at the beginning  
As we do when  
We enter the circle out front.  
We start at the beginning.  
Simply because we cannot conceive  
That there is always something before.  
We stop at the end  
Simply because we cannot conceive  
That there is always something beyond.  
It is not a simple thing.  
We cannot understand it.  
Yet we live it. . . .

*Shirley Fawcett*



Cary Hardin



Cary Hardin

Memorium

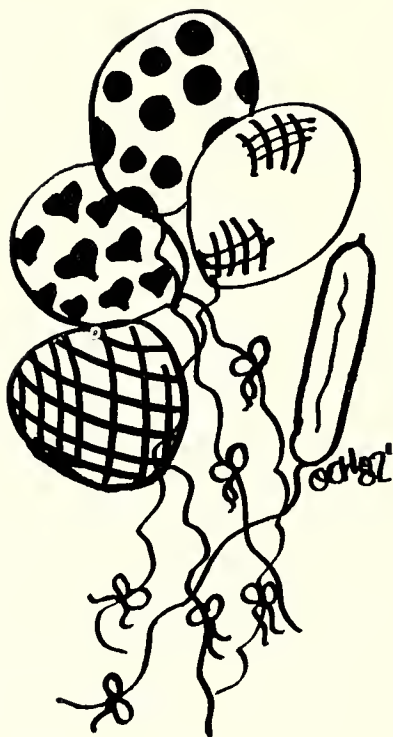
A single rose  
Remains in a vase  
Its hue long faded  
Like the definition  
Of your face  
Which softens with time  
Until season's warmth  
Rejuvenates  
What winter won't allow.

*Jocelyn Davis*  
*Honorable Mention, Poetry*  
*Muse Contest*

Cover design by  
Pip Johnson

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Kiki Glendening  
Cary Hardin  
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Cynthia Rouse  
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Ann Whitaker  
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Faculty Advisor

**Judges**

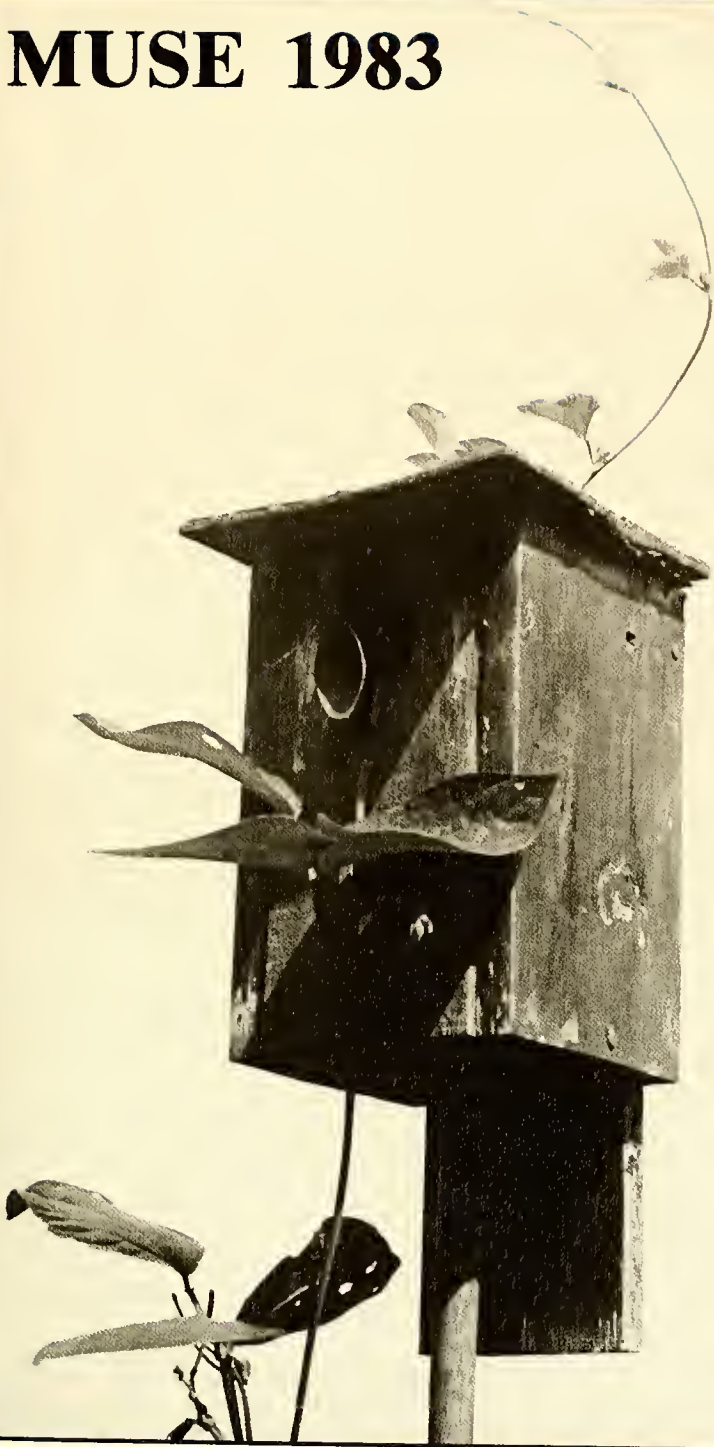
Art – Sally Rector  
Photography – Jim Moore  
Poetry and Prose – Shirley Moody







# MUSE 1983





For Calliope, Terpsichore, Erato,  
and the goddesses of Memory . . .

Saint Mary's College

|                  |  |
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| Muse Editor      | Elizabeth Archer   |
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| Editorial Staff  | Amy Hurka<br>Jacqueline Morris<br>Karen Mullican<br>Laura Reiley<br>Katherine Wilson<br>Ann Whitaker |

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| Muse Advisor | Anna Wooten-Hawkins |
|--------------|---------------------|

Muse Contest

|              |                      |
|--------------|----------------------|
| Art Judge    | Conrad Wiser         |
| Poetry Judge | Betty Adcock         |
| Prose Judge  | Angela Davis-Gardner |

With special thanks to the Muse Week Writers:

Betty Adcock  
Sally Buckner  
Angela Davis-Gardner  
Richard Kenney  
Steve Smith  
Julie Suk

*\*Cover photograph by Florence Norris*

## THE ATTACK

*Brady Whitley*

Death winds  
roll in from the sea,  
tides rising. . .

You land like Blackbeard's men—  
no one knew they were coming  
in the quiet,  
but you are known.

Our lighthouse sees you—  
This stormy sea-blue darkness  
holds your shadow  
on the sky's blackening edge.  
The shoreline listens.

We wait for you, Intruder,  
doors bolted,  
windows buckled,  
ears to the wind.  
And we expect your visit. . .  
no surprise  
in this attack—

Your visit reminds us of  
Blackbeard's bloody night.  
The wind cries mercy,  
for tonight  
the water screams around us as  
honking ship horns  
die on the edge of the sky.

*First Place, Poetry*  
Muse Contest

## A HINT OF JUNE

*Elizabeth Archer*

Discarded wrappings  
    crinkle in the flames.

Colored ashes glow silently.

Mixed melodies carousel  
    through the den.

Balls of light, and drummers  
    nestled in white snow,  
        enter the darkness of oak.

Stacked storybook tins  
    jingle with emptiness.

The scent of sugar  
    lingers near the stove.

But I  
    can smell the sea oats.

*Third Place, Poetry*  
Muse Contest



## THE STORM ZEUS BLEW

by Brady Whitley

A blanket of lightning unfolded across the dark sky and spread out to distant stars. White strips split and shattered into long ghostlike fingers, cold and wrinkly. The wind seemed to reach out of the clouds as if to steal Carrington from her safe bed.

It was raining again, really pouring now. The summer wind blew waves of rain through the screen coverings of the open windows. To Carrington, the rain was friendly; it rained softly. The thunder was angry, though. It began by striking the ground, then it shook the house, then her quiet room began to shake. The thunder was angry like a raging man getting ready to strike out at someone. Carrington shuddered at the sound of it and slid deeper into the security of her linen coverings; the weight of them helped her feel shielded.

The thunder sounded again, its booms ringing louder and in more confusing number. With the next loud boom a shadow appeared in her door. Marc, barely three years old, held a straggly blue blanket in one hand, and in the other, he held a battered stuffed bear.

"Carrie," whined Marc softly, "I'm scared."

"Ssh. Climb in Marc. It's almost over. The wind's dying down and the thunder sounds like it's moving away from us. Climb in with me and you can go back to sleep."

Marc stepped onto the cold bed frame, stretched his knees up to the top of the bed and pulled himself up with the covers. The two straightened their pajamas and then rearranged the covers, flattening out wrinkles and rises in the navy blue comforter. This comforter was Carrington's favorite; yellow and white daisies were thrown haphazardly onto a deep royal backdrop. The daisies spread and landed in overflowing heaps. To her, it was like being in a field of fresh country flowers.

The rain continued to blow in through the screens, yet it came with less force. Her pale yellow curtains danced on with the strongest winds. When the wet air whirled in, the yellow curtains took on the shape of unknown fairies. They were good fairies, the kind that spread happiness with sparkling bits of moon dust. She knew these fairies were good, because they took her to beautiful places. In dreams, they led her through fields of endless daisies.

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Carrington lifted herself to a sitting position. Pulling back the covers, she reached down to her feet and shook Marc, who was curled up in a ball where the sheet ends were tucked in. She wondered how he ever breathed down there in all those twisted covers.

"Marc, breakfast is ready."

Marc gave a little nod with his curly head, sheets rising and falling with his shaking. He stretched his light blue flannel sleeves

from his sleeping pocket and then crawled on his knees towards the bed's headboard where Carrington's oversized pillows rested against fingerprinted brass. Both of them slid off either side of her twin bed, landing with a slight bounce on the cool pine floor. In the middle of one of his widest yawns, Marc pulled his pajama bottoms up to keep them from dragging. He wore the ones their father had given him, and the grape juice stains down the front masked the faded baseball caps that marched from left to right across his chest. Carrington turned and led him down the stairs to the kitchen table where plates and silverware, reflecting the bright morning sun, hurt the children's puffy eyes. Marc climbed in his highchair so that he could reach the table better. It wasn't a baby's highchair. Marc wasn't a baby anymore. Carrington placed an extra pillow in her chair. She was taller, so she didn't need the highchair.

"Here Carrington. Help yourself and then help Marc to some." Their mother offered a platter of hot, steaming bacon and eggs. Carrington set the platter down and reached to scoop a spoonful of eggs onto her plate. She got lots of bacon because she loved bacon. Then she scooped another spoonful of eggs and balanced them in the air over her brother's plate, where she slid them off in a glump. If Carrington could have had her way, she thought a bowl of cereal would have tasted much better . . . the kind with little bits of colored marshmallow in it.

"It rained again last night," came their mother's voice from the other side of the table. "I bet we'll have an extra green summer with all this new rain."

Carrie thought about it. She pictured the farm. Her Dad lived there now. Three towering oak trees reigned over flat ground covered in endless wild grasses with little yellow and light-lavender flowers. The two-story farm house rested deep in the woods, just visible from certain spaces on the field's edge. That house was where their father lived now. Carrington had only been there once, but she remembered it well. She kept trying to concentrate on eating her eggs. She knew her mother would want her to finish every bite. But her Dad kept coming back to her, and she heard him yelling as he had the summer day he left, without returning.

Carrie was glad her brother Marc was too young to remember that day. It started with a fight. Her mother crouched on the garage steps with her head resting on balled-up fists, and she cried late into the night. At first her mother cried softly. But then she seemed to cry with a shaking fear that pained Carrie to watch.

"Mommy, why did he yell at you?"

"He is angry with me, Carrie. We have trouble understanding each other." She broke off into another roll of weak sobs, dropping her puffy eyes back to her fists.

"When is Dad coming back?" Carrington asked hesitantly.

"Your Father and I love both of you. He loves you and I love you, but we don't love each other anymore. We have problems when we live together, just between us, and we can't seem to work them out. I don't think your Father will be coming home anymore."

Carrington was afraid. She wanted to cry, but she bit her lip hard not to. When her eyes started watering, she bit twice as hard, but it wasn't working. To keep her mother from seeing her tears, she pretended to study her shoes. She wouldn't cry, she mustn't. She feared his absence like she feared the arrival of thunderstorms. They were almost the same to her. They brought the same emptiness to her stomach. Her father was gone. Carrington needed to think about it. She went to her room where she could think about her dad. He was gentleness for her, especially when she climbed up on the couch, right next to him, and watched him sing about the dragon, Puff, and their place by the sea. His deep voice whispered song after song, and she felt safe with him there. But now he was gone. She missed him already. She tried to imagine what it would be like without him there. She thought the house was lonely without him there.

Struggling to get her blue-lacquered rocking chair moving back and forth, Carrington leaned her body way out over the edge and then flung her weight back against the cushion. Her legs reached just half way to the floor, but she managed to get the rocker swaying. She felt settled and knew her mother wouldn't see her here, so she let herself cry. When she finished, she slid out of the rocker and walked over to her window. Past the front yard, she followed Ivey Lane as it twisted and curved up the hill connecting all the neighborhood's houses. Of all the different styles, she liked hers best; it was like a castle to her. The white pillars on the front porch rose up two whole stories, but standing at their base, they seemed even taller. And the red brick sides spread over the lot with authority. Somehow, the house stood taller than the rest.

The kids in the area liked her house best too; it was the only one with a tree house. This was important because the tree house was the most advantageous home territory during water fights and cowboy and Indian wars. Her house also had a creek that ran behind it. They waded in the creek on the hottest days and chased frogs up the hill after heavy rains. You could find gnomes there too because they liked to live near mossy rocks. Those were the same rocks the children buried treasure under in the fall. Yes, she loved her red brick castle, but she thought the castle would fall without its king . . .

"Carrington. Finish your breakfast please. The way you run around this place like a wild Indian set loose you need to eat good meals."

From the right side of the table Marc set his empty milk glass down with two-handed care. "I finished mine, Carrie," her brother beamed over to Carrie. Carrington

nodded to let Marc know she was pleased. She thought the white mustache circling his mouth looked silly, but she didn't say anything because she didn't want to make him feel stupid.

Later that night she kissed her brother goodnight; was something she always did, probably because she liked to help him say his prayers.

One of her favorite pictures hung in a frame over her bed. A print with black capital lettering in the middle bordered by drawings of wild animals, some with red, glaring eyes and some with long pointy teeth. But the poem was special:

From Ghoulies  
And Ghosties  
Long Leggitie Beasties  
And things that  
Go Bump  
In the night,  
Good Lord Deliver Us.

. . . "And God bless Daddy."

"That's good, now climb on in and get yourself to sleep. It's past your bedtime."

"Night Carrie."

"Night Marc."

Marc came back to Carrington's room again the next night. She didn't mind it, though. She knew why he was afraid of thunderstorms. It was like being afraid of things that go bump in the night. When the rumbles started, you thought the monsters were charging at you, or dragging steel balls across the attic floor. And when the wind blew mist in through the screen coverings, you felt like a beastie had brushed long unshaven legs up against you. The lightning roared louder than wild demons and flashed shapeless shadows against the walls. Outside, the storm combed tangles into the tossing willow's well-kept mane. The sky's blackness seeped to the far edges of the night. Not even the moon peeked through that blackness. When both their noses pressed against the wet window screen, they watched flashes light up the sky. Then another flash outlined the trees.

"It's the thunder," Marc noticed, "it's like an angry man yelling."

Carrington listened to her brother. She agreed with him. The storm was her mother crying. It was her father yelling. But Carrington was tired of remembering her father this way.

"Let's go out on the porch and see what it's like!" Marc turned to his sister, afraid of her suggestion, but then chuckled to himself at the thought of actually going out to the rain.

From the porch, the wind seemed less dangerous. In fact, it felt playful blowing across their cheeks and then swirling their hair into tiny circles. Carrington turned straight into the wind; she wanted the spray to tickle her

ashes. Rain fell in big, heavy drops, almost in bunches, and sounded like glass marbles bouncing on the kitchen floor. Thunder surrounded them; the drums rolled slowly, beginning with a low beat and ending with a steady boom. They stood there, side by side, facing the flashing sky.

Crack. Crack. Crack. Then they counted together, "one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three, one thousand four, one thousand five . . .". Boom! They jumped a little with its weight.

"It's leaving. The thunders are farther apart," Carrington offered softly.

"It wasn't that bad, huh?"

"Not really. I used to think it would hurt us, or really, that it wanted to hurt us. But it's just a rainstorm, Marc."

"Yeah, just a rainstorm," Marc added.

Carrington looked out at the rain and realized that the storms would all be the same. One was never more frightening than the next. In fact, they almost had a pattern about them. She ran out into the naked darkness. Her fluffy pink nightgown, soaked with the falling rain, clung to her body with its wetness. It wasn't cold rain; it was warm, and it felt wonderful as it dripped from her hair down her neck and then down her back. She spread her arms out and opened her palms to catch the falling drops. Marc watched her from the steps. He decided to join her.

Together in the yard, they stopped jumping when the thunder sounded. Their soaked night clothes clung like sticky noodles to their skin. But they didn't notice it. They just stood there, laughing.

Brady Whitley  
*First Place, Prose*  
Muse Contest



## PEN AND INK DRAWING

by Alex Kirkbride

## CLOCK OF PINK

*Elizabeth Archer*

Tea stained paper, bound with red yarn, clings to my night . . .  
a pressed pink rose discolored with time,  
scented letters that no longer smell of lavender,  
a photograph of my staircase and me,  
the white velvet ribbon that highlighted my hair,  
A midnight reflection, embedded in the torn edges of time . . .

Only I keep the ticket to enter.

## THE DISASTER

*Jacquie Taylor*

The silence is loud,  
The darkness glares down deserted corridors  
Filled with motionless Christmas animation.  
Suddenly—  
A loud hollow echo, and the sound of  
scurrying, retreating footsteps.  
And it begins—  
slowly, slowly.  
Small and blue it dances up the wall,  
Joining a harmony of yellow tongues.  
It sweeps up the cotton snow,  
Singeing the hair of the little drummer boy,  
Bursting the shiny glass balls,  
Leaving only black remnants.  
Long after the firemen have gone,  
Smoke still curls from under fallen beams,  
Waving its victory to those who weep.



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"When is Dad coming back?" Carrington asked hesitantly.

"Your Father and I love both of you. He loves you and I love you, but we don't love each other anymore. We have problems when we live together, just between us, and we can't seem to work them out. I don't think your Father will be coming home anymore."

Carrington was afraid. She wanted to cry, but she bit her lip hard not to. When her eyes started watering, she bit twice as hard, but it wasn't working. To keep her mother from seeing her tears, she pretended to study her shoes. She wouldn't cry, she mustn't. She feared his absence like she feared the arrival of thunderstorms. They were almost the same to her. They brought the same emptiness to her stomach. Her father was gone. Carrington needed to think about it. She went to her room where she could think about her dad. He was gentleness for her, especially when she climbed up on the couch, right next to him, and watched him sing about the dragon, Puff, and their place by the sea. His deep voice whispered song after song, and she felt safe with him there. But now he was gone. She missed him already. She tried to imagine what it would be like without him there. She thought the house was lonely without him there.

Struggling to get her blue-lacquered rocking chair moving back and forth, Carrington leaned her body way out over the edge and then flung her weight back against the cushion. Her legs reached just half way to the floor, but she managed to get the rocker swaying. She felt settled and knew her mother wouldn't see her here, so she let herself cry. When she finished, she slid out of the rocker and walked over to her window. Past the front yard, she followed Ivey Lane as it twisted and curved up the hill connecting all the neighborhood's houses. Of all the different styles, she liked hers best; it was like a castle to her. The white pillars on the front porch rose up two whole stories, but standing at their base, they seemed even taller. And the red brick sides spread over the lot with authority. Somehow, the house stood taller than the rest.

The kids in the area liked her house best too; it was the only one with a tree house. This was important because the tree house was the most advantageous home territory during water fights and cowboy and Indian wars. Her house also had a creek that ran behind it. They waded in the creek on the hottest days and chased frogs up the hill after heavy rains. You could find gnomes there too because they liked to live near mossy rocks. Those were the same rocks the children buried treasure under in the fall. Yes, she loved her red brick castle, but she thought the castle would fall without its king . . .

"Carrington. Finish your breakfast please. The way you run around this place like a wild Indian set loose you need to eat good meals."

From the right side of the table Marc set his empty milk glass down with two-handed care. "I finished mine, Carrie," her brother beamed over to Carrie. Carrington

nodded to let Marc know she was pleased. She thought the white mustache circling his mouth looked silly, but she didn't say anything because she didn't want to make him feel stupid.

Later that night she kissed her brother goodnight; it was something she always did, probably because she liked to help him say his prayers.

One of her favorite pictures hung in a frame over his bed. A print with black capital lettering in the middle was bordered by drawings of wild animals, some with red, glaring eyes and some with long pointy teeth. But the poem was special:

From Ghoulies  
And Ghosties  
Long Leggie Beasties  
And things that  
Go Bump  
In the night,  
Good Lord Deliver Us.

. . . "And God bless Daddy."

"That's good, now climb on in and get yourself to sleep. It's past your bedtime."

"Night Carrie."

"Night Marc."

Marc came back to Carrington's room again that night. She didn't mind it, though. She knew why he was afraid of thunderstorms. It was like being afraid of thin that go bump in the night. When the rumbles started, you thought the monsters were charging at you, or dragging steel balls across the attic floor. And when the wind blew mist in through the screen coverings, you felt like the beasties had brushed long unshaven legs up against you. The lightning roared louder than wild demons and flash shapeless shadows against the walls. Outside, the storm combed tangles into the tossing willow's well-kept mane. The sky's blackness seeped to the far edges of the night. Not even the moon peeked through that blackness. When both their noses pressed against the wet window screen, they watched flashes light up the sky. Then another flash outlined the trees.

"It's the thunder," Marc noticed, "it's like an angry man yelling."

Carrington listened to her brother. She agreed with him. The storm was her mother crying. It was her father yelling. But Carrington was tired of remembering her father this way.

"Let's go out on the porch and see what it's like!" Marc turned to his sister, afraid of her suggestion, but then chuckled to himself at the thought of actually going out into the rain.

From the porch, the wind seemed less dangerous. In fact, it felt playful blowing across their cheeks and then swirling their hair into tiny circles. Carrington turned straight into the wind; she wanted the spray to tickle her



ashes. Rain fell in big, heavy drops, almost in bunches, and sounded like glass marbles bouncing on the kitchen floor. Thunder surrounded them; the drums rolled slowly, beginning with a low beat and ending with a steady boom. They stood there, side by side, facing the flashing sky.

Crack. Crack. Crack. Then they counted together, "One thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three, one thousand four, one thousand five . . ." Boom! They jumped a little with its weight.

"It's leaving. The thunders are farther apart," Carrington offered softly.

"It wasn't that bad, huh?"

"Not really. I used to think it would hurt us, or really, that it wanted to hurt us. But it's just a rainstorm, Marc."

"Yeah, just a rainstorm," Marc added.

Carrington looked out at the rain and realized that the storms would all be the same. One was never more frightening than the next. In fact, they almost had a pattern about them. She ran out into the naked darkness. Her fluffy pink nightgown, soaked with the falling rain, clung to her body with its wetness. It wasn't cold rain; it was warm, and it felt wonderful as it dripped from her hair down her neck and then down her back. She spread her arms out and opened her palms to catch the falling drops. Marc watched her from the steps. He decided to join her.

Together in the yard, they stopped jumping when the thunder sounded. Their soaked night clothes clung like sticky noodles to their skin. But they didn't notice it. They just stood there, laughing.

Brady Whitley  
*First Place, Prose*  
Muse Contest



## PEN AND INK DRAWING

by Alex Kirkbride

## CLOCK OF PINK

*Elizabeth Archer*

Tea stained paper, bound with red yarn, clings to my night . . .  
    a pressed pink rose discolored with time,  
    scented letters that no longer smell of lavender,  
    a photograph of my staircase and me,  
    the white velvet ribbon that highlighted my hair,  
A midnight reflection, embedded in the torn edges of time . . .

Only I keep the ticket to enter.

## THE DISASTER

*Jacquie Taylor*

The silence is loud,  
The darkness glares down deserted corridors  
Filled with motionless Christmas animation.  
    Suddenly—  
A loud hollow echo, and the sound of  
    scurrying, retreating footsteps.  
And it begins—  
    slowly, slowly.  
Small and blue it dances up the wall,  
Joining a harmony of yellow tongues.  
It sweeps up the cotton snow,  
Singing the hair of the little drummer boy,  
Bursting the shiny glass balls,  
Leaving only black remnants.  
    Long after the firemen have gone,  
    Smoke still curls from under fallen beams,  
    Waving its victory to those who weep.

## THE VISITOR

*Brady Whitley*

Tonight,  
searching out the window for you,  
I hear your words whisper  
in our oldest oak trees and  
in our swaying spanish moss.

Your smell,  
a musty velvet curtain  
now a faded lavender,  
remains.

Outside,  
tall columns rise to the moon,  
night clouds on a diamond canvas.

Spirits wander  
with the wind.

You come knocking on the door  
and enter, then  
you linger in the house.

The pine-scented hope box  
tries to hold you,  
the salmon-colored slate roofs,  
the brickwalls green from your painted brush.

And in the hallway,  
boards creek under your step.

From room to room you tiptoe  
while calendars come and go,  
and the grandfather clock chimes,  
chimes, chimes.



**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Ellen Turner*

## D.L.

by Mimi Haithcox

Every since I was a child I've wondered what the letters D.L. stood for. And when I learned my alphabet in the first grade I felt quite sure that my newly-acquired knowledge would help me to break the code and that I could have its secret revealed to me. Much to my disappointment, the answer evaded me then, and it still does now.

D.L. was up in years. (The last count I heard was 85.) He was rather small with a little tuft of white hair on his head. In the words of his wife he was "... senile and blind" to tell if he didn't quit his drinkin' and git to church." He had also "... outlived his purpose" and wasn't "no use to nobody . . . jest a worry."

You had to hand it to his wife, though. She was considerate enough not to enlighten anyone about his uselessness in front of him. She made sure he was out of the room or at least that his back was turned. It seems she didn't like the way he rambled on. He called what he said "important"; she called it "rot of the mouth." It didn't seem to matter what she called it, there was always lots of

I used to go for a visit now and again to help with the chopping or cooking or cleaning or often just to offer a slight change in the scenery, and I always found it amusing to watch D.L. around his wife. It seems the more she talked about him and the quieter she was while doing it, the better he heard.

It always happened that as soon as I walked in the door of their house, D.L.'s wife would let out with the old wailings and lamentations. Needless to say, I was worried that D.L. might hear her, and his wife, seeing the look of concern on my face, would offer something like condolence, "Oh, he cain't hear. That part of it. He cain't hear a thing. What he cain't hear ain't a gonna' hurt him none."

When her back was turned I could look out into the living room and see D.L. sitting with his legs propped up on the wood heater, wiping the snuff from his chin, and chuckling heartily. No, he could hear just fine.

I did, however, enjoy his wife quite a bit. She taught me many of the lost arts of the Southern household. I could bake breads, can and preserve fruits and vegetables, make quilts, and I could weave cloth. But when she began to update of D.L.'s hopeless and sinful condition, I would just have to put off any further learning until the next visit. Besides, by then D.L. would be calling me.

I would walk out to D.L. beside the wood heater and ask how much wood he thought he needed. He always had a large stack easily within his reach, but it was the much-repeated ritual of my chopping and his instruction that he seemed to enjoy so much. A little extra wood wouldn't hurt.

He usually began the ceremony with, "Yep. It's hard to find a young'un nowadays that'll work for his keep. They's all so dang lazy and worthless." I knew he wasn't referring to me. He just needed a proper introduction for his story about his youthful days on the railroad with his dad.

He would continue, "Back in my day, if a young'un didn't work, he didn't eat and he got a good hidin' jest to keep him in line. That's what young'uns need nowadays . . . a good hidin' . . . makes 'em appreciate the good life they got." He went on as I chopped wood.

"Minds me of when I was a young'un. One day my daddy took me to the rails and put me to workin'. I sure hated that work. So when I got a chance to eat my lunch, I ran over to where the box cars was lined up. I unhitched one jest for spite. That box car commenced to rollin' and smashed right into a big oak tree. I got the hidin' of my life that time. My daddy learnt me a lesson I'll never forget. I never went near another box car durin' my lunch break again. Goes to show how 'portent a good hidin' can be to a smart-ass young'un". By the time he had finished that story, which he never failed to tell me each time I went for a working visit, it was time to go down to the cellar and check on his cider, wine, and beer. That always brought him to another of his stories, which also got proper introduction.

He cleared his throat and began rather dismally, "Never can tell what them city, company men put into their food. Never know jest what you're a' eatin'. Them old chemicals theys puttin' in everything 'll kill you deader than sure. I won't touch nothin' them companies make, less my doctor says to". By now he had given his approval of the cider and said that it would be fit in another few weeks. We would head over toward the beer and wine and he would go on.

"Hell, I 'member one time I ate me some hog feet and washed it down with some of that store-bought beer. I got so sick I couldn't eat for two days. Ever since, I only drink what I make". He would then give his okay to the beer and wine and we would start out the door.

He knew he had my attention all the time, but out of habit, no doubt formed with his wife's help, he always added, "You listenin'? You listen right close and I'll learn you somethin'." I would nod, and he would smile.

By then it was time for me to go home and tend to whatever was left undone. I would stop in the kitchen to tell his wife goodbye. She never failed to invite me out again. Nor did she ever fail to give one last complaint about D.L.'s awful state.

As I neared the door, I would always hear her say, "He ain't got good sense. He's dang looney". And so,



briefly, I began to consider the possibility of D.L. standing for "dang looney", but I quickly dismissed it because it would be too obvious. Half of her fun was talking about D.L. without his having the faintest notion of what she was saying. But, of course, he could hear just fine.

One day I proudly announced that my mare was with foal and looked ready to have it at any moment. D.L.'s wife smiled and said that a special occasion like that called for a special meal and that while she was fixing dinner, I should go out and see what D.L. wanted, if anything. I walked out to the living room where D.L. had his legs propped up on the wood heater and asked how much wood he needed. To my surprise and slight dismay, he answered, "None."

"Reckon we can do without for right now". His beaming but toothless smile eased my concern. While we were waiting for dinner, he mostly talked about this and that—practically everything except my mare.

The squirrel stew, biscuits, cornbread, sauerkraut, field peas, and apple pie were ready, so we sat down to eat. His wife talked on and on about my mare, but D.L. barely said a word. We finished dinner and I got up to leave.

As I was opening the tattered screen door, D.L. boomed, "Soon, real soon, but not yet." He sounded as if he were preaching about Christ's return. Anyhow, I took it to mean that the cider, beer, and wine would soon be fit. I acknowledged what he said with a short breath of laughter, but I couldn't help but wonder if my mention of the horse had upset him. I could not for the life of me figure out why such a thing as a mare would make him so deathly silent. I had decided that I would make no more mention of my mare—just to be on the safe side.

For the next few days things went on as they normally had. D.L.'s stories, his wife's lamentations and the "dang looney" farewell all offered a type of security. I was once again wondering what D.L. meant. At the close of each visit, D.L. always boomed out something about "it" being

real soon. Now I was concerned that he was talking about his cider and other beverages. He said it so often that I was beginning to wonder if he was becoming senile. So I began putting more time between my visits.

One morning around 6:30, I was awakened by a horse's whinnying. My mare was lying down and making horrendous noises deep in her throat. It was time for her foal. It was her first, and it looked as if she were having problems. As I watched her irregular breathing and saw her muscles begin to twitch, I realized what it must be like when the inability to change a situation makes one feel useless. It must have been that way with D.L., I thought. Perhaps D.L. had begun to accept his supposed "uselessness."

I had decided that someone with experience was needed, so I walked back toward the house, intending to call the veterinarian. "There ain't no need to go and call one of them city slickers. If a man can't depend on his self he ain't got no need for a mare." Yes, it was D.L., in all his philosophical glory.

"I ain't got no idee why some folks don't listen. All they need to do is listen to somebody who got a good hidin' when he was young . . ." I hadn't the opportunity to tell him my mare was delivering. Perhaps this was what he meant by "real soon, not yet, but real soon."

Then he proceeded to talk about interference in general. "Don't know why young'uns think they got to mess with everything. If they jest leave things alone, they'll work themselves out." I was so enthralled by him and by what he was saying that when I realized he had finished talking, the foal had been safely born.

I walked D.L. home to his wife who, as soon as D.L. entered, said, "Ain't you got good sense? You ought to know that mare won't be havin' a foal! Danged looney and deaf!" For the first time I began to sense the presence of some sort of affection in her verbal blows. As D.L. walked into the living room, took a dip of snuff, and plopped his legs on the wood stove, he began to chuckle.

Mimi Haithcox  
Second Place, Pros  
Muse Contest





**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Ellen Turner*

## OLD FRED

*Sally Buckner*

Old Fred came percolating back to town last August,  
Bought up his cousin's farm, tore down the house,  
And built, for him and his wife, and two near-grown kids,  
Sixteen rooms—not counting the seven bathrooms.  
(Must have a weak bladder.) And a four-car garage,  
Which ain't enough, he still parks two outside.  
Set up office in his house; far as I can tell,  
About all he does is keep on the phone to Wall Street  
And add up his accounts. Comes downtown  
About twice a week, drops in here for a Coke  
And Lucky Strikes or to renew his Valium  
Or pick up milk of magnesia for his old lady.  
She'd die if she heard me call her that; come to think  
Of it, she dyes anyways—platinum blond last week,  
Redhead the week before. That's a joke. She's a joke,  
Too, far as I can tell. Anyhow, Fred'll  
Jaw for an hour or more if I'm not too busy,  
Talk about growing up in a sharecropper's shack,  
Pulling his belt real tight so's no one could tell  
His third-time hand-me-down-britches was two sizes too big;  
Talk about leaving town with just six bits  
And a pack of Luckies in his pocket; talk about thumbing  
To Charlotte, scabbling around, picking up money,  
Picking up women, learning to turn 'em over  
(Women and money both); talk about how he done it  
All by hisself. To hear him tell it,  
It was him against the world. Gets right choked up  
Sometimes, swivels the stool, leans on the counter,  
Eyeballing me, says, "Harvey, look at me good;  
If ever there was one, you're seeing a self-made man."  
If he's said it once, he's said it a dozen times.  
I ain't told him, but he don't need to repeat it.  
Hell, nobody else'd want to take the blame.  
Lord knows, it's easy to see he's a one-man job.

Sally Buckner  
*Muse Week Writer*

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**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

Alex Kirkbride  
*Second Place, Art*  
Muse Contest

## GOING OUT

*Betty Adcock*

Beforehand, I try on everything I can think of:  
lady, mother, witch, sister, slut.  
I zip myself into one, check for leaks,  
promise myself this time  
I'm not going to be gulled out of anything.

I'm going to talk and smile right,  
and fit with how the ceiling's lit.

But other people's faces loose me  
past boundaries, past reasoning with,  
into packages with strange  
addresses, into smells, other wools  
pricking my skin.

And there's always the same bystander,  
some butcher or window-dresser  
who watches, standing still as a center,  
who has mastered the art of never  
blinking his eyes.

When I see him, I'll start to like all the tenants  
hiding under my backbone wanting a party.  
I'll know from his face I've escaped  
too happily from something I deserved.  
So I'll let out the knife-thrower, the spangled  
suicide, the rabbit unfolding from the dark,  
the sweet dove reaching up, scarf after scarf,  
mistakes and identities.  
I'll pretend the box worked with him in it.

One of us will disappear.

Betty Adcock  
*Muse Week Writer*

## AFTER YOU PUBLISH THE BOOK

*Julie Suk*

You plant a seed,  
and when it sprouts,  
climb to the clouds,  
and tease the giant to fall.

The sound reports for miles.  
People cheer!  
They love catastrophe,  
the rubble, the gore,  
the pieces they can pick through.  
You're a hero!

That is, until gossip  
and bickering begin.

People say you'll do anything  
for attention—court favors,  
stick beans up your nose.

And now, the monster  
lying here exposed.

How you wish it all back:  
the cow so blithely traded,  
your family and landscape  
familiar and neat,

the friends who admired you  
before the unspeakable  
flopped at their feet.

Julie Suk  
*Muse Week Writer*



**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

Amanda Durant  
*Third Place, Art*  
Muse Contest



## LA BREA

*Richard Kenney*

### Early

It is very early now, no light yet, nor  
sensation, apart from simple motions of waking:  
discomfort in the chill air, the stiff walk  
quick across cold floor-boards, razor,  
brushed lather and warm tap water off  
my cheeks—the feel of bare wool on wrists  
and throat—the hiss of the stove, and white coffee.  
Alone in this house, I wonder if *tabula rasa*  
ever existed at all. Lake Champlain looks flat,  
black by starlight; even the sheaved winds  
are flat as feathers on a sleeping raven's wing—  
Later, forecast rains will toss down Smuggler's Notch  
in silver skirt-veils, hiss across the flatiron  
lake like drops on a woodstove, into the night—

### Tranquility

and hideous broom-flaps here, unfolding condors  
knuckled to the vague bed-rail, and hung door-  
jamb anthropoid with clothes— In this appalling  
light even physical objects fail, conform  
to memories and night's La Brea, the glossy oil pools . . .  
By breakfast all grotesques have quit their roaring,  
pawing at the sky for light and release, followed  
their immense tracks down sinkholes of their own  
muddling until the only evidence  
of dreams is gone, erratic haloes ravens  
figured, just askim the water, rings, rings,  
and love, your slender unstockinged feet scarcely  
and always rough the nap of a newswept carpet  
still, and this is not tranquility, not yet—

Richard Kenney  
*Muse Week Writer*

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## NUCLEAR POEM

*Celso Emilio Ferreiro*

How wonderful, here comes the bomb with its uproar!  
The bomb, bang! the bomb, good friend.  
The bomb so full of ants and wires,  
and ovens to roast all the blond children.  
The bomb with its tape-worms, gadgets,  
glow-worms, fluorescent lights,  
lead fishes, vomit, water lilies,  
stars of plutocratic plutonium,  
manure of hydrogenated cobalt.

The bomb, bang! The bomb, good friend.  
With atoms exploding in a chain,  
breaking all the chains that tied us:

the high buildings,  
the high functionaries,  
the high financiers,  
the high ideals,  
all turning into radioactive ash!

The stupid mothers who gave birth to children  
will be dust, though loving dust.

The stupid fathers, the prostitutes,  
the grand dames of charity,  
the magnates and the moochers,  
the highnesses, excellences, eminences,  
the knighted and unknighthed gentlemen  
will be nothing, love, if the bomb comes.  
Love will be nothing and death that died  
with blessings and plenary indulgences will be nothing.

How wonderful, here comes the bomb! In a tiny instant  
lovely spring turns into an ash  
of restless foetal isotopes,  
of lethal smiles melting  
under an arch of triumphal atoms.

The bomb, bang! The bomb with its huge drum  
of mushrooms and swollen volutes  
is coming fast. Watch it, there it comes, good friend.

It serves us right! It is all right! It's good!

Baaang!!!

Translated from the Galician by Dolores Lado  
*St. Mary's Faculty*

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and when it sprouts,  
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*Muse Week Writer*



**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

Amanda Durant  
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*Muse Week Writer*

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The bomb with its tape-worms, gadgets,  
glow-worms, fluorescent lights,  
lead fishes, vomit, water lilies,  
stars of plutocratic plutonium,  
manure of hydrogenated cobalt.

The bomb, bang! The bomb, good friend.  
With atoms exploding in a chain,  
breaking all the chains that tied us:

the high buildings,  
the high functionaries,  
the high financiers,  
the high ideals,  
all turning into radioactive ash!

The stupid mothers who gave birth to children  
will be dust, though loving dust.

The stupid fathers, the prostitutes,  
the grand dames of charity,  
the magnates and the moochers,  
the highnesses, excellences, eminences,  
the knighted and unknighthed gentlemen  
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*St. Mary's Faculty*



## THE POET

*Jacqueline Morris*

You are the juggler,  
carefully spilling words  
onto cold blank pages  
suddenly brought to life.  
You give birth to a brilliant array of  
dreams and desires.

You have so much to say  
but often you can not speak.  
Then you write,  
the words run swiftly past me,  
my heart races to catch and  
preserve each phrase.

Calm tranquility in a noisy, smoke-filled room.  
You smile and remember my name,  
ask me how I am.  
I, hardly aware of anything else  
except those blue eyes looking back at me,  
stammer a quick reply.

Your gifted hand reaches for my limp one.  
I wonder what you are thinking about.  
Your wife, perhaps?  
Can you read me as well as you write?  
I am just a silly girl  
in love with your eyes and your words.

## THE COST OF CLOUDS

*Elizabeth Archer*

A dreamer pays the price  
whether rich or poor:

A dreamer pays the price  
more than once,  
more than twice.



**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

*by Tomoko Asami*

## Sonnet

I like thee a lot.  
I like the way thee gleam.  
Thou art better than a gold pot,  
Thy smile is a beam.

Shall thee sing a sweet song?  
Thou hath the sound of rings.  
Hear the bells going ding-dong,  
Does thee wish to have wings?

If thee did have wings, thee would fly like a butterfly  
Thee never lies to living things.  
I didn't like to say by by  
I will give thee rings!

With thee I will spend hours  
We will go on the very top of towers!

Nathaniel Quinn  
May 1982



Cocky '82

**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

*by Catherine Williamson*

## **BILLY RAN AWAY**

Billy ran away

And he didn't want to come back and stay

And he didn't come back and stay

All day.

—*Louise Bauso (age 5)*

## **WHAT TO DO**

What to do

If a flying ganoo

Should suddenly stop right in front of you.

What to do

If a big ugly fly

Should make up his mind not to die.

Well, your mind wouldn't know,

It would send the wrong message right down to your toe.

And your toe would go back

Instead of to the front.

And you would be doing an amaaaaazing stunt.

—*Katy Bauso (age 7)*

## REFLECTIONS

*By Faculty, Staff and Students*



Candlestick  
*by Lynn Jones*

The measure of success is not whether you have a tough problem to deal with, but whether it is the same problem you had last year.

*Sue Osborne*

School is like putting money in the bank . . . you only get as much back as you put in.

*Jack Kraemer*

We all yearn for a sense of control over our environment—to feel that we can make decisions that are right for us. Education gives us that sure sense of self.

*Hannah Scoggin*

A class is not a democracy. It is a monarchy, and those who enjoy having their heads attached to their shoulders would be well advised to observe the monarch's rules.

*Giva Watson*

Traditionally, college has been the place where pearls are polished—not where they are pulled, screaming, from the shell.

*Anna Wooten-Hawkins*

The moon is a distraction from our studies; it speaks to us of summertime and entices us to remember . . .

*Brady Whitley*

Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing badly. Whatever is not worth doing, is not worth doing at all.

*Doug Murray*  
(After Lord Chesterfield)

Ignorance as an excuse is not law.

*Steven Esthimer*

Argument cannot produce, and doubt cannot remove, instinctive generosity.

*Anna Wooten-Hawkins*

A dream is reality in a fantasy world. A real life experience: no questions asked.

*Elizabeth Archer*

Religion has nothing to do with Jesus Christ.

*Jacqueline Morris*

The real genius of any life is the defiance of boredom.

*Anna Wooten-Hawkins*









**MUSE 1984**



I saw thee sitting on a throne  
of gold . . . the only sad one . . .  
for thou didst not hear  
The soft, Lute-finger'd Muses  
chanting clear . . .

Keats  
"Lamia"

Saint Mary's College

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Muse Editor      | Brady Whitley  |
| Assistant Editor | Jacqueline Morris  |
| Editorial Staff  | Elizabeth Jane Archer<br>Tomoko Asami<br>Christine Trask<br>Katherine Walton |

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| Muse Advisor | Anna Wooten-Hawkins |
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Muse Contest

|              |                     |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Art Judge    | Mary Ann K. Jenkins |
| Poetry Judge | Mab Segrest         |
| Prose Judge  | Michael Matros      |

With special thanks to the writers who read their work in the Muse Week Festival:

Fred Chappell  
Robert Watson  
Anna Wooten-Hawkins  
Student Writers

*\*Cover art by Christine Trask, who won Third Place in Art in the Muse Contest*



## GOD, HE LOVED HIS LAND

*Maria Howard*

Wind whips around the red corner.  
Puffs of orange soil swirl around the tobacco plants.  
Memama and I sat and watched.

She said, "Daddy Bill used to walk around here.  
The mules in the barn knew him.  
They'd haw and holler all day long."

I thought about Daddy Bill and Memama.  
They lived on their acreage for ages, I always thought.  
I reckon it still looks the same.

The land is angry and glares, Klee painted.  
It is an angry gash on the forehead of the earth.  
The red of the barn is different, warmer and dull.

Pines line the long-dried irrigation pond.  
There is an abandoned mattress there now.  
Seedlings are rooted in the sluggish mud.

Crows and grackles live in the eaves of the barn.  
Daytimes, they line the limbs of the locust tree.  
The tree's beans litter the ground with brown apostrophes.

But best of all in the backyard, I like the earth.  
It is ugly, and the color of a brick-red Crayola.  
But it is rich.

In spring, there is a pale green mist over the furrows.  
In July, the fieldmouse looks up to a forest of green and gold.  
By September, dismembered stalks reach for God.

The ugly clay grows a wealth of tobacco here.

But God, Daddy Bill loved his land.

*First Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

*Mary Lisa Newman  
First Place, Art  
Muse Contest*

## COLIN'S BATTLE

*Jacqueline Morris*

Emphysema struck him at fifty,  
glaucoma soon after. The white educated coats  
took away his simple pleasures,  
and still he could not breathe.  
His breathing sounded like walking barefoot on broken glass.

His last year was spent  
with the white clowns and mechanical toys,  
the sheets and tubes that wrapped him up tight  
like a parcel post package without stamps, unable  
to be mailed anywhere.

The Byrd machines, the physical therapy treatments.  
In desperation he screamed,  
"I'm too sick for this! Those nurses keep smoking.  
I want a lawyer, I'll sue, I'll sue!"  
Everyone thought him a fool but the granddaughter who  
caught, red-handed, one of the white witches  
smoking by the ICU UNIT—NO SMOKING ALLOWED.

"I've had a stroke," he told his wife one morning.  
He had four more that night.  
Jesse James of Moore Memorial robbed him of his speech  
and the movement of his right side.  
They would never hear him laugh, curse, or ask how the pets were.  
The white coats let him come home.  
The granddaughter put her dog in his lap and watched the last joy  
he felt leak from his eyes like crystals.

*Second Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*

# ON THE CHEROKEE RESERVATION

*Elizabeth Richardson*

On the Cherokee Reservation that day  
a warrior and his son walked  
through the empty plain  
which was the plain of the world  
The warrior wore a headdress  
and carried a cold peace pipe  
in his hand  
while his son carried pelts  
which he kept handing out  
individually  
to animals  
as if each were furless

And then the two of them came on  
through the empty plain  
which was the plain of the world  
and then  
at a very dusty spot where the bones dried  
and seemed to have been waiting through all time  
for them  
they sat down together in the dust  
without looking at one another  
and ate cannabis leaves  
without looking at one another  
and put the stems  
in the bowl which seemed  
to have been brought for that purpose  
without looking at one another  
And the warrior took off his headdress and moccasins  
but kept his hair in  
braids  
and without saying anything  
fell to chanting  
and his son just stood there looking  
at the ponies grazing  
nickerling to one another  
in the stifling air  
as if they were fighting  
against a slow suffocation  
of the past

But finally  
he too sat down cross-legged  
and fell to chanting  
and fingering the cold peace pipe  
which nobody smoked  
and finally looking at his father  
his face  
told of a quiet  
despair.

*Third Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



**PENCIL DRAWING**

*Christine Trask  
Second Place, Art*



## COLLEGE

### (A Parody of Gregory Corso's Poem, "Marriage")

*Maria Howard*

Should I stay in college? Should I be good?  
Astound my parents with my sheepskin and hood?  
Don't go to bowling alleys but to class  
Tell my teacher about the Sierra Club and Euclid  
Impressing him, and affecting him, and all the prerequisites  
And he instructing me and I understanding why  
Not getting confused saying "I must learn! It's beautiful to learn!"  
And inviting him into my soul lean against a splintered desk  
And woo him the entire semester with the words in my being.

When he introduces me to his poetry  
Sweatshirted, hair all curly, strangled by a crush,  
Should I sit knees together in my dirty Lees  
and not ask "May I go to the bathroom?"  
How else to feel other than I am,  
often thinking Opium and Grey Flannel—  
O how terrible for a teacher  
seated before a young student, the teacher thinking,  
"I never noticed her before!"  
After class and assignments he asks, "What are you doing tonight?"  
Should I say "Nothing?" Would he like me then?  
Would he say "All right. Dinner then. I'll meet you by the courts."  
But don't tell your parents."  
Then I'd really have to go to the bathroom.

O God and the date! All the proprieties and the fumbings  
and me, showered for him, all grumbling and gurgling,  
too embarrassed to get at the drinks and food.  
And the Waiter! he looking at me in astonishment  
his eyes asking me if I'm aware of my escort's age  
And I trembling know his age only too well.  
When teacher kisses student, corny fireworks shoot off—  
I'm all his, and he knows it Ha! Ha! Ha!  
And in his eyes I can see what he wants to happen  
Then all the reasons and excuses and apologies  
Questions! Blushes! School! Friends!  
All streaming into my room  
All knowing where I was tonight  
The indifferent waiter he knowing what was going to happen  
The small town busboys they knowing what  
The whistling friends they knowing  
The winking roommate knowing  
Everybody knowing! I'd almost be inclined to do something!  
Stay out all night! Stare my mother in the eye!  
Screaming "I deny my upbringing! I deny Society!"  
Running rampant into those almost magnetic arms  
breathing "Kiss me! Touch me!"  
O I'd live in Sin forever! in a dark room under Richardson Hall  
I'd sit there the Mad Lover  
devising ways to break his language, a scourge of school  
a saint of lust—



But I should go to college, I should be good.  
How nice it'd be to go to the dorm back to a single bed  
and sit by the window and he (in the next dorm's window)  
khaki'd young and handsome, wanting me  
and so happy about me that he flunks his statistics exam  
and comes crying to me and we lie in the grass  
I saying Leather bikes! Stiff safety pins! Cardboard doorknobs!  
O God what a girlfriend I'd make! Yes, I should stay in college!  
So much to do! Like cutting off my fetal pig's snout  
and mailing it to Jim Hunt!  
Like unscrewing all the salt shaker tops!  
Like sneaking illegal beer in our room and  
getting drunk with the hall counselors!  
Like bouncing checks and having to call home  
collect for more money!

Yet if I should stay in college and it's Davidson in snow  
and Khaki should get bored and I am sleepless, worn,  
up for nights, cheek pressed to a cold pane, his window across from mine,  
finding myself like a common woman, a pregnant girl  
knowledgeed with children, not World War I or the Krebs cycle  
O! what would that be like!  
Surely I'd want to die, I'd rot in the library  
reading about abortions  
poring over addresses of adoption agencies  
conniving about marriage.

No. I doubt I'd be that kind of girl  
Not pregnant not lonely no cold pane  
but happy warm small town college.  
Six flights up, potato chips and brownie crumbs on the carpet  
Fat friends screeching over Coors "He called me!"  
And five frat boys in love with me  
And my professors sexy and available  
like the ones in my fantasies.  
All wanting me, only me.  
But the teachers really want my attention:  
Composition, Poli. Sci, Brit. Lit.

O but what about intelligence? I forgot intelligence  
not that I'm incapable of intelligence  
It's just I see intelligence as weird as wearing clothes.  
I never wanted to read a novel with no dialogue  
and run-on sentences are maddening  
And there's maybe a novel but it's already written  
And I don't like writing poetry and—  
but there's got to be something I can learn.

Because what if I'm 21 years old and dumb  
all alone in a furnished room with ink stains on my forehead  
And everyone else is smart.  
All the universe is an expert but me.  
Ah! Yet well I know that where there is knowledge  
there intelligence is made possible.  
Like Dickens in lonely London  
waiting for the sublime ideas to enter his head,  
So I wait, bereft of talent and the joy of creating.



**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

*by Amanda Durant*

## PARANOIA

by Ellen McCallum

It began, I think, with the arrest of Jesus Christ. I mean, that was the first day we really talked, standing on the steps outside the library one bright fall day. We had known each other for the past two years, but it was not until the time of the arrest that we delved beyond amiable superficiality and began to associate with each other. I don't know why it was that particular conversation, opened by my anecdote on the arrest, which nailed us together. For me, it was the beginning of my inclusion.

"You were always there in thought," I was later told. "Yeah, like God," I replied sarcastically, "But it wasn't until this year that you deigned to include me in per-

Sometimes one must work to become more than an afterthought, but I think the absence of Julianne created for her a vacuum into which I, the afterthought, tumbled.

After I knew her better, I began to wonder if that vacuum had not been contrived. I knew how much she missed Julianne—indeed, I missed her terribly, for she was my friend too—and I wondered what I had to offer to fill that space. I *did* ask her—once.

"You're an intellectual," she told me. I was shocked, and immediately attempted to strip that lie away from her.

"I don't see myself as one," I dissuaded her.

"People think you are," she countered.

"It's not what people think, it's what *I* think I am," I argued, and turned to go upstairs.

"Wait . . . I meant to ask you something," I paused, my foot on the third step. "You know a lot about this college application process . . . is an interview really *that* important?"

"Rather," I returned sarcastically.

"Seriously?" she demanded.

"Well, according to all the admissions books I've read, it ranked right up there with the essay in terms of importance. I think you should go," I answered, and continued my way up the stairs.

It was not the first time she had asked me for advice, although usually her requests required more thought on my part. I had become used to being her Dear Abby—I was consulted on the banal application process and on the profound reasons for Julianne acting as rudely stubborn as she was last year. Although I fretted that as we became closer I would lose my flattering role as advisor, I found that indeed she consulted me more and more often.

"Julianne wrote me today," she disclosed.

"Oh, really? What'd she have to say?" I inquired.

"Ummm, she wants me to go up and see her some-  
times."

"That's great!" I gushed enviously. "When?"

"Well, there's a slight problem."

"Oh?"

"I really . . . and I don't mean to be rude . . . but I just don't have the time . . ."

"Hmph," I stated scornfully.

"And besides that," she continued, undaunted, "it's so much trouble . . ."

"Oh, I'm sorry that one of the more important people in your life is too troublesome and time-consuming."

"You don't understand . . ." she protested.

"Then would you care to clarify your position for this court, Ma'am?" I argued sarcastically. "Seriously though, I really do understand. You'd just love to see her but inertia has set in and you have two papers due Monday and you don't want to spend eighty dollars on train tickets . . ."

"That's it, sort of . . . not really. I want to go, really I do. I'm not trying to sound like a martyr or anything, but since Mom has the flu, I have to cook *and* do all my chores . . . I really can't leave."

"Yeah, I know, I know," I nodded. "But isn't there any way you can go when your mom gets well?"

"I don't know," she replied despondently.

"Couldn't you get all your work done ahead . . . well, most of your work done ahead of time . . . your folks could eat soup and sandwiches for once, or go out."

"Well, maybe . . ."

"You really ought to go—you haven't seen each other since June and she won't be home for Thanksgiving."

"This is true . . . I'll see."

"You really miss her, don't you?"

"Yes," she replied quietly.

"I think that if you miss her that much, you'd find a way to go see her."

"Why don't you go see her . . . she's your friend too," she said defensively.

"Well, y'all are closer."

"Pffth."

". . . And besides, she didn't ask me," I said.

"That's a weak excuse. Well, I've got things to do," she stated abruptly, and left.

Rumor had it that Jesus Christ had been released. He was found wandering near the Presbyterian church several weeks after the arrest. You would have thought that the Presbyterians would have been delighted that Jesus had graced their church with His presence, but instead, they worried how to protect themselves and their children from this strange man. I kept her updated on His appearances in the course of our conversations, in which I commented

upon everything from the pseudo-cult of Kafka to the mundanities of English 102. But we always returned to her favorite theme, the college application process.

We discussed potential essay topics, compared them with those Julianne had written, analyzed test scores, grades, activities and interests, and always winded up discussing the importance of the interview. She, of course, felt it was too much trouble to visit each college. Everything, it seemed, was too much trouble—even decisions, which she usually threw at me to make.

I argued fine lines around going for the interview; even her protest of “It’s too much trouble!” I could dispense with. “Too much trouble to do something about your life?” I would exclaim.

Julianne helped as much as she could. The letters from Baltimore always contained at least a postscript encouraging her to go. Finally, my badgering paid off. She was leaving Wednesday.

“How long?” I asked.

“I’ll be home Monday night,” she said. It would take that long to travel to all four colleges, even if she squeezed in a nearby university late Monday afternoon. We said good-bye after I extracted the promise of a call with all the anecdotes and information as soon as she arrived home.

The letter came Thursday. “I hope this gets to you before I do . . . on Friday night, around eight. Unfortunately, I’ll have to leave Sunday in order to be back for Monday’s classes. I realize that seeing y’all might leave us all missing each other more, but I just had to see you two on my birthday . . . Love, Julianne.”

At first I was ecstatic. Julianne was coming home . . . but then I realized that only I would be here to greet her. Suddenly, my throat felt like it had been torn out through

my rear end. I didn’t want Julianne to come . . . it wasn’t necessary . . . I had just seen her when my family and I had gone up North to visit relatives . . . I felt piggish . . . it wasn’t fair . . . they hadn’t seen each other since June, yet they had a much closer friendship than Julianne and I had.

We small-talked for awhile. Monday nights I avoided homework as much as I can. I told her Jesus Christ had been re-arrested, but that this time he was being committed to Dix as a paranoid schizophrenic. I related Julianne’s comment that he was probably just some bored millionaire.

“You’ve been feeding Julianne that mess too?” she broke in. “Boy, you are obsessed. Don’t tell me you write letters on the subject.”

“Well, no . . . We just talked about it,” I admitted. “When’d you call her?” she asked lightly.

“Ummm . . . I got a letter from her Thursday . . . she came down this weekend,” I added hesitantly. Silence. “I’m terribly sorry you missed her,” I continued slowly. “I know it’s my fault . . .”

“Why?” she interrupted.

“Well, I talked you into going to those interviews last weekend, so you missed seeing her.”

“Pffsst. I didn’t go to those interviews because you told me to. When’ve I ever listened to you?” She asked categorically.

Saving face, I joked, “Never.” I realized it was the truth. She cared enough to find out what I thought of her plans, then would usually go ahead with what she had already decided. “I’m just a who’e,” I played along with an old joke, “Don’t nobody ever pay no min’ to me.”

“Nah,” she said comfortably.

*Ellen McCallin  
First Place, Pose  
Muse Contest*



*Sisters of the  
Moon*

*by Amanda Durant*



## ON THE EDGE OF SPRING

*Brady Whitley*

Almost Spring again—  
An aimless rain  
    beneath the weight  
    of platinum clouds,  
    forlorn.

The moonlit train returns  
    to listen—  
Icy blue chapel windows  
    stare  
    into the darkness,  
    a wet night  
    hanging in circles  
        beneath  
        lamplight . . .  
    awakened by this insensate season,  
    lingering.

Almost Spring again—  
The rain laughs  
    in chilling exhaustion . . .  
Melancholy March,  
    suspended for an eternity,  
    holds loneliness closer—  
  
    a lifeless anticipation  
    dull and sickly,  
    in the song  
    of the oldest oaks.

## CANDY KITCHEN

*Elizabeth Jane Archer*

Women, all hips,  
share soda counter afternoons  
talking about daily specials and shakes.

Green knit pants, elastic peeping through;  
hair tangled and teased  
glistens silver on stainless steel.

Worn elbows, on polished white linoleum swirled with gold,  
lean to shine two dollar pumps.

Coupons and coins litter the counter,  
cluttering thought.

Fretting about the rain,  
stale menthol burns time between two fingers.

## WEBSTER'S CAUSE

*Mimi Haithcox*

Cut swift and easy  
and no chicken blood clots  
under my nails,  
no spills on the Webster Poultry Mill floor

Chicago Cutlery knives  
like rusty tin glisten  
red and brown

In a crowd of fryer-hen feathers  
and bodiless beaks  
I taste, still taste  
catfish hissing in lard at home

Plastic wrapped fingers and forehead—  
pretend my work is crucial  
on each indispensable chicken

Millwork ain't easy  
It ain't hard  
but debeaking chickens  
is an awful boring job



## TRUTH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

*Mimi Haithcox*

Grandma got up to play  
when Sarah couldn't make it—  
because Preacher Smith said to

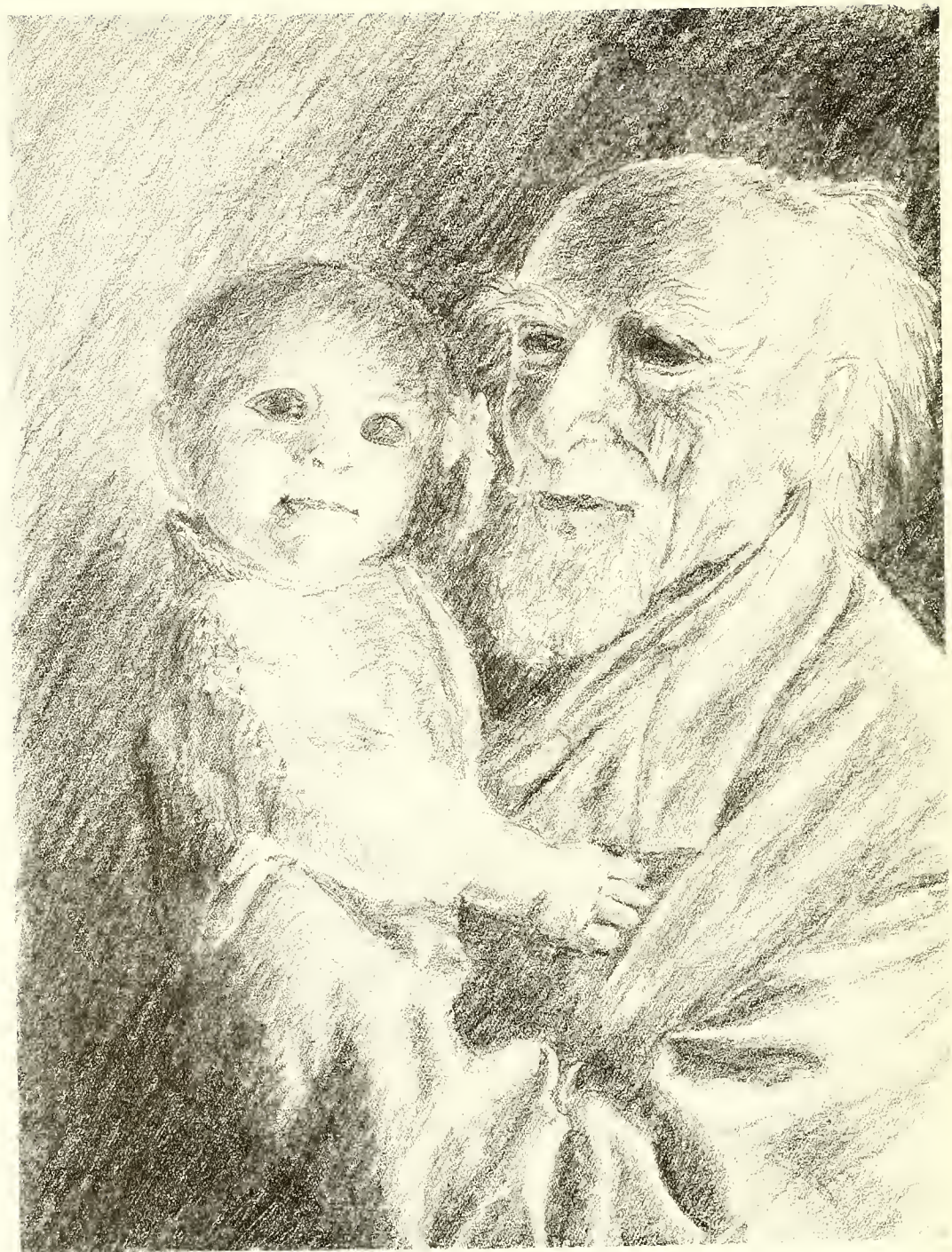
Her one song  
“On Higher Ground” got done  
five times in a row  
(tithing took a while on  
the first of the month)

I always sat there  
knocking muddy patent-leather shoes  
against the pew in front—  
Miss Ronie, smelling of Listerine  
and snuff, spewed out  
“Set still” between  
each verse

Brother Hooks patted me on the head,  
“But she knows her Ten Commandments  
ever one in order”

When Collection plate passed by,  
I took the nickel  
from Grandma's plastic  
pocketbook, and plunked it in

Tithing over,  
she came back  
still smelling of snuff—  
dipped into her pocketbook  
for a Wrigley's Spearmint—  
and snapped her gums on it,  
as if she sat on higher ground



**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Tomoko Asami*



# NATHAN

by Hanya Radwan

I first knew Nathan when he was a boy of fifteen with a pleasant, ugly face, a mouth that never stopped laughing and genial eyes.

He used to spend his mornings lying about the beach, with next to nothing on. His tall, broad-shouldered body was full of grace. He came in and out of the sea all the time, swimming with effortless strokes, in a style common to athletes. Scrambling up the rocks on his hard feet, except on Sundays, he never wore shoes. He'd throw himself into the water with a cry of delight.

His father was a fisherman who owned his own vineyard; Nathan, the eldest, acted as nursemaid to his younger brothers. He shouted to them to come ashore, when they ventured out too far. He made them dress when it was time to climb the hot vineclad hill for the unlavish midday meal.

Boys in the southern parts of Italy grow quickly, and a little while, he was madly in love with a pretty girl who lived on the "Grand Marina." Her eyes were like forest pools, and she held herself as if she was one of Caesar's daughters. They were engaged, but unable to marry until Nathan had served his military duty. When he left the land for the first time in his life, he wept like a child. It was hard for someone who had never been less free than the birds to be at the beck and call of others. It was still harder for him when he had to live on a battleship with strangers instead of in the small white cottage among the vines with his family. When he was ashore, he walked in busy friendless cities on streets so crowded that he was frightened to cross them; he had been used to silent paths, mountains, and the sea. He was dreadfully homesick. Nothing was so hard compared to leaving and being parted from the girl he loved with all his passionate young heart. He wrote her very often—long, ill-spelt letters in which he told her how constantly he thought of her, and how much he longed to be back.

He was sent here and there until he fell ill with some mysterious ailment that kept him in the hospital for months. He pulled through it with the mute and uncomprehending patience of a dog. He later learned that it was a case of rheumatism which made him unfit to continue his service; his heart exulted, for now he could go home. He didn't listen or pay attention to what the doctors told him, which was that he would never be quite well again. None of that mattered to him, because he was going back to the land he loved so well and the girl who was waiting for him.

As he was being rowed ashore, he saw his mother and her standing on the jetty, and his two brothers, big boys now, and he waved to them. His eyes searched the crowd that waited there for the girl. He couldn't see her anywhere. There was a great deal of kissing when he

jumped up the stairs; and they all, emotional creatures, cried a little as they exchanged greetings. "Where's Danya?" he asked.

"Son, I do not know. We haven't seen her; the last time she paid us a visit was a month ago!"

Nathan gave a sigh of exasperation, and boldly stepped forward on his way to Danya's house. The day was coming to a close; the moon was shining over the placid sea and the lights of Naples twinkled in the distance. When he was drawing near her home, he saw her and her mother sitting on the doorstep. He was shy as he approached them and asked, "Didn't you receive my letter that said I was coming home?"

Danya replied, "Yes, I did . . . yes, we did receive the letters; we were also informed by one of the island boys that you're ill." The girl sat mutely beside her mother, trying not to meet Nathan's eyes, which were favoring her.

"Isn't it a piece of luck, I'm back home!" The mother's scrutinizing eyes never left Nathan's face.

"We also know that you'll never be quite well again!" she said.

"You don't believe that nonsense the doctors said; I know now that I'm home I'll recover soon!" They were all silent for a little while, and then the mother nudged the girl.

Danya didn't try to soften the blow. She told him straight out, with the blunt directness of her race, "Nathan, I cannot marry you. As a man, you're not strong enough to work like one; both my parents and I have made our minds up, and anyway, even if I wanted to, my father would never give his consent." Nathan had heard enough. He bid them goodnight and went home hurriedly, deeply distressed. When he arrived, he found out that they all knew.

"Why did you not tell me?" he asked. "We wanted you to find out for yourself. Her father had been to us, and told us of this decision, and also that it was final," his mother said. He ran to her and wept at her bosom.

He was terribly unhappy but didn't place the blame on the girl. He knew that a fisherman's work required strength and endurance. Deep down he knew a girl couldn't marry a man who might not be able to support her.

His smile was very sad, and his eyes had the look of a beaten dog, but he never complained or said a hard word against the girl.

A few months later, after settling down to the old way of life and the common rounds of a fisherman's duty, his mother told him, "Son there's a young woman in the village who is willing to marry you; her name is Assunta." He replied, "She is as ugly as the devil." The mother fell

silent. The girl was older than he—twenty-five—and had been engaged to a man who, while serving his military duty, had been killed in Africa.

“She said, ‘If Nathan is willing to marry me I’ll buy him a boat and we’ll take a vineyard.’ Those were her exact words.” Nathan smiled sweetly at his mother and over his shoulder said, “I will think about what you said.”

Dressed in his stiff black clothes, he went up to high mass at the parish church. He placed himself in a position where he could have a good look at the young woman. He came down and said to his mother, “I’m willing.”

They married and settled down in a tiny white-washed cottage in the middle of a handsome vineyard. Nathan was now a big husky fellow, tall and broad; he still had the same ingenuous smile and those trusting eyes that he had as a boy.

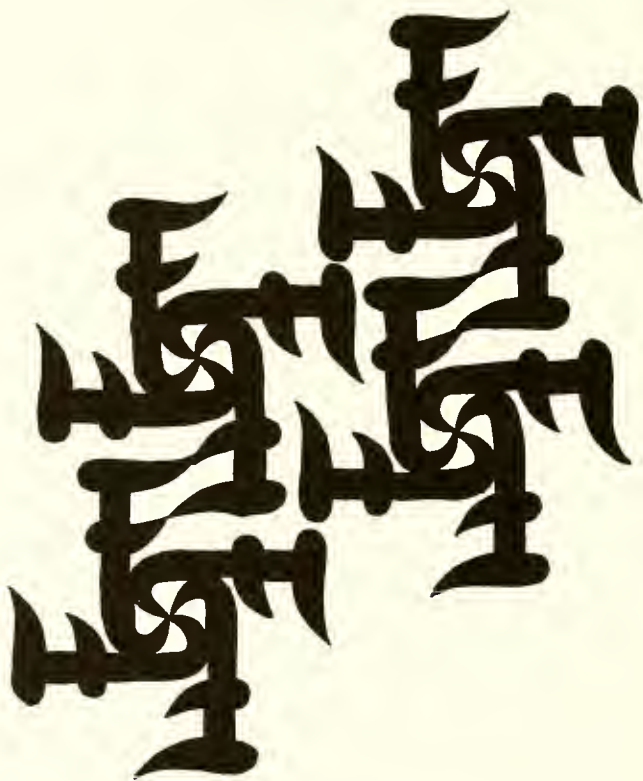
Assunta was a grim-visaged female with sharp, decided features who looked old for her years. But she had a good

heart and was nobody’s fool.

Assunta watched her husband, masculine and masterful, with a smile of devotion on her face. She never could bear the girl who had thrown him over, and had no other but harsh words for her. Nathan at times would get irritated but would say nothing.

Presently Assunta bore two children, both boys. Sometimes Nathan brought his children down to the beach and bathed them. The eldest boy was three and the youngest less than two. Nathan would dip them in the water; the older one bore it with stoicism, but the baby screamed lustily. Nathan had extremely large hands that looked deadly, but when he bathed his children, holding them so tenderly, drying them with delicate care, they were truly like flowers. He would seat the baby on his hand and hold him up, laughing a little at his smallness, and his laugh was like the laugh of an angel. His eyes, then, were as candid as his child’s.

*Hanya Radwan  
Third Place, Prose  
Muse Contest*



## PEN AND INK DRAWING

*by Linda Johnson*

## JODY'S GIFT

*Elizabeth Love*

I enclose your neck  
between my outstretched palms.  
It sings  
of twilight and horses  
cool wind  
through dying leaves.  
These ancient rhythms surface.

Infused with October's  
potency, unchallenged,  
you breathe fast hooves  
over shortened days.

Crushed velvet nightfall  
weaves enchantment.  
Your elusive eyes,  
unbridled,  
transcend the  
cool chestnut fire  
three summers grown.

Dance me into your autumn dream  
with wood moths in moonlight.  
The cycles that move you  
barely whisper through my world.



**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

*by Kim Butler*



## THE POT-BELLY STOVE

by Mimi Haithcox

Dillie shook me hard. She was hollerin', "Get up outa sack! You hear? Get up!" She grabbed hold of my cot, gave it a yank, and I fell off my cot, hurting my ow.

I squealed, "Hoo, Dillie! What gives? You come in belchin' like a sow . . ."

She turned on me and spit just like a cat, "It's comin' a storm! A spatin's blowing up, and you ain't finished h the well yet, neither!" Little Julius started cryin'. lie glared at me just a fussin', "Done went and woke up young'un. Get out there 'fore that weather hits!"

I wrapped the quilt around me and snatched up the beside the doorway. I was almost out the door when lie started hollerin' again. "Here! Might could use these e!" she bellowed. She threw a greasy paper sack at me. uldn't get my hand up from under the blanket, and the k splattered all over the floor. There were rusty bent s, staples, stripped screws, and headless tacks—none of n any good for nailing. But I squatted down and oped up a few. Didn't have too much choice. She was uding over me tappin' her foot and frettin', "Don't you none of them nails fall through the cracks. You hear? V ch out! There's one headed for the hole now!"

She was holdin' the baby, rubbing the back of his big, b d head. Julius was almost two years old and didn't have a air on his skin. He hadn't grown much, either. Lord, a his eyes was as big and buggy as a horse's. He looked li he was always cryin' 'cause he had this yellow grit in h eyes. Dillie would pick that stuff out of his sockets or d. It's a wonder he could see. She all the time had her fi ers in his face. He drooled, too. I was standing in the rway watching them fine white bubbles come out of the ck in his mouth. They looked like grits. Then Dillie bated, "Whatchya' waitin' for? Go on! Git!"

The stone slabs had been slipping out of place for a we e, and the whole wall was crumbling in the well. The re was rotten through, and pieces of tar paper were com- in off, plunkin' into the water. And the pulley had been lo gone. One year lightnin' struck the well house and sp that pulley and crank into boogles of splinters, so we to be dippin' with rope by hand.

I had been workin' on that well for days. Had to fish th stones out of the water. Then I had to smooth 'em all of and re-stack 'em. It won't so bad, but them rocks was y, an' I couldn't do but a few at a time 'fore I got tin. But Dillie wouldn't let up none. She was always ei r rockin' Julius by the pot-belly stove, or rantin' cause th well was crumblin' in, and the water was gettin' "s gnat". She would carry on and on. "You ain't done ye "We gonna' sit right here on this hill and die of

thirstin' 'cause you ain't done yet. I swear if you ain't teeu- jus," she would say. "Rain is scase. A spatin's gonna' blow up and knock the well in, an' yaoway knows when we'll get another pourin'."

It seemed kinda' queer that every time she took to preachin' and complainin' she had that Julius in her arms. That young'un was as limp on her chest as cured tobacco on a stick. But when she started hollering he started howling. And she'd squawk, "See what you done? Went an' got Ju-Ju goin'!"

One time she said that I got so fed up with it that I told her, "Shut up an' that damn varmit'll shut up!"

She stared at me with them cow eyes of hers. Her voice was hot, and her veins poked out on her head as she whined, "He's your nephew, Copie! Your kin! My boy! You damn . . ."

"But he ain't right, Dillie! He's touched," I said. "He's near 'bout two years on an' ain't said a blessed word! You tied to him all day long while the cows dry up 'cause ain't nobody been to milk 'em. Done lost two calves 'cause ain't nobody to help me with the pullin'. Cain't see no sense in it. We wastin' away with that thain'."

She let into me then. She put Julius down on her apron, and he just fell into a heap. She looked back at me an' said, "He's a whole sight better than you was. He's a angel. He ain't near the worry you was! You was the jackal's young'un. That's what! You the critter!" I looked down at that pile—all them green lines showin' through on its head, all them red and yellow streaks on its legs. I swung around quick. I was feelin' like I had the gut grubs.

Dillie said, "Where you goin'? That's right. You go on, Copie! Helpless, innocent child he is!"

I was starin' straight on ahead. "Got to fetch a chicken for supper," I said.

Since then it hadn't been much quiet, an' in a way, I was kinda' glad that I had to leave the house early that morning to work on the well. I knowed it was no use to work on it, though. That roof was gonna' go anytime, and it had been so dry that if it did rain everything'd turn to slosh an' cave in. They won't much I could do, but I thought I'd give it a go, and I wound that quilt tight around me.

I started stacking the rocks in a pile and levelled off the edges so I could make 'em fit right. I put some of them nails in the tar paper, but I knowed they wouldn't hold that paper still. And most of 'em fell through rotten wood and plunked in the water. The wind got up good and started tossin' dirt around. That wind was gonna' catch hold of that roof an' take it on to Beula Land, and the wall was gonna' go. I figured I ought to at least set up

some rain barrels. Then we'd have some clean water until we could dig us a new well.

There was four or five oak barrels layin' under the milking shed, but they won't too good, neither. It had been so long since we had rain, an' they hadn't been filled. They was as dry as the water hole in the pasture. They would have to be filled all the way before they'd even begin to swell up—they held thirty-one gallons. I rolled 'em under the eaves where they'd catch the run-off from the tin roof. The roof really won't tin, 'cause tin don't rust, and the tin on the house was as red as the clay in the field. Every other time I had put them barrels out an' they finally caught up a couple of gallons of water, red and brown specks would be settled in the bottom. We had to be sure not to shake it up much, or we'd get them red dots all in our teeth when we was drinkin'. I even put some Martin gourds out in the open—anything to catch some water. I couldn't see no more to do. We was gonna' have to dig us another well is all.

The dust was flyin' up and borin' into my face, neck, hands. And my ears was sore from bein' slapped by the wind. I went back in the house. I could see blue fat-back smoke comin' out of the kitchen. I could smell that old raunchy, stinkin' water oak burnin' in the stove. Them two smells together clogged up my throat an' made my eyes sting. I began to wonder if Dillie left the stove open or somethin'.

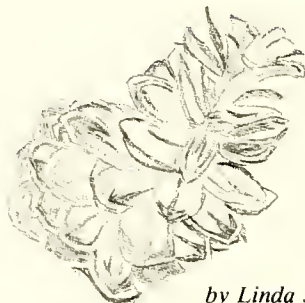
I pulled off the quilt an' threwed it back on my cot and went to the kitchen. It won't really a kitchen. It was just where we sectioned off the stove with blankets so as to make the place look bigger. That stink was somethin' else. It smelt like somebody was burnin' pig sty mud. I hollered "Dillie! Where you at? You leave the pot-belly open?" an' pulled back the 'doorway' blanket. Julius was layin' in front of the stove, limp as usual, but Dillie was over to one side eyein' that young'un. She was rubbin' her hands together just openin' and closin' her mouth without makin' no sound. She pointed to the rocking chair. It had broke its left front leg. I said, "Don't tell me you want me to do somethin' else now. What you over there gawkin' at? Hu! Hey! Dillie?"

She broke in on me an' said, "Roll him over, Copie." She talked real soft, "He don't move none. He ain't makin' sense, Copie." I rolled him over. One side of his head looked like it had been broiled. Smelt like a scald pig. It was the color of fried onions. My mouth come open an' I shot my eyes back up to Dillie.

She started yellin', "I was rockin' an' the leg broke! That's what! He fell on the stove! You hear what I say?" She kept goin'.

"He don't move none," I said. And she quieted down.

Mimi Haithcox  
Second Place, Prairie  
Muse Contest



by Linda Johnson

## **WEANING THE CALF**

**(After A Painting By Winslow Homer)**

*Kristin Morris*

The rope the boy pulls . . .  
a symbol of separation:  
loss of security, nurturing, love,  
isolation for the little calf,  
longing for Mother and home.  
The young boy trying to take the place of Mother  
is nothing short of an enemy.  
He still has a Mother.  
The calf will not accept the substitution.

Knowing this,  
the rope frays . . .

## **A WOMAN CALLED SUNSET**

**(After A Painting By Eugene Berman)**

*Elizabeth Richardson*

Look where we have driven you.  
Cold gray street. A crack in the wall frames the moon.  
Its rays dance on your translucent skin.  
Look at that neck.  
So thin, so white, so soft to the lips and the fingers.  
The tools of your ignored trade lay about your feet.  
Strands of hair, spells, and rodent bones.  
You will pick them up.  
You will use them.





**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Allyson Abbott*

## A MATCH SELLER

(After A Painting By David Gilmour Blythe)

*Elizabeth Love*

Framed in wood and easy lights  
grey eyes compel.  
Drawn across the room  
of still lives and landscapes  
I fidget, guilty  
before this oil on canvas.  
Without hate, without hope  
the Match Seller nourishes her fragile form.

I wrest my brown  
from her grey sight  
and hide in the flowers  
on my clipboard.  
Who is she  
to bring me to judgment  
one hundred years dead?  
Her defeat is not my choice.  
Silent, apple blanketing the mouth,  
her presence is unrelenting.

My stomach tightens,  
confirms my recognition.  
I have passed you in the street—  
I did not buy your matches,  
whispers my conviction.

## HIDE AND SEEK

by Elizabeth Love

It was three weeks into school and cold even for Cortland, New York. Up on the hill, brick dormitories thrust their unsightly shoulders into the sharp moonless night. Through the windows beer signs flashed neon, and lights made a silhouette of stuffed animals and Jack Daniels' bottles on the sills. Bass strains from speakers carried through the glass panes and this tenuous world spent itself. And the motion was swallowed, even as it was witnessed, by an indifferently Northern countryside.

Lynn and I were in the room, she writing letters, I thinking. Jane, our third, had gone to the library to study Political Science. This room was all we claimed here, designed for two with soft blue walls in a tall clay-red building. Crowded by metal bed frames with the window facing North, the three of us learned to give mind space when physical space was no longer possible.

Lynn, on the top bunk, rolled from her stomach to her back. Long fingers as adept with a paintbrush as with a basketball and hockey stick fingered the growing chain of beer can flip tops hanging from the cork strip high on the wall.

"I'm going out for a walk, you can come if you want." She made it almost a challenge.

"Well, okay, I'm not doing anything," I said. She was getting more brusque as the days moved into weeks. That she extended even this rough invitation surprised me. Silently we shoved our feet into sneakers, our heads then arms into sweatshirts.

"I've got a key," I said, "You don't have to take yours." I wrote a note for Jane on the door.

I was glad to get out and walk with someone. Usually I walked two or three times a week alone and more often now, lonely. It became a pattern. My feet would bring me to the hill beside the Student Union and I would sit on my sweatshirt in the long grass just out of view of the sidewalk. Once or twice I brought pen and paper and wrote, but more often I would lie back with my hair twisted up for a pillow and watch the stars or the clouds and the moon. I couldn't bring the ache I felt into the room and I would let it leak out of my eyes here.

"I'm going to the Union to buy a pack of Marlboros," Lynn said.

I was surprised at this defensive declaration. Neither she nor I smoke and the subject rarely came up with us.

"Sure, whatever," I said, feeling that she was looking for some sort of an answer. "I didn't know you smoked."

I never knew if something I said would upset her.

Through her clouded eyes and set jaw, I saw discord within her like a cold night fog.

"I did this summer but I quit."

"Oh." We walked in silence, the wind creeping over cotton sweatshirts, tee shirts and jeans. My feet made that the mud was crunchy-frozen, and sent my messages to put on more clothes. My body thought of a wool coat—my fingers, mittens—and my ears, a hat. Lynn bought the Marlboros.

"Don't tell anyone I smoked tonight. I really don't smoke, you know."

I grinned, "How much is it worth to you?"

Her eyebrows went up, then she smiled. "Thank you."

Outside our legs followed the sidewalk, past me on the hill and back down towards the dorms again. The wind stung water into my eyes, and shooting a sideways glance at Lynn, I saw her brush off the wetness that her hair had spread from cold eyes to a cold cheek.

"The wind makes you cry too?" I asked.

"Do you want to sit down here?" Lynn pointed to a short flight of cement steps, sheltered by the side of the dorm they led to. We sat and for a while watched a group of guys, all drunk, play lacrosse by the meager light through uncurtained windows. They were in shorts and tee shirts, trampling the stiff grass. The cold of the step slowly seeped into the flesh on the back of my thighs.

"You're not happy here either, are you?"

Lynn's question caught me off guard. "Well, is not that bad, but . . ."

She banged the pack of Marlboros against her right hand several times, opened the paper, and took out two cigarettes.

"You want one?"

"I haven't in three years." I took the cigarette between two numb fingers and scraped the head off a match before I got it lit. The smoke felt hard and tight going into my chest.

We talked through cigarette after cigarette and the moon set behind my head. She hurt, I hurt, and both our eyes were wet though the wind had stopped.

"Nobody really knows anybody here," Lynn said. "If I were to die tomorrow it wouldn't make a difference. You don't know me and I don't know you."

I got up and we walked back to the room. The silence between us was surprisingly warm. Jane was back and already asleep. When we washed our faces in tepid water the skin came alive and burned with a sudden heat.





**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

*by Molly Graham*

## SAND CASTLES

*Suzanne West*

You begin with a soft  
foundation  
adding more and more

Trying to build it  
stronger

Fearing the inevitable  
wave  
will crash  
down  
upon it.

You move farther  
away  
and start anew.

But the fresh  
beginning is  
destroyed once more.

You move  
to still higher  
ground.

## DEBBIE

by Jacqueline Morris

I grabbed the first seat on the Trailways bus and set back in the red tweed chair. Thanksgiving holiday was all here and I looked forward to the ride home. I could wait for the ride to begin so I could gaze out the window and relax, letting my mind wander from English terms to boys. People filed on the bus, passing me. I peeped for a minute that a cute young man might sit beside me. Most of the travelers were soldiers and black women with fat round chocolate babies. I decided to put my pocketbook on the seat next to mine, hoping no one would come to sit beside me. I really just wanted to be alone and not be bothered with some tart stranger talking to me all the way to Fayetteville.

I was lost in thought when someone poked my arm. "Miss, would you mind if this woman sat beside you? She needs to sit up front," said an obese black woman holding the hand of a creature that looked like an old man and an eight-year old girl at the same time. Blonde, fuzzy, hair-like crab grass covered her slightly pear-shaped head and at first glance, she looked as if she had no eyes. Not believing the features I saw, I clutched up my Aigner pocketbook and stammered, "Of course, I don't m-mind." Quickly the black woman said thank-you and helped this hide Puck-like person get situated in the seat beside me. The girl would not look at me. I was paralyzed by snobbery and curiosity and, though I was dying to stare at her deformity, I was terrified to look at or talk to her. I was angry. All I wanted was a relaxing, quiet trip home and now I had been forced to sit beside the ugliest and most repulsive thing I'd ever laid eyes on before. I then realized that about fifteen more deformed and obviously blind men and women were climbing on the bus and feeling their way to their seats. I heard the black woman telling a person behind me that she worked with the Governor Morehead School for the Blind and these people were going home for the holidays. My heart chilled and my body grew tingly with fear. I opened my Vogue magazine and flipped through the pages blindly, like them, as I tried to ignore the look of their sad, sallow faces. But I could not ignore the poor thing that was supposed to be a woman sitting beside me. Out of the corner of my eye I watched her adhere to her seat and take a folded, faded newspaper out of her overnight bag. She carefully unfolded the paper and read it out. She turned the pages slowly, as if she was reading every word but the paper was upside down. How clever of her, I thought—she is pretending to read that paper as if she could understand each damn word. Then I realized how appalling our contrast to each other was. I checked out in perfect preppy attire, complete with my add-a-beads dangling around my neck and a brand new pair of Sperry topsiders on my feet. She wore a pair of

worn-out imitation topsiders and looked like a rag o'muffin—a collage of yellow, brown, and orange dish rags. She looked so mangled and pitiful and vulnerable.

She finished reading the upside down paper and tried to fold it back up. Immediately after she had done this, she unfolded it and tried to spread it back out again. Her breathing was raspy and she started to sigh with frustration at her struggle with her paper. I forced the air into my lungs and asked her, "Would you like for me to help you hold your paper?"

She looked directly at me. I could not escape the reality of her now. She did indeed have eyes. Only those eyes had lashless lids that looked like they had been sewn together by nature, allowing only a triangle of white to peek through. God, her eyes looked like figments of a surrealist painter's imagination. Suddenly, I despised my own long black lashes which obscure my vision when I look through a microscope in biology lab. The shock of her face made my stomach churn. She smiled a toothless impish grin and pulled my hand to the edge of the paper. I cringed.

"My name is Jacquie," I said, screaming "Hypocrite!" to myself as I spoke to her in a sweet polite voice.

"Hwhi," she grumbled. For a few uncomfortable minutes we read the upside down paper together. I marveled again at her cleverness. She knew she looked frightful. She knew she was not normal and she also knew her right to be recognized and accepted as a person by society.

The bus finally lunged into gear. Oh my God, I thought, what if she gets sick from reading in a moving bus? I always do. I felt like crying. What if she throws up on me? I prayed, "Please God, please do not, do not let her get sick!"

Her puckish body suddenly jerked. I practically leapt out of my seat and into the bus driver's lap. She sneezed four hard times. Shaking, I asked her, "Are you feeling alright?"

"No, whi don't feel so good."

Oh Lord, she doesn't feel so good. I asked, "Do you have a cold?"

"Yeah, whi'd got a cold," she answered, her words barely comprehensible. I felt as helpless as she looked, hating myself for wanting to get the hell off that bus.

To my horror, she suddenly put her head on my shoulder and began to sniffle and whimper. I felt my heart bursting as I found myself putting my arms around her. She felt fragile like a sick baby chick. She snuggled up to me. I noticed a tag pinned to her coat. I think I really did expect to see written on it, "Please look after this bear." But what it actually said was: HI, MY NAME IS DEBBIE. I LIVE AT THE GOVERNOR MOREHEAD SCHOOL.



What was Thanksgiving going to be for this little Paddington Bear? "Debbie, just go to sleep. I'll wake you when we get to Fayetteville," I gently said, stroking her hair. I cradled her in my arms and let my mind wander like I'd planned. Only I fantasized that my father was a plastic surgeon who could separate those lids and reshape her eyes so they could open and close normally. I would teach her how to talk clearly instead of garble. I would buy her pretty clothes and read *Jane Eyre* to her. I would nurse this baby chick to health and make the life I thought she deserved possible.

I looked out the window at the gorgeous scene of red, orange and yellow-splattered trees, overlapping each other against a backdrop of grey clouds, rain pouring from them in giant slabs. I longed to describe what I saw to her. What did she see? I guessed that she might only see white through the triangular opening of her eyes. How sad her life must be. Obviously she was from a poor family. She would never experience the love of a man or ever have a family of her own.

She slept until we arrived at Fort Bragg. Another young man from the school asked me when we would arrive in Fayetteville. I cheerfully said, "In about fifteen minutes!" I felt triumphant that I had seen past his scruffy pound-dog appearance and had answered as if to a normal

person.

Debbie stirred. Her shoe had come untied. The imitation leather laces were worn so thin that I feared she would break them as she pulled on them, frantically trying to form a bow. The laces slipped through her tiny fingers as if they were made of butter. I agonized over whether I should try to help her. I did not want to offend her by patronizing her. I let two more minutes pass, then asked her, "Debbie, may I help you?"

Relieved, she lifted her foot up to me and I tied a tight bow.

"Whi have trouble tying ma shoes," she said happily.

"So do I! Does that feel ok?" I asked.

"Yeah. Ma pa's taking me to MacDonald's. Wm hongry!" she giggled.

"Are you excited about going home?"

"Yeah, I mish ma pa real bad."

As the bus pulled into the station she seemed to forget me in her excitement. She grabbed her small bag and hopped off the bus before I could say good-bye. I followed behind her, hoping to catch her but she had already been swept into the arms of her father. He hugged her tightly, ignoring the rain. He had soft round eyes from which tears spilled as he kissed her forehead and soft blond hair. Then he whisked her away in the rain.



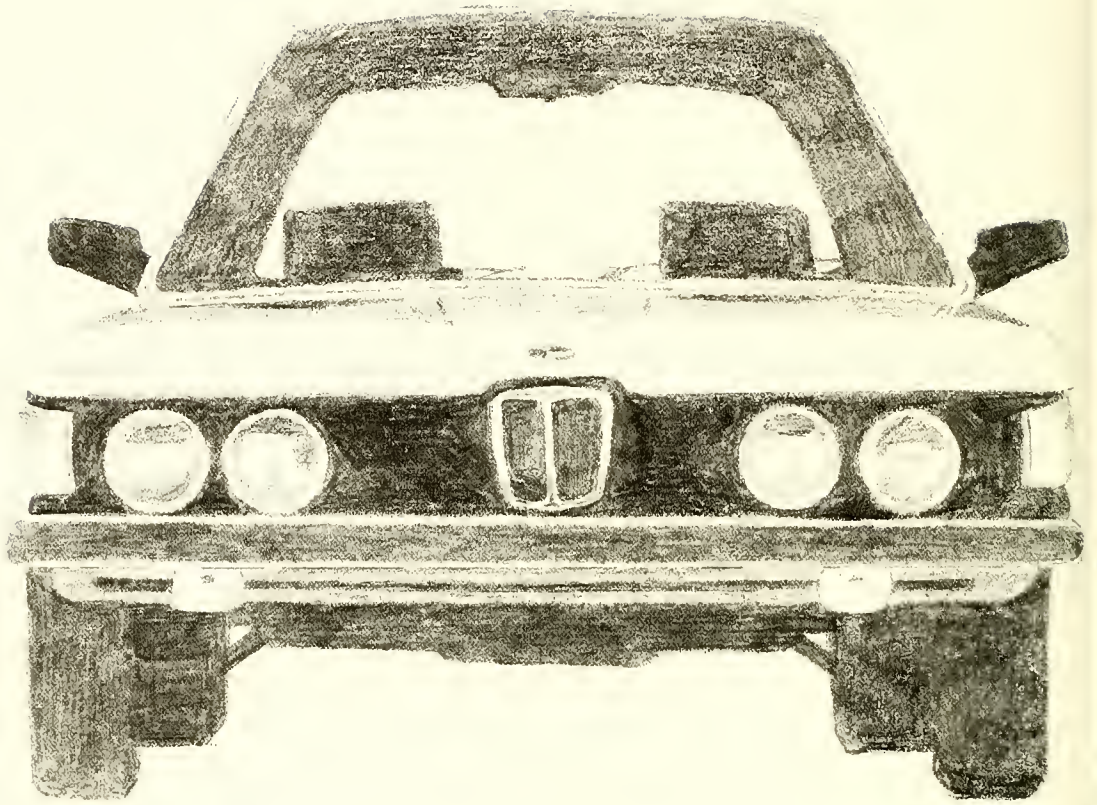
## PEN AND INK DRAWING

by Jacqueline Morris



**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Carol Shellhorn*



**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Karen Melton*



## TWO HOUR LAYOVER IN SYRACUSE BUS STATION

*Elizabeth Love*

Leg warmers and Timberlands . . .

I shift the pack

side

to

side—wary.

A greasy coat with

emaciated eyes

sightless fingers rotting

on a cigar follow

the high heeled hips

made up tight

in

red lipstick.

step — sway

step — sway

step — sway . . .

North side

bus number 20537 for

Cortland, Ithaca, Elmira . . .

I exit purposefully —

avoid a quaalude stare . . .

city cold tickles through

worn sweats . . .

number 20537

breathes steadily

inhales

Nike bags

down coats

wool hats.

# THE FUNERAL

by Karal Kirkman

The day began as any other. Mary Lynn, a small blonde-haired, blue-eyed girl called my house and asked if I could go out and play.

"Sure," I said. I slid out of bed and put on a pair of Levis and a football jersey.

Mary Lynn and I met outside in front of my house.

"I've already called Leanne and she wants us to go to her house," began Mary Lynn.

"Sounds fine, maybe we can get up a game of football," I said.

We walked along the road kicking a can around like a soccer ball. The sun was out and the air was extremely warm for nine in the morning. We passed Sandy's house but Mary Lynn had said before that Sandy was sick and could not come out. It would be different playing without Sandy. She was a year older, but she was still one of us.

We rounded the corner and walked into Leanne's yard. I left the can on the side of the road.

"Hey ya'll," yelled Leanne from the front door. She bounded down the front steps and walked with us to the back yard.

"What do you two want to do?" asked Leanne.

"Doesn't matter to me," I said.

"Me neither," said Mary Lynn, "I just don't want to build a fort."

Leanne and I were more tomboyish than Mary Lynn. She liked to talk on the phone a lot too, especially when Leanne and I wanted to play football.

"Okay, we'll play in Bobby and Greg's fort," said Leanne.

We went across the ditch and into a little shack. It was watertight and very safe. Since we were girls, we were only allowed on the first two floors. The top floor was for members of the club. It was sort of like a mini fraternity; the boys had to do weird stuff for about a week to get in.

"Hey, Leanne, what's that man doin'?" I asked.

"I'm not sure," she said.

By this time we were all standing at the window looking at the two men in the graveyard.

"It looks like they're drinking," I said.

"I guess so—but why in the graveyard?" asked Mary Lynn.

"I don't know, but I want to find out," I said.

Everyone followed me outside and over the fence. There we stood, an entire neighborhood. About ten little white kids, facing these two black men.

"What are you doin'?" I asked.

"We're diggin' a grave," the larger of the two men said.

"Who's it for?" I asked.

"You wouldn't know him," said the little one.

"Well, we might want to come to the funeral," said the big one.

"It's at one o'clock this afternoon," said the big one.

We were satisfied. I guessed there would be lots of people and they wouldn't mind if we watched. Nobody said much as we walked through the graveyard with the silent stones watching us. We crossed the fence and all marched into the fort.

Bobby, one of the oldest boys, took over and told everyone that had not heard what we were going to do. He was a lot like Leanne; he had curly brown hair and was built really small.

"Since it is a funeral, we should wash our faces and hands so we don't all look like silly little kids," he said.

"And I think the boys have decided not to let the girls go," he said in a very authoritative way.

"We will too go," Leanne shrieked.

"Yeah, the funeral has nothing to do with the club," I said.

"Right, it's an outside activity," Mary Lynn came in.

"Well, I don't think you should go. What if a fight breaks out and one of you gets killed or something? Bobby dramatized.

"Golly gee Beaver, what'd ya have to go and say a goofy thing like that for?" I said.

"Maybe I'm silly, but I'm still the oldest," Bobby replied with a smile that showed all his teeth.

"We'll see who goes," Leanne said.

We girls marched out of the fort and across the ditch.

"I'm kinda thirsty," Leanne complained.

"And I'm hungry," Mary Lynn said. Then again Mary Lynn was always hungry. She was a little chubby anyway.

We all split up for our houses where we would eat lunch and get ready for the funeral. The minutes passed slowly and I constantly asked the time. That within itself was rare, because time never concerned me. Finally the phone rang and it was Leanne.

"Are you ready?" she asked.

"Sure, I'm on my way," I said.

Mary Lynn was waiting for me outside again. This time we did not say anything, but finally Mary Lynn spoke up.

"Are you nervous?" she asked.

"Nope, it's just a funeral," I said.

"Well, I don't like it. It gives me the willies," she said, shrugging her shoulders.

Leanne was out in the street with her dog, Brady.

"Let's go," she said.

We three girls marched proudly over to the fort and crossed through the door.

"We're goin'," Leanne stated.

"Fine," the boys said.

Much to our surprise we did not go to the graveyard at We just stood on the opposite side of the ditch and red over. There was not a lot to see, just a big tent, pile and cars. Everything looked black.

Being the littlest, I had the worst time seeing. There e even boys in the pine trees looking across. Since I was e I thought maybe no one would notice me if I went r. So I ducked under a few people and crossed the h. The tent that I could hardly see before was quite e. A fat black lady and some other black people were ng under it. All the ladies wore hats and gloves, even ones that did not sit under the tent. I spotted an extra ir so I sat in it. The people just watched me. There was a man in a black robe throwing ashes around and talk- but kind of singing too. That did it! The fat lady ped up and started singing.

"Ole Lord, he took his last step," she cried. Then yone started clapping and singing.

I felt very uncomfortable and sort of sick. The next g I remember was the big black Limo taking the family y. I guess I passed out for awhile.

The two grave diggers, a few of the man's friends, and ere there. Of course the rest of the neighborhood was the other side of the ditch. Slowly I stood up and ced over to the men that were going to bury him.

"I still don't know this man," I said.

"May I see him?" I asked after awhile.

The two men were floored by my question. Somehow I k they understood, though.

"Sure," the little one spoke up.

The two men opened the lid and there he was. He had e hair and a very nice suit on.

"What happened to him?" I asked.

"Got his neck broke," the big man said.

"Oh," I answered.

They closed the lid and I turned around to the group fends that sat there opened-mouthed and gaping at me.

"Well, aren't you going to say anything?" asked Bob-

"I prayed for him," I said.

"She's losin' touch," Mary Lynn said as she watched cross the ditch.

"I'm goin' home for awhile. See ya'll later," I sput- out as I walked through Leanne's yard.

The walk home made me extremely tired, which was ge because I never got sleepy during the day.

When I got inside I asked Mother to make me a cup of R-ian tea and I told her that I was going to lie down. Of ose she got suspicious and immediately felt my o read.

"Are you sick?" she asked.

"No, just tired," I said. "Mother, I went to a funeral r," I told her in a slow calm voice.

"You what?" she asked excitedly.

"I went to a black man's funeral in the graveyard ad Leanne's house," I explained.

"Whose was it?" she asked.

"I don't know, but he would have probably been very if I had met him," I answered.

"I better make that two cups of tea and I think I'll lie do- with you," Mother said.

And she did. We fell asleep and my day ended until Daddy came home at five. I told the story over again at supper except with more dramatization this time. My parents just sat there like the gang had done earlier and watched me make my exit into the den to watch television.

"Strange child," Daddy stated.

"I agree," Mother complied.



## PENCIL DRAWING

by Tomoko Asami



*by Christine Trask*









JRAR

MUSE 1985





*by Lee Hanes Moore  
Honorable Mention, Art*

*Stories, if they are good, are like pieces of life chiseled out of time, but they are also in time, flowing onward somewhere even when we cannot follow them. They are not less windows through which we can look, doors through which we can walk. Whenever we choose to marvel that life could be thus, then we have begun to read.*

— Anna Wooten-Hawkins

**Saint Mary's College**

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Muse Contest

|              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| Art Judge    | Margot Richter |
| Poetry Judge | Shirley Moody  |
| Prose Judge  | Whitmel Joyner |

With special thanks to the writers who read their works in the Muse Week Festival:

Peter Makuck  
David Payne  
Shirley Moody

*\*Cover Art by Kristin Roberts*

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## HOMEMADE MAYONNAISE

*Lee Hanes Moore*

On grandmother's sandwiches there was always homemade mayonnaise,  
Reminiscence of the old days—starched white collars,  
Stability,  
And the harmony of tradition.

Every woman had her place,  
Chaperoned until marriage. Then  
The certain betrothal,  
With the bride draped in white, the color of homemade mayonnaise.

The men imprisoned them;  
It's all forgotten now,  
But it happened, they locked them away.

A woman dressed to the ankles,  
Marching in the cutting cold—  
Not at home, making homemade mayonnaise,  
But holding signs, demanding her rights.

Now that we have opportunities,  
She pleads with us to take them.  
We have all we need, so we turn away  
And forget her.

We have no conception  
Of the life sentence of a wood stove.  
Stern eyes of the past slung over a washboard  
Wanting us to be every thing they could not.

Not to drink tea in delicate gazebos,  
Talking of children and family ties.  
But to live in the world they fought for.

*Honorable Mention, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



*by Mary Lisa Newman*

## **THE FISHERMEN**

*Sandra F. Jackson*

Young men  
Dancing with empty nets—  
Those gauzy veils and bridal gowns  
Wedding them to life on the sea.

Sun rises,  
Sparkles on the blue expanse.  
In unison,  
Floating on an uneven floor of water,  
They sway to the music of the ocean.

In shady gray  
Men dance at daybreak,  
Lift and dip their wives,  
The lovely ghosts of women  
In the sea,  
To catch what they may.



## GREAT ORMEW HEAD, NEAR LIVERPOOL

(After A Painting By Robert Salmon)

*Amy Scott*

The sky was black and gray,  
The water below rough as gravel,  
The rocks surrounding the water  
many sizes larger than the ships.

Two ships and a shipwreck.  
The largest ship resting  
against an olive green rock.  
The lines on the sail  
like tangled telephone wires.

Behind the ship,  
a man holding a hoe,  
who had come down from the field above.

To the right of this ship,  
Rocks scattered on the shore  
like a broken puzzle.  
On the sand a  
mangled masthead, strewn with seaweed  
like moss.

Another ship's sail,  
wrinkled like a sheet  
on an unmade bed.

Lying beside this boat,  
a sheeted man,  
resting with the caught fish.

In the center of the turbulent water,  
a single boat  
with a crew of men  
working diligently  
to restore Disaster.

*First Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*

## **EYES**

*Carleton Anne Maury*

Bright jade-green,  
they spend hours drinking blends  
of pale green, turquoise and  
navy blue seas.  
At night, tired and dreamy,  
they imagine and play with  
the tiny white specks dancing  
against the dull, black sky.

## **HER EYES**

*Martha Fairer*

Her eyes are a gray turquoise that burst  
like sunlight reflected off a blue mountain  
lake in mid-morning.  
They seem frozen in time,  
as if God shouted Stop!  
before the full splendour unfolded.  
They seem sharp  
yet smoothed over,  
immobile in white ice.  
Deep within the black onyx, I am led to a young  
Indian lady  
standing silently  
on a porch high, high in the snow-covered mountains.  
A shepherd calls in the distance to his sheep.  
His voice shatters the silence that prevails.  
Peace covers the peaks like a blanket.



## CHARCOAL DRAWING

*by Lea Schwartz  
First Place, Art*

... A cheetah is speedy, a little bit of God,  
strung in the sinews like a harp. . .

—From "Animals"  
Anna Wooten-Hawkins

## ST. MARY'S

### (A Parody of Allen Ginsberg's "America")

*Jean Hagan*

St. Mary's it's killing me to be something.  
St. Mary's two hundred dollars and ninety-seven cents on October 4, 1984.  
I can't stand my own roommates.  
St. Mary's is the world going to war?  
Go drown yourself and don't forget the sign-out cards.  
I don't feel like going to class don't make me.  
I won't start my paper until I'm in the mood.  
St. Mary's when will you be sympathetic?  
When will you stop looking disappointed?  
When will you look at yourself through my eyes?  
When will you be worthy of your spirit?  
St. Mary's why are your halls full of tears and unbudgeted time?  
I'm sick of your insane conventions.  
When can I be rebellious and not feel guilty about it?  
St. Mary's after all it's you who will mold me not the world.  
Your rules are too much for me.  
You want me to be stagnant.  
There must be a way to compromise.  
The punk is at Sadlacks I don't think she'll come back, it's for the good of the school.  
Is it for the good of the school or is this a practical joke?  
I can't make my point anymore.  
But I won't give up my thoughts.  
St. Mary's stop pushing me I think I know what I'm doing.  
St. Mary's show me the way.  
I haven't read my campus mail in days, it never says anything important or that I don't already know.  
St. Mary's I feel sentimental about The Circle.  
St. Mary's I used to be unappreciative as a kid and I'm not sorry.  
I drink a beer every chance I get.  
I sit in my room for hours and stare at all the books on my desk.  
When I go to parties I try to smile and am never nice.  
My mind is made up there is something wrong.  
You should have seen me listening to hard core punk-rock music.  
My best friend agrees with me about you.  
No, I won't tell you how much money my father makes!  
I have some intelligent ideas and great dreams.  
St. Mary's have I told you what you've done to some of your girls during exam time?

I'm pleading with you.  
Are you going to allow my life to revolve around the cafeteria?  
I'm obsessed with the food I never eat.  
I'm there every meal.  
The cafeteria haunts me every time I creep up to my empty mailbox.  
Dinner is the social event.  
Everyone is talking about someone else.  
The test tomorrow is serious, I have to be serious it's my future.  
It occurs to me that I am St. Mary's.  
But the teachers are all against me.  
I haven't got a chance in hell.  
I'd better consider my intellectual resources.  
My intellectual resources consist of hours of procrastination, five cups of coffee, and an intelligent capable mind that only works well under pressure.

I say nothing about my hangups nor the criticism that lies under my attitude.  
I have abolished the constant fashion show of the college, and the highschool  
is the next to go.  
My ambition is to be in at least one club, despite the fact that no one knows me.  
St. Mary's how can I write a list of sacred grievances when you won't listen?  
St. Mary's listen to me.  
St. Mary's save the confused.  
St. Mary's Wednesday morning chapel must not die.  
St. Mary's I am the chapel cutter.  
St. Mary's you really don't want me to feel alone.  
St. Mary's it's them rich preppies.  
Them preppies them preppies everyone looks the same.  
The administration wants to eat us alive. They need to read my ethics book.  
All my books hate me. They want to make me conventional.  
Make me somebody's wife. No! Somebody's profession.  
St. Mary's this is quite serious.  
St. Mary's this is the impression I get from your standards.  
St. Mary's could I be wrong?  
I'd better start working.  
It's true I don't want to be a Cold Cut or make Phi Theta Kappa,  
I can't sing and I'm slack anyway.  
St. Mary's I'm wearing your ring and it means more to me than even you will  
ever know.  
St. Mary's I'm putting my odd talents at your disposal and my lazy shoulder  
to the wheel.

*Honorable Mention, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



**PHOTOGRAPH**

*by Julie Gray*



**PHOTOGRAPH**

*Jo Lee Credle  
Second Place, Art*



## YOU WERE WEARING

*Annie Gray Sprunt*

You were wearing your Nelson Rockefeller printed silk jacket.  
In each divided up square of the jacket was a picture of Nelson Rockefeller.  
Your hair was silver and you were stunning. You asked me, "Does everyone live this well?"  
I smelled the aroma of your French Riviera resort bedroom held in place by a Jackie Onassis hairclip.  
"No," I said, "only the few chosen elite." Then we were chauffeured home in my Rolls Royce together.  
We later frolicked on the veranda, so that your Pierre DuPont, King of Good Graces, mink was torn.

Grand-ma-ma was listening to Bach in the parlor, a Richard Prosser Mellon comb in her hair.  
We waited for a time and then joined her, only to be served Dom Perignon in goblets painted with pictures of Howard Hughes,  
As well as with illustrated information of the current stock market trend and horse race scoop.  
Father came in wearing his William Randolph Hearst, Jr. necktie: "How about some caviar, everyone?"  
I said, "Let's go on the terrace for a while." Then we went outside and lounged in the Nelson Hunt gazebo.  
On the estate across the iron gate we saw a yardman raking leaves piled in the likeness of the mystery money-man, Robert Lee Vesco.

*Honorable Mention, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



*Katherine Walton  
Third Place, AFI*

## KID

by Ashley Beirig

Dawn came suddenly, and with it the heat. An uncomfortable night had metamorphosed into an unbearably humid morning. It was only nine o'clock, and already the faded cotton dress Ruth wore clung to her back, a second skin of calico. Beads of perspiration crept down her round, ebony face, and periodically she would set down her weaving, pick up the red and green bandana that lay beside her chair, and mop her shining face. She had come early today. During the long Carolina tourist season, Ruth knew that the difference between a good day and a bad day depended solely on how visible her "spot" was. The Charleston Marketplace, open at eight o'clock, could fill up by eight-fifteen on a July Saturday; visitors to the city were unusually eager to bring home "authentic Charleston stuff." Such "stuff" was never complete without a handwoven basket.

Ruth sat on the sidewalk of the market, attempting to avoid the heat by concentrating on her basketweaving and putting off the moment when the scorching sun would force her to pick up her chair and her basket display and move aside. She knew her wares were more visible, their subtle patterns more arresting, in the bright morning sunshine than they would be in the shaded open-air pavillion. Besides, being outside gave her the added opportunity to be noticed by the passers on the horse and carriage tours that occasionally drove by her spot. Ruth estimated that about one quarter of her morning business came from the passers-by who noticed her handiwork. As a young girl, Ruth had managed to stay outside longer than any other basket woman, never stopping to step into the cool pavillion. Now Ruth's outdoor time was limited to a few hours at most, because direct sunshine made her faint and dizzy.

Today she had stopped to rest for a moment — these days her eyes stung and her hands ached after an hour or two of work — when a shrill screech in her left ear made her start. As she turned sharply around to see who had made such a rude noise, the half-finished basket slid off Ruth's ample lap. Following instinct, she quickly bent over to retrieve her fallen work and upset the plywood display stand next to her chair. She muttered a mild curse under her breath and sat back to survey the damage. Baskets were scattered within a ten-foot radius of her chair, along with palm fibers and her plywood stand. Ruth sighed and heaved herself out of her seat. She gingerly peeled her sweat-soaked dress from her sticky thighs, carefully avoiding the sensitive heat rash, and knelt to retrieve the spilled wares. Had Ruth seen the culprit who had screeched earlier, she would not have been so surprised when the slender young white boy darted in front of her.

Ruth's first impression of the child was that he was a restless sprite. She caught her breath, remembering the stories of "fairy chillun" her Mam used to tell her when Ruth was young and had grown bored with the hot, tedious job of summertime basketweaving. "Ruthie," Mam would ask, her sharp eyes never straying from the embryonic basket in her

lap, "is you getting wearied?" Though Ruth would not ever admit fatigue, Mam always knew the exact moment when Ruth's thoughts strayed from the baskets to a cool bottle of limeade, or when natural shifts of position to relieve a cramped back or a bout of "pincushion foot" became fidgets brought on by heat and boredom. "Well, Sugar," Mam would say, "I know dis here work ain' easy, but it's good money. Now, if you set still and gits about yo' work, I's gonna tell you a tale."

"Bout what, Mam?" Mam's tales always brought a sparkle to Ruth's eyes, lifted her spirits, and kept her mind off the heat. If the tale was extra exciting, even the prospect of an icy limeade wouldn't drag her mind off of it.

"Well, chile o'mine. . ." Mam would begin, in the deep, rich Gullah accent a child could settle back and get comfortable in. Sometimes the tales were of the once-upon-a-time variety, but more often they would be colorful stories of the South Carolina Low-country. Once in a while, Mam would sink into a real story-telling mood and talk about Plat Eye. "Plat Eye," she would begin, her usually sharp, clear eyes becoming unreadable and opaque as they always did when she spun her yarns, "is the Devil's spawn. He a ugly ole critter, an' he evil. Badness live in him, an' he live in badness. They was made fo' one another, mebbe even wifs one another. Now Plat Eye, he like nothin' better than the taste of young meat, an' he ain' afear'd to go crawlin' fo' it.

"Plat Eye, he long. . . oh, 'bout a mile o'him sometime. But he ain' allus the same lenth. Ol' Plat Eye, he can be jus' 'bout anythin' he want to be. Most time though, he a big slimy ol' wormy thing. No foots has Plat Eye got. No, he jus' crawl like a snake. He look like a snake, too - scales, an' toofs like a wile sow. But like I says, Plat Eye ain' allus what he seem. He can change. You seen them speckeldy lights 'bove the bog nights? Black nights, min' you, when there ain' no moon? How they twist an' bust like soapy bubbles an' gets longer an' longer 'till they like to split, then sorta fades away? Nebber stare too long at them lights, chile o'mine—" Here Mam would pause dramatically, sometimes darkly glancing up from her weaving, "'cause they is Plat Eye. He be trying' to beckon th' evil chillun to th' bog, th' ones who sass they Mams and' don' work like they's suppose to. He hypnotize 'em and' beckons 'em to him an' then. . ." another unbearable pause. . . "he eats 'em."

But Mam didn't often tell tales about Plat Eye, because by the time she had finished, Ruth was usually agape, enthralled by the stories of the monster in the Low-country swamps. As she grew older and began school, Ruth's teacher, disturbed by the children's "superstitious nonsense" about Plat Eye, told Ruth's whole class that Plat Eye was just a threat some ignorant, harassed mother made up a long time ago to gain a moment's peace from naughty children. She never could, however, quite convince Ruth, who sometimes heard, while in bed, slimy wet noises from the swamps on

moonless nights and shivered, despite the stifling heat. Mam's tales were always convincing to the point of being disconcerting.

One time when Mam had just finished a Plat Eye tale, Ruth sat back and thought for a moment, troubled. "Mam" she finally ventured, slowly and cautiously, for Mam did not cotton to questions most of the time, "do Plat Eye ever get any chillun who ain't evil?"

Mam looked sharply at Ruth and set down her weaving. Immediately, Ruth tensed; Mam never put down her unfinished basket unless it was time to go, time to lunch, or time to move into the pavillion. There was a long moment of silence between mother and daughter as Mam stared at Ruth. Then she spoke.

"Ruthie, you is amazin' me. How *can* sech a chile as you have sech smarts?" Mam gave a short snort of laughter, but it wasn't the deep, good laughter that normally bubbled from Mam's lips. Then she looked Ruth squarely in the eye and admitted, "Yes, Sugar. Plat Eye, he ain' that choosy 'bout what he eat so long as it's young an' tasty. But the difference between what happen to a good chile an' a bad chile when he get et is that a bad chile'll jus' set there in ol' Plat Eye's belly and melt away. But good chillun — now they's a different story. Good chillun gots themselves strong souls. An' when Plat Eye get his claws in them, they jus' rise 'bove it. After Plat Eye done suck the life outen them, they becomes. . .well, they. . ."

Ruth had never before seen Mam at a loss for words, and she watched, liquid brown eyes wide, as Mam fumbled with her tale.

". . .they becomes sorta earthbound angels. 'Ceptin they can't fly. They's just like reg'lar chilluns, 'cept for they only comes at night. An' they glow red. They stay on the bog banks, an' theys purport is a good un. They try to stop other good chillun from wandrin' into the bog at nightfall after coons an' fireburgs an' sech all, an' into Plat Eye's jaws." Here Mam paused, not for effect, but rather reflectively. Her weaving still lay slack in her lap, and she made no move to resume working on it. A soft sigh escaped her then. "Them red fairy chilluns is the only thing a body c'n trust on the bog, come nightfall," she said softly, almost to herself. Then, abruptly, she picked up her unfinished basket and began to weave. Ruth asked no more questions that day, but gradually Mam began to tell fewer stories of Plat Eye and more of the "fairy chillun," which gave Ruth comfort at night.

Now, as she stared at the boy in front of her who was speedily gathering up her spilled wares, casting occasional apologetic glances at her, she thought of all those tales Mam had told her long ago. This child fit every image she had ever had of the fairy chillun. His hair, an unruly shock of copper, shone in the hot mid-morning sun, an oasis of color amid the greenish brown baskets that surrounded it. Large green eyes ate up his whole face now; they were fringed with eyelashes the same color as his hair. It was the child's eyes that struck Ruth — those eyes did not seem to belong to a child.

Before Ruth had finished wondering about the boy's eyes, he had set the plywood display rack back up and was carefully arranging the baskets on it. She let common sense take over since, looking around, she noticed that the little mishap had drawn quite a few stares. "Standin' up in this heat and starin' at a chile ain't gonna make 'em stop," she thought. She silently began to collect baskets off the pile the boy had made and to remount them, careful to balance each

just right so as not to upset the stand again. Soon the stand looked as it had before the accident. Ruth straightened up, bracing her painful back in her hands, and surveyed the job. She nodded, satisfied.

"Well, chile," she began, but when she turned to face the red-headed boy to thank him for his generous help, he was gone.

It was another full month, at least, before Ruth saw the boy again. July had melted into August, and Charleston flourished like a hothouse blossom that favored high temperature and humidity. The sun was now less scorching; however, the intense humidity made even the most simple exercise a chore. Breathing was like inhaling damp cotton. Longtime Charlestonians, who knew that August as traditionally the month to temporarily give up their city for the refreshing ocean breezes, began their yearly retreat to Sullivan's Island. Tourists, on the other hand, remained undaunted by the nearly impossible humidity, though even the most stoical were overheard grumbling about how it might be easier to breathe water. The steady stream of tourists showed no signs of diminishing.

Ruth had staked out her usual place, and sat alternately weaving and grinning at tourists and passers-by. She knew that a positive, friendly attitude was most important to sales. In the past weeks she had occasionally put down her weaving and searched the sea of children's faces that bobbed like swam before her, knee-level to the adults, to look for the boy. She encountered chocolate grins, spiky, unique haircuts, and even a few redheaded children, but never the same splash of burnished copper or the same hazel eyes. Ruth had never forgotten those preternaturally wise, wide eyes, and he found herself often thinking of them. Today, though, her mind was on nothing but weaving and sales. Perhaps that is why the boy came. Ruth had long ago found that the desire least dwelt upon is often the desire that is one day fulfilled.

Leisurely weaving, Ruth contemplated moving into the pavillion. It was nearing one o'clock, and the heat as making her feel dizzy. As she toyed with the idea, she noted out of the corner of her eye a small figure looking over the baskets she had on display. She set the weaving carefully on her lap and looked up, the obligatory tourist grin on her face, and there he was. He squinted down at her and cocked his copper head, looking remarkably older than he was. Ruth stared at him, surprised. After a long, silent moment, the boy spoke.

"Hullo," he ventured.

"Hey there, chile," said Ruth kindly. "Ain't you here chile help ol' Ruth pick up baskets that day?" There was no doubt in Ruth's mind that this was that same child, but it seemed the correct thing to say.

"Yes'm," the boy answered, his eyes never leaving Ruth's face.

"So, chile, what's your name?"

The boy looked abashed. "Well, I got named after bp. But call me Kid. Most everybody does."

Ruth was thoughtful. "Kid," she mused. "It suits you, but not near 'nuff like a good name should. I'm gonna call you Skinny—'least 'til you get some mo' meat on them bones a yours."

The child nodded solemnly. "That's a good name. am skinny. 'Most everybody tells me so. I guess I like Skinny better'n Kid any day."

Ruth smiled, a broad, open smile with a depth that was



bestowed upon no tourist. "Okay, then. An' how old are you?"

"I'm almost ten." He grinned to reveal missing front teeth.

"Um, puny, but you got the marks to prove youse ten."

"Yes'm," the child said unnecessarily, and grinned again. He looks like a chile, at least when he smile so wide, Ruth thought. Mebbe he is a chile, really.

"Watcha lookin' at? An what's your name?" he asked politely. Ruth realized she had been scrutinizing the child's face.

"Nothing'. Call me Ruth."

"Yes ma'am, Ruth, C'n I sit down?"

After that day, the boy came often. He would sit beside Ruth and watch her weave, and Ruth would tell him the tales her Mam had once told her. Sometimes they would just sit in silence, listening to the summer slip away. Ruth discovered that he had no friends his age. In his words, "They are all just stupid and don't understand." When Ruth asked exactly what they didn't understand, he just looked at her with his aged eyes and shrugged. Ruth thought she knew.

On a day in late August, the boy showed up, his eyes red and swollen. Ruth was disturbed, but she knew that coaxing only made him close up tight, like an oyster hanging on to a pearl. Sure enough, he told her what was the matter after a few moments of superficial conversation.

"Ruth," he began in a thick, low voice, "I saw a cat today. I've seen it before. I sometimes fed it stuff." He wiped his nose on the back of his hand and continued. "It was smashed all over Broad Street. The man didn't even stop." He choked on his last words and struggled valiantly to hold back his tears, angrily swiping at his eyes. Ruth set her basket on the ground beside the fold-up wooden chair she sat on and gestured for him to come into her lap. Gratefully, he crept into the comforting lap and buried his face in Ruth's broad shoulder. Ruth did not try to explain away death or the child's natural pain, but simply patted his back until he stopped shaking. She did not notice, and if she had, would not have cared about the many staring people on the street. She only felt his sorrow and anger at the unfairness of life. His sobs grew softer after a moment or two. When he had completely stopped crying, he struggled out of Ruth's lap. He looked at the ground, uncharacteristically sullen. To break the tension, Ruth asked, "Kid, would you please han' me them palm leaves?" He handed the fibers to her, avoiding her eyes. Suddenly, he spoke.

"I don't give a damn about cats, nohow."

Ruth, shocked, looked up from her basket just in time to see his back retreating into the crowd. She sighed but did not call after him and resumed her weaving.

September returned, and the nights grew cooler. The city's residents began filing back in, breathing sighs of relief. September returned as always, but the boy didn't. Ruth stopped looking for him after summer had ripened into autumn, and went back to weaving alone. That is not to say she did not miss her "fairy chile"; on the contrary, she had grown quite fond of his presence and missed him often. But Ruth was used to having to get used to things she could not change. And autumn, undaunted, slipped into winter.

Low-country winters are mercifully mild; winds nip but do not bite, and snow is a rarity. That winter was no exception. Though business slackened for Ruth in winter, she had no trouble, really. Church bazaars and Low-county functions were always in need of her wares, and Christmas always left Ruth's pockets comfortably full.

An uneventful winter inched its stingy way towards spring, but refused to completely let go its grasp on the weather. Just as Ruth could swear she smelled the first crocus bulbs beginning to unfold, a gush of frigid air rushed in, and even after her many years of seeing spring come and go, she began to despair of any spring at all.

At last, in mid-April, a warm spell stayed long enough for Ruth's faith in spring to be renewed. With spring came the usual array of flowers - camellias, wisteria, and azaleas, all flourishing in the rich Charleston soil. Market Street yawned and stretched, readying itself for the long hot tourist season that lay ahead. And soon the familiar smells of the Marketplace were revived, like spring, and all was well once more.

And the boy returned.

There was no formal, awkward moment for either of them; he just showed up, like a perennial, and began to chat.

And so the summer ran its course.

Toward its end, Ruth made a decision.

"Kid," she said, "I won't be back next year. I been too long a weaver; too many long hot days for Ruth. My hands be achin'-my back, it sore. I have fambly upstate. They be willin' to take me on if I helps out sometimes."

His eyes had grown wide and he picked at his collar, but he spoke calmly enough. "Will I see you again?"

"Sugar," - Ruth tried to smile - "I don't think so."

He stood up slowly and said nothing.

"Now lemme go in peace, and you gifts me with a kiss." She turned a cheek to him.

Abashed — he was now eleven — he brushed his lips against her and pulled away. He looked at her then and said, so softly Ruth wasn't sure she had heard, "My real name is Richard."

Then he walked away slowly without looking back, and was swallowed in the crowd.

Ashley Beiring  
*First Place, Prose  
Muse Contest*

## EXODUS

(After Hart Benton's Painting, "Spring On the Missouri")

*Selden Gray*

The sky, a bedspread of black and dark blue,  
releases shots of thunder from  
cannons in the distance.

The red clay ground is a unified  
sea of murky waves.

Battered wheels of wood, covered  
with lumps of mud, tremble from the  
strain as two men, wet  
and fatigued, struggle to finish  
the endless load.

Mattress and stove, sacred treasures  
of the household, are hefted quickly  
into the drenched wagon.

In the surrounding bed of water,  
like a capsized yacht, a jug floats listlessly.

The house, now empty, stands weak  
against the force of the expanding ocean.

As the men conclude their loading,  
they lift their tired eyes from the wagon;  
in the remoteness they see a humble shack,  
already afloat.

*Second Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*





*by Lee Hanes Moore*  
*Honorable Mention, Art*

## HAIKU

*Lee Hanes Moore*

Spinning on his back,  
Close to a wintry death,  
A lone fly buzzes.

## CREATURE

*Ainsley Cardinal*

In my pond stands a creature—  
Weeds like lizard tongues form  
A circle to protect her  
Porcelain - blue figure.

Her nude body poses in the golden  
Light,  
Her lavender face, like  
An actor's mask, rises above the weeds,  
Her mystical eyes  
Glow like tinted glass.

Her hair sprouts into vegetation—  
Grapes, ferns,  
Flowers, leaves.

I ask myself, "Why is she  
Rising from the depths?"  
Perhaps behind her raspberry  
Lips, the secret she knows is kept.

*Honorable Mention, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Missy Ritchie*

## MISCELLANY

*Havalan Sealy*

It wouldn't have been that way  
I know it didn't have to be  
Everything is so still  
The stillness leaps out at me and hovers somewhere above my head  
billowing  
A grimace curls above the bed  
Eyes shut tight  
Straining to stop the imagination  
which is now laughing, howling  
I'm sure of it — I hear it  
the cackling imagination.

I was just not going to elaborate  
to describe feeling upon feeling upon terrible emotion  
with fancy plumed phrases  
stuffed fat with metaphorical miscellany. . .  
No,  
It wouldn't have been that way  
I know it didn't have to be.

## SHATTERED PANE

*Susan Demeritt*

In one skinny minute the crystal window  
of my heart has been shattered by the harsh,  
cold stone of an unkind word.

Hurled so suddenly and irrationally, it  
crashed through the pane of my love, making  
only a single and seemingly harmless hole.

Too soon the small wound grows and creeps until  
the entire window of my affections cracks and falls  
apart; only a few meaningless fragments remain.

The callous stone gashed the glass once so  
pretty and smooth, leaving it ugly and jagged enough  
to cut any others who might later try to touch it.

*Honorable Mention, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



**PEN AND INK DRAWING**

*By Kristin Roberts*

## PRISM

*Lee Hanes Moore*

Random Master.  
Things go so fast  
If you let them.  
Everything is constantly  
Moving.  
Random is just  
The way things fall,  
Fate turning the wheel.  
An obligatory,  
Obliviated,  
Agitated,  
Frantic-green  
Spectrum of chloroplasts,  
If you let it.  
Or a nucleus of natural prism  
Containing light,  
Bending reality  
Into color.  
White light of  
Accepted reality,  
A blindness  
To true matter.

## WINTER WORDS, LATE IN THE SEASON

*Anna Wooten-Hawkins*

Everyone has learned too well  
the color of winter,  
buff and mauve of birds skirting  
the feeder, woodpeckers  
angled on bark like ladder-  
back chairs.  
Nothing sings in this season  
that has not learned by rote  
what tension to hold,  
what twig will snap back on command.  
A patient sky is smeared with clouds  
that suck last light from the waning hedge;  
a dog barks tireless at a neighbor's grackle.  
Where is the frog's voice? Where is  
the juice that is always promised?  
Late in the season, before the warm reality  
of spring, the bower spider brings  
her tiny bouquet and saddles it  
in the window. We both wait for  
the delicious morsel, the string of light  
that winds down without thought or skill,  
to plop like joy at the center. She hides  
in her guywires like a bride behind white flowers  
concealing her brown fist.





**PENCIL DRAWING**

*Clayton Henckel  
Honorable Mention, Art*



## PEN AND INK DRAWING

*By Chris Martin*

## PRESERVATION

by Ellen McCallum

— You're here alone.  
— Yes.  
— It's been a while since we've seen you.  
— Oh. . .I've been swamped.  
— And how's your friend?  
— Who?  
— Your friend.  
— Which one?  
— The veggie one with the kinky red hair who always asked for milk with her tea.  
— Oh. . .she's fine.  
— Vague.  
— What?  
— You sound vague. Do you not talk now?  
— Oh, we do sometimes.  
— Have a fight?  
— No thanks, just coffee.  
— Ha ha. Am I being too personal?  
— That's okay. We-I- have been here so often you seem like an old friend.  
— Well, what'll you have? The usual?  
— Ummm. . .no. Just coffee right now- with milk on the side.  
— Oh yes, I know. I'll be back with it in a minute.  
I scrutinized the tiny magenta and violet flowers which perennially adorned the cafe tables. These flowers seemed to be the same ones that had been here the last time, when my friend had snatched some for her buttonhole. Expanding the scope of my gaze to encompass the rest of the familiar oak-paneled room in an attempt to avoid the dolor which sometimes filled me in my friend's absence, I noted that only two other patrons had chosen this cheery refuge from the cold afternoon rain. One, a young man, had his back to me; the young woman conversing with him over the remains of a late lunch seemed familiar — ah yes, we had known each other a few years ago, but had since lost touch. And here she sat in the same room, ignoring my presence, caught up in the charms of her companion.  
— Here you are.  
— Yes. Thanks.  
— Mind if I sit?  
— Won't you get in trouble?  
— Nah. It's slack now. . .So what happened to you two?  
— Mmm? (this coffee's hot.)  
— You and your friend.  
— Next you'll want to hear about my love life and secret fantasies.  
— No. I'm just interested in one of my customers, and you seem a likely source of information, since you two were such good friends.  
— No, not really. She doesn't communicate much with me anymore. Most of what I know I've gleaned from mutual friends.  
— You have several, I assume?

— Unfortunately — in that it makes it difficult.  
— Mmmm — "it"?  
— Yeah. Escaping her — forgetting her — letting go — whatever. The conversation inevitably includes some mention of her.  
— So you want to bid her farewell?  
— I don't know. I mean, you don't just throw away friends like that.  
— Then you were close friends.  
— Well, perhaps — for a very short time. But she usually distanced herself from me. And while I distanced myself from her as I struggled to maintain my identity, I kept trying to overcome that distance; one day I just gave up.  
— And that was the end?  
— End: cessation of a course of action, or the particular phase of an undertaking? I quit working so hard on my end, but that wasn't the terminus of the relationship. She still called me, I still wrote her.  
— So you're still friends?  
— Friends? People who know each other and check up on each other through mutual friends, and occasionally communicate directly, still haunting one another's thoughts. We — the "us" that everyone saw — no longer exists.  
— More coffee?  
— Sure.  
— Back shortly.  
The young woman's companion had disappeared; I presumed him to be in the restroom. I wondered if I should wander over and speak to her — did she recognize me. . . would she remember me? She was studying the Georgia O'Keefe print in the corner opposite mine, or perhaps memorizing the menu on the chalkboard along the same wall. I discerned that I was not in range of her gaze, and decided to remain where I was — observing — rather than exchanging superficialities.  
— Hi. . .how are you?  
— Oh, hello. Gosh, you've changed. You look good.  
— Thanks. Life's treating you well, I see.  
— Mm, yes.  
— Still at. . .?  
— Oh, yes. Love it.  
— Majoring in art like you'd once planned?  
— (An embarrassed titter) Oh no. Applied math/computer science. It's much more marketable.  
— Oh yes, of course. Well it's good to see you. (You've changed a lot. . . we wouldn't get along now.) I must move on.  
— Good to see you again.

The buds on my table probably began to shed two days ago. Flowers don't last that long in winter. I remembered trying to preserve a few my friend and I had found growing wild on one of our walks last fall; I had pressed them between

the pages of an old book. Only two or three had turned out to resemble anything — most were sadly distorted dry brown wads. Stains from their oils had blotted the pages.

— Use wax paper. (She arranged the flowers on the bare table-top.)

— Why? (Carefully I separated the brittle petals of one of the reddish wads.)

— Protects the book and the flowers do better. (Watching)

— If you say so. . . (Grinning)

— Some of these didn't turn out so badly.

— (Leaning across to see) Mmmm. . . no. But what do you do with them?

— Keep 'em. Souvenirs, of sorts. Throw away the bad ones. (Glancing at the clock). . . Ohh, getting late.

— Oh, don't go.

— (Apologetic smile) I'd stay, but I gotta get home. . . my ride to school is coming tonight. We're starting early tomorrow morning.

— Early like eight, or early like five?

— Oh, around four-thirty. It's a long drive.

— So. . . this is it (Watching her) . . . Goodbye.

— Goodbye. I'll miss you. (She reassured herself, hollowly.)

The young man at the far table had returned and now looked over his bill while his companion worshipped. They had, apparently, nothing new to say to each other.

— Anything else?

— You should get fresh flowers. These are about done for.

— Hmm. . . yeah, they are. Want them? You can take them home and press them.

— Oh, we tried that once. Weren't too successful, if you base success on how long things last.

— Use wax paper and an iron. Do you want anything to eat?

— You going to heat it with an iron?

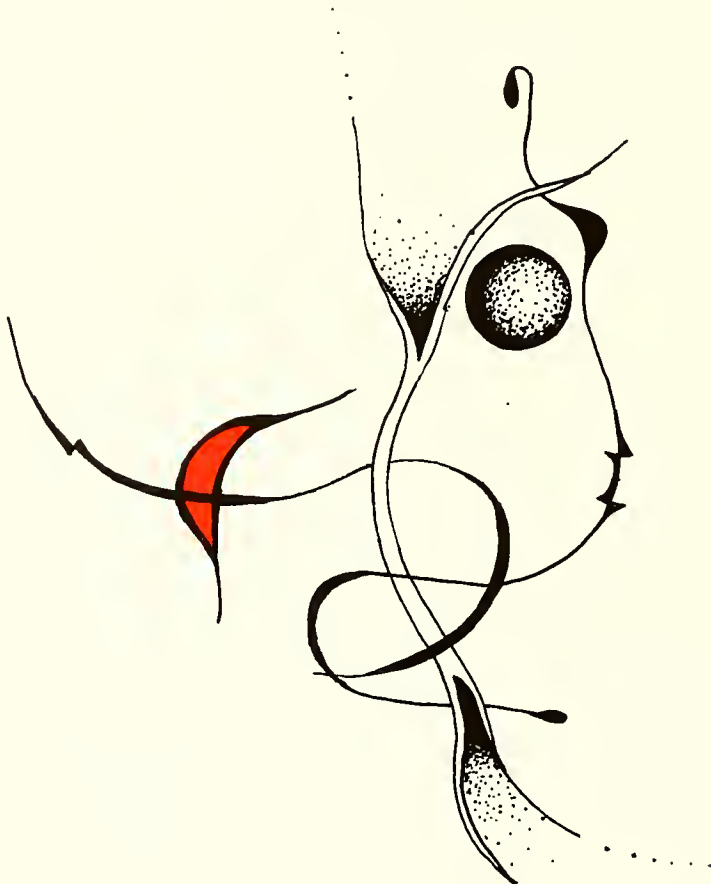
— Ha ha -very funny. No this is a classy joint - we use a big light bulb.

— Aargh. No, I think I'll scrape by with coffee today thanks.

— Okey-doke. See you next week? We'll have fresh flowers

— Hey, special occasion. I'll try to make it. . . Old habits die hard.

Ellen McCallum  
Second Place, Prose  
Muse Contest



by Jill Coats

## THE COLOR WAS GREY

*Jo Lee Credle*

It whirred into existence.  
A destruction not yet complete.  
A beginning in depths beyond comprehension.  
Groping feelings spiraling to the top,  
Ripping as they climbed.

The color was grey,  
And the mood was bizarre. . .

As if a planet had burst,  
Knowledge had escaped.  
A field that was never to be explored  
Had been surveyed, broken, planted  
With high rise buildings.

The secret was out and running fast.  
It would never be home again.  
Not as home was. . .then.

The color was grey,  
And the mood was bizarre. . .

## TIMES SQUARE

*Lei Zimmerman*

Dark rigid towers rising  
Upward into shining stars,  
And heaven,  
Physically cracked,  
Brittle, falls from the sky.  
Darkness covers, no bright  
Stars— just jagged mountainous  
Ridges protruding from Hell.  
Ghosts walk, dark spirits,  
Listening, learning the roar  
Of no sweet music, no  
Champagne.  
Why the destruction of spirit?  
Why can't God just send wind  
And blow these dark, grimy  
Feelings from our hands?

## VOICES

*Gray Cunningham*

**1st Voice (She)**

I spend my day as a prisoner  
performing the chores of a maid.  
The dust piles high in the chambers,  
cobwebs drape the walls.  
I am being eaten alive by hungry  
laundry and attacked by last night's  
dinner dishes. The refrigerator yearns  
for the freshness of a box of baking soda  
and the floors are suffocating from  
layers of dirt pile-up. I am ready to  
break out of my destiny into the real  
world. . .but the children will be here  
at 3:00. They will claw me for my last  
piece of bread and scream for the sneaker  
that is drowning in the laundry room. He  
will return tonight with fangs ready and  
a whip in his hand to lock me in the  
kitchen, the fires of hell.

**2nd Voice (He)**

It is 5:00 a.m. and someone is stomping  
in my brain. I must drag myself to  
the ice cold bathroom to wake myself  
up. The arctic water slaps me into  
consciousness. I sluggishly dress  
myself in funeral-colored slacks and  
jacket, cardboard shirts, and boxers.  
My coffee is bitter like the Listerine  
and my toast is like concrete in my  
stomach. The sound of the horn outside  
rings like clock alarms in my ears and  
I arch like the cat at the thought of  
what my day will be. At the office,  
my co-workers resemble inmates all clad  
in identical attire. The xerox machine  
is eating my secretary but I don't have  
time to worry because the papers on my  
desk have trapped me under an avalanche  
of work. The boss is prowling down the  
hall anticipating his jump on the first  
unalert prey. When I am released I must  
fight the cars all the way back to my home,  
where my wife and kids await me with bills  
and broken teeth.

**3rd Voice (It)**

Bump, bang, thud all the way to school.  
The drivers of the bus beat us against  
the seats. We line up by height and I  
am at the end. . .like a mouse among a



herd of elephants. We march into the ring for the first homework; my teacher puts me in the front of the room to be viewed like a fat man at the circus. My heart runs and my hands are wet. At lunch the mechanical line of robots places a stale piece of bread and a bowl full of foreign matter in my hands. It is not edible so I feed it to the other animals. They pile us on the bus like cattle in a box car to take us to the museum. We all wipe our hands on the Monet and run in eight different directions. The ring leader grabs the fur on my head and puts me back in line. We do the buddy system and poor Harold is lost. I laugh because I hate Harold. . .he stands in line in front of me and he stinks like the laundry room at home. Mom picks me up from the museum; the dog licks me like a lollipop all the way home.

*Third Place, Poetry  
Muse Contest*



## **PHOTOGRAPH**

*by Sarah McGuire*

## JOURNEY

*Amy Agner*

The sun rising to its full height  
In the morning sky, shone brightly,  
Illuminating the dark mourners' faces.  
Death was seen  
As well as heard  
In the cries of the depressed  
And in the sullen steps  
Of their feet.  
The coffin was lowered deeper,  
deeper,  
deeper into the frozen ground  
Where the body was hidden  
From the sun, and  
The spirit was lifted higher  
higher  
higher until it rose above  
Peace and  
Oblivion  
And into  
The sun,  
The stars,  
The sky.



**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Missy Ritchie*

## THE CHANGING

By Gray Cunningham

Yesterday afternoon at 3:00, my grandfather married his secretary. The ceremony was held at Christ Church, the oldest Episcopal church in Savannah. It was a windy day and all the ladies' hats kept blowing off their heads at the reception in Chippewa Square. There was only a handful of people there, mostly middle-class families trying to rise in society. Little did they know that *The Georgia Gazette* did not even acknowledge the wedding.

I don't think my mother acknowledged the wedding either. I heard her, when Joanne said "I do," mumble under her breath, "The low-class bitch." I laughed because anyone who was thirty-seven and a tennis pro and a former figure skater, who wanted to marry a 70-year old man, was nutty in my opinion. But then again, Joanne had been his "loyal" secretary for ten years, so she probably knew his total assets. The wedding was a sad day for me, especially because my grandmother and I were so close.

"Grandma, Grandma," I used to yell when I was 13, and at grandmother's house, as I was everyday before ballet class, "Please come help me with my tights." I rode the school bus to her house and then walked the rest of the way. Everyday I stopped to change clothes, and she awaited me with Coke and candy. How I looked forward to those days! Granddaddy was never there; he was always working. He worked for a company named "Johnson, Lane, Space and Smith." He, of course, was the Johnson, and the only surviving partner in the firm. Because his firm had become a multi-million dollar company, he was quite financially secure. I was glad Granddaddy was never there, as he was always overly friendly with me. He used to say, "Catherine darling, why don't you give Granddaddy a hug?" I would, and he would slip me a five or ten-dollar bill, whichever was on the top of his billfold. It made me feel bought. Buying is something he sure could do. He was cited in the paper everyday for giving ten-thousand dollars to this charity and twenty-five thousand dollars to that school. But why didn't Grandmother have a nice car and beautiful jewelry?

Last Christmas we all gathered at my house to have our annual Christmas party. Of course, all the prestigious families were invited as they were every year. The custom of these parties was to bring one gift to give to your wife, husband, or child. This was a special time in our home because we traditionally made our gifts ourselves. Daddy always said, "We don't want to appear tacky and exchange nice gifts, so we will save those for the privacy of our own Christmas celebration. "But Daddy," we'd say, "We want everyone to see our beautiful gifts!" "No, children. We will make our own gifts as planned." This particular Christmas party was different, though. There was a certain air outside and everyone could sense the mood. It began to snow early in the party so everyone was in the Christmas spirit. Granddaddy drank more than he should have and I could

hear his boisterous laugh from the living room. The party was elegant with various hors'd'ouvres and sparkling wines. I sat in the kitchen with Grandmother and we stole pate from the maids as they took the trays out. She always told me "Catherine, never eat more than a morsel in public; you don't want anyone to think you are overly anxious." I would laugh and give her a big hug because I loved her so much.

I heard the crystal bell ring, which was a signal that the exchanging of presents was beginning. I was excited about the ceremony, but again I knew that Granddaddy was going to give Grandmother her usual present, a modest pair of gold earrings or an inexpensive brooch. I wished that one day I would give her a beautiful emerald and diamond necklace that would make all the women there jealous. But I knew, as they knew, that he was only generous with himself and his name.

The first couple to exchange presents were Dr. and Mrs. Carlton. They were my cousins, whom I dearly loved. Dr. Carlton began his exchange by saying, "This gift is a token of the love of my dear wife Claudia, whom I cherish. Please keep this forever with you as a symbol of our love." I heard three women snifle as he brought out this beautiful pair of ruby and diamond earrings. The joy on his face was something to remember and the happiness of his wife was immense.

I began to be a little sad because Granddaddy was not and I knew he did not care what he gave Grandmother. Grandmother could sense this, but she was too proud to let it get her down. He stood up to his full six feet and four inches and for a minute he looked regal and distinguished. But I knew I was only mesmerized by his charming looks. I was brought back to reality when Grandmother opened a beautiful Tiffany box. All the guests grew quiet with amazement as she opened it. Instantly beams of light shot off every crystal in the room. And Granddaddy boasted in a stirring manner, "Nothing's too good for my wife. Read the inscription inside the ring." I was ready to jump out of my chair with enthusiasm, but I maintained my dignity, as Grandmother always did. She looked so happy. She began to read the engraving and a ghastly look came over her face. Her dignity began to ebb as she lost control of her pride. I ran to her side and she sobbed to Granddaddy, "You old fool, how could you do this to me after 35 years?" I grabbed the ring from her furiously, and read the inscription out loud. I was not going to let him get away with anything. "To you Joane, my true love." A dead silence fell over the room. "It's not true, it's not true," he slurred. "The engraver made a mistake."

The guests began to make a quick exit, as if afraid to be associated with a scandal. For in Savannah, scandal was to be avoided at all costs. Right there in my very own library I watched my Grandmother sink to her lowest, and I glared at



my grandfather with new-found hate. I *wanted* to say, "Marry that whore and be gone from here."

Three years later, on his wedding day, I vividly remember that night. How I hated that bastard. His new wife had on a gaudy pink dress, with inexpensive shoes. But on her left hand was a brilliant diamond ring with the inscription we all knew so well. I slipped away from the reception, and Daddy gave me a wink. For he knew where I was going. I drove down Abercorn Street, not even able to glance at my grandparents' old house. My mind was flooded with too much emotion. It was sad to think I would never play there again. Joanne would begin making radical changes to the outside of their Victorian house. The colors would change,

and everyone would know who lived there.

I continued to drive until I came to Habershan Street. On the final stretch, I parked my car. I could see her cheerfully wave. I nodded to her nurse who was passing by, and ran to give Grandma a hug, only it was harder now that she was confined to a wheelchair.

"How was the wedding, dear?"

"Tacky." I told her. "And empty."

Then I asked her as I always did, "Grandma, please come home with me." She replied, "My dear, this is my home now. I'm too proud to start over, and too old to try."

I hugged her again because I knew she was right.



## PEN AND INK DRAWING

by Amy Booth

## BANANA MILKSHAKES

*Carleton Anne Maury*

“Yeah, banana milkshakes.”  
Laughter roared from our mouths.  
“Christy get your shoes!”

Did we care what we looked like?  
A white arc fell from the dark.  
“Look Christy!” and I made a wish.

As frisky as two wild fillies  
we skipped beneath and over the fiery leaves,  
only the sound of clogs on pavement.

The moon encircled by a glorious ring,  
shone brightly through the leaves,  
as we ran along the tops of walls,

then pranced across the street.  
We noticed beautiful flowers watching us.  
We desired them and picked them.

Hearing a noise, we fled—  
No sooner were we laughing,

two children again.





**PENCIL DRAWING**

*by Mary Lisa Newman*

## ANNIE SAMPSON (A NARRATIVE)

by Lori Oates

Annie Sampson was the last living member of her entire family. She was proud of that and at the same time a little sad. She had never married nor had any children, and had outlived all her sister's children.

She would say, "Yes, sirree, I was born and raised in this old house and will stay here 'til my dyin' day." She would often brag of her old age and then would tell me to "fetch this old lady some wood." I was glad to do it. Sometimes I would stay with Annie on the weekends, spending the days chopping and stacking wood. I would take frequent breaks from Annie's insistence on talk and on a sip of Paul Jones bourbon.

She did love her bourbon. You could always count on Annie to reach her thin, brown arms under her bed and pull out a pint. I remember the first time I met Annie. I was fourteen and she was ninety-four. I had brought her a smoked ham from my father. She said to me in a teasing voice, "Well, thank-you, Miss Oates. Come in here and warm-up by the stove." I sat down on the floor and Annie took a seat in her rocking-chair. After some small talk, Annie reached under her bed. With the smile of an impish young child, she asked, "You ain't too young for a little sip, are you?"

"Thanks, Annie, but I'll pass. That stuff will probably make me breathe fire for a week."

She chuckled a little and then said, "Oh, honey, you gotta give it a chance."

I put the bottle to my lips and sipped her bourbon. Annie smiled.

One day I went to her house to make vegetable soup and she was grinning from ear to ear.

"What are you smiling about, old lady?" I asked.

"Why, honey, I'm engaged." She pulled her little arm up to show me a ring wrapped around her finger.

"Who's the lucky man?"

"Paul Jones, that's who!"

"I don't believe I know that gentleman."

She reached her hand down the wall of the dim kitchen. She pulled up a bottle of Paul Jones bourbon and began cackling. Passing the bottle to me, she said, "I'll share him with you." She was so pleased to have played a trick on me. She then came towards me and threw her arms around my waist to give me a hug.

Annie was fairly self-sufficient. Even in the last year of her life, at ninety-nine, I would see her outside plowing in her garden. Two wood stoves heated her house, lanterns furnished light, and there was an out-house and a well outside for plumbing. She had many friends who brought her food from time to time.

I would sit with Annie for hours and listen to her stories. She was a ninety-eight-year-old child. She was always full of life and never was at a loss for words nor was she senile. We would just pass time on her front porch. I would play her songs on my guitar and she would tell me stories of her childhood.

If I never respect another human being, I will always respect Annie. Although she is dead now, she will always remain in my heart and mind as my favorite person.

## "CEBOLLA CHURCH"

(After A Painting By Georgia O'Keefe)

Sally Bett Garey

The people have all gone now,  
Their eyes filled with despair.  
How did their world plummet  
So quickly before them?  
Why couldn't the will of man  
Overcome the forces of nature?

They built this church together  
Out of hope and desire.  
A universe in miniature.  
Now the church stands alone,  
A dream surrendered,  
Bare, on the sandy plain.

## **A BOLT OF LIGHTNING**

**(After Roger Brown's Painting, "Near Miss")**

*Anne Goode*

The leaves were fighting each other over  
    which way the wind was blowing  
    as she walked up the hill.  
Her red dress clung to her stick-like figure.

The clouds in the sky were billowing into a  
    somber gray.

As I watched from my window, I could see her;  
she was standing in the midst of all the trees.  
I turned to get my coat, turned back in time  
to see lightning zipper across the sky,  
    striking the tree beside the girl.  
Her hair blew everywhere; the impact catapulted  
her to the bottom of the hill.

My neighbors and I rushed to find her gone,  
the grass bent, leaving only her silhouette.

## **WINTER, 1946**

**(After A Painting by Andrew Wyeth)**

*Jean Hagan*

Small boy  
tumbling forever  
down the vast barren slope,  
why did your father leave you?

His coat is your courage;  
let it keep you warm.  
Worn for the liberty of the soil you run on,  
worn for the honor you were always shown.

Run hard over life and remember,  
for memories are your survival.

Your arm, the limb of your soul,  
floats in the wind.  
It opens the door to your grief,  
it frees your pain.

## THE PURSE

*Sidney Lassiter*

The purse is so simple  
and yet so essential.  
Is it something  
we should do without?

Should we leave our  
brush and mirror at home  
on the dresser  
where they belong?

Should we put our  
money in our shoe  
or in our pocket,  
where it can easily disappear?

Should we hold the  
keys to our house or car  
in our slippery and  
forgetful hands?

Should we leave our  
loved ones in tiny frames  
on the walls  
so they won't wrinkle or tear?

The purse, so simple, so essential,  
that extension of ourselves,  
is something we want  
to leave behind.



## PHOTOGRAPH

*by Jo Lee Credle*

## HAIKU

*Anne Goode*

Birds released from hands  
fly skyward in bright array.  
Balloons flock to clouds.

## REFLECTIONS ON A CAROLINA TWILIGHT

*Ashley Beirig*

But it was those lacy blue-green Southern twilights  
finally brought me home again,  
Those special seconds when the summer day lingers,  
unsure of herself,  
And relinquishes her place to the cool darkness,  
those  
    azalea-pink  
            glimpses of sunset  
viewed from behind dim curtains of evergreen and oak.  
Blinking,  
    you risked losing them.  
That musky, heady Southern scent  
    of moss,  
        magnolias, and  
            time  
just called me back.  
    The eerie calls of the last doves  
        and the first crickets.

I needed the eternal moment  
    where the South holds her breath,  
where no sound is heard  
            but the sun slipping away,  
    the  
        moment that shadows  
            fade to  
                darkness.























