

Glenn Elam

Renaissance

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Dedication

This fifth edition of RENAISSANCE is dedicated to
Beatrice Balkcum
in recognition of
twenty-one years of service to
Wayne Community College
as
Liberal Arts Instructor
Administrator
Patron of the Arts

Each of the student contributors recognized below will receive a \$20 award from SGA.

Cover Design:	Glenn Elam
Best Poetry:	Lewis Coble
Best Essays:	Richard Harris and Ruby Wallace
Best Short Story:	Coral Natitus
Best Artwork:	Sandra Sutton

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Rosalyn Lomax Marian Westbrook

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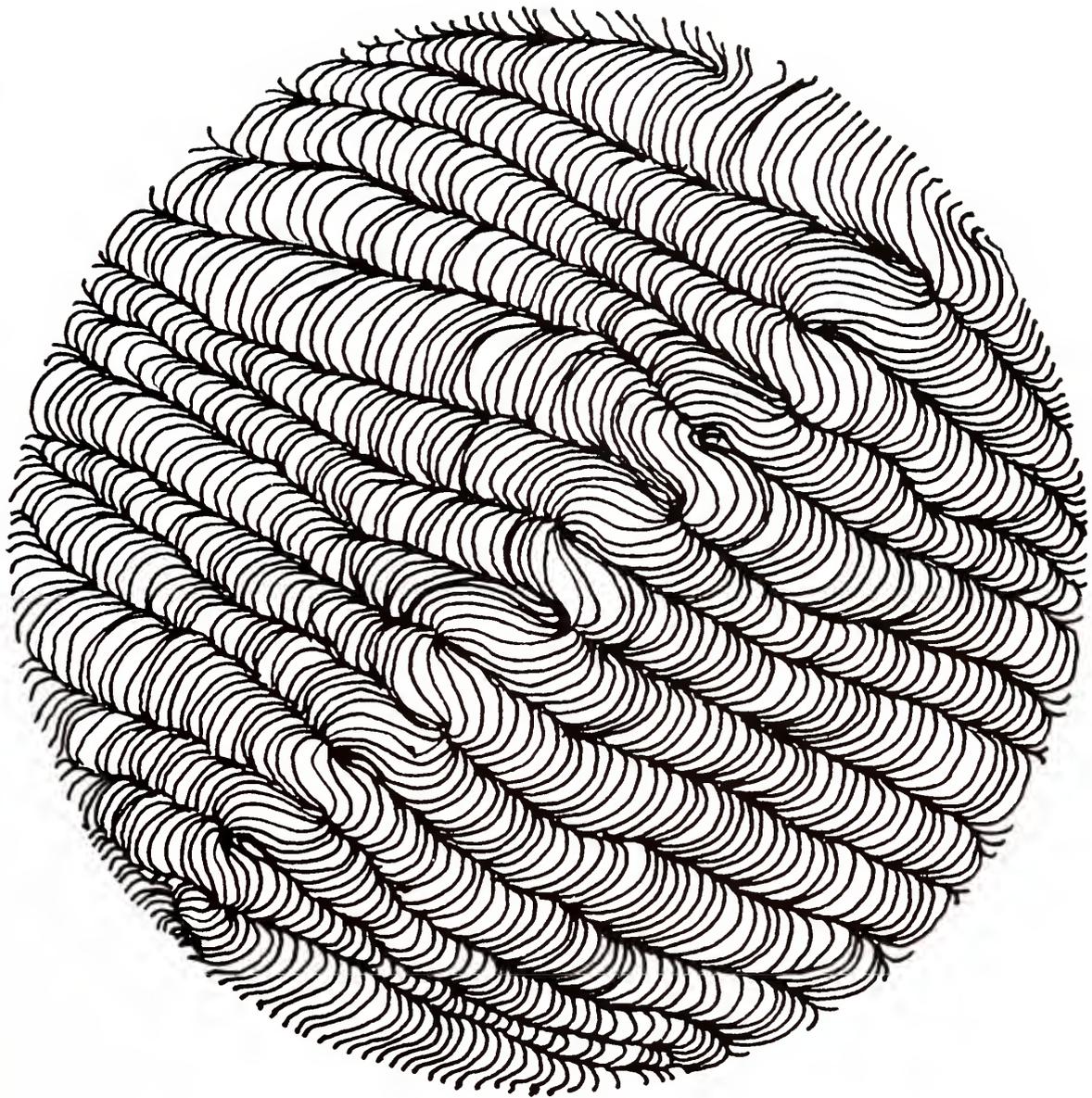
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Pen & Ink
Ann Mayo
College Transfer

THE LIONESS

The sun shines bright upon the meadows of my mind
overlooking the mountains of my memories
and the valleys of my darkest thoughts.

Across the valleys I see a lioness:
she stares me down as if I were her prey.
She stands stern and proud, yet bewildered.
Is she in a new place, or has she been hidden in
the deepest darkest valley beyond the sunshine
and green meadows of my most precious moments?

Her eyes lock upon my thoughts tormenting my soul,
eating away at the bit of happiness I feel.
Will she fade away, will she die,
or will she stalk the dark valleys of my mind
forever?

*Cindy Louise Pierce
College Transfer*

BUTTERFLY UNDER GLASS

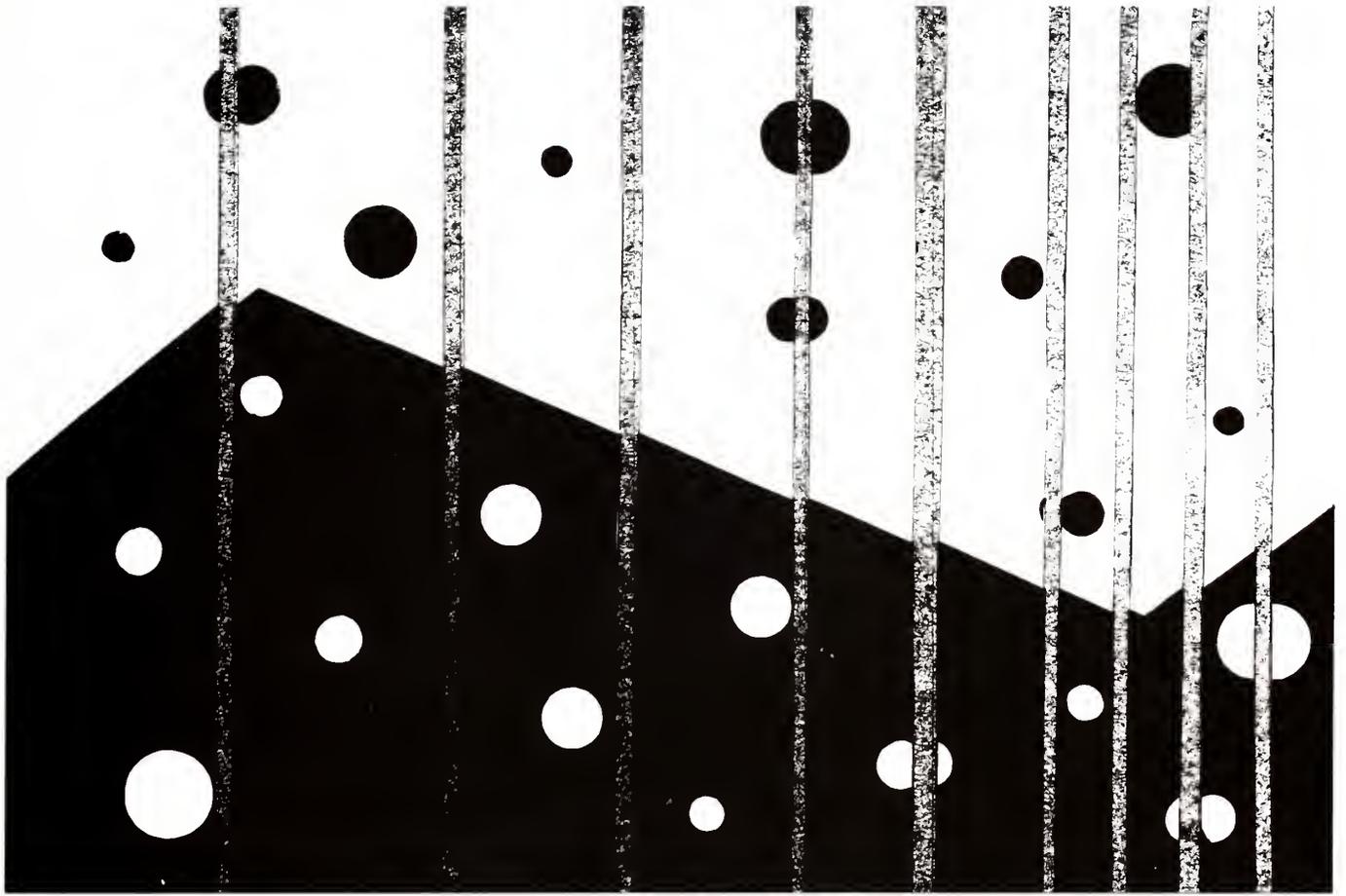
I saw a butterfly, hovering there
Just fluttering along without a care.
It had a freedom I wanted to share
A butterfly 'midst the grass.

So I captured it and kept it by.
Then caught by its sorrow, I realized
I had created by greed a flagrant lie,
A butterfly under glass.

A glass enclosure I did make
But if it fell, it would surely break
And so 'twas more than me at stake,
The butterfly under glass.

I tried my best to set it free
But it stayed around and clung to me.
I wish I had had eyes to see
That butterfly under glass.

*Cindy Smith
College Transfer*



"High Contrast" Collage
Kathe Wilson
College Transfer

THE PAGES WEEP

Mama sits by the window
in that old cloth chair,
The sun warm on her
dark black hair.

Mama reads the obituaries
to see what friends have died.
Afterward, the pages weep
with warm tears she's cried.

*Felicia Wilkins
College Transfer*

BRIGHT DARK PLACE

I live in the shadow of a bright dark place,
An emptiness,
A haunted space.

I cringe at the coming of a new-born day.
The brightness hurts.
"Please, darkness, stay!"

I stand in the shadow on two tired feet.
I stand even though my soul's grown weak.

I find comfort in this bright dark place.
The shadows caress.
I am safe.

*Felicia Wilkins
College Transfer*

GRANDMA'S HOUSE

Richard Harris
College Transfer

Bill Withers sang a tune back in the seventies about Grandma's hands. My memories are not about my grandmother's hands but about the small wood frame house that held our family together as my parents, aunts, uncles, cousins and nieces grew in prosperity and love.

The house was a small wooden slab structure built on a mound of red dirt between two much larger houses near the end of Side Street. I never knew until many years later that Grandma's unpainted old house was rented. The lack of color outside did not lower the spirit of growing life inside.

You had to walk up the old steps to a small porch into the front door that leads to the front room. Today people call them living rooms. Just inside the door you would see a potbellied woodstove directly across the room resting on the worn linoleum floor. To the right of the stove was one of two small bedrooms. The other bedroom was down a short hallway from the right of the stove. Oh, yes, I missed the bathroom! Well, it was an outside house that stands alone.

The kitchen stands alone in my memory too because of blazing heat from the wooden cookstove just to the left of the potbellied stove, inside the kitchen entrance. White powder known as flour was everywhere as it was formed into dough for the making of biscuits and pie crust. Kids my age would be playing made up games outside the house as the cooking was in progress. Cooking took so long in those days that often we would be given a baked sweet potato to carry us until dinner was ready.

As we waited for dinner there would be no one in the front room since all the work was in the kitchen. The adult men would be away until it was time to eat. There was no television or even radio, and life was still full without it.

Life was full of everything I could imagine in those early days around Grandma's house. But an event occurred not long after I began to speak words that would change my life until this very moment.

My mother was a beautiful, redheaded, light-skinned, freckle-faced woman who was only twenty years old when I was born. My brother was born two and a half years before. Tuberculosis was the dreaded and common disease in North Carolina in those post-World War II years. It was treatable if the victim would leave the security of family to live in a faraway hospital. My mother was a tuberculosis victim who

would not leave her children for treatment, and she died before I was two years old.

Within a few hours after my mother died, Grandma's house was the center of activity, just as it was on some Sundays. I was unaware that anything had happened that would affect my life. But there was a wake going on, and the scene of that wake is buried so deep in my mind that I can still see it today at age forty-two.

Children were playing in the back bedroom as adults moved around trying to maintain order. There was a body in a box that looked like a bed, right where the bed always was positioned in the front bedroom. Curiosity was eating away at the children. We wanted to know more about the dead body in the house. Was it going to get us at night? Would a ghost come out in the creepy hours of darkness?

My attention was taken away from youthful thoughts of ghosts as the adults seemed to show attention to my brother and me as they discussed, "Should we do it?" or "Should we not do it?" Soon someone decided that they should do it, and immediately I was walked into the scary room where the dead body was supposed to be. My little heart pounded as all my imagined fears came right at me for real. Soon I was lifted off the floor, held directly over the dead person, and asked: "Do you know who this is?" No answer came from me, and after a forever span of time, I was released to go play with my cousins in the back bedroom.

I would not feel the pain of my mother's death until I was a teenager wishing for the understanding that my real mother would have had for me. My childless aunt and uncle took my brother and me to be their own. This allowed my father to find a new family and prosperity in Washington, D.C. This left my brother and me in a world where everyone seemed to have a mama and daddy except us. My aunt and uncle never missed a moment to remind us of the circumstances that made us have an aunt and uncle for parents.

My aunt and uncle found many reasons to argue until their fights put fear in my brother and me. Grandma's house was a refuge from hurt after my mother died. But even grandmothers die, and nine years after my mother's wake, Grandma died of a brain hemorrhage as she cared for her grandchildren in that old wood house on Side Street.

5th STREET: WHERE THE REAL JOURNEY BEGINS

Jim Thomas

Director of Planning and Research

The morning of March 19th began early for about 385 National Guardsmen heading for Ft. Irwin, CA. For me it started at 4:30 in a motel in Raleigh and for others who had to drive to Raeford it started, I'm told, much earlier. The trip in question was the journey to the National Training Center in the Mojave Desert where the 2nd Battalion, 252nd Armor was to spend the next three weeks.

Being a photo-journalist with the Tar Heel Minuteman, I was assigned to cover the story, along with colleague Sgt. Bob Garrett. We were to be transformed into "combat photographers" while following the six-million-dollar "Deep Strike '87" training exercise.

The 2/252 troops were being driven to Pope AFB by commercial buses. Some of the soldiers I talked to drove from as far away as Asheville to attend this exercise. When the buses arrived at Green Ramp, point of embarkation, the usual "hurry up and wait" game wasn't forgotten. The officer in charge of the movement had to check soldiers against the manifest, reload them on a bus and then send them to the plane. At one point I saw some soldiers get off one bus to board another. Then the equipment was removed from under the bus to be put on a vehicle that hoists it high in the air to be loaded under the belly of the Boeing 727 or Lockheed L-1011.

Once we were on the tarmac the roll call was taken again for the troops to board the plane. Commercial airliners aren't meant for carrying troops loaded down with Kelvar helmets, load bearing equipment, gas masks, and M16s. Storage space was at a premium, and if you were last to load, it was impossible to find any. Many of us had to sit on our equipment or hold it between our legs the entire trip.

The anxiety, like the morale, was high. I happened to hear comments made in reference to another charter flight that had ended in disaster some sixteen months before. I'm sure a lot of people said personal prayers before we left. I made the usual promises to the Lord that if He got me down safely, I'd never miss church again.

As the flight attendants began their FAA-required pre-flight briefing on safety, an officer in the forward cabin stood and began to mimic the actions of the steward. All of us thought it must be part of the Army regulations until he tried to give a stewardess the obligatory "welcome aboard kiss" and she sternly returned him to his seat. That broke everyone up but when the stewardess, who was reading her instructions, got to the point where she said, "If you're travelling with elderly or small children," the crowd really roared. Having caught her mistake she adlibbed, "or those acting like small children"; that really raised the laughter.

The battalion chaplain gave a prayer that set everyone at ease and then away we went. The 727 left on time, 09:00, but

the L-1011 I flew on left at 10:30 for its 5-hour flight. That was okay because we got to see an inflight movie. On the ground it had been raining all morning, but above the clouds the sun was bright and it seemed like a good omen.

Since many of us had eaten little since the wee hours of the morning, lunch sounded like a good idea. Lunch wasn't as good as we expected, a ham and cheese sandwich with a cheese danish. It hardly helped the hunger pangs.

When lunch was over the guys on the L-1011 were treated to an inflight movie. *Crocodile Dundee* was scheduled but the flight attendants decided to let us take a vote. The first choice was *Top Gun*; I voted for *Crocodile Dundee* since I had already seen *Top Gun*. It was strange watching a flying movie while flying at 600 mph at 33,000 feet over the US. I figured that *Top Gun* would get everyone all pumped up to go shoot the eyes out of the OPFOR (Opposing Force) at Ft. Irwin. It reminded me of the story of President Nixon's order to invade Cambodia in the Spring of 1970, the day after he had seen *Patton*.

After the movie everyone seemed relaxed, considering what lay before them in California. We flew over Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, the Grand Canyon and other interesting points that the plane's captain pointed out. We landed at Norton AFB, CA at 13:00 hours, Pacific Coast time.

Once on the ground guys wearing yellow baseball caps with MCC (Movement Control Center) on them boarded the plane and in drill-instructor fashion gave us our marching orders. We boarded commercial buses for yet another two and one-half hours of riding. Like the plane trip, it too was comical.

Rolling down Interstate 15 from San Bernadino to Barstow, we viewed the mountains and the sights. We passed the Roy and Dale Rogers Museum in Victorville, and several comments were made that if Dale died before Roy he would probably have her stuffed like he did his horse Trigger and dog Bullet. One guy commented that California looked like Morehead City at low tide.

As we neared the town of Barstow, the closest civilization to Ft. Irwin, the group broke into a chorus singing the 1960's Petula Clark song "Downtown," except it sounded more like "When you're down and lonely you can always go to Barstowww!"

Down the road we went through Ten Mile Pass on to Ft. Irwin. The desert is just what it looks like in the movies—desolate, sand, no vegetation, and rocks, endless rocks. The highway to Ft. Irwin, which is 37 miles off the beaten track, is lined every so often with crosses painted with various dates on them. We wondered what they were for and later found out that they designated auto accidents that had killed people on that road. They say that desert driving causes highway hypnosis; they must be right.

The desert prompted comments like, "God started making North Carolina first and by the time He got to California He must have been tired," and "God must have designed hell after Ft. Irwin." We also passed a huge rock formation with the unit crests of numerous units painted on it. They were units that had previously trained at the NTC. Some people thought NTC stood for National Testing Center rather than National Training Center.

The long awaited destination was finally in sight. Back in North Carolina it was about 7:00 pm. Cornelius Ryan must have titled his book *The Longest Day* after a trip to Ft. Irwin.

We finally arrived and promptly went to an area called the Dustbowl. It was named correctly. The wind was blowing about 20 knots and flags were flying parallel to the ground. We saw a subdivision of pup tents on the left side of the road that would make Raleigh proud. On the right side of the road were GP medium tents, track vehicles and other assorted military vehicles.

We were there. The comic relief that had relaxed us on our way to this sandpit gave way to seriousness. You see, the Dustbowl is also known as 5th Street, and it is there where the real journey begins.

RACING THE SUN

Racing the sun down this dusty highway
I think of my past, quietly turning
pages in the book of time...

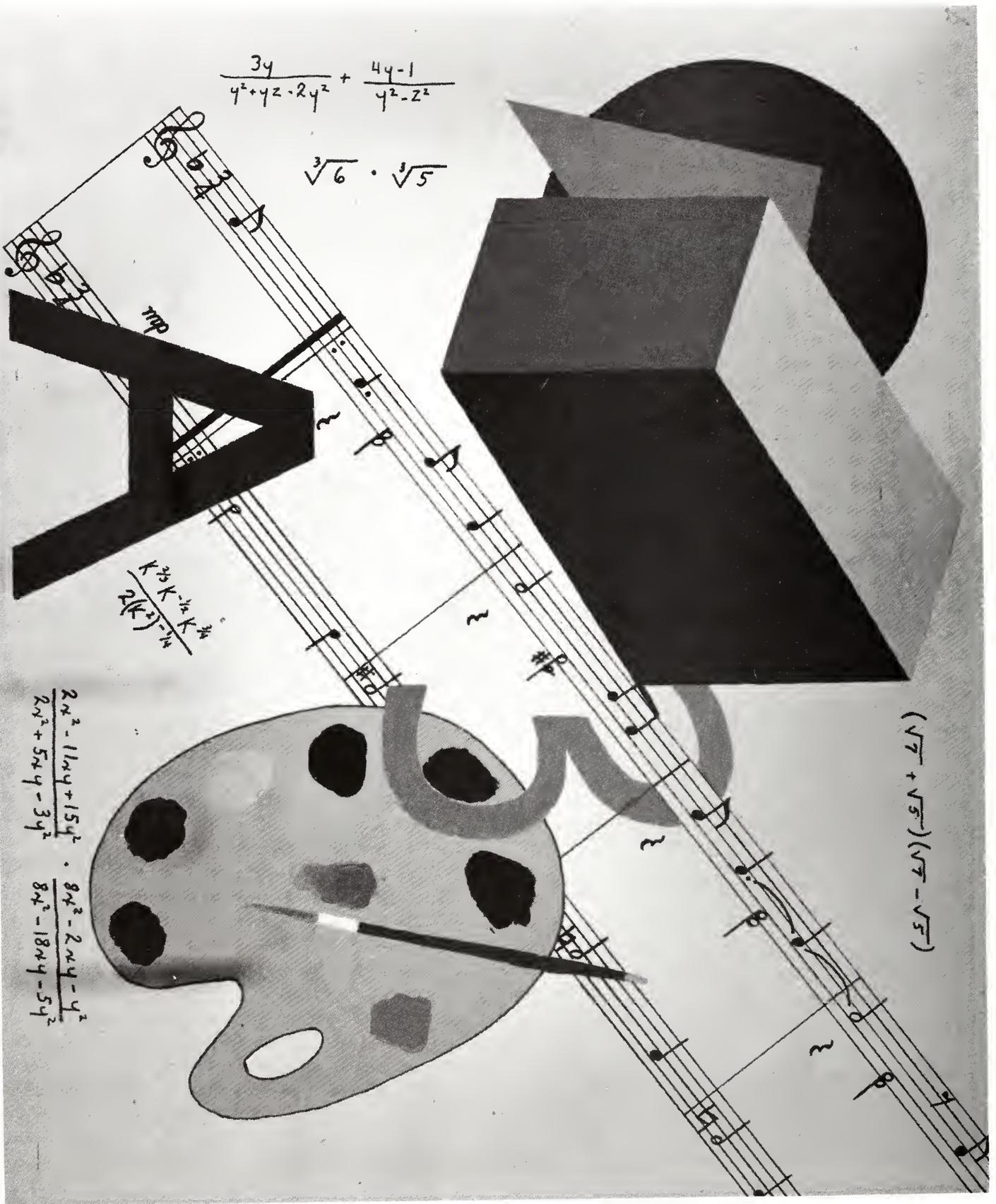
To the twelfth summer of my life,
hanging out and wasting time like
kids have done since the birth of
our species.

To my high school years, trying so
desperately hard to be liked and
accepted by people who now seem
trivial.

To my hitch in the Navy, where I
learned about discipline, bureaucracy
and the salvation of the sea.

And as I peer into the confusing
kaleidoscope of my future, I wonder
if I'll ever find my allotted space
on this insignificant planet we call
Earth...

*Stewart Pittman
College Transfer*



Me
 acrylic
 Glenn Elam
 College Transfer

ENGLISH 152, 12:00

I slink into my seat on the back row,
prop up my purple lit book
so Ms. Westbrook can't see
and start cleaning my nails.
I worked on my car for my hot date tonight
and the degreaser didn't get it all.

I glance up; old Westbrook
is going on about some crazy poem
called "Naming of Parts." When she says
it's parts of a gun, I perk up,
but then the guy starts talking
about flowers in a garden
and bees attacking flowers
and crap I can't make any sense of.

Well, Wessie is oohing and aahing
about how good this stuff is,
but I can't see why it turns her on.
She's o.k., I guess, as far as teachers go.
She comes in reciting stuff like
"Loveliest of Trees" and telling us
to memorize it. Fat Chance.

I have to admit "Stopping by Woods"
was pretty nice; it reminded me
of walking in soft snow with my girlfriend.
Of course, I'd never use the word *queer*
like he did—it'd make people think
I'm gay or something.

Well, anyway, back to boring class.
Wessie has stirred herself
to go to the board and write
"simile" and "metaphor,"
so figuring it's maybe a test question,
I jot it down.

About that time my stomach lets out a growl;
it's coming up on 12:30
and I've only had a doughnut and Coke
all morning.
Suddenly I look out at the highway
and think of Pizza Inn,
only a quarter of a mile as the crow flies,
and the most mouth-watering, luscious-looking
pepperoni and mushroom pizza
flashes into my mind.

Then I hear Wessie calling my name,
and I blurt out,
"I'd like a pepperoni and mushroom pizza."
I know I'm dead, but she says,
"Good, John, you know that a simile
uses 'like' or 'as'; now we need something
to compare it to. *What is like a pizza?*"

I hear myself say, "My girlfriend's breath is like
pepperoni and mushroom pizza";
now I think I've gone too far,
but old Wessie just smiles and says,
"That's wonderful. You must have just read
Shakespeare's sonnet 'My Mistress' Eyes,'
where he refers to his mistress' breath.
See, class, that's what extra study will do."

Then the class cracks up:
guys hoot and girls giggle,
and the bell rings--
just in time.

Marian Westbrook
English Instructor

THOREAU'S CAPE COD AND MY CAPE COD

Mike Nault
College Transfer

Henry David Thoreau is, perhaps, as well known as an observer of nature as he is as a social reformer. It is in this spirit, more than any other, that he penned the book *Cape Cod*, a fascinating look at a frontier practically next door to his beloved Concord. Although the Cape Cod of the mid-nineteenth century is far removed from that on which I was born and grew to adulthood, many of Thoreau's words still ring as true as they did one hundred and fifty years ago.

As aforementioned, I am a "Cape Coddler"; although I made the decision to leave the land of my birth for North Carolina due to numerous factors, Cape Cod remains my home. Despite the almost daily changes in its appearance, I love it as one can love only the place of one's childhood. It is, however, only remotely the place where I was born, and, although recognizable in Thoreau's words, it is hardly the wilderness he found it one hundred and fifty years ago. The desolate barrier between mainland Massachusetts and the Atlantic is now a thriving resort community replete with traffic jams, air and noise pollution, high prices, and the accompanying loss of natural and human beauty that always follows our "improvements" upon nature.

For me, Thoreau's *Cape Cod* is a painful glimpse of what was and can never be again.

Thoreau begins, as all travelers must, with the journey to the Cape. Originally planning to go directly to Provincetown, the outermost region of the Cape, by way of the steamer out of Boston, he traveled there from Concord. Upon his arrival in Boston, the town was abuzz with the news of a devastating shipwreck off Cohasset, a village just south of Plymouth (of Pilgrim fame), west of the beginning of Cape Cod, and he and his companion decided to take the train to Cohasset instead. There are still ferries from Boston Harbor to Provincetown, going directly across Massachusetts Bay; this is considered a wonderful way to beat the on-Cape traffic, and perhaps catch sight of a whale or two. The trains have not run for decades—just before I left, almost three years ago, a sightseeing train began to make the run from Sandwich (the first town on the Cape) to Yarmouth, about halfway the length of the Cape. Every summer, when the on-Cape traffic reaches more and more horrendous proportions on the two available freeways to the Cape, much is made of the idea of restoring commuter train service to the Cape—an idea rendered forever impractical by the distinct lack of public transportation available once you have arrived. At the time Thoreau traveled, the train ran only as far as Sandwich, and he was obliged to take a stagecoach as far as Orleans—about two-thirds of the way down-Cape. The stage followed the Bay or North side of the Cape, which is the equivalent today of taking the only freeway on the Cape, Route 6, or taking the original highway, now known as Route 6A—the Old King's Highway which, I was fascinated to discover, was Thoreau's route! While speaking with the Wellfleet oysterman of the chapter title, he reveals his "occupation" of surveyor when asked, and is told "King George the Third...laid out a road four rods wide and straight the whole length of the Cape." This side of the Cape is much prized for its historical homes and sites, and the relatively non-commercial aspect of the area—the last bastion of the same.

Upon arrival in Orleans, Thoreau made inquiries about his original plan to walk the remainder of the Cape to Provincetown—about thirty miles. Any assumption of effectiveness in his character is immediately laid to rest when the facts of the bleak autumn weather in late October and his planned route—along the water—are taken into consideration. Now approximately forty miles out into the Atlantic, the weather can be harsh and unfriendly during the dog days of August; in October, it is simply raw and frigid.

Along the way, whether on foot or availing himself of what transportation he could, Thoreau had all he needed and more for his book in the flora and fauna surrounding him. The Cape, glacial formation that it is, is the antithesis to the verdant land Thoreau knew in Concord: he makes mention of the shortness of the vegetation—the strange variety (or lack thereof) of trees, and the abundance of the "scrub" pine, a squat and knotty variety of this tree—and the hard-scrabble, extremely limited farming available to the inhabitants of the area. Then, as now, the land does not yield a living to those who settle upon it—its value now is purely in real estate terms due to its resort status. When Thoreau visited it, the land served only as a bed for the native fishermen; only from the sea could a livelihood be obtained.

Thoreau makes much of the illusionary effect of the beach; even his chapter title "The Sea and the Desert" reflects that concept of mirage that only endless stretches of sand can produce. "Indeed," he says, "to an inlander, the Cape landscape is a constant mirage." Unfortunately, the over-development of the Cape has dealt a death blow to any possible mirage effect—buildings almost everywhere render mistaking distances and the like impossible. Only travel to the extreme outer regions of the Cape affords the adventurer a glimpse of what the Cape was to Thoreau; here only are the occasional stretches of beach or marsh, still basically uninhabited. The move on the cape, however, is constantly down; in our lifetime these expanses will be encroached upon as the areas closer to the mainland have been. In the meantime, the bleak, desolate, ocean-thrashed Cape of Thoreau's book can still be experienced in the secluded, undeveloped areas of the lower Cape, especially in the ever-briefer off-season.

He was fascinated with the vegetation that did manage to thrive in this soil and climate, attributing it to the unending dampness of the air due to the proximity of the ocean (the Cape being never more than five miles wide at any point, and, at several, much narrower). The shifting dunes appealed to him greatly, and especially the manner in which trees were used to attempt to hold these gigantic masses of sand in place (I can remember many a January that began with carrying the defrocked Christmas tree to the beach, where local conservation groups would arrange the skeletal remains in the sand for just such a purpose).

Naturally, Thoreau found the Cape Coddlers he encountered wonderful character studies. The hardy Wellfleet Oysterman, children encountered on the beach, the people he discovered in the process of salvaging wood for fuel—these

people afford the humorist Thoreau sly swipes at the reserved and stern-faced Yankee inhabitants of this desolate and obstinate land. The main industries, he finds, are primarily fishing, and, secondarily, salvage of the many shipwrecks off the Cape. He delights in the tales of the inhabitants, especially in the hyperbole reserved for people who lack conversation in their social lives. He says of the oysterman, "This was the merriest old man that we had ever seen, and one of the best preserved. His style of conversation was coarse and plain enough to have suited Rabelais." Again, the hard facts of life on Cape Cod in the late twentieth century have rendered the friendliness and neighborliness of the residents near to extinction. Overcrowding, an endless tramp of tourists, and a crime rate rising in direct proportion to the economic desperation of the year-round residents lends an air of distrust, if not dislike, to any encounters save those with the well-acquainted or related. Repeat business is not a necessity for the modern-day Cape businessman. He need not be polite to a customer of his business; he will never lack for customers, whether he is good to them or not. Even socially, the air of irritability manifests itself: after you have fought traffic all day, had most of the people you dealt with treat you with indifference or downright rudeness, even the most even-tempered person begins to crack under the pressure.

Perhaps the most startling contrast between the Cape Cod Thoreau visited and the Cape Cod of today is found in the chapter of his book dealing with Provincetown, the outermost town on the Cape. In Thoreau's day, this most desolate and storm-tossed of Cape towns was primarily the home of fishermen. Only having visited "P-town" (as the natives refer to it) in the deadest of winter that only occurs in New England in February can I have any appreciation whatsoever for

Thoreau's descriptions. Provincetown in the late twentieth century is what all of Cape Cod used to be—all but boarded up in the winter, and wide open in the summer. A fashionable artists' colony in the Thirties, Provincetown slowly became the New England equivalent of Fire Island, due to the large gay percentage of any artistic community. P-town becomes a constant Mardi Gras from Memorial Day to Columbus Day, while the locals shake their heads and ring their cash registers. The shores that the indomitable Pilgrims abandoned for more hospitable climes now see gays walking down the streets holding hands while more "normal" tourists gawk and point. Anything goes in P-town, and, as adolescents and young adults, my friends and I would drive the hour or so from our mid-Cape homes for a "walk on the wild side."

The Cape Cod I loved—the Cape Cod I visit—the Cape Cod that Thoreau traveled with all the wonder of a man visiting another world—all one and the same place, but each has been weathered, molded, improved, desecrated, by the forces of nature and the forces of mankind. Each has something to say to us; the Cape of Thoreau with its vast wildernesses, endless stretches of beach, its cruel yet strangely provident relationship with the awesome Atlantic that tells us, "live in harmony with Nature around you"—the Cape of my birth, a place of childhood wonderment, a seasonal attitude of living to the fullest in summer since you wouldn't live fully in winter; the beginnings of the overdevelopment that endangers the Cape to this day, and its unheeded warning to conserve its beauty—the Cape today, overcrowded, yet strangely under-populated; a place whose children must leave because it cannot even provide them with the sustenance it gave in Thoreau's day. Perhaps Thoreau should revisit it, if only in the spirit of a new writer, and pen the inevitably disturbing sequel to his book.

I struggle with all.
 Thoreau
 Augustine
 Gibran
 Luther
 Even MacLaine
 Part of all
 All of none
 (Emerson thought)
 Perhaps personal perspective purest

Balance Saint with Demon
 Peasant with King
 Free with Slave
 Lover with Despot
 Even God with Man
 Good
 Evil
 (Revelation)
 Tentatives trying tread truest

Mike Nault
College Transfer

DREAMS

Dreams are much
like a stained glass
window.
Every day we add
a new pane, color, or
picture.
Some days a pane
breaks but is quickly
replaced.
Then one day the
entire collection
shatters.
We search among
shards in hopes
of finding the dream
we lost.
As we slowly piece
the window back
together
We discover a new
and beautiful pattern.
A window of new colors,
shapes, and pictures has
formed.
A new dream.

*Lewis Coble
College Transfer*

SNOW FALL

Watching snow fall, I think of you,
of cold winter nights
warmed by your smile, your touch,
your laughter.

The bleakness of the day
seems endless.
Snowflakes fall silently
to the ground
as my heartbeat echoes
through an empty room.

Thinking of you brings memories
of happy times we shared,
times of anticipation, joy and love.

Reflecting on these times
turns snowflakes
into happy memories.
The bleakness of the day
turns into laughter,
for although we're apart,
we are not really alone.

*Michael Watson
College Transfer*

THE WAITING

Tonight I wait;
I waited last night;
I know they're there,
But where?

Why do they come?
Why do I wait?
I don't want them to come,
But yet I wait for them.

Day in, day out, and all through
the night,
This waiting has become a part of
my life,
So I keep still, and wait quietly,
For this waiting could mean my death.

Engulfed in this nightmare of waiting,
To a point that I feel I belong,
Where will I be tomorrow,
If I continue to wait tonight?

Why do they come?
Why do I wait?
One thing is for sure; they will come;
So I will continue to wait.

*Randal C. Turley
College Transfer*



Photo by *Randal C. Turley, College Transfer*

CARLA'S SPECIAL CHRISTMAS

by

Coral Natitus, College Transfer

"How much longer will it be?" asked Betty.

"When are we going to be there?" sighed Fred.

"Will there be snow there?" Terri asked.

"I hope Grandpa's up when we get there so he can tell us the story," said Carla as she stared out the car window, but the drive seemed to take forever. After awhile we drove into a small town with snow-covered streets. "Yah! There's snow!" cried Terri.

Daddy stopped at a stop light, the only one in town. Several people were standing around with smoke coming from their mouths as they spoke. Others walked slowly as they made their way across the slippery side walk.

As we turned at the light, we were all speechless at the beauty of the colored lights and silver bells that decorated the lamp posts and buildings.

We slowly passed a Christmas tree lot, then a bakery. The smell of pine and fresh baked goodies filled the air, but soon we were in front of Grandma and Grandpa's house. We all jumped out of the car and ran into the house. The little heater in the corner made the house so warm and so did Grandma who had her arms stretched out, ready for her hugs.

Sitting in his worn easy chair was a half-bald, round-bellied man. Grandpa! He wore blue jean overalls and a light blue shirt with a red elastic band around his arm. It was his turn for hugs. As Carla hugged Grandpa, she asked, "When are you going to tell us the story?" Grandpa rubbed her head. "Later, during your visit! Tomorrow we'll go get the tree!" he told her.

The next morning we could hardly wait. Morning seemed to drag on. Finally Daddy and Grandpa started putting on their jackets. "Let's get the tree!" they yelled. We all rushed to get our jackets and ran to the car.

As we pulled up to the Christmas tree lot, we stared at the huge trees, wondering which one we could take home. We walked around the lot several times before we found the perfect tree. "I want to put the tree top on!" said Fred. They tied the tree on the car, and back home we went. Before we could get home, Carla asked Grandpa again, "Will you tell us the story tonight?" Grandpa tried not to laugh and said, "Tonight, after the tree's decorated."

All afternoon we strung popcorn and cranberry ropes and put decorations on the tree. As the last piece of tinsel was laid on the tree, Fred put the tree top ornament in its place.

We gathered around Grandpa sitting in his chair. He looked at each of us with a big smile on his face. We thought he would never start. Then with his rough voice he started. "Once upon a time there was a lonely old man who sat on his porch every day. Every now and then a squirrel would slowly walk up to him. The old man would reach into his pocket and very carefully pulled out a cookie. He would hand the cookie to the squirrel who then would quickly run away. Soon the squirrel returned every day. The old man began to look forward to the visit of his new friend. He would always make sure he had cookies in his pockets.

"As each day went on, the old man noticed the days were getting colder, which meant winter was on its way. He knew

his friend would not come by so much and that he wouldn't be able to sit on his porch. 'Maybe he'll return in the spring,' the old man thought.

"As winter set in, the squirrel spent his time in his home in the tree. The old man grew lonelier, waiting for spring to arrive.

"Spring came and went with no sight of his friend. Summer and fall also came and went and his friend still hadn't shown up. Winter came in fast and hard with one bad storm after another. The only thing the old man would do was sit in his chair and stare out the frosted window. Day after day he sat, wishing he could see his old friend.

"One day he was sitting in his chair as usual. But today was different. It was Christmas day. The day was bright and cheerful. The snow sparkled from the sun's glare.

"All of a sudden a strong wind started to blow. It blew harder and harder, picking up the sparkling snow, blowing it everywhere. A dark cloud now covered the sun. The old man heard a strange sound: 'Clump!' He sat up in his chair to see where the sound was coming from. He could see nothing.

"Again, he heard the 'Clump!' He put his face closer to the window. Still he saw nothing. 'Clump! Clump!' The sound seemed to be getting closer. He placed his head up against the frosted window and tried to see through the snow flakes whirling around. Then he saw a faint tiny shadow in the distance.

"Again he heard the strange sound: 'Clump! Clump! Clump!' The sound and shadow got closer and closer. Soon he saw what he thought was a squirrel. He rubbed his eyes and said, 'It couldn't be a squirrel. They're safe and warm in their homes in the trees.'

"He looked out the window again; to his surprise coming out of the blowing snow was a squirrel. He sat amazed at what he saw. He watched the squirrel come closer. The closer the squirrel got, the more amazed he became. The squirrel was walking on two legs with the help of a walking stick. It wore a green knit scarf around its neck and an old torn black top hat with red silk around the rim.

"He watched as the squirrel made its way up the stairs to the door. The squirrel raised his hand and placed the walking stick against the house; with the other hand he knocked on the door. The knock was so faint that if the old man hadn't seen the squirrel knock, he wouldn't have heard it.

"He went to the door. As he opened the door, the squirrel looked up at the old man and held out his hand. The old man pulled a cookie from his pocket and handed it to the squirrel. The squirrel tipped his hat in thanks and went on his way. The old man tried to see where the squirrel went, but the snow was too thick to see.

"After the squirrel disappeared into the storm, an even stranger thing happened. The wind stopped blowing and the snow flakes started to settle back on the ground. As soon as the last snow flake hit the ground, the dark cloud was gone. The sun began to shine and the snow began to sparkle again. The old man no longer felt lonely. Instead he felt happy and full of

Christmas spirit. THE END!” said Grandpa. “Now off to bed. You know Santa won’t come if you stay up!”

We were all too excited to sleep. As we all lay in bed, Terri asked Betty, “What do you want Santa to bring you? I want a doll with long hair!” Betty answered longingly, “I want a pretty lace dress! What do you want, Fred?” Fred thought a moment. “I want an Army helicopter that really flies! What about you, Carla?”

Carla stared up at the dark ceiling in a daze and in a whisper said, “I want to see the squirrel!” The others looked bewildered. “What squirrel?” asked Terri. “The one in Grandpa’s story.” Betty said.

A tear fell down Carla’s cheek. All that night she lay awake. She couldn’t get the squirrel out of her mind.

The next morning when all the children woke up to see what Santa had brought them, they were surprised to see Carla half awake sitting in Grandpa’s chair, looking out the window.

Grandma asked Carla, “Aren’t you going to open your gifts?”

“I’ll open them after I see the squirrel,” she answered, still staring out the window.

After a while her eyes began to get heavy, so heavy she could hardly keep them open. Soon she was fast asleep.

The day was beautiful. The sun beamed brightly on the snow-covered yard and trees. Hours went by, when suddenly Carla was awakened by a strange sound: “Clump! Clump!” She sat straight up in her chair as she rubbed her tired eyes. She heard the sound again: “Clump!” She jumped toward the window.

The wind started to blow the snow off the ground. A dark cloud began to cover the bright sun. She pushed her face closer

to the window. “Clump! Clump!” With her unbelieving eyes she saw a faint shadow. She rubbed her eyes to clear her sight. The shadow got closer and more visible. “The squirrel!” she yelled. “Just like Grandpa’s Story!”

As the squirrel came closer she could see the cane, the green knit scarf wrapped around his neck, and the old black top hat on his head. “Quick everyone! Quick! It’s the squirrel!”

The others started to laugh, saying, “What a crazy girl!” and went back to playing with their things. Again Carla yelled, “He’s really here! Hurry before he’s gone!” Grandpa was the only one to pay attention to her.

Grandpa looked out the window. He looked down at Carla and smiled. He grabbed her hand and walked her to the door. They waited to hear the faint knock on the door. Grandpa then handed her a cookie. When Carla heard the knock, she slowly opened the door. Carla bent down to give him the cookie. The squirrel held out its hand to receive the cookie. He tipped his hat in thanks and slowly hobbled away. Carla wrapped her arms around Grandpa’s neck and whispered, “I knew you weren’t just telling a story! I knew the squirrel was real!”

Back in the house the others were still laughing. Carla asked Grandpa, “Why don’t they believe us? He’s real, I saw him!” Grandpa held her tightly. “Just like the real Santa Claus, he shows himself only to those who believe from the heart! Merry Christmas, Carla!”

Carla had a big smile on her face as she turned to unopened gifts. She will cherish the memory only she and Grandpa will have forever.



Squirrel, pen & ink
Grace Lutz, Media Technician

INTAGLIO BRICK SCULPTURES

Patricia Turlington, Instructor

Liberal Arts

Photos by Malcolm Shearin, Media Director

Reprinted by permission of author from *NC Architect*, May-June 1977. A story of the collaboration of an artist and a sculptor using brick as an art form.

Initial Concept As a painter, this commission offered me a challenge beyond my previous experience. I had always had tremendous respect for architects and for big, beautiful buildings that utilized form and space artistically and functionally.

Griffin-Flynn Architects, Ltd., of Goldsboro, had hired me to do what they called GRAPHICS for the interior of the new school they had designed: North Drive Elementary School in Goldsboro.

At the initial meeting in February 1975, the architects did most of the talking. Starting at the very beginning of their design concept, they took me through its various developmental stages: pages of drawings and blueprints. They allowed me to get into their heads and also to absorb some of their enthusiasm.

I floated off into mental pictures in response to their talk and to the idea of "graphics." I kept struggling with the word GRAPHICS.....what did it mean artistically, to the architects, to me? But most importantly, to the children they were to be done for?

Skinny lines changing into fat lines, circles floating, packed together.....The ideas floated through my head as I nodded and tried desperately to appear cognizant of the intimidating blueprints> (I who could only read the big numbers on a ruler!) (para) Facts kept pouring in from the architects: open plan school, lots of visual distance, plus and minus levels, solar heat, and a major portion of the interior was to be brick. I struggled with the word "graphics," again. One of the architects, Hank Flynn, sensing my blank response, suggested that I do the "designs." Then we'd have a sign painter transfer them to the walls. Instantly my fantasies projected on the walls. But how could a sign painter understand that funny, skinny line? The designs would be just a job for him to do; the "art" would be lost in translation.

They showed me graphics they liked in various architectural magazines. Well, at least, we were finding out what graphics meant to them. In the stack of large, slick magazines was a small Brick Association magazine that had several photographs of an abstract form carved into a part of a large brick wall in a bank. The brick sculpture idea made sense to me. No danger of someone else translating my designs or the paint flaking off in a year. "Touchable," the ultimate experience for children. This art form easily could adapt to my ideas!

Beginning that day, everytime I thought about my art interwoven in a beautiful modern building, my mind would float off on an ego trip. But then, thinking about dealing with blueprints, architects, a building, the totally unknown amount of work, I would become terrified and my breathing would threaten to stop.

The architects gave me three weeks to work out my initial ideas for the graphics. When I left with a complete set of blue-

prints under my arm, I did not have the slightest idea that I could do the graphics, but I knew that it was the greatest artistic challenge of my life, and I was damn well going to give it a "college" try.

Renoir said, "You should wander about and daydream a bit; it's when you are not doing much of anything that you are accomplishing the most. Before you can have a roaring fire, you've got to have a good supply of wood."....So I spent the next three weeks under Renoir's tutelage. To keep things from being too simple, I was not only doing my usual undefinable job as Director of the Goldsboro Art Center, but also teaching a group of high school Humanities students a daily two-hour "Art Modules" class. The night before the presentation, after an evening of cocktails, dinner and dancing, I was ready to put down my thoughts.

At this point, I decided definitely on "graphics" through brick. I relied very heavily that night on my three years of teaching creative drawing at Wayne Community College and my insight into children's minds through my own two sons and the "child" in my own mind. At this time I had no conception of the size of a brick, how they are laid in a wall, the role mortar joints had to play, or any idea of how I was going to cut the brick. In my naive manner I just went along, taking it one step at a time, trusting life's natural flow and my common sense.

My first drawing was a fish with beautiful small scales, but as I realized that I would have to carve each scale, I began to draw them larger and larger! Then a landscape, the kind the viewer projects into, seeing his own rivers, sea of grass, trees, mountains, rock formations, aesthetically a vast expanse of space. I tried out several other ideas before going to bed, realizing I had only scratched the surface.

Never having given a presentation to architects, I was scared to death. My designs were very unpolished. But I showed a clear head (faked with a masterful gaze) and I understood the direction in which I wanted to take the graphics. The architects said they liked the brick carving idea and the designs. They threw in a couple of thoughts themselves, which guaranteed they liked the idea.

THE PARTNERSHIP Now for the brick. I had never even carved a soap duck! In an attempt to compensate for this "handicap," I hashed through several plans, including the idea of other artists carving under my supervision.

Finally I came up with the idea of JANE WESTBROOK. I didn't need an assistant; I needed a partner!

A sculpture graduate from East Carolina University, Jane was headed in the fall to the Art Center School of Design in Los Angeles. She quit her job early and moved to Goldsboro for our project.

Jane is technically oriented as I am intuitive. She is not intimidated by machinery. She had worked as an engineer's aid—She could read rulers and blueprints!

At first the architects were reluctant to deal with Jane. She looked sixteen: youthful face, innocent smile and manner,

long straight hair down her back. The problem was solved when she cut her hair in a sophisticated style to emphasize her twenty-five years.

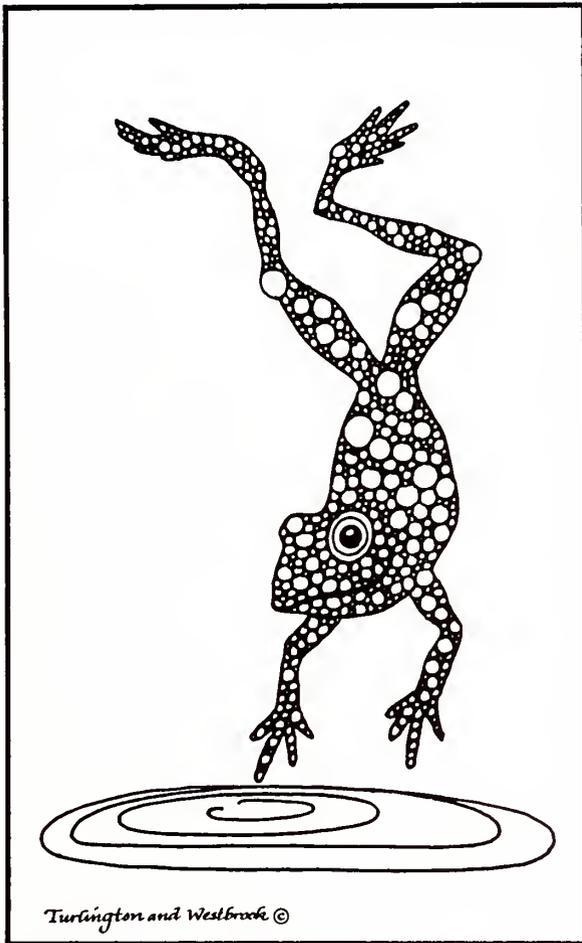
I asked Jane to bring anything that would cut brick, forgetting to tell her that it was soft, unfired brick courtesy of Borden Brick Company. She arrived with everything from a carbon drill to a hairpin!

We stacked 24 green bricks in a wooden frame using plaster board in place of mortar. Initially we were both very timid about cutting into the brick, and then Jane said, "What are

studio began to look more like a library than a work room.

We reiterated the differences between executing the sculptures in fired or unfired brick. Fired brick would be carved with power tools directly into the school walls.

The unfired brick technique would require dismantling and reassembling the sculptures but we could use hand carving tools and stamps. The unfired brick carving process would be more laborious but it would give the sculptures a hand carved, natural look that we felt was so advantageous to a child's environment.



Drawing: "Bumpy the Frog" Design for Intaglio Brick Sculpture Photograph: "Bumpy the Frog," 2'8" x 3'4", Intaglio Brick Sculpture, North Drive Elementary School, Goldsboro, N.C. One of eleven brick sculptures done for North Drive Elementary School; the first brick sculptures in North Carolina and the first brick sculptures in a public school in the United States.

we so scared of?" and we attacked it with gusto. So the little duck in brick was born, and we felt confident that we could handle the brick sculpture idea.

Our initial problem was getting two artists who approached working very differently to try to work together—not only on designs but on techniques of working. Jane handles technical problems with skill and cunning, never moving in until she has it all figured out, whereas I simply jump in and swim around until something starts working.

We researched all the libraries within a 60-mile radius, as well as borrowed from several friends' (and their children's) libraries all the books related to carving, pottery, children's art, anything that anywhere near pertained to our project. My

The architects furnished us with the specific locations in the school where they wanted the carvings, and the visual range and lighting each carving would have.

I had given Jane complete freedom to see what she could do. Now there was feedback and discord. We dissected, put back together all kinds of "themes" for the sculptures. We went down many blind alleys. There were nights of debates, failures, and frustrations as we tried to communicate our artistic thoughts to each other. Would we ever arrive at a set of designs?

For two months we struggled, fought each other and filled the floor with discarded designs. So far the partnership had been a disaster. You can solve a problem if you can DEFINE

the problem and so far I could not.

I went to a lawyer friend in a large firm and asked him how he dealt with working with the Senior Partner on a case. He said that when the Senior Partner asked him to come in on a case, the Senior Partner was the BOSS: though he was free to disagree and advise. But when the Subordinate Partner asked the Senior Partner to join him in a case, the Subordinate was the BOSS with all the privileges that went with it.

What Jane and I lacked was a Boss, or in more polite terms, a leader. So I took the reins, figuring I would be the Design Boss and she could be the Sculpture Boss when it came time to carve the designs. This was not so hard for me, since I could not have been the boss in the execution of the designs with my

“handicap.” But this solution proved extremely hard for Jane, who was used to being her own boss, designing and executing her own work. (Jane bucked and bucked, but I held tight. Since she was technically oriented and could draw to scale, I gave her all those “nasty” jobs. One night, for example, poor Jane sat fussing as she drew a full sheet of 350 bricks to scale, while I, sweating but happy, refined a design.

How to keep her from killing me? Well, I told her, God intended that she do all the scale drawings because HE had her sit on a stool for a year and a half as an engineer’s aide to prepare her for this! (She was to get even later by always carving above me as I carved below her in a torrential rain of particles of clay!)

Jane and I conferred constantly on how to carve everything we were designing. It wasn’t a valid idea, line or form unless we could translate it successfully into sculpture. Most of the carving techniques were resolved at this stage of the project, so that when we actually did the sculptures we were able to spend our creative energies refining and embellishing the carvings.

After much painful labor, each acceptable design was tacked up above our 14-foot drawing table. Then Jane suggested that we make a plaster maquette to show the architects and the school board a design translated into a brick model.

Weighing, mixing and pouring the plaster was straight out of the Keystone Cops: Jane, holding to hard and fast rules, and me, yelling “it’s not working; let’s try adding...,” as we were up to our elbows in hardening plaster.

Between us the plaster got mixed, poured and, with God’s help, set up. We decided to use my “responsive” abstract drawings as the design we would transfer to the maquette. World War III ensued when Jane wanted to have me spend what I thought would amount to 50 hours redrawing my design to the scale of the maquette. We compromised, with her doing

a partial scale of my design and my ad-libbing the design when necessary.

Twelve hours later the carving emerged: a living visual symbol of one of our designs translated into a plaster brick model, and I had my first taste of carving: tired muscles, an aching back, numb fingers, a floor and body covered with plaster dust, and a smile of success you could see a mile. We were now 24 hours before the deadline for the formal design presentation to the architects.

THE DESIGNS From around 150 drawings, we had selected

11 drawings/designs for the sculptures. From my initial concept of art for the school, I wanted the art Jane and I created to be an integral part of the building, not something set apart, competing with the building.

We did not intentionally go after animal figures, it just happened that these particular designs met our artistic criteria. Each design had to be dynamic enough to be visually stronger than the brick walls it would be carved into; so that the viewer initially saw the carving, not the brick. If the brick “competed” with the carvings, the effect would be poor.

We were after designs which, when carved, would hold a child’s interest, encourage his creativity and emotional response. The totem pole suits the child’s interest in monsters and the absurd; the spider, his interest in insects, and something scary; the dog, shaggy, non-descript, that big playful type; the

eagle emanates strength, aloof beauty; the lion, which peers with crossed eyes and a goofy expression on his face behind the bars of a zoo cage, is fun. Is there a child who hasn’t felt absurdly “caged” some days in school?

Much of an artistic statement simply “happens”....and the artist flows with it. The dinosaur skeleton which goes around a corner fit none of the space specifications the architects had given us, but the design was too good to throw out. In a moment of unconscious thinking, I said, “OK, we’ll move it to that staircase, wrap it around the corner, and the curve of its back will be dynamic enough to make the corner of the wall disappear; a kind of visual magic.”

So many months of frustrating hard work suddenly clicked the night before the formal presentation to the architects; Renoir’s tutelage again—we had our roaring fire!

Jack LeSueur, a classical guitarist, came over and spent several hours playing and singing in my studio. He provided that extra spark which kept our energy at an intense pitch.

Throughout the many months in which we worked on the designs, and until we made our final selection of designs that night, the design aspect had held top priority. We made only



Eagle

vague mental notes about the techniques and procedures we'd use to execute the designs.

So at 2 in the morning, we wrote up a general outline straight off the top of our heads of the total technical procedure necessary to transfer the designs into sculptures. The exhausted guitarist had to drive back to Raleigh; so we sent him off with a goodie bag containing a jar of water, some cheese, and apple and a No-Doz pill! We went to bed at 4; the presentation was at 9 that morning.

THE PRESENTATION We had chosen the order with the care and cunning of a fox. We started with the Lion. The architects' response was immediate: laughter. They were totally captivated with our designs, having no major criticisms or reservations.

The presentation to the School Board did not go as well. One of the architects presented the designs at random as I sat on the side lines. The Board questioned the permanence and durability of the sculptures and their lack of color.

I realized that we were in trouble and took the ball. I carefully explained the durability: a child would have to swing a 100-pound hammer to break down a sculpture; touching them would only increase the depth of the cuts; and the sculptures could be cleaned by scrubbing. I defended their lack of color; the Board was programmed to think that "art" meant color (such as mosaic tile). I explained that the special lighting would provide depth and movement. I gave them all my enthusiasm, and they accepted the designs and the idea of brick sculptures. It was now the end of May, 1975.

CARVING The next months Jane and I spent with the technical aspects of the work while Gary Partin, the architect in charge, shifted several carvings to better locations and put them in the blueprint specifications.

We found that we could "stamp" much of the pattern work in some of the carvings (i.e., the fish scales) and Jane set to work scrounging junk heaps in metal yards, or making the stamps out of wood. She also designed and made several cutting tools while I stood in awe and fanned her brow and felt awfully glad I had her.

Jane built one 6'x8' frame with adjustable bars to bring it down to all the other carving sizes and an L shape frame for the dinosaur skeleton since it went around the corner. Every technical problem was resolved with several alternate plans, in case the first approach didn't work, such as choosing several methods for transferring the designs into cartoons (drawings the actual size of the sculptures that would be traced onto the

unfired brick walls).

The most practical technique was tried first. If it didn't give us the results we wanted, we'd go to Plan B, and so on. Working out these technical solutions was very stimulating because we met so many people who wanted to help us in any way that they could. Lyn Thompson of Borden Brick and Tile Company and Marion Cockrane, a consulting engineer with the N.C. Brick Association were two of our biggest supporters.

Our biggest problem was the material to substitute for the mortar between the bricks. We tried everything, consulted with sculptors and college department heads. Nothing we tried worked. At zero hour we settled on common stoneware clay that potters use, as it would easily separate from the bricks when they were disassembled for firing.

We were carving solid bricks and could only cut 1 1/4" deep. We had sheets of plywood the proper thickness of mortar joints cut to lay behind the clay mortar joints and if in carving, we hit the wooden slat, we knew we'd carved as deep as the structural engineers would allow.

Each sculpture would have alphabetical coding and the brick coded and numbered consecutively. Each sculpture had a matching coded and numbered blueprint to make reassembling the sculptures as simple and clear as possible. They would range in size from 3'x4' to 6'x8'.

In the lull between solving technical problems, Jane and I continued to disagree. Jane was uneasy because we hadn't done a "polished" test carving (the duck was very rough) and I refused to do one because I felt we'd done enough homework and that our experience and talents (innate and otherwise) would pull us through.

Meanwhile I was working full time at the Art Center: hanging exhibits, handling correspondence, dealing with artists, the public, a Board of Directors, a staff of art teachers....

In August 1975, the contracts were let and we could start carving. We were to have fifteen days to do the 11 carvings.

The brick company told us that we could not work past 5 p.m. because they did not have a night watchman and could not guarantee our safety in such a secluded, open plant.

So we solved that problem ourselves. We went to Sanford and looked over Borden's plant facilities several days before we were to begin our work and found only one building that offered air conditioning (to keep the unfired bricks from drying out), adequate lights, a woman's bathroom, a telephone, and doors that could be locked: the plant's small office building! So we told them that we would need (primarily) the manager's personal office.

The morning we began our work, Jane strolled in the office carrying a 22 rifle (she's an excellent shot) and I brought up the rear in my Mickey Mouse shirt.



Totem

The subject of protection never came up again. They did not greet us (two women about to execute the first brick sculptures ever carved in North Carolina) with a brass band. In fact, they treated us with something less than enthusiasm. They obviously did not know how to handle our being there (we came with the brick contract), and could not comprehend what we were going to do.

They passed 2,000 unfired bricks through the window and then closed the door. There we sat, in a 10'x12' room with 2,000 bricks; it was like the story of Rumpelstiltskin; we could not leave until all the bricks had been carved!

At 5 p.m. a couple of men poked their heads in the door and saw nothing but a 4-foot brick wall in a wooden frame. They nodded in dismay and left.

Then the elves set to work. We transferred the spider from the design cartoon and carved well into the night. The next morning they arrived before we did and opened the door and peeked inside the wrappings and found a four foot spider carved into the bricks.

From that moment on, they loved us. By 5 p.m. the boss, Boyce Price, was buying us refreshments and taking us to dinner. From then on, no one minded our belongings scattered throughout their offices; in fact, they seemed to enjoy the constant flow of visitors (newspaper reporters, brick people and artists) who came down to see the work in progress.

After spending six to eight hours stacking a wall, we'd be exhausted and depressed from the grueling manual work and the realization that we had ten to twelve hours of carving work ahead of us. At that point, if you were to ask us who came up with the idea of doing the brick sculptures, we would have blamed the architects. But after we'd finished a sculpture, absolutely dead on our feet but happy, we would have exclaimed that the whole idea had been ours!

We had done our homework well in the months preceding carving the sculptures, and the carving process went smoothly. Jane was so happy playing the Boss and making the majority of cutting decisions. In fact, she was so happy to be carving! Her body was much more conditioned to the grueling work than mine; she could carve rings around me. I was delighted to play the assistant sculptor, janitor, errand boy, business manager, brick and blueprint numberer, entertainer and, when the going got rough and I had long before quit in exhaustion, Jane's trainer. Rubbing her aching back and neck, massaging her numb arm, saying, "Come on, Champ, I know you can do it!" Two crazy ladies. We laughed as often as possible and never fought once.

When a sculpture was finished, we took it down brick by brick, passed the brick out the window and stacked the brick on a pallet. A fork lift then took them to the firing room and they were hand loaded onto the tops of specially marked kiln cars. The firing process for each sculpture took seven days. Each unfired brick weighed five pounds; in the course of stacking the walls and then dismantling them, Jane and I each picked up over 18,000 pounds in those two weeks.

THE INSTALLATION Seven months after Jane and I finished carving the unfired sculptures, the architects said that it was time to install them in the load bearing walls of the school. I had been watching the school site, trying to relate the blue-

prints with holes in the ground and concrete pillars reaching almost to the sky.

Jane was in Los Angeles; the installation was totally my "baby." Would I remember how to use the tools? Were any of the bricks broken in shipping them to the site? Would the bricks fit back together?

I arrived on the site with a good case of "rigormortis" (unable to bend my elbows) and was introduced to the brick mason, Frank Pierce, who would work with me in the installation. The site was like the great plains of Kansas: 30 degrees, no shelter, grey open sky and wind—a far cry from the "studio" Jane and I had worked in at the brick factory!

I uncrated the first carving to go up: the Frog. The bricks had been beautifully packed in a wooden crate with cardboard and straw; the Frog was in perfect condition when I laid it out on the ground. I spent seven hours in the open air, my hands burning with cold, as Frank laid the rows of brick in the wall and I tooled out the mortar joints so that the sculpture would flow as a solid unit. By the end of the day I was flying; the theory worked from design through installation! And I had not forgotten my fifteen day sculpture lesson!

The men on the site were polite but distant during the first installations. Only the construction superintendent and the head electrician spoke my name as they nodded "hello." I found myself extremely uncomfortable as the only female among 50 men on the site. With time, we all got used to my being there, and they obviously began to take great pride in having the sculptures in the school.

Frank was a real craftsman, never hurrying, always willing to move a brick a fraction to suit my eye. So many people came to the site to see the work in progress and their curiosity helped my motivation. I found that when I got tired, and frustrated with the tedious work of tooling out the mortar joints, Frank acted as my trainer and would encourage me!

There were no surprises in the installation; only small problems, such as a light switch where the dog's tail belonged. But always everyone cooperated and the problems were solved.

Between uncrating and laying out the sculptures, waiting as the bricks were laid and the mortar set up to the right degree, and dealing with small problems, it took a full day to install each carving. Working within the school's construction schedule, the installations spanned a three-month period.

I loved the open air, the blue skies, the grey skies, the freedom of being an artist—working intensely—watching the sun set on a sculpture, even working under a sheet of plastic in the pouring rain....

A kindergarten class came—the first children to see the carvings. They laughed and squealed and touched them. What more could Jane and I ask? (para) Jane flew home for summer break from school, and together we installed the abstract mural (which was three times larger than any other sculpture) in "our" style. Eight straight working hours. A few rum and cokes and peanuts at six with company. then working until nine p.m. with Frank totally locked into our work style: "You only quit when you can't stand up."

In looking back over the project, the only mistakes that we made were business mistakes. I would much rather make those kinds of mistakes, which are repairable, than artistic ones, which are permanent. I miss it all.

ON HER DOGWOOD OBSESSION

"They won't live."
"Nah. 'S too late—too warm
To transplant dogwoods."
The old men shook their heads.
Her husband, younger and kinder,
Consoled her: "I *hope* they'll live."

Today she finds two
Twice her height.
With the strength of her slight frame
Doubled by sheer determination,
She uproots them one at a time,
Lugs them through the woods into her yard,
And smiles.

She lays the dirty running shoe
To the broken-handled shovel,
Digs the hole designed for salvaged roots,
And plants her prizes.

Nodding as confidently as the naysayers shook their heads,
She tours the yard,
Examines the nursery-bred dogwood of three years' tenure
With its two blossoms,
Then gloats over her woods-born treasure of two years' tenure
Sporting its twenty-two blossoms.

Eyes moist, she ponders
The cross design and nail-print markings
Of the blossoms.

Wiping dirt from hands to jeans,
She smiles again, knowing
One could do worse
Than be a transplanter of dogwoods.

Rosalyn Lomax
English Instructor



Dogwood
charcoal
Sandra Sutton
College Transfer

DAY'S END AT LAND'S END

Clint Proctor
College Transfer

The sun has worked hard all day, racing across the clear blue sky. It now sits on the edge of the glittering turquoise blue ocean like a great fireball about to roll off a table. A reflective river of light plays from shore to horizon, widening itself as it approaches the sun. The seas splash silver pockets of light to and fro, as the waves wallow in toward the beach.

Behind the sun, the sky has come alive with rays of iridescent sunbeams streaking up and out, coloring space with countless lines. The blending of the bright oranges, yellows, blues, and greens creates a canvas that no artist can imitate. As the sun slips over the edge, the colors change and darken. They seem to be trying to follow the sun into the night.

The seagulls hang suspended above the empty beach. Their wings are fixed in place, and only their heads move from side to side as they search for morsels of food. They seem to be tied in place by invisible rope, dancing like kites in the salty breeze. Their constant caw-cawing mixes with the sounds of surf and wind as they talk among themselves. Now and then, one breaks away from his rope, and swoops down to grab a bite to eat. They are eager in their feeding because the oncoming darkness will soon end the hunt.

At waters' edge, sand stretches out like a fine textured carpet. Small seashells twinkle as they wash in and out with the surf. Bits of sea foam left on the sand by the receding waves are soon carried away by the gentle wind. Small black-faced terns dart and chase the waves, looking like comical little Charlie Chaplins with their quick stop-and-go movements. They act as if they are afraid of getting their feet wet, staying close to, but never quite touching the water. A few yards

behind the playing terns, a small crab emerges from his burrow. He moves cautiously at first, waving his fiddle claw around as if to ward off any would-be enemies. After insuring that all is safe, he scurries across the smooth packed sand like a ghost. During the long hot day he has kept cool by relaxing in his home in the sand. The setting sun is his signal to come out and enjoy life.

The otherwise beautiful beach is littered here and there with pieces of man-made garbage. Cans, bottles, paper cups, and even an abandoned red towel lie useless on the land's edge. The creeping tide is coming in to clean up some of this waste. Nature was designed to clean up after herself. How long can we expect her to clean up after man's destruction?

The sun has rolled over the horizon now. The once bountiful blues and yellows have fused together into a sullen dark gray. A faint orange glow can be seen pulsing directly over the spot where the sun said good-bye. All of the colors that once danced on the water have followed the chase to the horizon, leaving the ocean an eerie pale black. Two fishing boats, their red and green running lights aglow, are heading out for the night's work. As they get closer to the horizon the black water swallows them into nothing.

Without the sun the beach becomes another world. The day-life animals have gone, and the night-life animals own the beach. The temperature has dropped twenty degrees and the once gusting wind has died. A very quiet calm has engulfed the beach. It is a time to reflect on the past and plan for the future, for the present holds only peace and tranquility. If every day could have such an ending, we would be a happier people.



Salty's Pier, Vicki Branch, Admissions Clerk, Registrar's Office



Sunset in Paradise, Acrylic, Winnie Swatzyna, College Transfer

THE SETTING SUN OF EGYPT

Rhonda McIntosh
College Transfer

As a gentle breeze caresses my body, I rise and stretch toward the setting sun. The wind is hot and even though it is moving, it feels stagnant. It is heavily scented with diesel fuel, dust, and the pungent odor of dried manure.

The dusk of evening is near, and the orange ball-like sun is slowly sinking into the Nile. The coral light beams create a haze through the air because of the large amounts of pollution, making it difficult to see clearly fifty yards ahead. I can still make out the routine activities of those below me.

The men lazily sip tea and hardly make an effort to brush the flies that gather around their mouths. Large plump women wrapped from head to toe expose kind, chubby faces and await the beck and call of the men. Young boys scamper around the streets in soiled clothes, already learning idle mannerisms from their fathers. The unmarried young girls roam the streets with baskets of food or cases of drinks balanced on their heads. As a hush comes over the city to prepare for night, it is not uncommon to see an occasional thirteen-year-old child married with two small children and a third on the way.

At the edge of the balcony my fingers twist around the railing; the smooth cool marble is a contrast to the dry heat surrounding me. My ears are now flooded with a barrage of unfamiliar sounds. The donkeys attached to carts kick and bray as their cruel owners beat them. The chants of merchants bartering in harsh voices drift up through the air. The greetings of friends and strangers can be heard as they cross paths. Yet the most outstanding sound is the call for prayer every three hours from the revered mosque. This sound, and this sound alone can make a city of twenty-four million stand still for minutes at the time.

The hour as the sun is setting reminds me of summers spent in another land but a land filled with green grass, not dry, dusty sand. Brilliant blue skies were abundant there, and it was safe to venture out past the home with the laughter of people my own age as companionship. Then as quickly as this memory appears in my head, it fades as a minstrel passes below me, playing a melancholy tune on a stringed instrument. For now no other place exists. Like a prisoner I must finish my term here. This is my life. This is my reality. This is Egypt.

SCRAPS OF ILLUSION

Ruby Wallace
College Transfer

It was my senior piano recital. For eight years I had taken lessons at the Catholic convent. This would be my final recital, and I wanted it to be perfect. I had practiced endlessly and felt that musically I was prepared. As almost any woman knows, however, you have to look your best in order to feel your best and, thus, perform your best. I found this concept very hard to explain to a woman dressed head to toe in black robes.

Thanks to a part-time job, I had saved enough money for a new evening gown. After much shopping I found the world's most beautiful dress. It was floor length with a bouffant skirt that had yards and yards of net and several crinolines underneath. Without a doubt, it was the most luscious shade of pink that I had ever seen. It was also strapless. Although it was quite expensive, it would serve as my prom dress too. I finished blowing my budget by buying satin shoes which were dyed to match. At that time, that outfit was the biggest investment I had ever made.

The big night came. I was excited yet confident. I floated into the auditorium on my pink cloud and waited for the gasps of admiration. Indeed, there were gasps. My teacher, Sister Philip Marie, clasped her cross and said hoarsely, "Where is the top of your dress?"

Terrified that something had slipped, I made a reassuring check. "I am the top of this dress."

"Your taking a bow in that dress would be more than the Blessed Mother could stand. You cannot go on stage like that."

I was angry and humiliated. Obviously the Blessed Mother knew little about fashion if she preferred tons of cloth that the nuns wore to my visionary delight of net. "Sister, that's not fair," I stammered. "I've worked hard. Besides, there's nothing wrong with my dress."

"Your shoulders are bare and that is improper. The Monsignor is in the audience and he would be embarrassed."

I started crying and crept off in despair to a dressing room to pity myself. I had offended the Blessed Mother and the Monsignor. Things didn't look good. If I couldn't even be in the recital, what were my chances of Heaven?

Then I heard the soft swishing of robes as one of the younger nuns came into the room. She was carrying needle and thread, scissors, and some inch-wide ribbon—blue ribbon. "I found some scraps of ribbon," she said. "Let's see what we can do about making you look proper." She measured the ribbon across each shoulder and cut it into two lengths. Then she deftly tacked the ribbons into place.

"Sister, it's only ribbon. It doesn't cover my shoulders."

"That's true, but it gives the illusion of a proper cover."

"But, Sister," I wailed, "It's BLUE ribbon!"

"If we can make Sister Philip Marie and the Monsignor imagine your shoulders are covered, then you can imagine the ribbon is pink."

I was allowed to perform and I played brilliantly in my all-pink dress.

THOUGHTS

Of fallen snow, I often think,
Of horse and sleigh, of skating rink,
Of Christmas cheer, of hair in curl,
Of presents many, when I was a girl.

Of patent shoes, I loved to wear,
Of hats or flowers, for my hair,
Of egg hunts where I found not any,
Of jelly beans—I ate too many!

Of ocean waves, their pull, their roar,
Of cool sea breezes, through my door,
Of watermelon, cool and sweet,
Of family reunions—a cousin retreat.

Of burning leaves, raked up so neat,
Of shoes that covered once-bare feet,
Of school—such happy memories made,
Of ball games, dances, homecoming parades.

Of times and seasons yet to come,
Of changes, reasons—seems there's none.
Of life—reaching that golden shore.
Of eternity—a resting place forever more.

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Grace J. Lutz
Media Department



Collage
Jenny Bish
College Transfer

SLOW-MOE THE TENNIS PRO

Jimmy Bryant

Business Administration

Tennis is a game that requires concentration and physical exertion. Both are necessary and equally important for winning at tennis. To break an opponent's concentration is to take away his edge; at the same if the opponent is tired, victory is almost certain. Tennis players use many ploys and strategies to take away one and, if possible, both of these prerequisites to winning. Of all the tactics I have witnessed, none worked as well to this end as the pregame antics of Slow-Moe the Tennis Pro.

Slow-Moe arrives in the park about the same time every evening to play tennis. Even before his opponents see him, they anticipate his coming. Slow-Moe's car has the appeal of a funeral hearse and sounds as if it is being driven to a slow death. Even though Slow-Moe weighs only one hundred forty pounds, soaked and wet, his monstrosity of a vehicle leans heavily apart. When Slow-Moe finally makes it to the court entrance in his nonchalant way, his strategy goes into action. Very slowly, Moe opens the gate as if inspecting the hinges to insure they keep the heavy gate from crashing down upon his frail, wiry body. After entering, he carefully saunters to the next post, stepping as if unsure of where the other park patrons have walked their dogs.

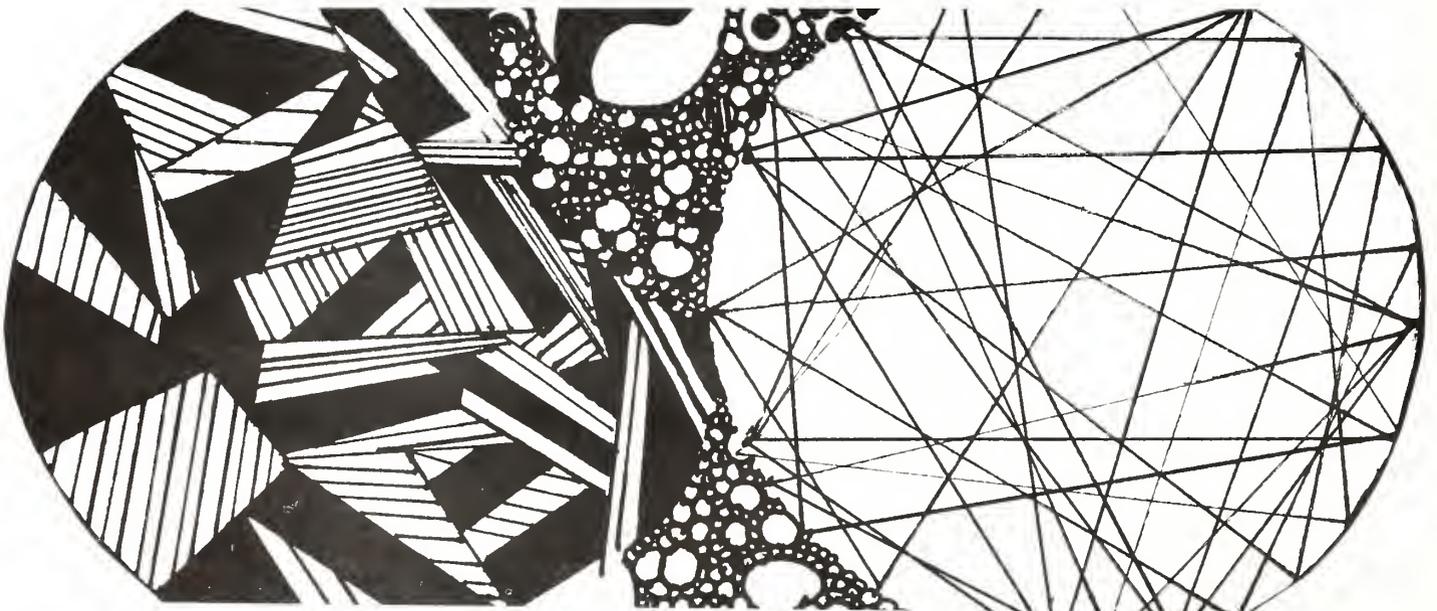
Once Slow-Moe makes it to the net post, he begins his famous and ceremonious preparation for the match. At first his appearance leads one to believe he has been hired to advertise for every sportswear manufacturer in the free world, but as he dresses down for action, his appearance takes on a drab and shabby look which perfectly matches his unconcern and indifference towards his opponent's patience. For what seems like hours, Moe unlaces his immaculate, high shock absorbing Nike-Air specialty shoes and removes them in no real hurry. He then slides into his trademark tennis shoes which strain at every stitch to keep his big toes confined. Slowly and deliber-

ately, he adjusts the laces until the desired fit and comfort are achieved. From an equipment bag, that could no doubt serve as shelter for Moe should the weather become inclement, he begins to choose a racquet with the care of a hit man selecting the proper weapon. This is all part of the strategy because Moe never uses anything but the racquet that looks to be tried by fire. Upon closer inspection, one can see that though this racquet appears to have been recovered from the rubble of a Pro Shot at the base of Mt. St. Helena, the strawberry licorice string, which is strung to optimum tension, makes for a very effective tennis weapon.

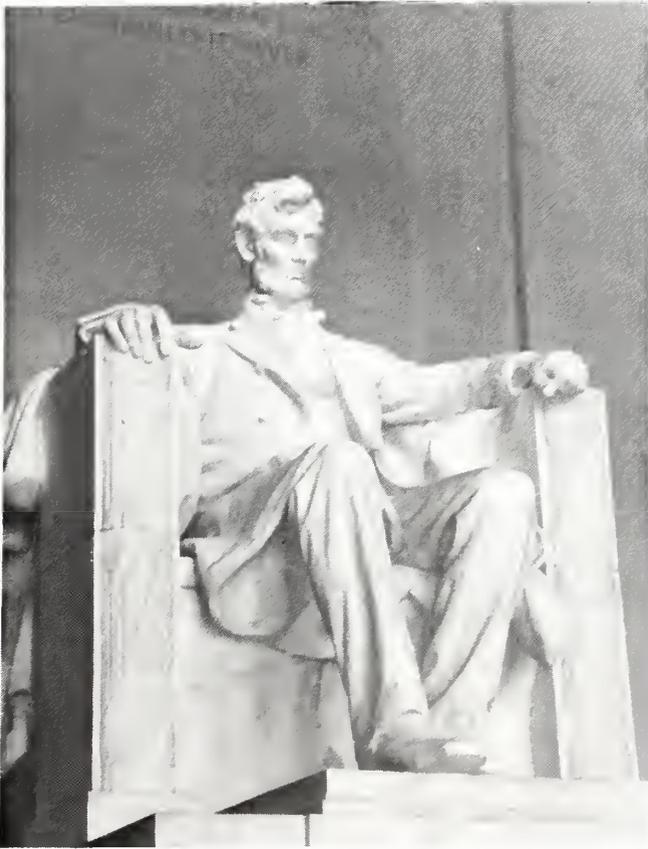
After what seems like days, Moe finally makes it onto the court to play. By now his opponent's enthusiasm is gone and hunger pangs have set in, but he must play Moe to justify the wait. The strategy has worked and Slow-Moe the tennis Pro is ready to begin.

Needless to say, Moe has won the match before it begins. As he prepares for his serve, the racquet moves like a pendulum while he lightly tosses the ball into the air as if hoisting an egg. Suddenly—blam—he scares his nodding opponent half to death with a low and very powerful serve. After the serve, Moe loiters at the baseline, anticipating his opponent's long, looping return. Moe takes the return on the rise with a smooth follow-through as if he's closing a sliding door and approaches the net. While at the net, the frustrated opponent makes every attempt to do bodily harm to Moe because of his vulnerable position. These attempts are to no avail as Moe hides behind his racquet as though it were an impenetrable shield and deflects the fuzzy missiles back into his confused opponent's court.

No one will tell you that Moe does not play good tennis, but all agree that his pregame antics take the opponent out of the mood to play and are an effective strategy to gain, for Moe, the winning edge.



Design, pen and ink, Kim Hinnant, College Transfer



Lincoln
Liz Meador
English Instructor

Publishing House
Rosalyn Lomax
English Instructor





Frozen Stream, Vicki Branch, Admissions Clerk, Registrar's Office

WHITE CHRISTMAS

Kris Buie

College Transfer

How many persons living in North Carolina have had to walk over a mile in nineteen inches of snow and well below freezing temperatures to wait for the school bus? I remember most vividly this aspect of LaCrosse, Wisconsin, where I spent the first eight years of my life. I would have to force twenty pounds of clothing onto my body and stuff my feet into five pairs of socks plus boots. Then my brother and I would trudge through the thick snow, slipping and sliding towards our destination. The unrelenting winds would blow icy snow onto our faces, stinging our deeply flushed cheeks.

I recall one morning in particular when we experienced a terrible blizzard. Although there was over two feet of snow already covering the ground and the temperature was ten below zero, the city still refused to close the schools. So my brother and I stood at the bus stop for what seemed like hours, motionless, as if remaining perfectly still would help us retain a little warmth in our bodies. Finally, unable to endure the discomfort any longer, I began to cry. I felt as if I were solidly frozen and would shatter into a million pieces if I were to move. John finally quieted me by saying, "If you keep on crying, your tears will turn into ice cubes."

Of course, there were also a number of advantages to living in Wisconsin, especially for a young person. Even though I always dreaded waiting in the cold for the school bus, the afternoons and weekends were completely different. By midday, the temperature would reach about twenty degrees or so. Then John and I would be ready to bundle up and spend the afternoon outdoors. We lived on the cliffs so there were many steep hills close by where we could go sledding. We would construct igloos and massive forts and have endless snowball fights. We could snow ski right in our own backyard. Sometimes we would even pour water all over the back porch, let it freeze, and ice skate. Finally, close to frostbite, we would return to the indoors and warm ourselves by the fire, only to retreat outside again. But with all my reminiscences of Wisconsin, what I miss most of all is the guaranteed "white Christmas."

By now, it should be apparent why I find North Carolina such an alteration, even after all the time my family and I have lived here. I still have not fully adjusted to the comparatively warm winters and I still desire the winters of the past. I will probably always prefer winter to summer as a result of my earliest memories. As the saying goes, "You can take the girl out of Wisconsin, but you can't take Wisconsin out of the girl."

Winter of silver
Summer of gold
each will be lonely
an anguish untold
each moment an hour
an eternity
I will cry you a brook
that shall run to the sea
and we'll sail away
on a vessel of courage
to a land of dreams
never being discouraged
blue skies above
green waters below
I'll open my heart
to give you my soul
all of our hopes
and wishes we'll tell
to share in a love
no fable could sell
and as we travel
on an ocean of bliss
two shall be one
sealed with a kiss
now I awaken
from my beautiful dream
again it is raining
and I long to scream
yet, this I hold in
knowing full well
my wonderful dream
fate soon will sell
to you and to me
soon husband and wife
my dream shall come true
for the price of my life.

*Summer Young
College Transfer*



Mountain to the Pacific
Rosalyn Lomax, English Instructor

ONLY TIME WILL TELL

There's a time to beg
a time to borrow
a time to steal
the time is now
so choose your path
for life is short
the future is now
the past is gone
the end is near
take action now
or forever hold your peace
yesterday is over
today is here
tomorrow does not exist
live for the present
not the past
life is reality
there is no escape
your time will come
just like the rest
this life on earth
is only a test
Are you worthy of heaven or hell?
Only time will tell.

*Frank Coffey
Marketing & Retailing*

YESTERDAY

Yesterday. . .
I could have gone,
Yesterday. . .
I would have gone,
Yesterday. . .
I felt tied and bound,
Yesterday. . .
I felt scared,
Yesterday. . .
You were insecure,
Yesterday. . .
You were afraid,
Yesterday. . .
is gone.
Today. . .
I love you,
Today. . .
I need you,
Today. . .
You are not afraid,
Today. . .
We are together.
*Kim Hibbard
Early Childhood Development*

THE 23RD OF DOPE & DRUGS: A WARNING

Any kind of dope is my shepherd. My mind and my body always want it, I mean always. The devil maketh me to sit down with my friends and smoke dope, because he loves to see me very high.

He leadeth me in paths that I am too blind to see. He's killing my soul....When there is no dope to be found, he sends me something harder, like acid or speed to keep my body going.

Yea, though I go through the valley of the shadow of death, I'll keep on smoking my dope and doing drugs, and drinking.

For I will fear nothing because the devil is with me. He preparast me places to go where there is nothing but loud hard rock music to listen to. The devil gives me a bad hangover, for my cup never runneth dry.

Surely no goodness and no mercy shall follow me, because my dope and drugs shall keep me occupied all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of HELL with the devil forever and ever.

*Freida F. Hicks
College Transfer*

JUST ANOTHER

Another day on the edge of an overdose of loneliness
Another night with my arms 'round the shadows
Another morning with a chill in the air
Another hollow face in the mirror staring too closely
Another cup of coffee.

Just try to forget my forgotten feelings
Just look at all the mindless people in the street
Just no picture to fill the frame on the wall
Just enough to be much more than enough
Just not enough.

Greg Sutton
College Transfer

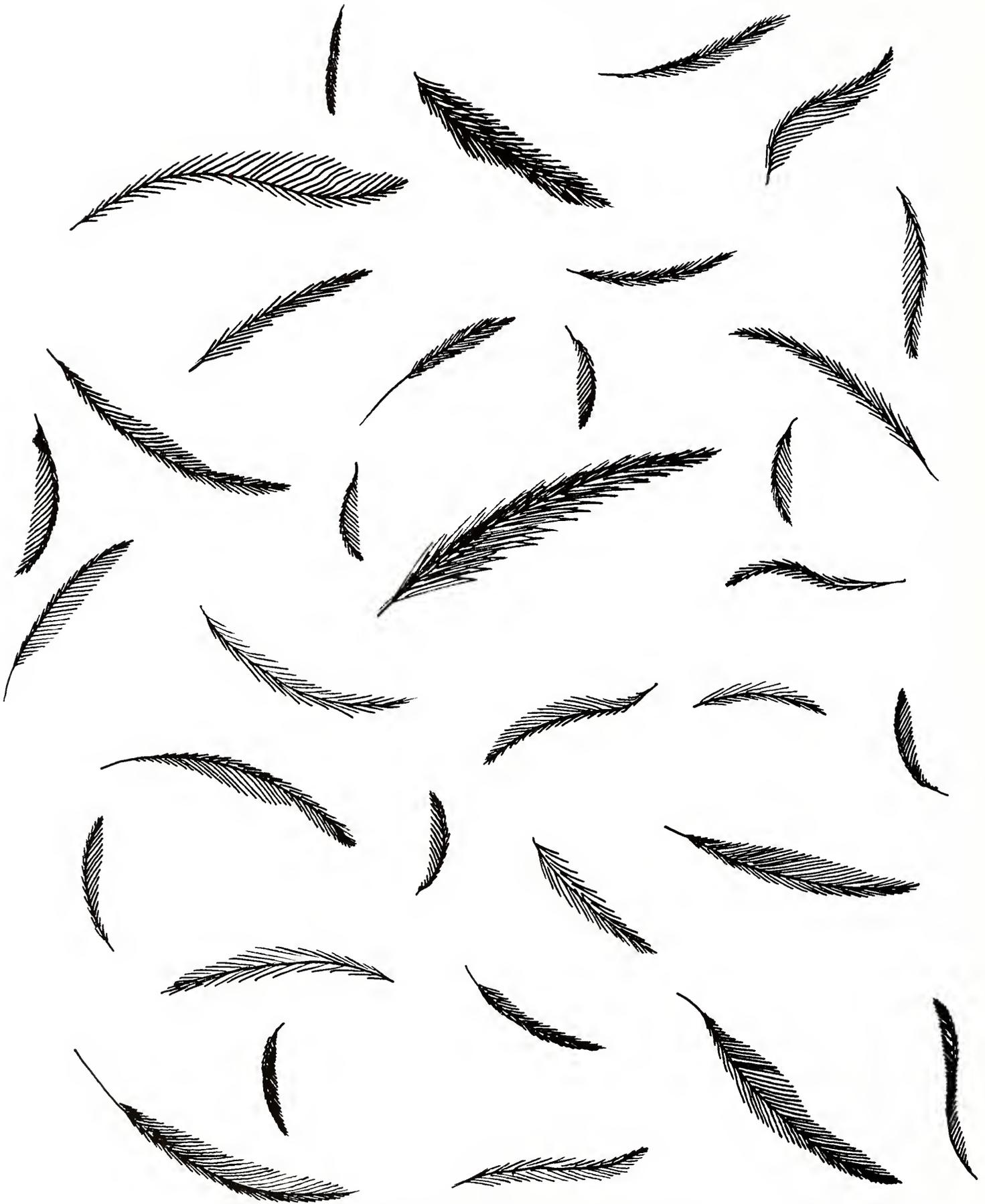
BETRAYER

I gave my
heart and soul
to you.
My trust and
faith I shared
with you.
My life and
future I presented
to you.
You returned
them in a brown paper bag.

Lewis Coble
College Transfer

Spring takes a peek
around a forbidding
corner
Waiting till the last
second to warm our
hearts
But even spring's warm
breezes won't warm
what you
left
behind...

Tammi Newman
College Transfer



Feathers, pen and ink, Glenn Elam, College Transfer

**RESPONSE TO LAURENCE FERLINGHETTI'S
"CONSTANTLY RISKING ABSURDITY"**

A super realist,
that I'm not,
but troubled deep
within my heart
for I struggle
hard to see
any reality that makes me...me!
I find it hard
to live day by day,
never forgiven for yesterday.
I can not reason,
And I! too cold to hurt,
am not a realist
for I can perceive:
No truth to life,
No fancy foot works,
No death defying leaps,
No flying above heads,
But only what I see!

*Julie Weidner
College Transfer*

I sit here
in my room.
I am alone
because
you have left.
The night is
so cold and
the dark so
lonely.
I wonder if
I will live
or even survive.
A finger of light
touches my face.
The dawning sun
rises and so do
I.

*Lewis Coble
College Transfer*

PIECES

Often our lives fall
into little pieces.
We sit in our room with our
life piled in front of us.
While shifting through the
pile, we pick out what's best.
The rest we simply sweep
under the edge of the rug.
It becomes an everyday habit
that we take for granted.
Then one day we find those
pieces have become a mountain.
A mountain that we must
face, climb, and overcome
Or find ourselves buried
by an avalanche of the past.
Better to resolve and throw out
than to push back and hide.

*Lewis Coble
College Transfer*

DEPRESSION WITH INSIGHT

Some days I don't know why I'm alive:
Some days I love life.
I shouldn't die on a day
I want to die.
I should die when I'm alive.
No other way will my soul
touch another,
Except when I'm alive.

*Ken Evans
College Transfer*

NO DOUGHNUTS TONIGHT

Phillip Millard
Law Enforcement Technology

Police work is a unique job. I risk my life protecting property I don't own and people I don't know. Police officers rarely prepare for a work day without a trickle of fear running through their veins. That same trickle of fear ran through my veins as I strapped on my bullet-proof vest and loaded my revolver. I was preparing for an evening I would not soon forget.

After starting routine patrol, about three minutes passed before I received my first call for service. It was a domestic dispute. When I located the residence, my vehicle screeched to a halt, most likely alerting the occupants inside that the police had arrived. When my back-up officer arrived, we cautiously approached the front door, carefully listening to the yelling coming from inside. We positioned ourselves on each side of the door prior to knocking. This step is to minimize the chance of getting shot by a stray bullet from inside the house. I proceeded to knock, immediately causing the screaming inside to stop. Someone from inside hollered, "Who is it?" "The Police!" I said. Things then seemed to calm down. The door was opened and this boyfriend-girlfriend dispute was handled rather simply by my asking the male subject to find another place to stay for the evening. He complied but vowed to return the next day.

Several domestic disputes and gang fights later, I began following a suspicious vehicle. After following the vehicle for several minutes, I noticed that a passenger threw a bag out the window. I made the decision to stop the vehicle. When the blue light was activated, the vehicle did not slow down; in fact, the vehicle accelerated and continued to do so until speeds in excess of one hundred miles per hour were achieved. I informed headquarters that I was beginning a chase; then I activated my siren. My right hand was occupied with using the

police radio, while my left hand was on the steering wheel attempting to keep my vehicle on the road. This is not an easy task when the vehicle which you're driving is traveling in excess of one hundred miles an hour. I desperately tried to maintain my composure. I continued the pursuit until the vehicle I was chasing ran a stop sign and struck another vehicle. No one was injured. The driver of the vehicle I was chasing was placed under arrest and eventually jailed. When the driver was asked why he didn't stop, he replied: "I thought it would be exciting."

After I left the jail, I began to wonder what would happen next. The radio was fairly silent for approximately ten to twelve minutes. Another officer informed headquarters over the radio that he was stopping a vehicle at Herman and Elm Streets. Nearly one minute later that same officer broke radio silence again with anything but routine traffic. "Help me! Help me quick! I've been shot!" The words exploded over the radio. My heart began to beat wildly. My hands gripped the steering wheel tightly. My voice was shaky as I responded. "Fifty-three is en route!" I arrived just after another officer. I could not believe what I saw. An officer had been shot! Was this a nightmare? The officer was bleeding from the top of his head. The rescue arrived shortly after I did. When the rescue left with the officer, we began to search for the suspect. After we had searched about ten minutes, the suspect called the police and turned himself in.

Resuming routine patrol was very difficult. Feelings of fear, sorrow, anger, and faith continued to pass through my mind, making the last thirty minutes of my tour of duty the most excruciating I have ever endured. I rode past Krispy Kreme Doughnuts and nearly turned around to grab a cup, but with my shift nearly over I decided: no doughnuts tonight.

YIELD NOT TO TEMPTATION

Michael Watson
College Transfer

Waging the war against cellulite is a losing battle. Everywhere the dieter turns, the enemy has a storehouse of ammunition. The soldier in the war against weight can hold his own until he marches into enemy headquarters—the grocery store.

Upon entering the enemy's camp, the dieter must be careful. He must not let the innocent display of vegetables and fruits catch him off guard. They have been placed at the entrance of the camp to lure him in deeper. Their nutritious, low-calorie appearance only tempts his taste buds to explore further. His weakened defenses have now opened the way for the major attack.

As he explores enemy territory, things may seem peaceful. Innocent cleansers and paper products sit benignly on the shelves. Suddenly the first attack takes him by surprise. He has just stumbled into Twinkie Territory. Little Debbie and her troops launch a full-fledged attack. Twinkies, Moon Pies, and Ho-Hos are fired from every direction. Restraint and will power are his only salvation from certain calorie catastrophe. Survival is possible. By closing his eyes and running to the next aisle, the dieter can assure the safety of his thighs.

Surviving the first attack is victory; however, the war is not yet over. The dieter must not let his battle-weary mind become dulled. As with most wars, the enemy may attack again while the dieter is recovering from the previous encounter. If he plots his course of action offensively, survival is possible. He must now alert all of his senses to their battle stations. Sight and smell will prove themselves to be the dieter's best assets. He must proceed with caution to avoid dieter's disaster. By using his eyes, he can spot enemy frozen foods at a distance. His nose will enable him to sniff out the submarine sandwiches and eclair torpedoes docked in the grocer's bakery. The dieter must keep in mind the skills he learned in Bubble Butt Boot Camp. They will be his wartime source of strength.

Beyond the cashier's counter is the demilitarized zone. Victory is in sight. The dieter must use all the strength he has left to charge the exit door. He must run as fast as he can to his car and drive to safety. He is now free from the enemy camp. Now all he need worry about is the two-for-one burger coupon on the dash of his car.



CARDINAL LESSON

She repeatedly attacks our windows
Thinking she assaults her rival.

Do I too fail to recognize
My sometimes greatest enemy?

Rosalyn Lomax
English Instructor



Nesting Cardinals, watercolor, Grace Lutz, Media Department

THE EYE OF THE STORM

Clint Proctor
College Transfer

The National Weather Service had tracked Hurricane Frederick for days. He had made his way across Cuba and the Florida Keys and was now heading north up the east coast of the United States. The Navy's high command had determined that the fleet docked in Norfolk Harbor was in danger. They ordered all ships out to sea away from any chance of being washed ashore by the high tides and wind.

The U.S.S. Spiegel Grove was one of these warships. She was 584 feet long, 84 feet wide, and weighed 42,000 tons. From waterline to forecastle was 45 feet and it was 70 feet from waterline to bridge. When you stood on the dock and looked at her, she looked enormous and invincible. I was proud and confident to be going to sea with her. That confidence was about to be tested, and my respect for Mother Ocean was to be forever strengthened.

Once underway, our course took us down the Chesapeake Bay, around Cape Henry on out to open sea. The 345 sailors on board hurriedly went about their tasks. Every man not actually involved in the ship's movement was busy securing down the ship. All watertight hatches were closed and dogged. Anything that could move was stored away or tied down. We were all munching on crackers in hopes of relieving any seasickness that was likely to occur. We knew this was going to be a rough ride.

I was an Operations Specialist working surface radar in Combat Information Center. We prided ourselves in being the "brains" of the ship. We controlled ship movement, surface navigation, communications, and warfare systems. We were referred to as "scope dopes" in jest because of the radar screens we constantly peered into while gathering information.

We had just lost sight of land when the ship started to roll. Our course was set to miss as much of the hurricane as possible. My instincts told me we wouldn't miss it enough.

As I stared into the radar scope and called out bearings and ranges of the other ships in our area to the bridge, I noticed the Chief OS buckling his safety belt. Now this man was very wise. He had spent 31 years of his life at sea. If his safety belt was buckled, then mine was going to be too.

By the time that I got off watch at 1800 hours the slow steady wallow had turned into a constant pounding. Almost every roll was 20 to 25 degrees, the seas were breaking over the forecastle, and the rain seemed as heavy as the ocean below us.

It got worse. Every time our bow hit a wave, the forecastle disappeared under a wall of water. Ocean spray was hitting the bridge 70 feet above the waterline. Now and then we could hear a low pitch whine when the propellers came out of the water due to our stern rising so high. We were tipped forward and back, side to side, and up and down all at once. Darkness had enveloped us and added a touch of depression to our situation.

Walking down the passageway to the mess deck was like running an obstacle course. At times I was actually walking on the walls, which were where the deck should have been. Spilled food and beverages were a couple of inches deep on the mess deck floor. It would slosh and slide with each roll the ship took.

We had to stand in order to eat. All of the chairs had been stowed away. The trick was simple. We held our tray in one hand, the handrail in the other hand, and ate one quick forkful at the time between rolls. When your food was gone, either eaten or dropped, you went back through the line to get something to drink.

After chow I went down to my bunk and tried to sleep. The constant rolling is extremely tiring and I was more than ready for some rest. During the night I kept dreaming that I was falling. Just as I was about to hit, the dream would begin again with the falling. Suddenly I woke up and realized what had been happening. I was lying on my stomach. The ship would rise out of the water and slam back down. When she slammed down, I would be suspended in mid-air. Then I would fall back into my bunk. I solved the problem by putting on my pants and lacing the belt through my bunk ladder. This tied me in my bunk so that sleep came more peacefully.

After being on the Grove during this ride and seeing this mammoth-sized warship being treated like a toy by those 50-foot seas and those 60-knot winds, I had respect for the sea instilled in me forever. That storm ripped our hull open in an area 2 feet wide and 8 feet long. The hull was made out of 16-inch thick armored steel. Even though I saw it, it's still hard to imagine that much force.

I took a ride I'll tell my grandchildren about, and I was never afraid until I saw the gaping hole in the hull after the voyage. This was the first time that I knew my life would someday end. Before then, my boyish dreams and hopes had been unending. Now I knew this was not how it would be.

ORPHEUS

Artist: Tom Gurganus
ECU Graduate Student

Writer: Micah Harris
English Instructor

Jeff Parker, Art Editor, *East Carolinian*

If you compare the "Orpheus" story in Renaissance 1988, reprinted from ECU's Pirate Comics last year, to the effort below, you'll see there has been a major overhaul. Realizing that we could not sustain a sense of terror in a weekly comic strip, Artist Tom Gurganus and I decided to retain the monster element but play it for laughs. In the process, we changed Orpheus' identity and swathed him in bandages. We gave him a supporting cast: Jumpin' Jimmy, video/yogurt store magnate, and Charon, sexy Vatican agent.

The revisions worked: "Orpheus" won "Most Improved Comic Strip" at the 1989 ECU Media Board Awards. In that regard, Tom deserves special credit. His art peaked with this story, particularly the fourth episode, which, for totally intuitive reasons, is one of my most satisfying collaborations....

Orpheus By Harris and Gurganus

DATE: 1985. BEFORE ADOPTING THE IDENTITY OF DONOVAN MONTAG, ORPHEUS CAST THE DEMON ABADDON INTO HIS OWN BOTTOMLESS PIT, TOOK THE KEY, AND LEFT HIM THERE TO STEW!

'DEMON POSSESSED AND HOMICIDAL. THAT SORT OF BEAR.'
- WES CRAVEN - UNFILMED SCRIPT FOR 'KID' MOVIE. "NIGHTMARE AT POOL CORNER"

1989: ORPHEUS' ORIGINAL IDENTITY HAS BEEN RESTORED. HAVING BANISHED THE WORLD'S LARGEST ELVIS IMPERATOR TO THE NETHERWORLD, HE AND HIS FRIENDS REFUSE TO SAMPLE THE LOCAL CUISINE.

MEANWHILE... AT 'TOYS 'R' US' (JUST DOWN THE MALL FROM ROSE'S)... A DISGRUNTLED PUNKETTE HAS BEEN FIRED FOR UPSETTING CUSTOMERS WITH HER CLAIMS THAT ROY ORBISON SPEAKS STRANGE PORTENTS OF THE AFTERLIFE TO HER.

IF THERE'S A ROSE'S IN THAT MALL, THEIR DINER'S GOT 2/\$1.00 HOT DOGS

THROUGH A BIRTH-MARK FAVORING THE DEAD ROCK LEGEND ON HER HEAD...

ONE OF THESE DAYS ORPHEUS... I'LL GET YOU. YOU'LL SEE...

AND THEN WE CAN PICK UP SOME PEANUT BRITTLE AT THE PEANUT SHACK. YUM

WHY DON'T WE JUST SCRAPE SOME FRESH ROAD KILL OFF THE HIGHWAY?

SEX ... (A POLICY NOT SANCTIONED BY "TOYS 'R' US").

TOYS 'R' US & ROSE'S ARE DEFINITELY REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF THEIR PARENTS

SEEKING VENGEANCE, SHE PLUGS A HEAVY METAL CASSETTE INTO A "TALKING" TEDDY BEAR...

HAR! ROY TOLD ME TO!

... UNWARE THAT IT CONTAINS A BACK-MASKED, DEMONIC SUMMONING CHANT UNLEASHING SOME FORCE FROM HELL IN THE UNSUSPECTING TEDDY.

I'M BACK... ME... ABADDON, DEMON FROM THE BOTTOMLESS PIT!!

OPPHEUS READ?

HOLD THIS COMIC STRIP UP TO A MIRROR FOR A SECRET, DEMON BACK-MASKED MESSAGE. THIS MESSAGE IS GOOD FOR 10¢ OFF OF A WAFFLE CONE AT ANY "SHELTON'S" ICE CREAM & MASSAGE PARLOR. CLIP & SAVE!

Orpheus By Harris and Gurganus

LAST WEEK: ORPHEUS' OLD ENEMY, ABADDON (DEMON OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT) POSSESSED A TALKING TEDDY BEAR VIA A DEMONIC MESSAGE BACKMASKED IN A TAPE. AS FATE (AND CHEAP PLOT CONTRIVANCES) WOULD HAVE IT, THIS OCCURS AT THE SAME MALL ORPHEUS HAS STOPPED AT FOR DINNER.

"I can't be dangerous, because there's nothing much smaller than I am. I can't be fierce, because they would just call it noise."
William Faulkner, "The Bear"

AHH... HE'S CUTE!

HUH! NO PEANUT SHACK AND THEY CALL THIS A MALL!

WILL YOU PIPE DOWN!

GASP!

HEY LOOK... ONE O' THEM... IN A BEAR SUIT!

IT... IT IS YOU! YOU TOOK THE KEY TO MY BOTTOMLESS PIT! YOU... MEANIE!!

I TAKE IT YOU KNOW THIS BEAR.

BACK! BACK HUMAN CATTLE! OR DEAL WITH ME AND ALL THE POWERS OF HELL!!



I AIN'T NO BEAR!
MY REAL BODY'S
STILL LOCKED
IN THE PIT!
AND I'M GETTIN'
IT BACK!

BUT FIRST YOU'LL
FEEL MY WRATH
AND KNOW THAT...



OY VEY!!
I SET
MYSELF
ON FIRE!

KNEW I SHOULD
WORN CLEAN
DRAWERS.



OOOH



HA! LOOK! AL JOLSEN
GET IT?

**NEXT
WEEK**
**ORPHEUS: THE
JAZZ SINGER**

Orpheus

By Harris and Gurganus

LAST WEEK: WHILE WALKING AROUND THE MALL, ORPHEUS & CREW LOST THEIR WARDROBE TO THE HELLFIRE BLAST OF AN ENRAGED, DEVIL-POSSESSED TEDDY BEAR (WHO CONSEQUENTLY SET HIMSELF ON FIRE!!

"I've got a deep-gut feeling that we're dealing with something that's not natural."
- Leon Ames
(describing Kush-Ta-Ka, bear of evil.) Claws (1977)



SO ORPHEUS, WHILE I RAN TO MONTGOMERY WARD'S FOR A BUCKET, REVOLO FOR ALOE-VERA BATH SALTS, AND AROUND BACK TO USE THE SPIGOT...

... YOU ACTUALLY THOUGHT YOU'D ESCAPE EH? THOUGHT BECAUSE I CAN'T USE MY HELLFIRE WITHOUT IGNITING MYSELF IN NO THREAT, EH?



WELL BUSTER, I'VE POWERS THE LIKE OF WHICH YOU'VE NEVER SEEN! DIG THIS **CRAZY HEX BOLT!!!**

(ABADDON DOESN'T GET OUT MUCH BEING IMPRISONED IN A BOTTOMLESS PIT AND ALL, HENCE USE OF BOBBY SHEEN/ALERA SLANG, #17)

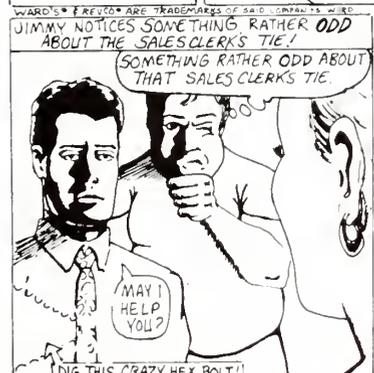


WHY IS ORPHEUS SO QUIET?

HE'S JUST SULKING 'CAUSE BELKS DON'T CARRY NO SURGICAL BANDAGES- SO HE'S GOT TO WEAR A PAPER SACK!

DIG THIS CRAZY HEX BOLT!

MAKES ME LOOK FUNNY.



WARD'S REVENGE ARE TRADEMARKS OF HIS OWNERS. WARD'S JIMMY NOTICES SOMETHING RATHER ODD ABOUT THE SALES CLERK'S TIE!

SOMETHING RATHER ODD ABOUT THAT SALES CLERK'S TIE.

MAY I HELP YOU?

DIG THIS CRAZY HEX BOLT!



A SHOUTED WARNING COMES TOO LATE!

AN OBSERVANT CUSTOMER (SEE PANEL)

THAT PAISLEY PRINT LEAPT OFF THAT TIE LIKE A FLAP-JACK OFF IN A SPATULA... AND NOW IT'S EATING THAT GUY'S FACE!



WITH EACH MALL-RAT AND SENIOR CITIZEN IT DEVOURS THE RENEGADE PAISLEY PRINT GROWS LARGER!

WAUGH HE GOT ME!

SOMEBODY STOP IT! IT'S HEADED FOR THE CRAFT SHOW!

Orpheus

"When I was a kid, I had a Teddy Bear named Booboo. We were best friends. Then I puked on him and my parents had to burn him." - Micah Harris, Disjointed Rambling of a Weekend Fever

By Harris and Gurganus



LAST WEEK:

THE DEMONIC TEDDY HEXPIN RELEASED A GIANT, ECTOPLASMIC PAISLEY PRINT ON AN UNSUSPECTING MALL CROWD

HELP! IT'S HEADED FOR THE CRAFT SHOW!



TO DISCOVER THE PAISLEY PRINT'S WEAKNESS, OUR HEROES POOL THEIR MONSTER SAVVY.

THINK! THINK! JUMPIN' HIT ME WITH CLASSICAL MONSTER ANATHEMA

UH UM, GARLIC, HOLY WATER

ARE THOSE UGLY PAISLEY PRINTS IN STYLE AGAIN? THERE'RE AS TACKY AS PLAID

HURRY MAN IT JUST ABSORBED THE BLACK VELVET ELVIS PAINTINGS

UM... CROSSES... UH...



KLICK

IT'S PLAID



CONFRONTED BY PLAID, THE PAISLEY PRINT DWINDLES.

SOME EMBRAZENED REDNECKS TORTURE IT.

YIPE!

KICK IT AGAIN, JOE. DON MAKE IT YELP LIKE OL' SHEP!



SEEING HIS SCHEME FAIL, TEDDY/ABADDON FLEES, RUNNING AFOUL OF SOME MAGNETS IN THE TOY STORE. THEIR MAGNETIC FIELDS ERASE THE BACK-MASKED MESSAGE THAT HOLDS HIM ON THIS PLANE.

WHERE'S THAT PAISLEY PRINT?



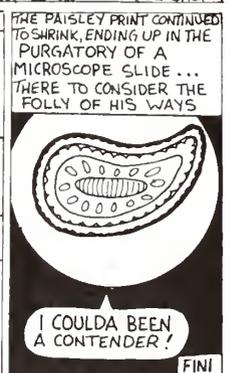
GUESS THAT WRAPS UP ANOTHER CASE

CUT THE SCOOBY-DOO DIALOGUE JUMPIN'



MONTHS LATER AT ECU'S BIOLOGY DEPT. HEY TIM TAKE A LOOK AT THIS SLIDE

DISCOVER SOMETHING NEW, GARY HAR!



THE PAISLEY PRINT CONTINUED TO SHRINK, ENDING UP IN THE PURGATORY OF A MICROSCOPE SLIDE...

THERE TO CONSIDER THE FOLLY OF HIS WAYS

I COULDA BEEN A CONTENDER!



Barn, Lewis Coble, College Transfer

LIFE'S A BITCH, PART III

There she lay, in the midst of the mists of eternity, Life. And taking a deep inhalation of the heady vapors around her, she reached into the ebbing fog and pulled out a vague, shapeless entity—a soul. And she took the hazy, unborn soul to her bosom and wrapped it into the form of a man child, filling it with all of the hopes, dreams, desires, and passions that belong to man. Then, with a faint inward smile, she flung the infant soul down, down to the world for it to grow, so she could teach it—teach it that all of the hopes, dreams, desires, and passions instilled in it were futile and meaningless, and the reason behind it all was madness.

*Greg Sutton
College Transfer*

THE FUNERAL OF MR. HENRY

Ruby Wallace
College Transfer

Mr. Henry was our neighbor when I was just a kid. He was a robust, unclesish sort of man whose smile would spread up his face and make his eyes nearly disappear. Our backyards were separated by a sizable ditch from which any number of treasures could be found: minnows, worms, rusty nails, chunks of colored glass. Knowing many secrets of the universe, Mr. Henry once told me that there could, just maybe, be buried loot from pirate ships under all that mud. Everyone knew Blackbeard used to prowl up and down the coast, and he had actually lived at Bath, just a few miles away. It seemed quite possible to me that if Blackbeard had ever confided in anyone, it would have been Mr. Henry.

A new job caused Mr. Henry and his family to move to Maryland. They came back for visits now and then, and once we even went to visit them in Maryland. I had long since stopped digging around in the ditch, but I would still believe anything this jovial man told me.

Many years passed; I grew up, and Mr. Henry grew older. Then one day we were notified that he had died. Although he had lived in Maryland for a long, long time, he had considered North Carolina his home, and that was where he wanted to be buried. We were given all the details as to time and place of his funeral and burial. On the appointed day, my elderly mother, my sister, and I got ready to say our good-byes to our old friend.

The service was to be held in an aged Episcopal Church in a small farming community about seventy-five miles away. It had rained all morning and was still overcast. The penetrating chill of the January day seemed appropriate for a funeral. Being unfamiliar with the territory, we allowed ourselves plenty of time for the unexpected. When we arrived, we searched out the steeples until we found what we thought was the church we wanted. No other vehicle was on the premises, not even a hearse. Since the church door was unlocked, we went inside. The lights were out, and the church was stone cold. We went back outside to wait in the car.

About ten minutes went by. My mother kept saying this must not be the right church, because surely the funeral home would have brought the body and had it in place before now. But just then a car pulled up, and a woman started carrying a cross and other altar items into the church. That made us feel a little better. Indeed, an affair of some kind was going to happen in there shortly. Before long other cars began arriving, and the people, other than us, went inside the church.

"How long are we going to sit here?" I asked my mother.

"Until we're sure this is Henry's funeral," she replied.

"People are here for something," my sister pointed out, shivering.

"It could be anything," Mother insisted. "Henry isn't here yet."

"At least he won't be cold when he does get here," I mused.

By this time people were coming in droves, pushing into the small, frame church. Standing room only for the upcoming event became a real possibility, and one that I did not crave.

I appealed again to my mother to go inside. At that moment Henry's family got out of a car and started towards the church. We were at the right place, all right, and we hustled inside.

The church was still as cold as a tomb. Wherever Henry was, the sexton must be with him. We scrooched ourselves in a pew near the front, grateful for the warmth of body heat. The priest stood up and began the service.

"He can't start the funeral without Henry," Mother protested under her breath.

"Maybe it's a memorial service," I ventured.

"No, he's not buried yet," she said, full of wisdom.

The service continued with Henry's daughter giving a loving tribute to her deceased father. After she sat down, the priest turned to a small table which held a rectangular box, about the size of a kitchen match box, covered by a lace-edged linen cloth. As he raised the box heavenward and invoked God's blessings, realization suddenly hit me.

"Mama, there's Mr. Henry," I whispered.

Squinting her eyes and craning her neck around, "Where?" she asked.

"Right there—in that little box!"

"Henry's in that box?" she asked, incredulously.

"He's been cremated," I offered.

"They burned him up?" she asked too loudly.

"Sushhhhh!"

"What are they gonna do now?"

I didn't know, and at this point I was afraid to guess. One thing was for sure: I didn't dare look at my sister, because in spite of this being a sad occasion, I was on the verge of insane laughter, and I felt she was too.

The service ended with the priest solemnly carrying Henry out of the church and down the road to the cemetery, with Mother carefully watching every move. At the cemetery, the box containing Mr. Henry was placed inside another box which was about the size of a small pet carrier. This crypt was then buried. Mr. Henry was in his final resting place.

Mr. Henry had been a big man with a big heart. He had loved life, he had loved people, and he had loved to laugh. Who knows—when he looked down on his life's final ritual, he may have gotten his biggest laugh of all!

SILENT NIGHT
Grace Lutz, Media Technician

As I rounded the corner of the over-crowded aisle in the hurry-up, bustling store filled with Christmas shoppers, I saw her. On the bottom shelf of rows and rows of Christmas ornaments and decorations sat this angel dressed in gold with her wings spread. My mind flashed to Mother who had become a beautiful angel herself just two weeks earlier.

I picked the figurine up and realized it was a music box. I wound it up and very sweetly "Silent night" came from the base of this beautiful piece. As tears welled in my eyes, I began to think of the Christmas concert I had attended two nights before Mother's death. . . .

It had been two years since we heard the news of her incurable cancer. There had been good and bad times, but the last six months had been a nightmare. Her suffering had been so intense that we prayed for her passing so her suffering would end.

My best friends were singing at the concert being presented by the college where I work. My hopes were that the Christmas music would cheer me up. The instrumentals were pleasant, then the choir began.

"Go Tell It On The Mountain" was performed so well. As they began to sing "Hark, The Herald Angels Sing" my mind drifted to the heavenly hosts coming down to tell the shepherds the glorious news—the Savior is born! Then I imagined how Heaven must be at Christmas time in celebration of our Lord's birthday. My excitement grew as I thought of Mother being there for the celebration.

I crashed back to reality as Susan began to sing my very favorite, "Silent Night." As she sang "sleep in heavenly peace," I prayed that God would soon give Mother this same peace.

The next night I sat on her bed holding her hand. She was in a semi-coma, falling in and out of sleep. I shared my thoughts at the concert with her and then turned to the side because I was crying. Then I began to sing "Silent Night." Out of her coma state, she reached for me with her small weak hand and patted my arm. That was the last thing she did. The next day, at last, God granted her heavenly peace on a silent night, December 10, 1987.

Of course, I purchased the music box and of course, I cry when I play it. But thank God for the first silent night and the precious gift He gave.



Rays of Morning, Vicki Branch, Admissions Clerk



Cliffs of the Neuse, Vicki Branch, Admissions Clerk

THE LAST DAYS OF THE NEBULAE SPECTRE

Artists: Richard Haselrig and Jeff Parker

Writer: Micah Harris

The following story gave me a chance to write my version of my hero from those long lost Saturday mornings of my childhood...those days when "Smurf" was not yet part of our vocabulary. In approaching the material, I was inspired by Philip Jose Farmer's novel, *A Feast Unknown*, and Alan Moore's comic book, *Miracle Man*.

The art on the first two episodes (reprinted from our ECU Comic, "The Avatar") is by Richard Haselrig, whose sense of composition gave grace to what could have been a copy-encumbered layout. (And by the way, ignore the man and woman who appear in the first and last panels of the first episode. They are regular characters from "The Avatar" and irrelevant to the edited version of our story reprinted here.)

The four remaining episodes were drawn by *East Carolinian* Art Director Jeff Parker and ran in his "Tales of the Undercover Cats." Jeff turned in a virtuoso performance here, producing polished comics under impoverished conditions that shame the hack work of many well-paid pros.

Thank you, gentlemen.

- Micah Harris

The Avatar

LAST WEEK: QUEQUEG AND LORELI DISCOVERED A TIME CAPSULE LEFT BY THE NEBULAE SPECTRE IN HIS CITADEL - A TIME CAPSULE TO THE PAST!

I WAS A YOUNG MAN OF 29 WHEN THE CARTEL KNOWN AS THE NUMINOUS FIRST CONTACTED ME ALTHOUGH I'M SURE THEY'D BEEN WATCHING ME FOR SOME TIME.

MY WEALTH AND INTELLECT BROUGHT ME TO THEIR ATTENTION. AMONG THEM WERE NAMES THAT WERE LISTED AMONG THE SCIENTIFIC GENIUSES OF MY TIME.

BUT INSTEAD I TREAD THE LOWEST HELL. THEY BROUGHT ME TO THEIR "SCIENTIFIC COMPLEX: A CONCENTRATION CAMP OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS DISSIDENTS THEY EXPERIMENTED ON.

MY NAME IS ALEXI QUESTOR AND THOUGH MEN WILL COME TO KNOW ME AS THE NEBULAE SPECTRE, IT IS ALEXI QUESTOR I MUST TELL OF FIRST.

I FELT I WALKED AMONG GODS

TO PROVE MY UNQUESTIONING OBEDIENCE, MY SPONSOR ORDERED ME TO SHOOT A PREGNANT WOMAN. I WAS IN TOO DEEP NOT TO COMPLY MEANT MY DEATH.

HE LEFT ME VOMITING. BUT I'D AIMED CAREFULLY. I DELIVERED HER TWINS BY CAESAREAN. THEIR FISTS SEEMED CLUTCHED IN IMPOTENT RAGE AS I CUT THEM FROM THE CORPSE OF THEIR MOTHER.

HER EYES.

THE TWINS HAD HER EYES BUT ESPECIALLY THE BOY, JASON. I WOULD CATCH HIM WATCHING ME SOMETIME.

I WAS A COWARD.

...LIKE HER...

... LIKE HE KNEW....

The Avatar

LAST WEEK: QUEQUEG AND LORELI LEARNED OF ALEXI QUESTOR'S (THE NEBULAE SPECTRE) RECRUITMENT INTO THE SECRET SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY, THE NUMINOUS. HIS STORY CONTINUES.

MY PROBATION PAST, I WAS TAKEN TO THE CONCENTRATION PLANET'S TWIN WORLD FOR FINAL INDUCTION. ALWAYS ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE SUN FROM THE CONCENTRATION PLANET, THIS WORLD WAS INVISIBLE TO THE OTHER, GHOST-LIKE.

THE WRAITH WORLD

INITIATED, I WAS NOW PRIVY TO THEIR GREAT EVIL PURPOSE...

BRETHREN, OUR GENETIC EXPERIMENTS ON THE CONCENTRATION PLANET HAVE PROVEN MANKIND HAS THE POTENTIAL TO ASCEND AS THIS WORLD'S RACE DID.

THEY BROUGHT ME INSIDE THE PLANET AMONG THE RUINS OF A LONG VANISHED ALIEN CIVILIZATION. HERE THE NUMINOUS CONVENED.

WE TURN OUR ATTENTION NOW TO THIS WORLD. TO REDISCOVER THEIR SCIENCE AND USE IT TO SEND OUR MINDS THROUGH SPACE AND CONTACT THEM OR THE AGENTS OF THEIR ASCENSION...



... AND USE THEM TO REMAKE THE HUMAN RACE ABOVE WHOM WE'LL REIGN AS GODS...



... NUMINOUS INDEED.



A MONTH LATER, THE NUMINOUS FIRE-BALLED THE CONCENTRATION PLANET. THERE WERE NO EVALUATIONS THESE "GODS" OF NO MERCY...



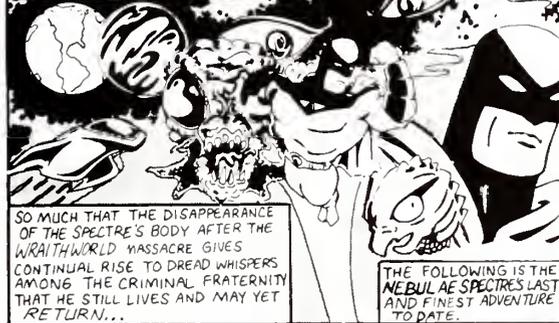
WHAT PANTHEON WAS THIS TO TREAD ABOVE THE STARS?

READ OUR COMPANION STORY BELOW AND JOIN US HERE NEXT WEEK FOR THE EPILOGUE. (PART ONE.)

Tales of The Undercover Cats

By Parker

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AFTER HIS SUPPOSED DEATH THE EXPLOITS OF THE NEBULAE SPECTRE HAUNTS THE COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESSES OF TWO PLANETS



SO MUCH THAT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE SPECTRE'S BODY AFTER THE WRAITHWORLD MASSACRE GIVES CONTINUAL RISE TO DREAD WHISPERS AMONG THE CRIMINAL FRATERNITY THAT HE STILL LIVES AND MAY YET RETURN...

THE FOLLOWING IS THE NEBULAE SPECTRE'S LAST AND FINEST ADVENTURE TO DATE.

JENN... JASON-REPORT TO SPECTRE LAB



COMING NEBULAE

AT ONCE NEBULAE SPECTRE

CHILDREN, I'LL COME RIGHT TO THE POINT. MY WAR AGAINST EVIL CULMINATES HERE TOMORROW. I WON'T BE ABLE TO GUARANTEE YOUR SAFETY. YOU MUST LEAVE THE WRAITH WORLD TODAY... FOREVER



PARKER 24



JENN-WHAT DID...

I SAID NO. I'M NOT GOING. AND I'M NOT A CHILD ANYMORE...



MEANWHILE, A GALACTIC ENTOURAGE EDGES TOWARD THE WRAITHWORLD



THEIR OBJECTIVE... TO SUMMON AN ANCIENT EVIL (CONT.)

WRITTEN BY MICAH HARRIS

LAST WEEK, AWARE OF HIS ENCRDACHING ENEMIES THE NEBULAE SPECTRE ORDERED HIS WARDS JENNIFER AND JASON TO LEAVE HIS CITADEL INSIDE THE WRAITHWORLD. INSTEAD, JENN REVEALED HER LOVE FOR HER GUARDIAN.



AND THEN...

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO INDULGE YOUR FANTASIES, JENN. PUT YOUR MASK BACK ON.

BUT-

PUT YOUR MASK ON! YOU KNOW WE ALWAYS WEAR OUR MASKS WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER.

JASON, TAKE YOUR SISTER OUT OF HERE.

THOSE EYES... JUST LIKE HERS



I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO DISTURBED

YOU DON'T REALLY INTEND TO LEAVE, DO YOU, JASE?

OF COURSE NOT, SIS.

IF I GUESS WE'LL DO WHAT ALL TEEN SIDKICKS WOULD DO-- SKULK ABOUT THE SIDELINES.

...NAVELY CAUSE LUCKY BREAK FOR OUR HERO AT THE LAST MINUTE... UNLESS WE GET CAPTURED FIRST.

OH, JASE.



ON THE PLANET'S SURFACE

THAT'S THE THIRD SHIP WE'VE SEEN LAND-- SO MUCH FOR OUR SECRET LOCATION

IT MUST BE TOGETHER. THESE SHIPS HERE-- THE SPECTRE'S ODD BEHAVIOR



WHO KNOWS WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT?



MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE WRAITHWORLD... THE NEBULAE SPECTRE'S HEADQUARTERS ARE VAST...

THERE ARE CORRIDORS BEHIND LOCKED DOORS THAT JENN AND JASE KNOW NOTHING OF.



FROM WITHIN COMES A STIRRING OF SHADOWS, A MURMUR OF VOICES. THEY ARE HERE, READY TO FULFILL THEIR EVIL PACT SEALED LONG AGO

THEY ARE HERE...

BUT WHERE IS THE NEBULAE SPECTRE?

WRITER MICAH HARRIS



THE BIG BLUNDER

Lewis Camden
College Transfer

One of the most memorable days of my high school career occurred during my senior year. It was memorable because I made one of the biggest blunders in my life, so far.

It was in the fall of 1985 about half way through the football season. As always during this time, I was busy with practice and school work and trying to adjust to life as a senior. Up until now I had worked hard in school and I was about to find out that my hard work was soon to be recognized. One day before practice, as I was walking down the hallway, my history teacher pulled me over to the side and told me she wanted to talk to me. I accompanied her to her classroom and proceeded to take a seat. We began to talk and she told me that she was head of the scholarship committee that year. She told me the committee had chosen me to represent the school in the Morehead scholarship competition. As you may know, this scholarship is very prestigious and it pays a full four years at Carolina. I was very happy and I felt I had a good chance because of my high class rank and many extracurricular activities. She told me that the scholarship was very competitive and I would have to go to an interview at the county level if I won, then onto interviews at higher levels. She also told me in order to do this I would have to practice with a couple of mock interviews she had arranged. So after all of this information, I went on about my happy way to practice, feeling good.

In the weeks to come, I went to two mock interviews—one with officials from Mount Olive College, the other with teachers from Southern Wayne. I felt I was ready. They told me what to work on and I did. I was ready to advance to another level. I was ready to win the Morehead.

The day had arrived. I was to go to the bank on the corner of Ash and William streets for my interview. I got there and

found out the interviews were taking place on the second floor, so up I went. When I got to the hall outside the room, I saw several other people already sitting down waiting for their chance to go in and conquer the board of interviewers. I grabbed a seat. Slowly they went in, one by one, and then reappeared a short time later with an expression of relief on their faces. Relief that it was over. Now it was my turn. I was ready—calm and collected.

They called my name to go in and I went. There they sat—four stately gentlemen all in suits. Carolina Blue flowing from them. I walked in, introduced myself, and shook hands with each of them. They told me to take a seat and we began our discussion. It wasn't what I had expected. We talked casually about me and things I like doing and what I wanted to do. I thought it was going well. Then it happened. The old size twelve foot of mine went squarely into my mouth. One of these stately gentlemen threw me a curve, a question out of the blue. A simple one but one I wished I had picked up before I answered. His question was, "Lewis, besides Carolina, what other colleges have you applied to?"

Without thinking I said, "ECU and State." State! What kind of Carolina fan would say he applied to State? Bamm! I was shot down cold. Their smiles turned to frowns and I swear I even saw one of them shaking his head in disbelief.

They thanked me for my participation and dismissed me. I felt so low that I could have crawled under a snake's belly. I didn't feel hungry because I had just eaten my shoe.

Needless to say, I never heard from the committee again. Maybe that mistake didn't cost me the scholarship, but next time I will know: never go into a room of Carolina die-hards and tell them you applied to State.



Shoe, pencil sketch
Glenn Elam, College Transfer



Notes
pen & ink
Michele McLendon, College Transfer

JOURNEY
Preston Howard
Business Computer Programming

Sometimes, when I close my eyes, there is more than darkness. I am standing at the beginning of a long hallway. The floor, made of marble, has alternating black and white squares like a giant chessboard. The grey stone walls, rough and worn, extend into the distance. This hallway is surprisingly well lit—if only by my awareness of it—but seems to darken farther down.

A good walk takes me to the end of the hallway. There, I find an opening that leads into darkness. As I step closer, what at first looked like a dropoff turns out to be a winding stairway leading downward. The steps seem suspended in space—small points of light hang somewhere in the distance. It doesn't exactly inspire confidence, but I descent anyway.

At the bottom of the stairway, a large door blocks my path. It appears to be made of a dark wood—old and almost petrified. The lock is a tarnished brass plate with a keyhole and a handle parallel to the floor. It is locked, but looking down, I find that I have a gold key. Unlocking the door, I enter.

The first thing I notice is the tree, or trees. It is hard to tell whether I am in the branches of one large tree or many intertwined. The limbs are a brownish green, approximately six inches in diameter, and they snake off in every direction. They seem arranged in a strategic disorder, making it easy to move among them.

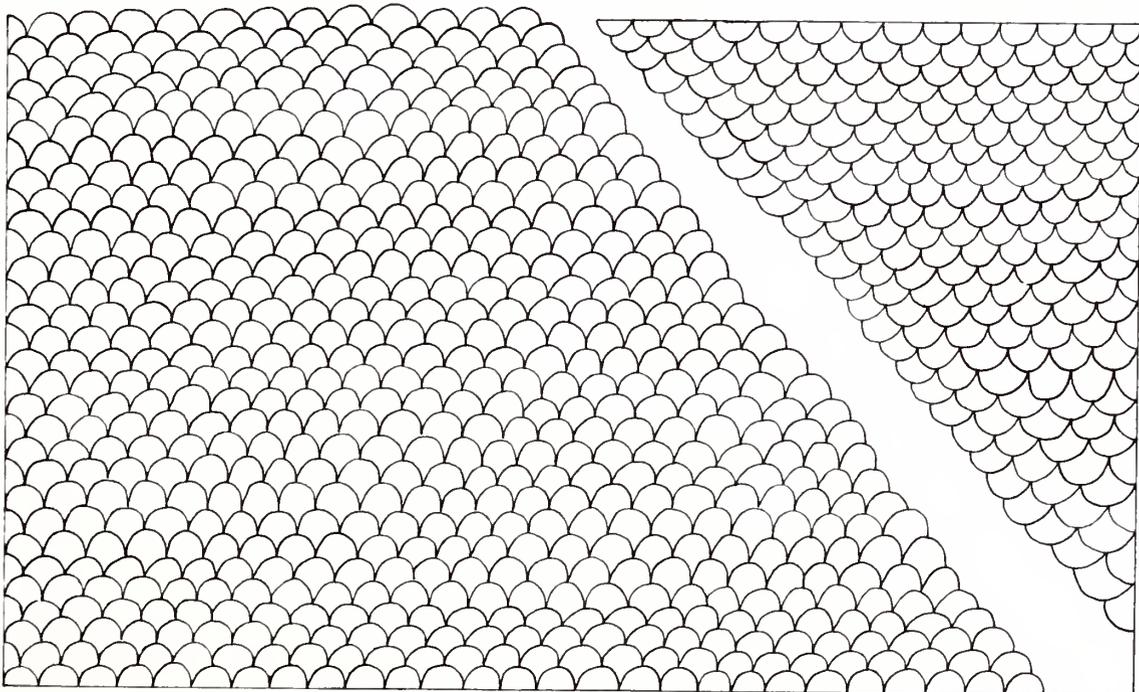
Further down among the branches, I come to a gurgling stream. The water is crystal clear, and its smooth stone bottom is visible a couple of feet down. I reach in. The stream is warm and feels like silk between my fingers. Cupping my hands, I raise some of the water to my lips and find it as sweet and refreshing as it is clear. In the distance, I hear a bird's song, and I start the climb back up among the limbs.

I finally emerge from the limbs, and what I see is breathtaking. Above and below me, formed by the twisting branches, rises a cylindrical clearing with mist floating up from below. At the bottom lies a still body of water, about fifty feet in diameter. The water looks deep from here. On impulse, I dive.

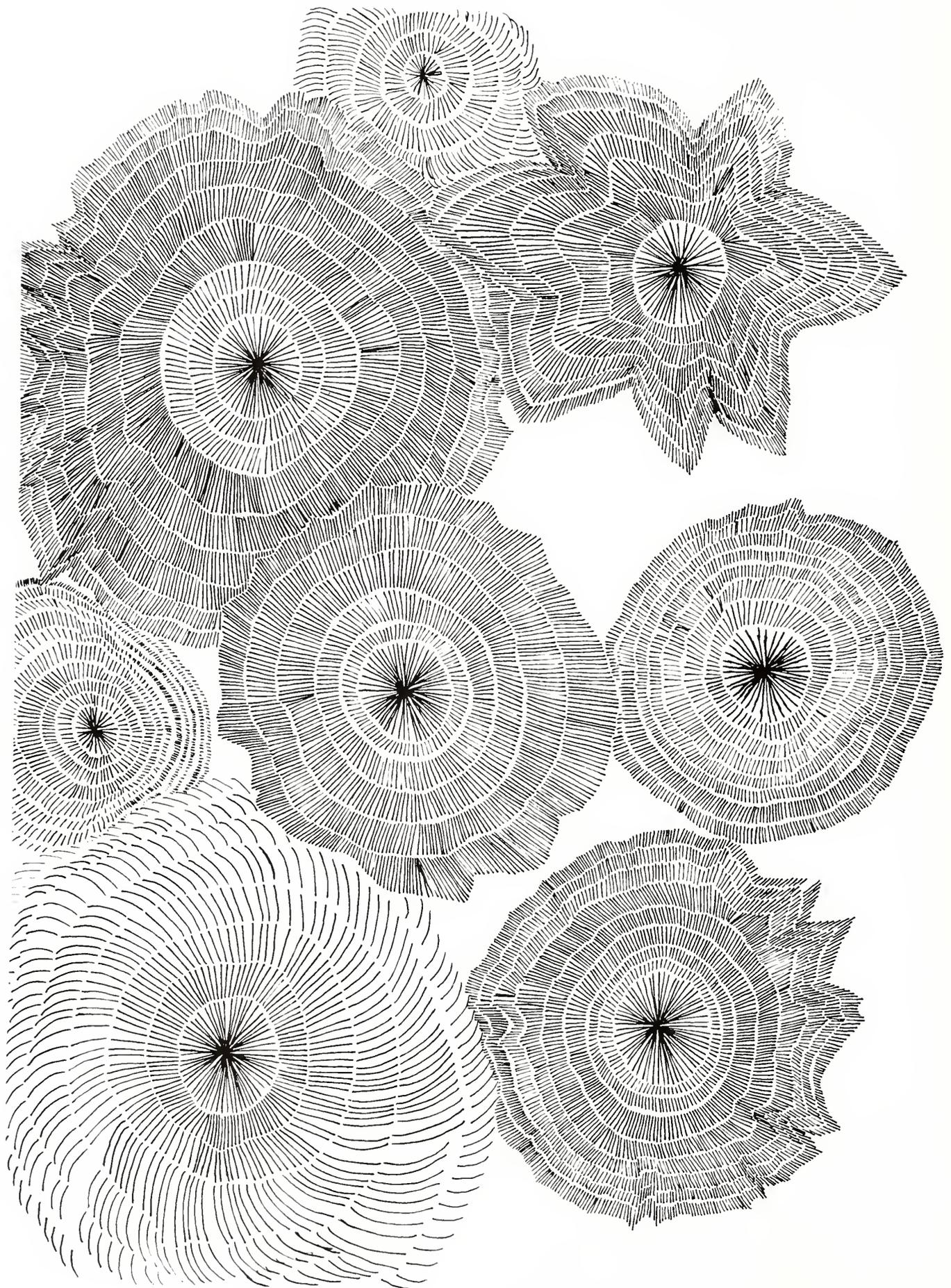
The fall seems to last an eternity, but I finally enter the water—no splash or waves, just a perfectly smooth entry. The contrast is incredible—light becomes dark, sound becomes silence. It is like suddenly becoming blind and deaf, left with only the sense of motion, of sinking. I begin to slow as I lose momentum. Noticing a glow from below, I swim toward it. The light turns out to be an opening in the rock, so I enter into the cave, I feel a warm breeze on my face. After a couple of feet, it turns into a gusting wind, which dries me completely. I look around, but the wind has no apparent source. A few more steps take me into the open.

Stretching before me, in contrast to the rock floor and ceiling, are two walls covered with beautiful wooden bookshelves. On each shelf, there must be hundreds of books—handsome leather-bound volumes with gold lettering. In the center stands a waist-high pedestal made of stone. Small passages lead off to the left and right. Exploring one of these, I find a dark room - no, not dark - it is more like shadow. These, I know, are the grey areas, where my degree of control is minimal, where fear is born. This is the unknown.

Feeling uneasy, I decide to go no further. I open my eyes. Changing worlds has to be experienced to be believed. Everything is strange and new. I am reborn—it even feels somewhat awkward to possess a body. I want to return to the unknown, the adventure. But this world beckons too. Refreshed by my journey within, I go on about my usual business.



Path, pen & ink, Glenn Elam, College Transfer



Crystals, pen and ink, Ann Mayo, College Transfer

ICE STORMS

for John Reaves, who died February 21, 1989

After the ice storm
there are carcasses to care for:
the broken-off branches must be
gathered in piles for a final
dissection of their amputated parts.

I pull them across the yard
by their splintered bone ends,
the ivory exposure of marrow pointing
toward heaven like so many supplicating arms.

Some have stabbed the soil with force,
falling through iced air to spear the earth below.
Ice still clings, a stubborn claim of power;
some have bled a crystalline clump, lifeblood of
gelatinous sap, now useless coagulum.

The stack of broken branches becomes a
wretched sculpture, the intertwining
of gnarled bark wrenched like children
from their mothers' arms, like white
bodies piled at Dachau or Auschwitz.

I glance above where they've left their
space in the sky, no more to shade or murmur in the
summer wind or shelter nests for squirrels or birds.

The job done, I come inside. The ringing phone
brings news of your death and I learn amid my
falling tears and whys renting the air, this:
we can only clear away, and mourn, what is left
after ice storms.

Liz Meador
English Instructor



Nude
Charcoal
Sandra Sutton, College Transfer

