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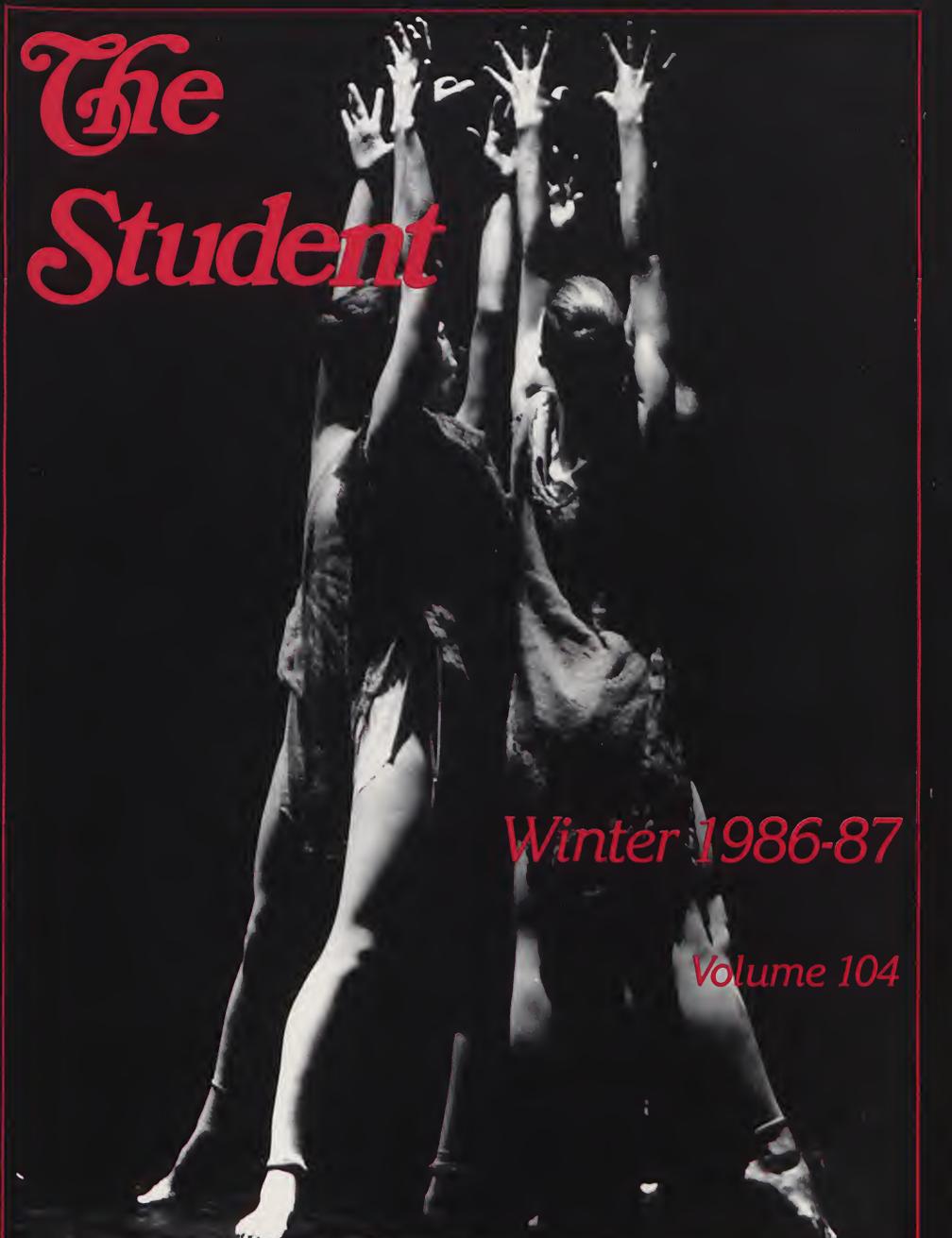
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*The
Student*

Winter 1986-87

Volume 104

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Winter 1986-87

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Front cover photo: "The Dancers" by Sam Greenwood

The Student

Winter 1986-87

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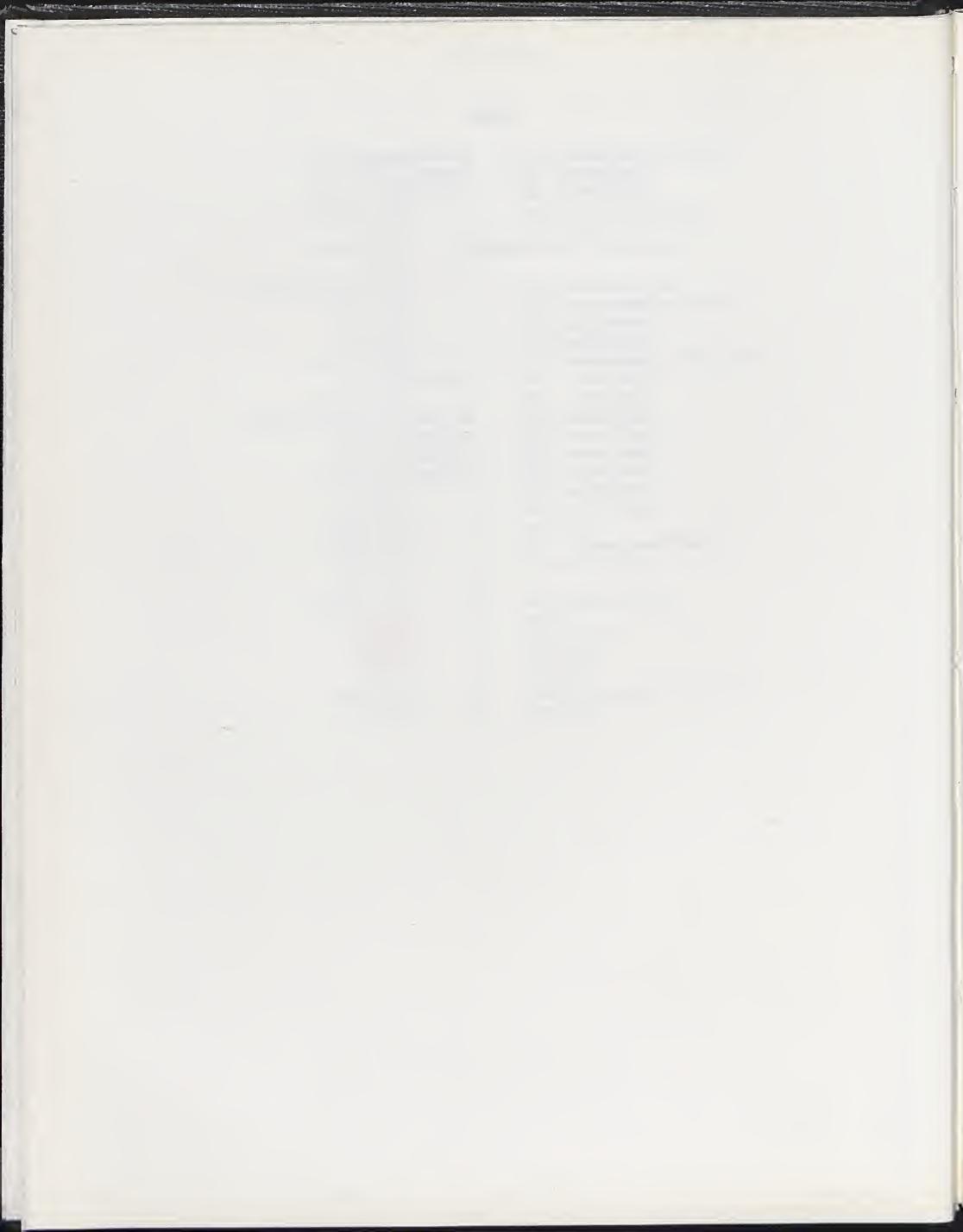
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October second and the idealist

Meredith Holladay

Running
broken
through doors that close fast behind us:
that is how our youth is.
And I know all about the bombs already,
and the silver mouths,
and the secret
 red
 messages
slipped
between the teeth.
(nothing is coherent while chewing's going on
so keep your mouth shut,
please)

But,
 though no perfect science or art comes yet to my head,
 in my stomach, somewhere,
 a deep storm-hunger waits
 for the west to blacken.

I will die
underneath statues of Plato
and other winged heroes,

but I refuse to chase such water
that in the desert
disappears
as we approach with shrunken tongues.

Morning On Elsiehorn

Lori A. Sheppard

Midday had just opened her jaws,
and let out a breath, teeming
with violets, floating
on the notes of scattered cowbells.
The sun marked our passage,
as did the cows, gazing at us,
wondering why humans would be here,
so high.

A brown hunting lodge
sat up high on a rise. There
We'd pacify our stomachs,
there our boots and packs
would drop like rain.
And we would walk to the pore
where the alp sent its leftover snow.
The blue, a deep cold, to stop the escape
of strength, and urge lungs
to make their presence known.

Night grabbed us as we left,
and pushed us upwards, where the alp
crested, where we fought to cling
to the side of that rolling swell.
That alp kept climbing, and we
saw the pastures fan out
behind, separate quilts.

The top was only a jumble of rocks,
each trying to go higher. The sun began
to blink as our breaths floated out.
Satisfaction fought through fatigue,
and our muscles steamed, there
where the earth ended,
where the sky thinned out, and
light began.

Fate Isn't Always Fair

Florence Hadsell

My little brother came home
From grade school yesterday.
He was wearing a sober face
With scrunched-up eyebrows
Deep in thought.

He did not speak to me
As he crossed the room
But sat in a chair
In the corner
Alone.

Ten minutes passed
Fifteen, then twenty.
His freckled face looked up
At me.
He was crying.

Out of his pain.
His pain of knowing Michael.
See, Michael lives in a children's home
And my brother wondered
Why Michael lived there
Instead of him.

Sam Greenwood



Partners in Crime

L. D. Russell

Letting the screen door slam shut behind them, the two boys bolted from the house. Kyle Ponder ran the length of the back yard and hid behind the huge red garage. His brother Pete slipped into the garage and went immediately to the rear so that he could watch Kyle through the holes in the siding, for Kyle, three years his younger, liked to urinate outdoors when he thought no one could see him. Just as Pete had expected, Kyle stood no more than two feet away with both hands before him, trying to be careful not to wet his shoes and pants. Pete could not help but snicker, which sent Kyle off running red-faced and struggling to zip up his pants as he went. Pete saw the dark splotches down both Kyle's legs when he turned the corner into the garage screaming, "Dem you, Pete! Dem you!"

"Look here, Nigel Kyle," Pete said to distract his attention. "I just found us a hangin' noose and a sword." Pete knew that the word "sword," spoken with just the right tone of mystery, would snare his brother's attention, and he was right. Kyle's eyes widened as he cried, "I wanna see!"

Pete held up a six-foot length of cord and a broken broom handle, its splintered end pointed toward Kyle.

"Aw," said Kyle, "that ain't no sword."

"Is too," said Pete.

"No it ain't," said Kyle.

"It is if I say so." As was his custom, Pete was pulling rank. "It's a sword and I'm a pirate and if you don't believe it you can just get off my ship."

"Well . . . but I want to be a pirate too," said Kyle.

"You can't," said Pete.

"Why not?" asked Kyle.

" 'Cause you ain't got no sword," said Pete.

"Dem," said Kyle, his face darkening. He turned to leave the garage.

"Wait," said Pete when he saw his brother leaving. "I'll make you one." He slammed the broom handle across a rusty car fender leaning against the wall. The wood cracked, a long clean break, and with a little twisting Kyle had a sword with one blade and Pete had one with two. Pete did not notice Kyle eyeing the longer two-edged sword which he had kept for himself. Instead, he very seriously draped the rope over one shoulder and led his younger brother out of the garage.

As the two boys stepped out into the sunlight, their youngest brother Julian was backing out of the house. He closed the screen door quietly so that their mother would not know he was gone. Julian was her "baby," as she always put it, and she still considered him too young to play outdoors, so he was confined to the house where she could keep an eye on him. For hyperactive Julian this was intolerable torture, and he snuck out to play with his brothers whenever he found the chance.

"I'm tellin' Mom on you, Julie!" shouted Kyle.

"Naw, Kyle," said Pete, winking slyly and pointing to Julian meaningfully with his sword. "Come on."

The two boys took Julian by the arms and led him solemnly out to the garage. He was shorter and heavier than either of his brothers, having not yet lost his baby fat, and his face was rounder, with chubby cheeks that crowded his hazel eyes whenever he smiled. His hair was blonde, a shade lighter than Kyle's. He waddled along between Kyle, the thinnest of the three boys, and Pete, whose darker hair and older age set him apart from his brothers. When they reached the garage, Pete twisted the rope around and

around Julian's wrists, while Kyle ran into the garage and brought out a large metal bucket. Young Julian stood quietly, happy to be outdoors and caught up in the busy activity around him. He was the center of attention. After tangling Julian's hands, Pete tied a loop in the rope, slipped the noose over Julian's head, and threaded its frayed end through a hole in the garage wall. Kyle set the bucket down underneath the hole and helped Julian to stand on it. By the time Julian was set, Pete had stepped around into the garage and pulled the rope until he heard Julian's head bump the wall. He then tied the rope around the car fender and ran out to join Kyle.

Kyle was standing at attention a few feet before the prisoner, sword at his side. When Pete reached for his double-edged sword, he saw that Kyle had switched them.

"Hey, gimme my sword!" Pete ordered.

"I ain't got your sword," said Kyle. "This is mine."

"Give it here, I said!" shouted Pete, unwilling to let Kyle usurp his place as leader.

"On guard!" Kyle warned as he circled his fuming brother, one hand held high behind his head and the other waving the sword before Pete's reddening face.

For the first time since sneaking out of the house, Julian had slipped from his brother's attention. This being ignored was something he could not endure. All his life he had been a third party, odd man out, a surprise to his parents and a latecomer to his siblings' hotblooded rivalry. He struggled against the knots which bound him.

"Hey, what about me? What about me?" Julian cried, but his brothers paid him no mind. Instead, they rolled in the grass at his feet, hands grasping wrists, legs intertwined, their faces sweaty and gnarled in pain. They growled and whined like fighting dogs, biting and scratching each other and using fear and pity and any other weapon, emotional or physical, to break each other's nerve and gain the upper hand.

Before long Pete, easily the stronger and craftier of the two, had established himself in a sitting position on Kyle's chest. He leaned forward to protect his lower back from Kyle's kicking knees and to hold Kyle's arms to the ground above his head. Kyle squirmed between Pete's legs as though he were in a frenzy, but he could not free himself. Finally, in desperation he screamed, "I hate you, Peter! I hate you!" Pete lowered his face until he could feel the hot breath of Kyle's screaming.

"Whose sword is it?" Pete asked.

Tears welled up in Kyle's eyes, and his struggling ceased. "Pete," he whimpered, "Pete . . . I can't breathe. Let me up . . . please."

"Is it my sword?" Pete asked.

"Dammit, Pete, get off me!" Kyle screamed. "I — I can't breathe! Mama! Mama! I'm dyin'! Pete's smotherin' me —"

"Shut your mouth, cry baby," said Pete, glancing up nervously at the back door of the house. Just then both boys were jolted back into awareness of their younger brother, who had been struggling to untie himself while they grappled with each other. Floundering angrily, Julian had somehow kicked the bucket out from under himself, and both Pete and Kyle jumped at the hollow pop of the cord as it jerked taut. Before them dangled Julian a few inches off the ground, his eyes bulging and his tongue darting to and fro in a strangled scream. Despite the entangling cord, his arms and legs flailed about, giving him the comic appearance of a marionette on a live wire.

Pete and Kyle let each other go and jumped to their feet. Before they could move any closer, however, the hilarity of Julian's unwilling puppetry struck them full force and, glancing at one another, they doubled over in spasms of laughter. Here was little Julian in his usual role, begging his brother's for the attention and acceptance they had never given him. How ridiculous he looked! How funny it was that they had strung him up! Beneath their laughter, like poison in the blood, ran the animal hatred they felt towards Julian for interfering in their lives, for stealing their mother's attentions, and for needing his brothers' love so much.

Meanwhile Julian bumped his head against the garage wall and gasped for breath. His face turned blood red and his kicking grew ferocious. He turned his eyes upon his brothers in a look so full of sheer terror that, transfixed by his glare, the boys fell suddenly silent. Then as one they leapt to his side, Kyle holding him up while Pete unwound the cord. When he was freed, Julian wheezed a sigh of relief and immediately screamed his fear and rage. No sooner had his feet touched the ground than their mother came bounding out of the house. Pete and Kyle froze where they stood, but Julian ran to meet her. Mrs. Ponder stooped to pick him up without breaking stride and rushed out to the garage.

"Where does it hurt, Jewel?" she implored. "Poor baby!"

By the time she crossed the yard, she had examined the rope burns on Julian's neck and guessed their cause. The sight of Pete and Kyle standing bolt upright with the rope dangling between them confirmed her worst fears.

"What on earth have you done?" she screamed at Pete. Turning on Kyle, she hissed, "I asked you a question, boy. Answer me!" Her sons could only stand in wide-eyed silence, horrified to be culprits and victims in such a deed. Their hysterical mother set Julian roughly down and dragged Pete by the arm around the corner into the half-light of the garage. Outside, Kyle could hardly breathe as he listened to his mother pound the seat of Pete's pants with her open hand.

The whipping seemed to go on forever, until finally Pete ran from the garage holding onto his behind and stifling his sobs.

"Go to your room!" his mother shouted.

Next, using one hand to hold him and the other to strike him, she lifted Kyle from the ground and whipped him round and round in a circle. Her fury spent, she pushed Kyle toward the house. "Just you wait 'til your father gets home!" she said after him. Then she reached down for Julian.

Kyle ran as fast as he could to find Pete. His rump burned from his mother's blows, and his eyes felt scalded by the hot tears that came. Rushing blindly into the house, he opened the door to the boys' room and found Pete lying on the bed with his face to the wall. Kyle climbed up and lay alongside his brother as close as he could snuggle. The boys jerked sporadically, shaken by sobs as their tears subsided. Between sniffles they could hear their mother comforting Julian as she doctored his wounds in the next room, and both of them, in their heart of hearts, wished that he was lying between them even now in the warmth of their own bed.

Greta Lutman



Scott Hoffman



Christopher Kaley

Swan Lake's faded fanfares
hopelessly try to fill this
flaking room, this cell into
which I fit so badly.

Even when I go out I stay in,
hoping to catch a glimpse
of modern David
next door, living in a different
block of insanity.

The walls are brittle
Mother or Woman yells and they'll crack
some more

the door got blown off
the hinges today by Woman
raw with perfection
painted beauty Woman she is

there's a pit out there
a dank stinking fungal pit
a rotting black of filth

but it smells sweet enough
from where I'm standing
am forced to stand
by Woman-perfect cell-ruler
looking like a beet
And words like an atom smasher
tractoring
elephanting
me through
a fissure, a gorge
in the peach wall

And she gets tiny away,
little legs spread firm
to put hips under fistng hands —
I can see the wall sealing up
between her thighs —
and the screen turned strainer
door banging shut.

Janet Ramey



The Absorption of Roy G. Biv

Tom Auble

A giant pit engulfed
The sun-sparkled,
Paint-speckled,
Rainbow in the sky.
The green of Celtic folklore
Lost its finest battle-and faded,
And the blue of the deep dark sea
Sank into a still deeper ocean of emptiness.
Others were there,
And they too,
were helpless.
At the pit's lowest low,
A coal-black cauldron bubbled.
I watched as each colored arch
Melted, and then blended, into blankness.

Unknown to Unknowing

Donna Bowman

and back again, I have to deal with it. The falseness of colors and the smell of the unwashed are only two of my problems. It's when I can't decide if my drumbeats are mythical or just a book of thunderings that I have a job to do. I take the screens out and let the snow pile inches deep on the floor and melt into my own Nile. If the frogs come that is their concern. I just listen for the priests' ancient pounding, and with the snow and sand I fashion a temple of new design and wash it with ocher colors.

Janet Ramey



Nicholas

I don't want to be
on your pedestal.
For, if I slip and fall
I may shatter,
and you may not
have the love
to make me whole again.

Reverie

Robert Christopher Hoerter

Self-portrait: Skidding on water-film round in shape,
Around a spherical circumference like a renegade electron
At any moment destined to be flung off, a jagged stone from
David's sling, at any moment destined to cling too
Tightly, bursting my bubble, sucked into
Its center (a black hole?) like those dead leaves of fall that
Disappear into Pa's boat wake, a mini-Charybdis.

If but I had some time away from life;
Make me eighty-three with nowhere to go,
no time to live, no mind rife
with emotional discord, black with fear,
or deep with vines and thorns and seeping poison,
Poison dripping on my bare soul at well's bottom (so far down).

I want to retire. I want to lie prone,
asleep in an invisible hammock floating over
Breezy-warm heath, looking up alone
at cotton-ball clouds, playing God with the sky.
Watch my skin — it prickles in the wind,
tickled by green-smelling gusty fingers
sent by Zephyr to arrange my hair in shelves
and to gently wring out my spirit
'til it's soft and white and warm again

Handmade
Greta Lutman



80501
Amy Trottier

KABAMN!!!!

it's okay: just another sonic boom.
did you know that every time a bell rings,
another angel gets his wings?

Popcorn

Keiji Furuya

Makoto stood in his teacher's office. This teacher, harmonious with her students, usually welcomed her school gang in her office. The books arranged closely on the shelf seemed to burst out of the shelf, seemed to make fun of him, to sneer at him.

It was the final deadline for his paper. He had stayed up all night to finish it. He often stayed up to complete assignments — he rarely began to grapple with them until the deadline was just around the corner.

"I have ten days left. I can do it tomorrow."

He had a friend who said, "I can't enjoy playing if I don't finish assignments immediately. I get nervous."

But Makoto was not that type. Although he knew he had to do it sooner or later, he invariably put off his duty in spite of himself. All-nighters were his fate. Although he always swore the morning after that he would never do it again, his determination hid itself away in his mind where he could not see it. His laziness was preventing him from developing, but . . .

And here he was again. Another all-nighter before another deadline. He had written the sentences, but had had no time to add the pepper for extra flavor. He handed in the paper, not satisfied, already losing sight of his discontentment.

The teacher skimmed the paper. Then she tore it up and threw the pieces into the wastebasket. He felt as if she had destroyed him, had thrown him into raging waves.

"Makoto," the teacher said, "I trusted you. I was waiting for this. I didn't pressure you because you said you could do it. I believed you were devoting yourself to this paper day after day. This paper is full of your laziness. I cannot accept this. You can do much better. You have the ability, but you're wasting it. Rewrite this! Now!"

He remembered a dream he used to have in his childhood. A boy is sitting on a roof, looking at the sky. Heavy clouds creep up; it looks like rain. The boy has to hurry into his house. However, he cannot find the ladder he used to climb up on the roof. He has no choice but to jump from the roof to the ground. The moment he lands, the ground opens its mouth and swallows the falling boy. Falling, falling in the dark . . .

Then Professor Yagyu came into the office to kill time. At that moment, Makoto wanted Prof. Yagyu to pick him up, but his hope was mercilessly destroyed. Prof. Yagyu took what was left of Makoto's paper out of the wastebasket and read it.

"Young man, your English is almost perfect. You make hardly any mistakes in grammar, idioms, structure. However, there is no content. Your paper merely retells the story. Your paper is all plot. No one can find analysis here."

No one had ever talked to him that way before.

"Literature is art! In novels, writers consider the human problems in society. Because writers need to appeal to people, novels come into the world. You do not understand that. You are a fool, only thinking of grammar. You have an empty head. I am deeply troubled because students with empty heads are increasing. In Japan teachers concentrate on grammar, so students' heads are empty. Students are no better than robots that can speak English."

"Me? A fool? Empty-headed!?"

Makoto had studied English very hard because he did not want anyone to overpower him. He had confidence in his English. But his paper was . . .

Overcome by the bitter shock, he heard a collapsing cry wrenched out of the self living deep in his mind.

He remembered his first encounter with English. His junior high school English teacher, Mr. Nakamoto, had said at the beginning of the course, "Our heads are completely filled with Japanese. When we learn English or some other foreign language, we cannot understand it well if we only practice with our mouths and ears. First, we have to study grammar. However, the texts are all approved by the Ministry of Education. For example, we can find formal and out-of-date expressions everywhere in English texts. Besides English, history books cover up facts like the Japanese massacres of Chinese in World War II and Koreans during the Great Tokyo Earthquake. Therefore, I don't want to use texts. I want to teach English through popular songs. After listening to the music, I'll explain grammar. Also, I want you to introduce your favorite songs. We'll work together."

Makoto enjoyed English due to Mr. Nakamoto. Nevertheless, Makoto had learned English for English sake. He had mastered the mechanics, but he did not know how to use his skill. English had been the goal, not a tool to reach a goal. Having reached one goal, he found it false — now he had to start walking toward the next goal, without taking a rest.

Makoto, gazing down the railway, leaned against the door on the train carrying him home. The train dashes along on safe rails, but Makoto's internal train had just set forth without any rails. "Where am I going?" No one knew his train's destination. It could go anywhere. Makoto had to lay his own rails and drive his own train.

"Hey, where have you been hiding?"

"Oh, Sakaguchi."

At the station near his house, Makoto met one of his friends from high school by chance.

"Do you want to have lunch?" the friend said.

Makoto had not recognized how hungry he was.

"Now that you mention it . . ."

In high school Sakaguchi had gone to a cram school to study only for college entrance examinations as most students do. Japanese colleges choose students only by scores on a single exam, so students have to fill their heads with as many facts as possible. Makoto had refused that kind of nonsense.

"I'll have a steak and a glass of red wine," Sakaguchi said.

Makoto thought how rich his friend was. Where could he get that kind of money?

"I want an egg salad sandwich," Makoto ordered. "Anyway, how is college life?"

"Well, I go to school only on Thursdays when I have P.E. On the other days, teachers don't call the roll, so I do part-time jobs instead of going to classes."

"I envy you . . ." Makoto said aloud.

But in his mind, Makoto muttered, "What a fool he is!"

Then he continued out loud, "I have to go to school every day early in the morning and have lots of homework."

Makoto's college was not as famous as his friend's. While his friend's was hard to enter but easy to graduate from, Makoto's was easier to enter but harder to graduate from. Makoto was disgusted with the heavy assignments, but otherwise, he knew he would spoil himself as his friend had done if he never had to go to school. He was satisfied studying for himself and his future. Now he knew it was useless to tell his spoiled friend about his suffering that day.

Makoto had never been particularly proud of himself. He had never showed off. Besides, he was shy. At parties, he had always had trouble talking with girls he didn't know.

"I just remembered. Takuro said the same as you," Sakaguchi said behind the hot steak which had just arrived on the table.

Takuro was another one of Makoto's classmates from high school. Now he was studying English Literature at a top-level national university, but in high school Takuro and Makoto had led the pack in English. Naturally, Makoto was interested in knowing about Takuro's recent situation.

"I have to do my best not to fall behind Takuro," Makoto said to himself.

While eating, Makoto thought, "Even if my classmates enter good colleges, they do not study. They do not further their education, but just revel in the names of their colleges."

Even his old friends fit the stereotype. Japanese college students spend most of their time on leisure. Makoto could not understand what such students thought.

"I have nothing in common with those who only want to play. Let them play as they want to. I'll do what I should do."

He kept to his own pace. He tried to fulfill his duties and never do what he must not do. This was because he thought about and researched into problems until he could satisfy himself. Only when he figured out what he hadn't been able to understand was he satisfied.

Once he had begun to wonder, "Why does one year have twelve months? Why do some months have thirty days but others thirty-one? Who created the calendar?"

It must have been while he was in elementary school that he had fought with encyclopedias until he could understand completely.

He drew his own conclusions. He instituted his own policies about what he should or should not do. Therefore, he walked along on the surface with his friends whom he couldn't understand. Makoto differed from those friends completely. They had a different posture. He was satisfied if a friend whom he could understand understood him.

By this time his friend had finished his steak, but left the corn on the dish. Without the steak, the corn had no meaning. It was like the leisure-loving students who were left behind by other good students. Makoto could see only corn inside of his friend. Sakaguchi was nothing but corn on a dish of steak.

On arriving home, Makoto's sister was struggling in the kitchen.

"Hi, sis! What are you doing? Watch out! Don't break any dishes this time," Makoto shouted.

"Shut up! Or I won't give you anything to eat!"

"Give me a break! No one can eat what you cook!"

"Get off my back! Appreciate me because I cook for you!"

"No, thank you! I can cook better than you."

"Then, cook for yourself!"

Last night, she cooked sukiyaki.

"This is too sweet, what kind of spices did you put in?" Makoto asked while trying to eat the sukiyaki.

"I put in sugar and soy sauce," the sister answered.

"That's all? How about salt and sake?"

"When I tasted it, I thought it wasn't sweet enough so I put in more sugar."

"It is no use putting in more sugar! Why didn't you put some salt in? I always tell you that salt helps sweetness! haven't you understood yet?"

Makoto had decided not to marry an inept woman like his sister. However, whenever he thought of the girl he loved, he imagined himself married to her. He didn't mean to want to marry her, but he supposed the girl would be his wife. He couldn't love a girl if he could not love her from the bottom of his heart. He could love only a girl he could share happiness with for the rest of his life.

"Pong, pong, po-pong!"

His sister must have been cooking popcorn for a snack. It made him hungry. He liked the taste of popcorn — even more, he liked the popping itself.

Dried corn seemed devoid of energy, but as the energy built up, his body tightened. He caught on fire and burst. He broke his shell that had been covering his energy. His inner self exploded. And with the explosion, he did not break into pieces but changed into the mature corn that he should be.

Listening to the sound of the popping, Makoto could see something he had never seen before. Makoto, like the corn, was rolling around in the pan. The lid of the pan had never been taken off before. But now, Makoto's exertion liberated the contents.

The Abyss

Angela Gray

Darkly Doubts assail me,
Slowly creeping closer one by one,
Reaching out spindley fingers in tentative touches
To quickly gain confidence and credence,
Winding, weaving a tight web,
Unraveling, using every fiber in the fabric of
My life.
Til a completed cocoon of slippery Uncertainty
Suspends my soul precariously above the precipice edge
Of Belief.
Slippery, yes, yet sticky and tenacious enough
To prevent the dangerous downward descent
Into the abyss of
Accepting.

Janet Ramey



There Is Only One Crow Named Jake

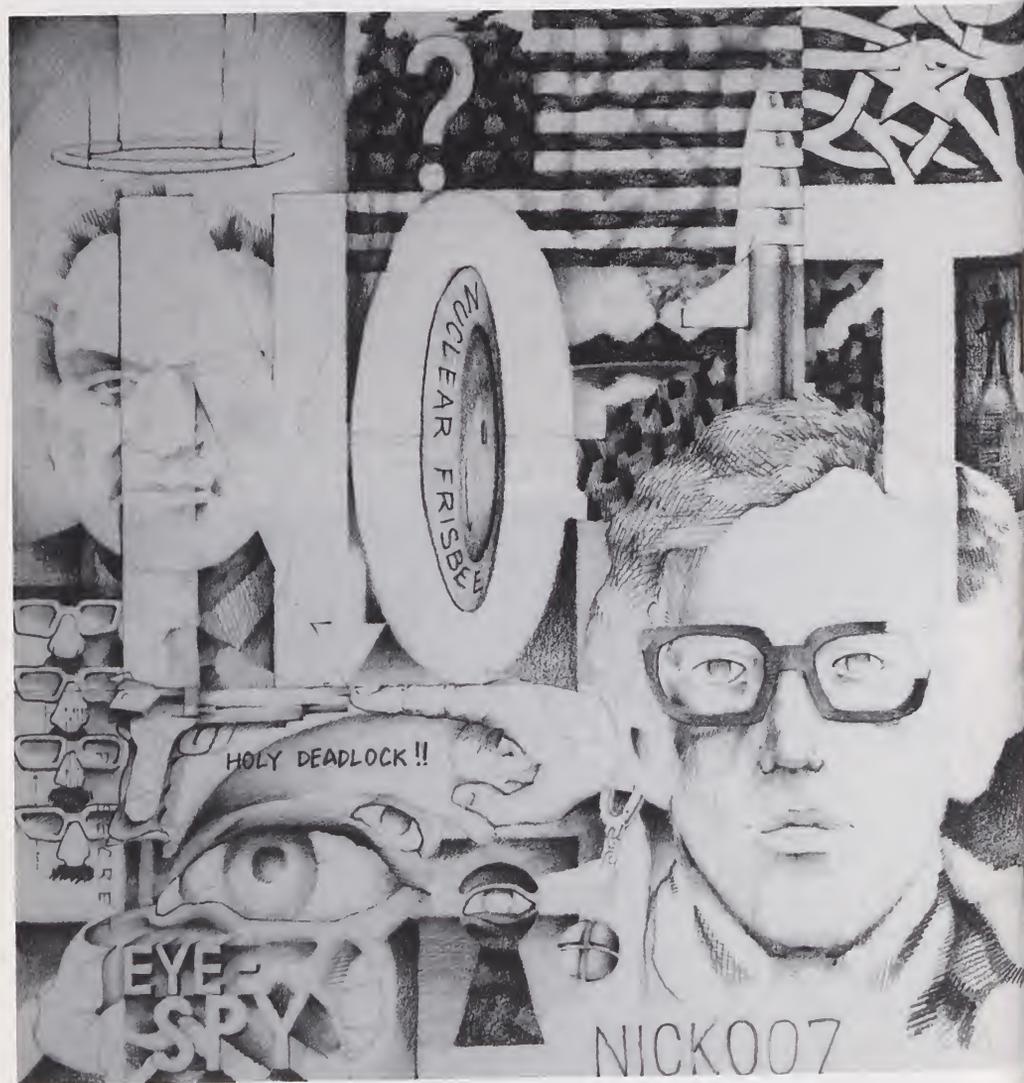
Lori A. Sheppard

That day he seemed to fly out
of the sun, also standing
on her head. With two claws,
he rode her straw hat down
like a bronco, a lone cowboy.
When Jack heard his wife scream,
and came out of the house,
he saw Ethel dancing,
circling,
in the garden to the beat
of her own prayers. Eight
bean plants pulped in the heat
before he flew into a tree.

A sign from the Devil became
a gift from the Lord:
Food appeared on the well
and was digested in a plum tree.
And Jake's new house had a dirt floor
to scratch, a box of straw
for sleep, and a tree trunk
to rule from. When spectacles
and words of wildlife admonition
came to visit, the door was left open.
Jake wouldn't give up coconut cookies
and weenies on Sundays.

Jack will never forget that day
Ethel called three times
from the yard, how in the garden
a crow's laugh met him
between the bean rows.
When confronted the bird tilted
his head, smirked down his beak,
and replied, "What cha want
wa want?" On days there
were no visitors, he used
his water hole, a rusted
pressure cooker, to make stew,
and took a bath and combed feathers.

In twenty years, the bean rows
turned to rabbit burrows.
Five grandchildren stood before
that bird, playing 'stick'
and feeding that insistent beak.
Each winter we wrapped that cage
tighter, watched the silver
tracings of his wings grow wider.
Often Ethel would pause and think
of the day the Devil stood on her head.



Rob Duckwall



Grass

Bonnie Flett

Grass:
What an amazing institution.
How plush,
something we put down to keep clods
of dirt from annoying us,
it pushes up again
so that we can hack it down again

The crux:
weeds around it grow
naturally
but we pull out those florid pagans
that disrupt sacred uniform of blades

I think I like grass:
it tickles me.
Some people I know are like that.

Rest

Donna Bowman

To wait in song
for tones as sharp, as smooth
as colored wax
to rest with my voice
in a single syllable
a heartbeat suspended
when nothing follows

Hard Faces

Greta Lutman



Rinzai for Sylvia

Robert Christopher Hoerter

Breaking the glass, shattering images
In sand that run through millions
of fingers anyway — no better
than one huge, turgid finger on
a skeleton hand rattling rattling

I'm on the cold tile floor now;
the scratch didn't hurt like they said it would
I didn't burn like they said I should
My rivers were swollen like a pregnant sow,
Begging to be burst
Dehydration serves thirst
In this world of mine

Gorged with the dank night air,
the river flows out, pooling in the dark
sworling into fingerprints of crimson canals,
like on Mars (they said they were dry).
And I am one of Bradbury's other-world priests;
In the midst of converting the natives, I find
my Self stark naked against a storm of the soul.

I seek humanity
I lose before I find

A shard of glass on the counter,
Staring at me with two suns for eyes,
Burning through anything and everybody
and spinning — a dynamo whirling until all light
is fused in a tight powerbulging ball,
throwing light upon Me

Standing kneedeep in red sand, eyes closed,
Revelling inside for the inside because inside
there is standing an other-world priest
Red streaks on his face, marks of a new church
Reeling in simplicity
Knowing humanity

The Staff

Greta Lutman



Juggling

Dave Reeves

His older brother juggles.

He wants to.

He starts with one.

 s s
 s i s i
 o n o n

T g, catching, t g, catching
getting the feel.

Then two;

Never letting one land where the other is.

Then three

And it is harder,

But he is better.

Then different objects:

Knives, apples and oranges, pins and even Books.

He needs to juggle.

Practicing
(Blindfolded)

 A
 Knife
 L
 A
 N
 D
 S

He wants to need to juggle.

Savior

Lisa M. Young

Granny,
in her near-total
Blindness
and near-blind
Motherliness,
Grabbed artlessly
for the little bird
which had flown in
the back door
and was beating itself
sane
Against the foggy kitchen
Window,
and pitched it out
the door.

And You
Speak of
Miracles as if
They don't exist.

Crawling

Donna Bowman

(when I lost a contact lens and
my shrink's phone number)
on all fours like a living
Golden Gate Bridge
so stretched to the shore or
hung by tiny cables pulling
blind men in cars
picking solemnly at scales beneath the carpet threads
silent as my phone because there's
no one talking anywhere

Sax Player
Janet Ramey



People on Ice

Martha Sisk

They met each other slipping through a crack in a plastic wall,
and thought, just maybe, that they had met before.
The room was quiet, except near the fissures, and there was plenty of
room to lie back and ricochet dreams off the walls. Only a few fell out.
They held hands after a while, and it was comfortable and kind of
strange, and he laughed quietly but their eyes wouldn't connect.
She started dancing, later, to the vibrations of the floor, and he joined
her.
The floor suddenly stopped but they kept it up, faster and faster.
Desire to escape the encircling violence,
but no courage to risk the only chance,
they circle each other in frenzied silence,
terrified of mistaking the steps for the dance.

Boulder

Barnsley Brown

Causing an avalanche in the mind
is hardly an easy task,
unless one is a god
or goddess
or both

But to be human is far harder
when stones threaten to turn
gravel, and rocks crumble
to ash.

Still, we stand entombed,
waiting for the One
boulder
to cross the summit
and crash,
loosening rock
falling rock
to cement concrete
foundation

Scott Hoffman



Perfection Cindy Caldwell

I offer no
Flashing images
Nor musical rhythms.
Mine
Is a song
Harsh, discordant,
Plain.

I struggle to find the words,
But they don't come.
So here I sit
With my worn, out-of-tune
Guitar
And sing my song
Anyway.

Carrie Galloway

Often my grandfather'd invite me along
to pick blackberries for my grandmother's jelly
and we'd go early before the sun burned off the fog
and enjoy the cool, misty morning —
From the mountain roads where the berries grow wild
from the town board and managing the mill
from the garden he and my grandmother grew
(they always had fresh vegetables and flowers for you in the summer)
from the neighborhood streets
where they walked after supper, often holding hands,
his world gradually — suddenly — didn't go
much further than a chair on the porch in the sun —
He bent painfully under the weight of
losing his wife and then later a daughter and then a son
and since he was straightforward
he'd admit when he felt puny
but he still laughed a lot and made you laugh, too,
like when he said the carport just kept getting smaller
every time he tried to back out of it
and even during the times he was very sick in the hospital
he'd make you smile and he'd want
to know how you were doing —
Back at home strokes and gravity
would battle him to the ground
and although his mind stayed sharp
it got to where he couldn't see
you when you came in the backdoor
until you were right up to him and
then he'd light up and hug you hello
and you'd stay close by because he couldn't hear you otherwise
and we'd come to visit him a lot because
he spoke his mind and he wanted to hear yours.

The Whining

L. D. Russell

The farther out on the pier he walked, the more he could feel it sway back and forth, back and forth beneath him as the waves rose one after another to push their way past the heavy wooden pylons. The motion dizzied him, and as far out as the pier lights shone, the sight of the great dark sea, rolling, swelling, sliding, never still, made him pause and grasp the railing for support. Through the cracks between the floor boards, Kyle saw the crest of each wave pass just below his feet on its way to the shore a hundred yards behind him. How deep is it down there? he wondered. Does the shore slip down gradually, perhaps with sandbars, or does it drop suddenly like the edge of a lake?

Holding the rail, he walked slowly out to the pier's end. Fish heads, beer cans, and pale dead shrimp lay scattered around, left, Kyle guessed, by the rowdy group of men who fished for sharks every night after the pier office closed. Kyle had watched them before, drinking, cursing, laughing, and shouting whenever a strike bent double one of the waiting rods. The men were gone now, their refuse the only evidence of their having been here at all, so Kyle had the immense pier to himself.

He was a young man, his thin body filling out, although it retained that lean angularity of yearling colts or unweaned calves. The high sharp cheekbones, his wavy hair cut short and dishevelled by the wind, and his dark single eyebrow, thickest between the eyes, gave his face the brooding, lost look so common among the higher mammals.

Kyle peered off into the night. When he was a child, he remembered, the sea had always comforted him, especially at night. The warmth of the ocean air, the soothing monotony of the waves nestling against the shore, and the enveloping security of the darkness had eased his young mind to sleep many times. Tonight, however, the wind chilled him, the darkness, heavy and ominous, threatened to smother him, and the relentless waves seemed to tug at him from

below. Yet despite the fear which stalked his heart like some prowling predator, he felt inexplicably drawn toward the sea. More than anything else in his life, this vast expanse of ceaselessly churning liquid could draw him up and out of himself. The salty sting of the spray, the water's moist sperry smell, and the way the wind worried over his face, arms, legs, and loins set his senses on edge. The sea made him feel like a body again. Yet with this aliveness, this redemption of his senses, came a quiver of vulnerability that every living thing must know. For to be alive is one thing, but to quicken to one's existence is something else again. Deep within a body is the knowledge of its nakedness upon this earth, and deeper, far deeper, lies the threat of extinction — and its certainty. So Kyle was at once fascinated and frightened by the sea, whose endless motion matched his own body rhythms, its great surge and heave corresponding with his breathing and pulse.

Watching this living landscape brought back to Kyle an experience his older brother Pete had related to him shortly before his death. Once, while swimming alone in the ocean, Pete had noticed how the constant rocking motion of the waves tugged at his loose swimtrunks, so that it was all he could do to keep them from slipping off. Then, as he lay back in the restless water and floated, Pete was appalled to realize that the sea pulled at more than just his clothing, that if he remained in the water long enough, it would eventually strip the very skin from off his body and devour him until he was a mass of exposed raw flesh, then a bare skeleton, the bones polished clean by the salt and friction. Finally, he would be utterly consumed as the sea disintegrated his body into its basic elements.

Winning in remembrance, Kyle thought of his brother's bones, the skull stark, white, and smiling insanely as it lay even now beneath a barren hillside in their hometown cemetery. How strange, he thought, that the earth, undulating ever so slowly, its mountains and valleys imperceptibly ebbing and flowing through the centuries, had sucked the life from

Pete's body just as the sea had sought to do, devouring flesh, nerves, muscles, and sinews until Pete had actually become one with the earth.

Ashes to ashes, thought Kyle. Dust to dust. The thought of Pete dead and buried, never again to live or breathe, laugh or cry, saddened Kyle beyond the telling of it, yet he envied Pete his death. Abortive though his life had been, Pete was done, finished, complete. He could rest now, his nerves and muscles relaxed in death, never again to be strung taut. But Kyle must live on. He could not stop his stubborn heart, no matter how tired he was of its beating.

Oh, Goddam it all! he thought in exasperation. Why did I even come out here? He wished now he had stayed in bed, where Missy his wife lay sleeping soundly, her hand in the hollow left by his absence. He knew, however, that tonight would be no different from any other night since he had found Pete dead in his apartment, as cold and empty as the handgun by his side. Sleep would not come, though he lay waiting the whole night through. Nothing could be worse for Kyle, who needed the healing balm of sleep like never before, than turning over and over in bed, the pillow growing hot and hard under his head, making his ears burn and ache. Meanwhile, images from his life, memories, doubts, and regrets would all rise up from the depths of his mind to mock and torment him.

Yet how could he give himself over to sleep, when he felt his life slipping through him in the darkness? Missy's very restfulness drove from him any hope of sleep. There she lay, still and heavy as a corpse, relinquishing her hold on life qualmlessly, like one who has never lived and therefore need never die. It was in these nights, in her easy sleep, that Missy had died to Kyle far deader than Pete could ever be, for Kyle wanted to live, but was afraid to die, and to surrender himself in sleep seemed a blasphemy and betrayal of life itself. And yet for all his wakefulness, Kyle felt no joy in the passing of these nights, even though he seized upon each moment as a drowning man clutches the very water which will smother him. Thus the slow nights passed, one, and another, and another, until the tissues of Kyle's prone body cried out for release. For weeks now, when he had slept at all, in short fitful snatches just before dawn, his dreams had been filled with the maddening, ceaseless roll of the ocean, wave after wave pushing him up and down, up and down like a helpless piece of driftwood. His only respite from the nightmares came as he plunged into unconsciousness, not with the ease of one entering deep sleep but with the desperate agony of one who is drowning.

Tonight, Kyle had given up trying to rest. Going out for a walk and some fresh air, he had found himself being drawn toward the end of the long pier, as if the whole world were a

pit and this point the bottom toward which he was slipping. His fingers gripped the rough railing until the knuckles shone white, and with all his strength Kyle tried to keep his feet firmly planted on the floor boards below him.

Oh, God, he thought, it would be so easy to let go. Shutting his eyes and clenching his teeth, he tightened his grip all the more. Kyle felt as he had at sixteen, listening for the first time to the sermon in church, hearing the closing invitation of his pleading preacher to come now before it was too late, to walk down the aisle to the front, to give his life to God and let Jesus be his savior. At the last, he had been torn from his place, his fingers losing their grip on the pew in front of him. He had felt driven by a force greater than he, mysterious and unquestionable. Strangest of all, Kyle knew that force to be inside him, lurking in the depths of his mind and heart and life, and he felt it now surging up from within, prying at his fingers, lifting his legs, pulling him toward the ever-beckoning water. He wanted so desperately to let go, to be done with the struggling and the lostness and to slip quietly back into the unknowing, uncaring abyss whence he had come.

"Peter!" he called out over the water. "Peter, help me!" Kyle leaned out over the rail as far as his hand would reach, and with his fingertips he could barely catch the spray thrown from the crests of the waves as they rushed beneath him. For several moments he lingered thus, feeling the sea's unbridled might to the very marrow of his bones, yet sensing his own body suspended above the flood as he had never known it before. If I let go, he thought, this water will kill me, either by shattering me against the pier or by sucking me down and out in the undertow. And if I die, I will never again feel this pain. But great Christ . . . I would rather hurt than die —

"I won't die!" he shouted at the sea. Yet somehow in the saying of it he knew it was not true. Kyle sensed that no matter how long he managed to live, though it be a hundred years, sooner or later his life must end in death. This thought, though deeper than thought, freed him to loosen his hold on the rail and stand. For a long while, Kyle let his gaze wander out over the deep. The waves rose and fell without beginning or end. The pier moved beneath him with a gently rocking motion, and the wind pressed against him like hands seeking warmth.

Beyond him, Kyle heard a faint shrill whining. It's Pete, he thought. He listened as the whining intensified until it sounded as if the very spirit of God were moving up in the face of the water. Turning to go, Kyle realized with a shudder that the whining came from within his own throat, he could taste bitter salty tears, and, starting towards shore, he knew that at least for this night he would be able to sleep.

The Seeker's Song

Karen Juhasz

And when I search, I am
The best of seekers. I am
Hard and cold, looking for
that something that cannot elude
Me forever. Probing strangers'
Eyes, I seek the perfect one.
I am a relentless hunter,
Dazzling and challenging to
Those around me, perilous
and beautiful to those I seek.
I look through everyone, always
Waiting for one who will look
Back, one who will answer the
Challenge, take the dare.

And when I search, I am
Silent and stealthy, almost
Afraid to find what I seek.
I enter the world, quiet and
Unnoticeable. I am just a
Flicker of light that crosses
Strangers' paths and leaves them
Wondering what just passed.
I hunt the darkness, with no
Force. I blend gracefully
With all around me. No one
Can discover my silent seeking,
For I am fearful of being found,
Of being forced to be what I
Could never become, what I
Could never love in myself.

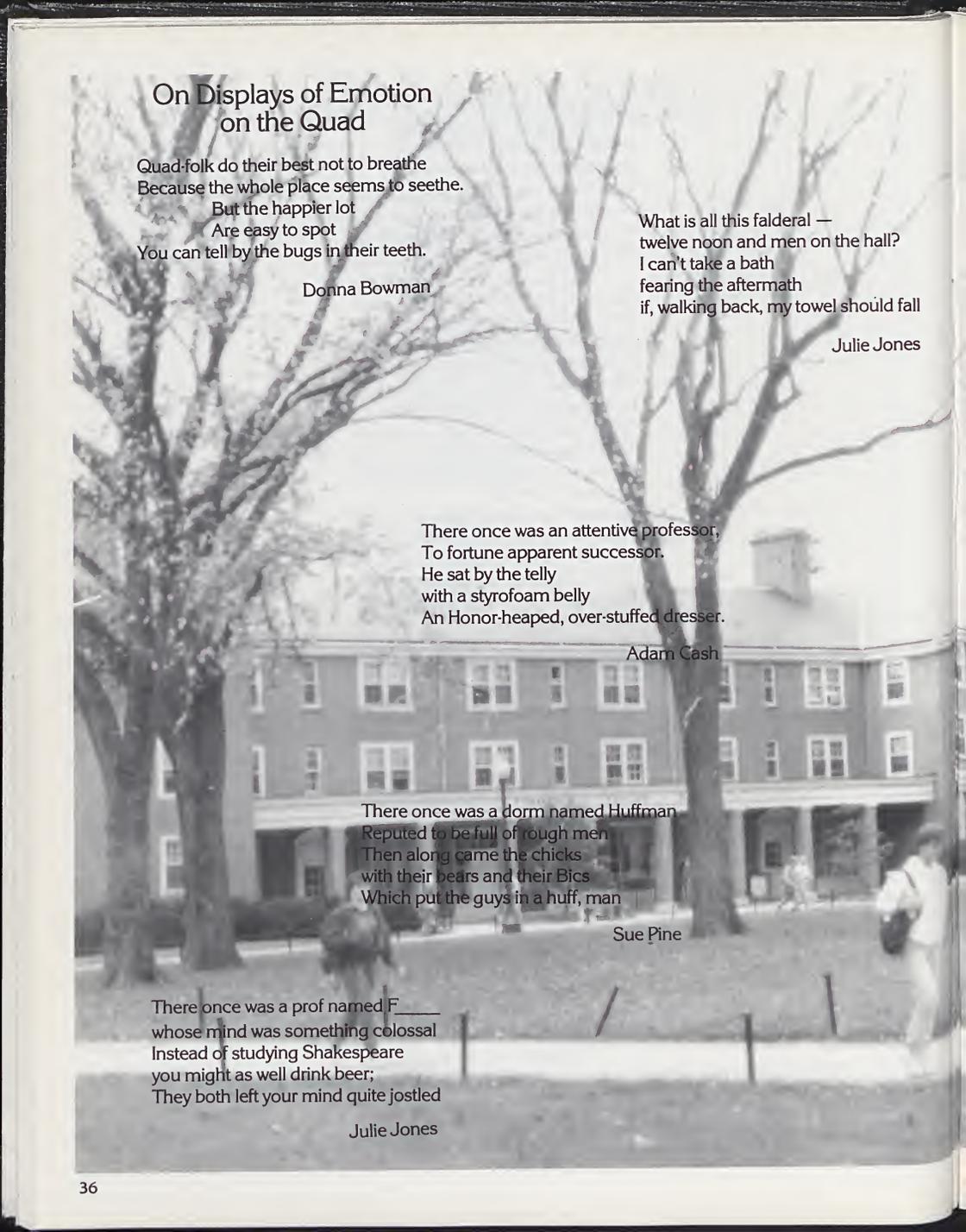
And when I search, I am
A lonely wanderer, moving
Always by myself in a vast
World of strangers. I seek
A home, a resting place, but
Cannot find it. I am always
Reaching for someone who is
Not there, for someone to love
And to love me. I am beautiful
In my sadness; distant,
Untouchable, but not by my own
Design. I seek with a reverence
That people do not comprehend.

I would give my wild world
For love. I kneel time and again
Before strangers and look into
Their eyes, but find only more
Wandering. There is no place
For the lost wanderer; no home,
No peace, no shelter. Always and
Forever moving, motion's only child.

And when I search, I would
Despair. No one can reach me,
Caged in a hard outer shell
That dares the world to come
Close and be destroyed in fire.
No one knows the fear, the pain
Of this existence. And yet
A dazzling seeker I must be
And would not trade it, even
If I could. For as I lift
My eyes, I see a soul nearby,
Moving as I do; hard and cold
And yet lost. Now, when I
Search, I know what I seek.
Can I dare, can I catch hold?
Can I tell my soul the truth?
The truth that burns and
Warms like deadly living fire —
That when I search, I am
Searching for you.

Lisa M. Young

Yielding generously
In my fingers,
Your hair
Playfully curls,
Tingling like
Teddy-bear
Growls.



On Displays of Emotion on the Quad

Quad-folk do their best not to breathe
Because the whole place seems to seethe.

But the happier lot
Are easy to spot
You can tell by the bugs in their teeth.

Donna Bowman

What is all this falderal —
twelve noon and men on the hall?
I can't take a bath
fearing the aftermath
if, walking back, my towel should fall

Julie Jones

There once was an attentive professor,
To fortune apparent successor.
He sat by the telly
with a styrofoam belly
An Honor-heaped, over-stuffed dresser.

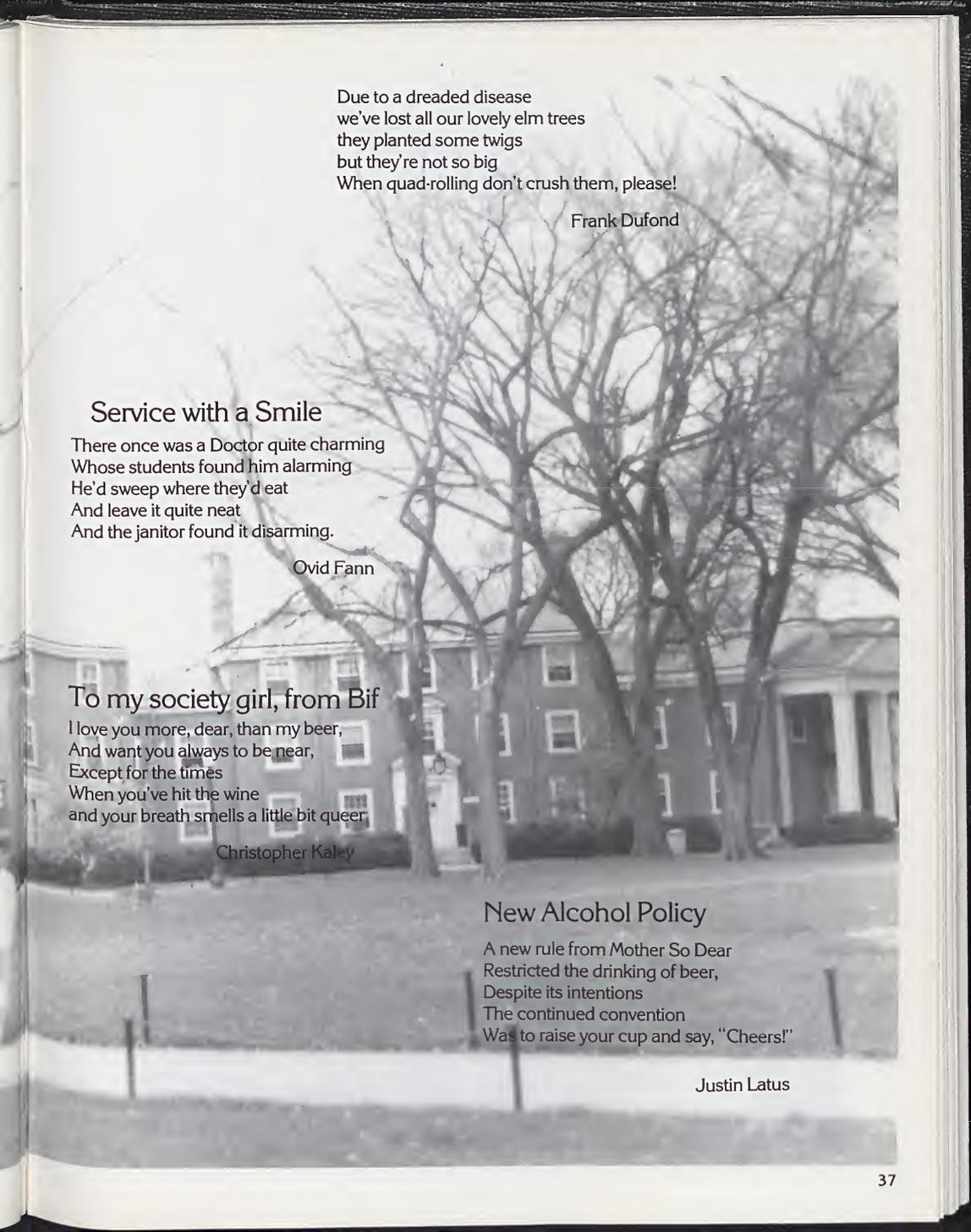
Adam Cash

There once was a dorm named Huffman
Reputed to be full of rough men
Then along came the chicks
with their bears and their Bics
Which put the guys in a huff, man

Sue Pine

There once was a prof named F_____
whose mind was something colossal
Instead of studying Shakespeare
you might as well drink beer;
They both left your mind quite jostled

Julie Jones



Due to a dreaded disease
we've lost all our lovely elm trees
they planted some twigs
but they're not so big
When quad-rolling don't crush them, please!

Frank Dufond

Service with a Smile

There once was a Doctor quite charming
Whose students found him alarming
He'd sweep where they'd eat
And leave it quite neat
And the janitor found it disarming.

Ovid Fann

To my society girl, from Bif

I love you more, dear, than my beer,
And want you always to be near,
Except for the times
When you've hit the wine
and your breath smells a little bit queer.

Christopher Kaley

New Alcohol Policy

A new rule from Mother So Dear
Restricted the drinking of beer,
Despite its intentions
The continued convention
Was to raise your cup and say, "Cheers!"

Justin Latus

“Flight”

Florence Hadsell

I hadda do it
I hadda go
Loomin' large in front o' me
It look like
A giant red, white, and blue torpedo
Ready to shoot me t' Mars.

Once inside
It was smotherin'
Not alone, but still lonely
Lookin' out through small
Eyes to see the world.

Time t' leave.
Faster — whoosh!
We was up
But I wadn't afraid —
Aint so bad up there.

Janet Ramey



Rain Song (for Melissa)

David J. Peterson

Coming in from the rain,
Weighed down with cold grey tears,
I take a bench in the public house,
Thirsty, ordering a clear cold water
For the rain comes every day.

A shiver nudges my spine
In the warmth of the half-full room
And I draw my MacIntosh
Tighter around my shoulders and knees.

Time passes here in the trembling of a hand-dipped candle,
In the ticking of a thousand waterclocks
Muffled behind the glass pane—
Still feeling each tick, each of a thousand, thousand ticks,
Running off the yellow plastic and into my shoes
To weigh them down

Twitching my cold toes, they squish,
Like stiffening fish in their pathetic surf or leather mire,
Muttering advice like some permanent press philosopher
Saying, "Make mud while the rain is shining."

And a fellow in the back of the pub
Directs the base of his glass to the sky
And hurls it with relish into the fireplace—
A thousand starry fragments,
Here and gone.

moving

Martha Henseler

I stand on the beach,
staring
at the lavender sky hidden behind a splash of golden clouds
floating across the distant horizon.
The waves lap the shore as rhythmically as the ticking of a
clock in the latest hours of a lonely night
hypnotic,
luring me to travel deep into my mind
living lives . . . saying goodbye
dreaming dreams . . . wanting to cry.
a solely flying seagull
a long silhouette on the splendid sky
breaks my trance . . . like you
drawing my attention to the sun
slowly
sinking
into the black water
bringing the day to a peaceful end,
leaving but a glowing smear of cold fire on the fading sky —
stray sparks smolder on the ocean.
The seagull is gone
and I wonder.
The waves slide onto the beach and wash over my fresh footprints
they become an unknown part of the endless sea.
But my tracks remain as gentle dents on the shore.

The sun glides full into the dying waters
its steady gaze but a burning memory on my back as I reach
into the foaming water to retrieve a stray shell.
I must go, as did you

and I wonder now.

Bourbon Street

Leslie Tate

Jazz sweeps
onto those weathered sidewalks, mingling

with harness bells, as horses
swish their braided tails.

A siren bellows, warning women
who sell their wares from windows.

Dressed in old French filigree,
the church steps are littered with tourists

who, hearing the Jackson Square
chimes, start toward

the open-air market,
toward the bright vegetables
reflected in the train station window.

Foreboding

Angela Gray

Gnarled old hands clutching at the sky
disappear at the crack of a whip
only to claw upward again to
grasp at their black oppressive tormentor.

Blue distorted fingers slash out
raking deep across the dark face
creating a new deformed figure
Only to be snatched back as a
threatening rumble breaks the
eerie fear-laden silence and
grows to become a dreadful rage-filled roar
releasing a torrent of suppressed fury
and a dire warning of the eminent
Rain.

Surrogate

Martha Sisk

A glass shatters in her hand as she looks out the window and
the hard fierce ache tightens in her breasts.

They run by the water, brother and sister easy together as
daddy watches, sun hot on the backs full of brown.

The lab was cold, white splinters on metal, no faces
the other father came through glass
but still it happened

and the life grew within hot and strong.

She held it with the pride of sacrifice, avoided caffeine,
put \$50,000 down on a place at the lake.

He was born the day after Christmas, and the fully final
plans exploded —

falling from the scaffold she watched as they took him, the
father and the shining mother-eyes not her own.

The ache started then and it will not stop, even with her
two firstborn clutched in her arms, even when he smiles and wraps
her with warmth.

The three see her watching.

They turn to wave as the baby next door begins to howl,
a cry that would shatter glass.

Dead flowers make poor souvenirs

Barnsley Brown

The sign stated,
so I let fall the leaves
and read no more into it —
save glassed-in skates
(or corkers)
whose feel is known by frosty
curators with sculpted nails,
which glide cold
along blades

(Not to mention
the one
whom they transported
so far so long
ago.)

But glass,
though transparent,
glares
and for the gleam
I cannot seem to touch
the slick native
surface reflecting pure,
unpolished —
unlike the nails which place
dead flowers
here to entice
scavengers
from the reality of
leaves.

Impressions

Janet Ramey

Sometimes I
don't know
what to think

Ambiguity
causes distortion
Reality dissolves and
imagination

I don't want to think
or hope
or care

I don't want
to set myself up

or believe
to hope
or say.

takes over —
always a disaster.

too much.

to
fall

again.

Contributors

Tom Auble is an English major from Maryland who enjoys sports and being active, but also enjoys quiet time when he can write. He likes to write simply for the sake of writing.

Donna Bowman is a religion major planning to go to graduate school. She writes a LOT of poetry.

Barnsley Brown is a junior English major who spent the fall semester in London. She won recognition in the 1986 Academy of American Poets contest.

Cindy Caldwell is a sophomore English or religion major. Her interests include drawing, photography, writing, and reading.

Rob Duckwall is a senior art major hoping to pursue a career in medical illustration. He appreciates good grammar, despises polyester, and delights in giving his socks away.

Jane E. Durlap, a senior Carswell scholar from Charlotte, NC, is editorial page co-editor of *Old Gold and Black*. She firmly believes that an afternoon of Beethoven and cappuccino can cure anything. In her nonexistent spare time she enjoys music and Russian.

Bonnie Flett is a junior biology major who adores James Dickey, George Winston, and dancing. She hopes to go into medicine and learn not to take herself so seriously.

Carrie Galloway is a graduate student in English from Brevard, NC.

Keiji Furuya is an exchange student from Tokyo, Japan. He came to America because he wanted a new experience. He is enjoying his stay at Wake Forest.

Angela Gray is a sophomore from Elizabeth City, NC, who has tentative plans to major in cultural anthropology and minor in Spanish. She finds it a challenge to attempt to look at the world through others' eyes and to understand the "why" of their views; consequently, she would like to work cross-culturally on a consultation basis.

Florence Hadsell is a sophomore here at Wake, and has been writing poetry since she was 11. She's a Democrat who hates cold weather passionately. Her favorite person is her car, Katrina.

Robert Christopher Hoeter is a member of The Committee To Oberlin-ize Wake Forest (CTOWF), and plans to take over a small Caribbean island nation by 1999.

Meredith Holladay is a junior philosophy major from Thomasville, NC, who spent a semester in Venice.

Greta Lutman is a junior from Fayetteville, NC, with a minor in anthropology. Her work was published in the 1985 Best Annual College Photography and she was one of three winners in the autumn 1986 Sawtooth Photography Competition.

Nicholas is a junior politics major from Southeastern Virginia. Her interests include dancing, art, traveling, and community services. Possible future plans include law school and owning a townhouse in Georgetown.

David Peterson is senior English major/computer science minor from Flint, MI. He asserts that life is a multimedia art experiment. Look out, it could be you — "excuse, me, can you tell me where I am?"

Janet Ramey is a freshman interested in photography and music; undecided in all aspects of life, she aspires not to change the world, but to keep the world from changing her.

L. D. Russell is a graduate student studying theology and literature. His hometown is Union, SC.

Lori Sheppard is a senior psychology major planning to go to grad school; her life revolves around chewing bubble gum and swinging in swings.

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Pro Humanitate

The Student

*Spring
1987*



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Shells

Donna Bowman

Holding the swallow
for savor on my tongue
I take a drink
The bubbles explode into my throat

Half a week away

Your arrival is blind
A voice without eyes
and seawater
coats the roads behind you

Swimming the wires
across America
are the blind scavenger fish
scrubbing the bones
the shells of phone lines

I feel their teeth
picking at the roof of my mouth
They pop gently
and glow with phosphor

Steam

Leslie Tate

There's a gold fish
under my skin,
which bumps
into the walls
of my heart,
backs up,
and continues
through its chambers.
Eyes wide as a
surprised child,
mouth coughing
water,
a train engine
pumping steam.

Station

Jane E. Dunlap

Baby brother of sorts looking for formula
in the wilderness near the highway
With his head in my lap hands still
tugging at goldenrod voice leashed
into an unrippled whisper he ventured.
"You know, kid, the universe is expanding
all around us, even as we speak Each atom
each diatom each cell There will never
be just enough emptiness to fill"
I had a black dress hat and a silk tie and
a couple of daguerreotypes from the house
All he had was a thick signed paper
and a check They lay in the singed grass
near us mute reality, glutinous
in the back of the throat
"Maybe he, too, is out there expanding,
filling emptiness I think you know the
answer to that one," I managed
He raised questioning infant eyes
"This grass (sharp and wiry as it is)
will hold our shapes for a while after we
stand up Won't it?" Exhaling
slowly through his nose chipped goldenrod
showering through his fingers mine laced
tightly in his fevered dark shock
"Days, maybe We've been here a long time
Someone else will come by and notice
our impression Still later someone else will
merely sense that we were here
"Want to try on the hat for size?"
He carefully sat up leaving my warm and
sisterly denim nest his milk smile
now salted with smooth bits of tooth
"I already did It's yours."

Janet Ramey



Suzanne Gillian Holder



Secondhand

Lori A. Sheppard

And they went down there and
took her life
just packed it up
in an orange and steel U-haul.
I sat and watched them
reduce her world
to boxes and
broken picture frames.
She cried for that glass
the same tears I saw fall
in every box stacked
in the basement.
That moisture fed mold
seeping through boxes
she never unpacked.
They all grew old together.
And when we went through
the stuff before the garage sale,
all had to be thrown away,
all of it driven,
to the dump, and burned.

New Year's Night

Martha Sisk

The snow bears down on the trees,
and they bow their heads
in solemn benediction.
Grey billows hold the earth-light in,
reflecting off white billows below
to reveal life asleep on a soft mattress
snuggled under its warming blanket.
The hush is almost holy, but it comforts;
the whole earth lulls as if it were a giant cradle
rocking slowly through time.

(gregg)

Jane Dickey

Such is this man—
his breath in my ear
Greater than the howls of the leaves
as they tear from the trees
in the night
Sometimes I imagine
I hold his breath in my palm
But it slips out as I remember
I do not know this person:
He has rooted that part of him away and so
is no more than a man
hot and white

So am I—
as alone as this burning on my neck
mind writhing greater than the branches
in the coarse of the night
This woman needs resolution although sees
the chalk of words,
also white a cry
impossible:
When it comes to this man
this person I cannot be
too hard or cold or grey
But this deepness must be buried

Do not speak of strength:
together we do what
can barely get us through the night

Mexico

Dave Olson



The Tale of Sir Gallawad The Thirteenth Knight of the Round Table

Thomas B. Parker

A goodly knight was pricking on the plain,
For he had just the mighty dragon slain.
Closely followed fair Una on her mare,
For no one but her great knight did she care.
They soon rode past a princess very sad.
An evil beast had captured mom and dad.
She asked for help, but the bold knight just said,
"No. Una and I must now go to bed."
Then came a knight who said, "I fight for God.
I am the mighty knight Sir Gallawad."

He then tried to dismount onto the grass,
But when he did, he fell onto his ass.
The fair maiden let out a fearful scream.
The knight had split his holy trousers' seam.
He tried to rise and kiss her precious hand,
But his shiny armour was filled with sand.
"I'll do my best to rescue mom and dad.
No fairy land beast can be all that bad."
"Don't forget, you might face Quadressa too.
She's twice as wicked as her sister, 'Du!'"

He then helped her onto her loyal horse,
But he pushed her over with too much force.
They soon rode off toward a mountain's cave
Where Sir Gallawad must prove he is brave.
Finally, he asked, "Ma'am, what is your name?"
"They call me Triuna, the easy dame,
They changed my wardrobe from off-white to black
Because I'm always lying on my back."
Soon they came to the dark and gloomy hole
Where a young foolish knight could lose his soul.

Sir Gallawad jumped down and caught his skirt
Thus causing his face to confront the dirt.
After wiping the soil from his teeth,
He entered the crevice and went beneath.
There he saw a beast of tremendous size.
It had three small heads, but only two eyes.
The creature rose, growled, and charged the knight.
The knight grabbed his sword and prepared to fight,
But his sword hit the rocks above his head
Leaving the huge beast buried, crushed, and dead.

Triuna hugged her victorious knight
Who had just won his first and only fight.
It had been a very vigorous day,
So the maiden and her knight hit the hay.
But Triuna could not believe her eyes
As Sir Gallawad's sword refused to rise.
They went to sleep and awoke at daybreak,
But the knight had made a vital mistake.
He had forgotten to tie down her mare
And her only horse was no longer there.

So off they went across the mountain pass
And soon came upon a most ugly mass.
Its body weighed almost a thousand pounds
And its mouth made the most horrible sounds.
The trembling knight just said, "Can we go by?"
To which the monster replied, "You must die!"
But when the knight dismounted from his horse,
He was hit with an incredible force.
The blow knocked him into a dying tree.
When he stood up, he saw not one, but three.

With three beasts to kill, instead of just one,
He picked up three swords to get the job done.
He swung at its arm and then at its head,
But he cut the tree which crushed the beast dead,
She could not believe what her knight had done.
Her knight had faced two beasts and somehow won.
Once again, they climbed onto the saddle,
Prepared to face yet another battle.
They crossed the mountain pass and reached the plain
Where many a noble knight had been slain.

The third gruesome beast appeared in the south.
It had razor sharp teeth lining its mouth.
The knight dismounted and ran to the beast.
Triuna warned, "You will soon be deceased!"
"Never! I fight in the name of the Lord!"
"But one will die when he forgets his sword!"
There stood the knight, easy prey for the beast.
The beast struck him and prepared for his feast,
When along came Arthur to save the day.
For it was his duty, monsters to slay.

After an easy fight, the beast was dead.
Prince Arthur yawned, stretched, and thereafter said,
"Take this knight where he can learn about pride.
I suggest, he goes to the house of Clyde."
So off they travelled to Scotland to train,
Where Sir Gallawad much knowledge would gain.
There they met a man whom they called Wiebman
Because he always dressed like a woman.
Wiebman transformed Sir Gallawad into
Both a Christian knight and a hero too.

After a grueling year of sweat and tears,
The knight was ready to confront his fears.
So off they went to rescue mom and dad,
To do what no other mighty knight had.
After days of travel they came upon,
Triuna's kingdom plus one big dragon.
Sir Gallawad put all his fears aside
And thrust his sword into the dragon's side.
The monstrous serpent laughed and blew his nose,
Burning the knight's body from head to toes.

The blow knocked him into the Well of Strife
Where Sir Gallawad was brought back to life.
The mighty christian knight soon went to bed
While Triuna all night prayers said.
The dragon with scales as tough as flint,
Laughed all night at his lesser opponent.
The next morning the knight did rise again,
But was no match against a thousand men
As the dragon won with a mere toenail.
The knight was hit and began to sail.

Gallawad finally came to a stop
As his body ran into a tree top.
From the Tree of Strife holy balm did flow
To help the knight against his mighty foe.
On the third day he rose again to fight.
The evil dragon with the deadly bite.
He could not stab a dragon of that size,
So he threw his sword at the dragon's eyes.
The dragon's eyeball and sword did collide
And shortly thereafter the dragon died.

There was much rejoicing in fairy land
As the dragon's body lay on the sand.
Triuna's parents were finally free
And they made the knight a husband to be.
So off they rode across the horizon
With dreams of a new kingdom to begin.
Now we see that evil loses again
As nothing can defeat the will of men.
It does not matter who wins or loses,
But that one good over evil chooses.

Paul Gilbert



Kevin Hinkle

You've had one they said
And now be gone
Click, crash, clang, clank.
The hollow laughter of the happy past
Like a spoon on a tin bowl
Feeds you cold, cold, cold nothing
And the stony pillow
Drinks your red, red tears.

Grand Opening BFD

Dave Olson



What Happened After Dr. Fiorgi's Presentation At the 47th Annual American Philosophy Convention:

Robert Christopher Hoerter

Eyes bulging at the lies,
old Mrs. O'Callahan's head exploded.
the cynics, chuckling, craving attention,
collapsed unconscious
to the floor, blood slithering
like tears
down their cheeks – and the ears
that were deaf, they fell off
bouncing on the floor
rotten slices of cucumber
And Fiorgi clicked out
leaving his papers
stepping carefully
understanding the dead.

Colsons

Lori A. Sheppard

The waitress in the home-perm
lights another Winston, leans
back to the counter,
Dennis stands by the door jamb,
fingering the purple pouches
beneath his eyes,
the man at the counter
eyes the buck-toothed
waitress with the plastic jewelry
Judy wipes the counter
hips moving to the beat
of the fan,
the cops in the far booth
watch us, college kids, laughing
in our booth, with money
we eat this food
not knowing the words
to Merle Haggard's '75 hit.

Greta Lutman



John Fike

When the dreams arrived
With golden-green smells of spring
And sweet voices of birds aflame,
I danced with my mother
And made love to her—
I in my youth,
She in her splendour.
That sweet incest
And innocence . . .
Both to be destroyed.
By the calling of the world
I am not what I would be,
For her strident voice oppresses:
It holds me down,
A black anchor on my heart.
And yet, to remember, to sing!
These are my longings—
For the return of the dreams.

Not Particularly Profound

Jane E. Dunlap

Caedmon had it pretty easy out there
in the straw his tansured head burrowed
into blonde summer straw smelling cowness
horseness harness leather
and hiding
then an iridescent figure with indistinct
features slips a hot lyric right there
under his cassock And suddenly Caedmon is
no longer too self-preoccupied to take the harp
like the rest of us when it is handed over
like a dripping trencher
Today we laud him: Hail Caedmon,
Father of British Literature
Inspiration desperation divine intervention
talent call it whatever you want
but a hot lyric is a hot lyric
no matter what.

Judith

Donna Bowman

You lied for days,
fed him all your wine.

It never rained, never
in Israel.
His army was powder dry.

You left with his head,
and the ground sucked his blood
puddling in the dust.

The army screamed
at your beauty and fled as one man,
knowing the thirst of murder.

They searched for Babylon,
for clear water.

The Wrecker

L.D. Russell

Outside the fire station, three men stood talking, unaware that dusk was coming on. All around them the world lay still and silent, waiting for the night. No bird flew overhead, but far off in the trees which surrounded the station a lone owl raised its melancholy voice. The men did not notice this, however. They stood roughly in a circle, and moved nearer one another as the light began to fade.

One man, short and stocky, smoked a fat cigar. He held it between his stubby fingers and used it like a pointer to emphasize what he said. The other men listened to him without looking directly at him. The more he gesticulated with the cigar, the more they averted their eyes. He was saying, "I tell you, the man is henpecked." He said this as if the condition of being henpecked were the worst thing in the world.

"Ain't we all?" said one of the others, a tall thin man wearing glasses.

"Not like Charlie, we ain't," said the man with the cigar. "Flo don't never give that man a moment's peace. Why, she'd just as soon nag him as look at him."

"Well, he ain't exactly a sight for sore eyes," said the third man with a sly grin.

"You mark my word," said the fat man, waving his cigar, "it's on account of Flo that Charlie ain't here tonight. You know how she hates for him to stay out late, 'specially when she knows we're playin' poker."

"You may be right about that, Ed," said the man with glasses, "but still it don't seem right. He ain't stayed home on a Sunday since he first talked Flo into lettin' him come."

The third man said, "You'd think at least he would've called."

The three men stood in silence for a moment. Around them the trees grew imperceptibly darker, and the light in the clearing where they stood slowly lost its clarity. The men's shadows, which had already leaned far away from them as the sun went down, now faded altogether on the darkening ground. As the air around them cooled, each man hunched his shoulders ever so slightly and leaned towards the others. All but Ed put their hands in their pants pockets.

Ed said, "If I was Charlie, I'd have straightened Flo out a long time ago. Ain't right for a woman to rule over a man." The tip of his cigar flared red as he flicked the ashes away.

"Maybe she makes it worth his while," grinned the third man. The other two snorted through their noses.

"Well," said the man with glasses, looking over at Ed, "here it is dark already and we ain't dealt the first hand. Maybe you ought to find yourself a new partner, Ed. Your old one's done give up the ghost." As he said this, the owl started up again in the woods, and though the men did not turn toward the sound, they moved together into the sphere of light falling from the station window. The sky was still very bright, almost unnaturally so, but the trees had solidified into a dark wall all around them. Everything in sight, the station house, the men's trucks, and the entire circle of woods, stood up silhouetted dark purple against the lavender sky.

"Reckon we ought to call him?" asked the man with glasses.

"Naw, John," said Ed, irritably. "I ain't about to have to ask Flo if I can please speak to her husband. Every time I call over there, she's got icicles in her voice, like she'd just love to nag on me if she ever got half a chance. But I'll sure catch Charlie at the mill tomorrow, you can bet on that." Ed put his cigar in one side of his mouth, blew thick smoke out the other, and stuffed his heavy hands down in his pockets.

So the men stood waiting, not looking at one another, uncertain what to do. Soon they heard an engine slowly grinding its gears as it topped the nearby rise. They faced the road and waited for it to round the bend.

"Well, whatta you know?" said Ed.

"But that ain't Charlie's truck," said John, shifting his glasses on his nose.

"Sure ain't," said the third man.

While they watched to see what was coming, something flitted across the edge of the light in which they were standing. Each man felt the muscles of his legs and back contract and the hairs of his scalp crawl a little. A moment later, they glimpsed a small black bat dip its wings into the circle of light and then disappear back into the night. They sensed rather than saw what it was, and each stared even more intently at the road beyond them.

By this time they could tell that the engine was that of a large truck, and judging from its strained roar, that it was hauling a burden almost equally as large.

"Sounds like Hank's wrecker," said John.

"What's he pullin'?" asked Ed.

The third man said, as if to himself, "Have mercy."

It was then that the big truck turned into the gravel driveway of the station. Its headlights momentarily flashed across the three men, lighting up their eyes and paralyzing them like deer in the road. The wrecker drove all the way to the front of the station house, stopping just beyond the men so as to leave its load at the very edge of the light. The men concentrated their gaze on the cab of the wrecker, in order not to look at what they knew, and had instinctively feared all along, to be Charlie's truck. After a moment, Hank killed the wrecker's engine and swung open the big door. As he stepped to the ground amid the waiting circle, he spat sideways from his mouth.

"Evenin', Hank," said Ed.

"Howdy, boys," said Hank. He was a big man himself. He spat again. "Where you feller's been? I been tryin' to raise you on the radio for a hour or more."

"We been waitin'," said John. "For Charlie."

Hank glanced over his shoulder at Charlie's truck, its front tires, both flat, suspended from the ground by the chains which bound it to the wrecker. The front end of the truck was crushed as if by a great impact. The windshield had been shattered. A jagged hole just above the steering wheel radiated outward in a thousand pieces of broken glass reflecting the station light like a spider web covered with dew. The twisted metal of the hood and fenders was coated with thick brown mud, and water seeped from the unhinged door.

"Hank?" asked Ed.

"Charlie's dead," said Hank abruptly, looking out beyond the men into the wall of night around them.

"Have mercy," said the third man.

After a long pause, his voice gone hollow, Ed asked, "Where'd it happen?"

"Down by Bull Creek Bridge," said Hank. He still had not looked at the men but stared solemnly down at his muddy boots.

"Comin' this way?" asked John.

"Yeah," said Hank, spitting again. "He never pulled it out of the curve. Went straight through the brush and almost jumped the creek. The far bank stopped him. Bull Creek must be twelve foot wide right there." Looking up, Hank said, "He must've been flyin'."

Again the men stood silent, while around them the night grew darker still. The woods surrounding them were alive with the myriad voices of the night. The grass at their feet resounded with the stirrings of a thousand insects. Above the din, the owl's lonely voice rose like a question in the night. Mingled with these sounds and inseparable from them, the metal of the big wrecker ticked rhythmically as it cooled. Alongside its huge bulk, standing in the stark light of the station, the men looked smaller and somehow more vulnerable than they had before nightfall.

Suddenly, as if compelled, the four men fanned out to stand nearer the wrecked truck. Its gnarled body and shattered glass seemed still to hold something of the force of the impact, a vestige of the violence which had crushed it. From within the ruptured cab, carried on the night breeze, seeped a wild animal smell of torn flesh and bruised meat, which made the men's

nostrils flare and kept them at a respectful distance, all except Ed who reached out his hand but could not bring himself to touch it, as if the truck were a holy thing with the power to heal or kill.

Hank spat abruptly into the grass, then shifted the wad of tobacco from one jaw to the other. He spat again. "Ben Forbis's boy found him," Hank said. He spoke openly, without hesitation, as though the silent men had asked him. He knew they would hear him out. "He was already dead, had been for some time. The boy came and got me. He looked half-dead himself, like he'd seen a ghost." While Hank spoke, the owl did not cease to cry out in the woods. "I think we broke Charlie's legs just tryin' to pry him out -- the impact drove him into the dash like a nail through a board. Didn't kill him right off, though. You can see the nail marks where he tried to claw his way out. He must've been bleedin' awful bad, 'specially from his legs and his insides. When the truck slid back down the bank, he was in water up to his chest. No tellin' how long he set there. The current's mighty strong at the bridge, and that water's like ice. . . well, it sucked him dry of every ounce of blood. By the time I got to him, he was whiter'n anything I ever seen."

Hank stopped to spit, and the little bat flashed again through the light. Ed's cigar was dark now, but he held on to it still. John shifted his weight from one foot to the other, and the other man cleared his throat. Beyond them, unnoticed, a pale sickle moon edged above the treeline to shed some small light in the clearing. What had become lost in utter blackness before, the station yard, the road, and the trees beyond, now stood out ghostly white as in a dark dream. Water dripped more slowly from the truck, plopping loudly into puddles in the gravel.

Looking steadily into the men's faces and speaking in a hushed voice, Hank said, "It would've been awful, boys, but Charlie looked so peaceful settin' there like he was out for a Sunday ride. I reckon he knew he was done for. Maybe once he couldn't git loose, he just give in to the current and let it take him away. That water's so cold, it would've numbed his pain. I don't know, but he sure did look peaceful."

"Where is he now?" ventured Ed.

"We put him in Forbis's car," said Hank, "settin' up just like we found him -- we couldn't even stretch him out -- so the boy could take him over to the funeral home. He ask me if I was goin' to call Flo to tell her 'bout Charlie, but honest to God, boys, after what I been through I just ain't got it in me. Maybe the mortician can call her. Ain't that what he's paid for?"

"Don't you worry 'bout that," said Ed, putting the dead cigar back in his mouth. "You done your part, and then some."

John said, as if to himself, "Poor Charlie."

"Mercy, mercy," said the third man.

After another long moment of silence, when for the first time the men noticed the owl's voice because it had stopped, Hank said good night, climbed up into the wrecker, and slowly hauled the truck back down the driveway. The men stood apart watching the big wrecker's headlights until they disappeared around the bend. Once it topped the rise, pushed on by its burden, the engine gained speed and receded into the night. By now the sickle moon hung poised above the clearing, illuminating the men's faces even in the false light of the station.

John pushed back his glasses and kicked up gravel with his boot. Then he and the third man moved toward the station door. Ed stood still.

"Ain't you comin'?" asked John.

"Naw," said Ed, throwing his cigar butt down the driveway toward the road.

"You stayin' out here in the dark?" asked the third man.

"Hell, naw," said Ed, turning away. "Somebody's got to go tell Flo."

Balloon Race

Dave Olson



Maudern Love (A Tribute to Maud Gonne)

Dianne E. Timblin

Why must
My happy
Friend-love,
Become a haunting
Jack-in-the-Box,
Popping with conflict
And grinding a
Tired tune?

Why do
The eyes
That shone with
Lilting-sharing laughter,
Shine now
Like sad searchlights,
Following me,
Averting when their
Quarry confronts?

Why has
My strong
Spirit-friend's
Heart grown like a
Great, wounded swan
I must tread
Carefully around?
I fear to encourage,
I fear to discourage
This mend that should
Never be.

Dave Olson





On Broad Street

Sloane Frantz

Not until the sun
comes over the hill
and makes the mailman squint,
do the ladies on Broad Street
come waddling out
through creaky screen doors
that slam behind them.
They find their way to rockers
where the brown paint has chipped off
and the whiteness of yesterday
shows through.

Babies are shifted in fat laps,
bald heads warmed
by Broad Street sun.
Knees covered with gingham
go up and down and up
as the toothless grins
go bounce bounce bounce
on Broad Street.

Martha Sisk

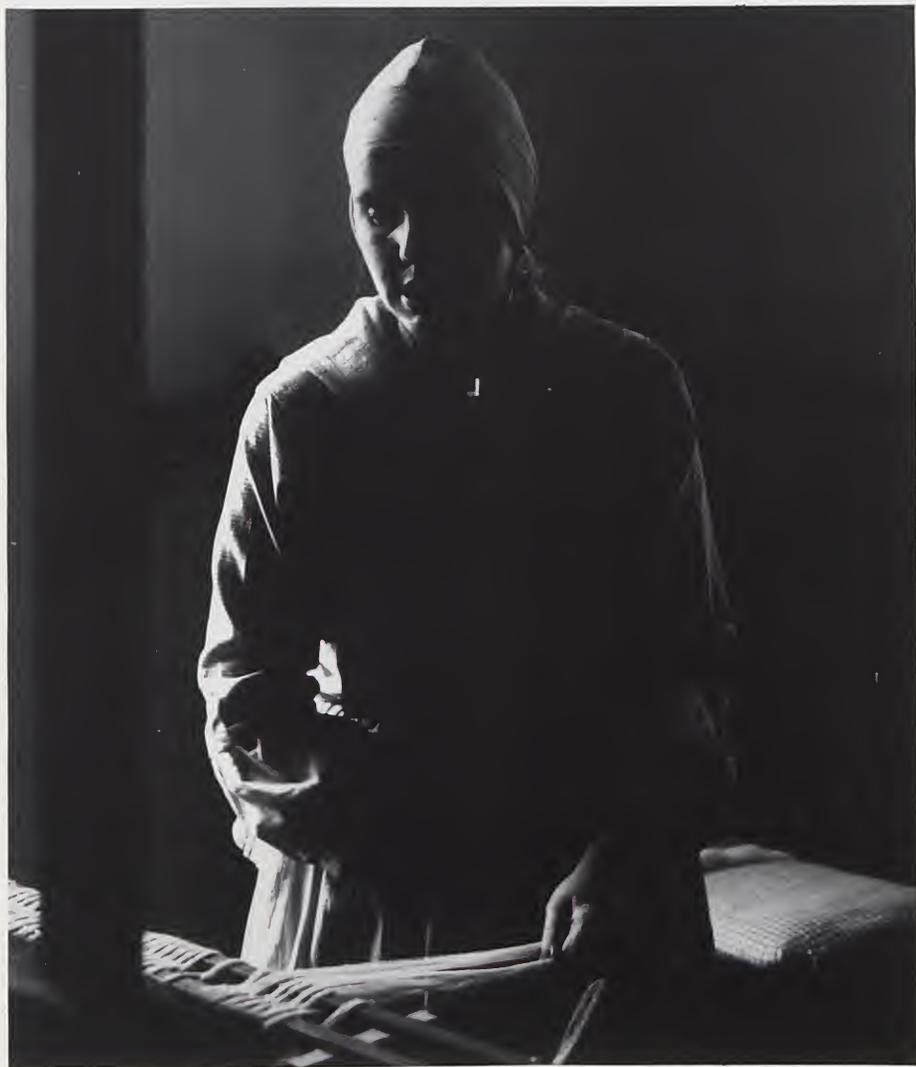
Someday he might come back.
The planes fly over every day,
and the roar shakes the shutters
and makes it hard to concentrate,
to not miss a stitch.
The undersides of the wings shine a dull silver —
if they went more slowly
the house would reflect upside down,
a spinning top on the velvet sky.
Some days, in the garden,
it seems as if the house does spin away
and leave her floating, alone,
on a sea of weeds
blowing at the speed of light.

Hocker

Lori A. Sheppard

The morning Gilley felt
the sky fall, it
wopped down
still warm
circling like
a warped
propeller—
one long tail
churning into
a ball
bringing it
earthward
to rest
smack on
that patch of skin
among the trees.

Kevin Hinkle



Buoyancy

Barnsley Brown

We drained the pool each winter
when the heat could no longer
fend off ice, and chunks
stuck fast to the drain,
chlorine melting away.

Who could have guessed so much
lodged in the house,
the brick, black-shuttered facade,
a shield to the pool.
Colonial Williamsburg never looked
quite so good—
Bricks absorbing what the drain
never would.

I used to immerse my face in water,
breathing bubbles in
a dead man's float.
Eyes on the grate
fearing drops of
bricks to stop it up.

But warmth in pool liquid
couldn't stop the cold from coming.
I can still see her there,
a girl of twelve floating
face-down,
eyes open
to the cool blue ocean
of tile.

Suzanne Gillian Holder



Social Psychology

Richard Jackson

Penis envy.
Who wants one anyhow?
Standing in public toilets,
Urinating on the wall.
The drunk beside pissing on your shoe.

Washington Crossing

David B. Alligood



The Gods Have Gone

Natatie Hall

There are pools of tears
Outside on the sidewalk
Overhead it is bleak—
Someone has hidden the colors.
There are miles and miles
Between here and there
The wall of clouds divides them.
Earth's rug used to be bright green;
Now it is shades of yellow, and brown
And mud.
The scent of decay rises up
All the leaves have fallen
And are mixing with the wetness.
Inside is simulated life;
Fluorescent bulbs and warmth which must be bought
Separated from the death outside
Trying to pretend it's not there.
Why does life cost us?
It should be free.
Where did the tears lying outside
On the sidewalk come from?
. . . Maybe the gods are crying.

Bonnie Flett

Tilted against the pillow
I think about the walls
and how they shine
I mean, they're really bright and
nothing the dark can do
will stop them.
A mime of thought skitters across the ceiling
leaving prints on the water-stained tiles
that quake with the bright blue
spots on my eyes.
After a time both start to shrink
and I know it's Saturday
in the worst way
(the most wall-dulling of days)
I work my way up
but can't stomach breakfast so
just use the spoon
to write myself cheery note in the yogurt
—for later when I need it—
and hit the shower

Yeats Reflected

Dianne E. Timblin

I step out
Into the longing shadows
Of late afternoon,
Feeling a November
Gust's brush strokes
Against my face,
The wind uneffectedly
Moves on
Past my resisting frame
And I sigh
To remember
Last night's words,
The finality of which
Leave me too
Preoccupied to notice
Collage of orange leaves below
Or giant duck-back clouds above.
The breeze rings through
Inside hollows, an
Empty, expressionless solemnity
I dread carrying again
The morning after
Tonight's fathomless sleep.
Perhaps this evening I shall
Witness the ascent and descent
Of an illuminating
Half-moon,
And remember another
Poet's forty-year
Ache.

Nathan Free



Mark Siler



Afterlife

Tim Klett

A leaf floating in the mist
Its veins brightly lit
Being the only essence
In this dark universe.

In Between Days

Lori A. Sheppard

We used to sit and scratch
our feet for hours,
rubbing off the scent
of leather, pressing fingertips
into the lacemarks, crossing
our veins, a separate network.
We would stroke each toenail back
to place, picking out wool.
Nothing felt better than to pull
those toes back, then let go
let them splay
the way they wanted.
We would fill the cracks
in our heels with vaseline,
camphor steaming
from those flattened joints.
And when roll call
came
we would emerge
back into the day
faces blushing.

Calhoun Clark



Black Mourning

Robert Christopher Hoerter

My head's hurting real bad now (forgive the grammar, but when you're in pain, anything goes) - I'll tie the bandage tighter. I can't take the damn thing off now, or the headaches get worse. Every click on the keyboard is like a red-hot hammer striking an anvil, the anvil being my head. The headaches get worse, you see. They get worse. And every click is like a hammer. I can't see a doctor. I don't know why it hurts, but I can't see a doctor. I can't write if I see a doctor, because the next one will be worse. And writing...see, writing gets it out of my head, I'm thinking writing will get it out of my head. But I can't see a doctor, because I can't see the last line. I can't write, and the next one will be worse. The last line on the chart; all I can see is this face. And the face is Jennifer's.

It wasn't a beautiful face; it was kind of translucent, and that made it all the more beautiful, because you could see all that witty intelligence - God, she was quick - shining through like an entire Ed Sullivan show. I could gather that much from her picture in the paper, and from the opposite effect in her poetry. The opposite effect - her stuff was like an exorcism, every line labor to free herself. Poetry is so often a cathartic experience, and I assumed it was for her, that there was a person obsessed with living life locked up inside. I didn't know. I will never know.

Anyway, that was Jennifer, and she was just another unknown face, another unknown poet, to Garth and me. We were editors of the of the magazine that year - all powerful deities of the written work, at least until our contracts expired. And the stuff came in.

It was all pretty tame. The usual submissions: I'm in love, love sinks, the world is wonderful, life is rotten. Then there's always the suicide batch. People who's emotional age is either too young or much, much too old. Or the hopeless, the victimized. There was that, too. Then there was Jennifer Miklas. "Jennifer Miklas."

"Who?"

"Jennifer Miklas." Name sounds like one that'll be bad for this coming news...not her. I knew.

There was Jennifer. Garth and the others put her in the manic depressive, but definitely not suicidal, category. Even the girls, who should have known better than anyone else, didn't know better.

I have this talent, this uncanniness. "Talent" carries too good of a connotation for my liking. And "gift" isn't right, either. I have this sense for poetry - I guess for people in general - for picking up subtleties in feeling, nuances in meaning, for tracing truths of the soul and spirit. I always blew reading comprehension tests out of the water when I was in school, leaving my teachers smug and my classmates rather shocked and somewhat jealous, no doubt. Then I discovered poetry. This is my medium, I thought, this is my world. I reveled in a sworling world of emotions and half-emotions, a dizziness of subjectivity and illusion, compressed wreckage of pages of prose in one image of verse, for I could navigate it, I could understand - I felt as much as read, then eventually wrote as much as felt.

The hot, hot coffee burnt my tongue. I could not feel its tip. "All of them are like that," Garth was saying. "The hormones get a little unbalanced, they want to commit suicide. It's all a chemical imbalance, you know." I took and held the poems, the Miklas poems. They hung, full of meaning, from my hand. They dripped meaning. "You've got to be kidding, right?" "Wilson, the softie, wants us to call the fire department. You wanna notify the hotline or something? Let's get on with it or we'll be here all night."

Black is like night. But it doesn't become Black until you think night. I knew. And all the while, a pen was scratching in the dark, black night.

The scratching went on for months. Then Garth called me about 2 AM one night, late as his news. "Do you remember Jennifer Miklas?" She is dead. I whispered, "She is dead."

"How...?" I hung up. I ripped a strip of black cloth from an old college shirt, wrapping it loosely around my head. Oh God, I thought. Oh God. It hurts. It hurts because I knew, and no one else may have...I could have, I felt, you know? I could have stopped the hurt. Kind of like a doctor.

But I can't go to a doctor. I don't know why, but I can't go to a doctor. Don't need a doctor - I've got a bandage already. And besides, I can't see the last line. I just tie it tighter, thinking the next one will be worse. But writing gets it out of my head. And every click is like a hammer. But now, now, understand, I can see. Yes. I pull it tighter (why is it there?), knowing the next one will be worse. And smiling.

Brian on Freights

Randy Benson



An Oriental Face Confused to be in an Italian Film

Donna Bowman

I watch from the back room,
the lights on,
and laugh with subtitles.

For this I papered the city
with handbills,
covered my glorious hands with glue,
slapped my brush on smeared new ink,
and splattered pedestrians
with my earnestness of downtown
and pride in art films.

So this Chinese man could see me
tonight in color
and read my laughter in Italian.

For Richard Leakey

Lyle Scruggs

This man pounds on my head;
dead sounds, thumping.
power

And the earth turns heavy
with river silt.
speed

The skull has gone;
a jawbone.
Don't tap, pound.
skin

Plot

Richard Jackson

Basketball courts made into clipboards.
Oatmeal cookies burning.
M.A.S.H. on the television,
and my roommate not studying for his test.
I'm wearing two watches.
The world is neither safe nor sane.

Parkbench Villanelle

Sloane Frantz

No one seems to notice his wrinkled hands.
All the dreams he had are now antiques.
He remembers a girl named Mary and old jazz bands.

People walking by occasionally speak.
A trenchcoat barely shields him from the cold.
No one seems to notice his wrinkled hands.

In 1950- a sharp and handsome Greek,
witty jokes, smiles, his steps bold.
He remembers a girl named Mary and old jazz bands.

His mustache droopy, thin shoe soles leak;
lovers walking by must think him old;
But no one seems to notice his wrinkled hands.

Wishes he had, dreams he meant to seek;
His model T, his father's house he sold.
He remembers a girl named Mary and old jazz bands.

Bony finger still carries a circle of gold.
A tear traces valleys on his cheek.
No one seems to notice his wrinkled hands.
He remembers a girl named Mary and old jazz bands.

Janet Ramey



for Buddy

Carrie Galloway

he looked
death in the
proverbial eye
raised his

head slightly
smiled
and is
living four

years later
as we try
to learn to
smile likewise

Standing in the cold for no apparent reason

David B. Alligood

Amy stands erect, alone
crowded on the step
"What are you doing out here?" One asks and
(streams of whitened light shine downwards in all darkened seasons)
i am standing in the cold for no apparent reason

the cold wind shuffles snow
and pierces bones deep
Amy needs no hats, nor movement, to generate a spark
One friend encourages her, a hasty return through the cracked door
she only smiles, answering assuredly by moving no more

finally she returns
the hall is full, bright
the singing still echoes throughout the chapel, unchanged
relieved, the moment was saved eternally
still the wind hushed her new vibrancy
the intensity welled up, her heart warmed by the cold and stillness

Coverings

Donna Bowman

Elsewhere the evening
alarms her
firing her eyes to welcome.
Her hand
lifted in petrified greeting
us papered with its own nakedness.
Etched between her fingers
is despair
that your hand will never
cover her.

And beside us
the curtains decorate me
with one stripe
one streetlight.
You are a warm coal
beside me.
My skin flushes in sleep.

Out in the desperate morning
she opens
my eyes to danger:
evening, exposed and bare
her body pooling like ink
lips of fog
lifting.

Bonnie Flett

In this tremor of no God
I still find myself swerving
to miss the squirrel in the road.
Which might be greater, the life now
or then?

Suzanne Gillian Holder



Seasoncircuit

Robert N. Wilson

How often have you seen
leaves falling off of the trees
in a hail of redyellowgold
crunching in the wake of
passersby. . .

or the snows of December
piling up against the drift fences
which have been put up in haste
to keep the roads open to passing
cars. . .

the hiss of the runners of
an iceboat under full sail skimming
the silver ice in a colourful
silent flash of pure
speed. . .

yellowgreen leaves and fresh smelling
flowers in bloom after renewing rains that
make the world come to life
in a burst of
rebirth. . .

a gold sun burns brightly in a blue sky
accompanied by cotton
guiding the lives of ten
thousand bronze statues
below.

Genie's World

Dave Olson



Martha Sisk

Jeffrey is eating peanut butter,
and he spreads it in slow sworls
as the voices drift above him.
They sound like a cartoon,
like the day Billy's father left,
backing out his car over the toys in the driveway.
Billy's father didn't come back,
and sometimes when they run in the yard
they find a piece of jagged pink plastic
to add to their treasure chest.
A gnawing, twisting motion convulses his stomach,
but the smooth, sticky peanut butter pushes it down.
He puts away the jar and runs upstairs to play trains,
sticky fingers jammed deep in his ears.

Contributors

David B. Alligood is a student at Bowman Gray. He enjoys reading and Bob Dylan music. He hopes to practice medicine someday in a third world country.

Randy Benson is a junior communications/rhetoric major. He's a member of the cross country and track teams and enjoys riding on trains with friends, eating green apples, and rockin' with Mick. If he could have one wish, it would be to stay the same while changing everything around him.

Donna Bowman is a junior religion major planning to go to graduate school. She tied for second place in the individual poem category in the Academy of American Poets contest.

Barnsley Brown is a junior French/English major. Her interests include poetry, music, and theatre; and she is a member of the Anthony Aston Society. She hopes to study theatre at Duke this summer before going to Dijon. She tied for first place for individual poems in the Academy of American Poets contest.

Calhoun Clark is a sociology major from Columbia, SC. His interest include poetry, reading, hunting, and motorcycles.

Rob Duckwall is a senior art major who lost more than his share of footfights to his younger brother—not because he is a wimp or anything, but because his brother, with shorter legs and all, had a mechanical advantage and used certain principles of physics to emerge from the bathtub victorious.

Jane E. Dunlap is a senior from Charlotte, NC and editorial page co-editor of the *Old Gold and Black*. In her nonexistent spare time she enjoys Russian and music.

John Herschel Fike was born the 26th of January, 1966, in the middle of a snowstorm, the fourth child of pacifist dairy farmers. He plans to learn, not teach, and hopes to grow.

Bonnie Flett is a junior majoring in biology, minoring in French. Her goals are to be a doctor, gain five inches in height, and to somehow get over her addiction to oppressively serious films and books.

Carrie Galloway is an English graduate student from Brevard, NC.

Paul Gilbert is a junior politics major. He is from Birmingham, Alabama. He enjoys taking pictures in his spare spare time and hopes someday to learn something.

Natalie Hall is a sophomore from West Virginia and has been writing poetry since she was 11. She's a Democrat who passionately hates cold weather. Her favorite person is her cat, Katrina.

Kevin Hinkle is a senior French/English major who will be spending next year teaching English in a high school in France. He has recently become interested in third world literature, and he likes to play tennis in his spare time.

Robert Christopher Hoerter, in his endless quest for the perfect siesta, plans to be placed in suspended animation for three months this summer.

Tim Klett is a psychology major who loves to work with people. He considers Robert Hedin an important influence on his writing and states, "spontaneity is important to me."

David Olson is a sophomore from North Dakota. He is majoring in biology and hopes to continue to graduate school.

Thomas B. Parker immigrated from Canada in 1970, searching for the American dream (Life, Liberty, and a BMW). Unable to find it in Lima, Ohio, he enrolled this year at Wake Forest and is currently working towards a "Mr." degree.

Janet Ramey is interested in photography and music. She foresees no possible major and is presently drifting towards the end of her freshman year.

L.D. Russell is a graduate student studying literature and theology. He is from Union, SC.

Lori Sheppard is a senior psychology major. She will be attending graduate school here next fall. Her philosophy on life concerns the importance of smaller pleasures: bubblegum, swings, and tunes.

Martha Sisk is a junior biology major who is still unsure about what she wants to do with her life. She writes poetry with the hope that someday she might actually say something significant.

Leslie Tate is a junior English major from Richmond, VA. She hopes to continue writing and placed first for collection of poems in the Academy of American Poets contest.

Dianne Timblin is a junior English major from Greensboro, NC. She enjoys watching old movies, browsing through toy stores, traveling to faraway places. She would someday like to work for either *Time* magazine or David Letterman, depending on whether or not she grows up.

