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reverie

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Retrospect

reverie - n. abstract musings, dreams, product
of such musings.

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Phil Klucking

Crystal waters

Spring

New shoes,
Blue shoes.
Jog,
SPLASH,
Shuffle,
walk,
run
Run
RUN
jog.
Tired,
dirty;
old
shoes.

Lauren Smith

There's a place where I can go,
a place of love and care.
Where streams of crystal water flow,
and Jasmine in the air.
Everything is free and wild,
like rain and wind and sun.
Everything is like a child
so innocent and fun.
A zephyr wind blows all night
and goes on through the day
living here feels so right
I wish that I could stay.
There's a place where I can go
so beautiful and clean.
Where eagles fly, and flowers grow
the best life's ever been

Gary Smith

Best Friends

by Drue Robinson

Twilit Barringer is my best friend. She doesn't know it yet but she is. I like Twilit's hair 'cause mine never curls like hers and I like her eyes 'cause they're not brown.

Lucy Hammond used to be my best friend. She used to play cars with me on the dirt pile in the back yard during hot summer evenings. She used to drink lemonade faster than me and then spit the ice cubes out onto the sidewalk and watch them melt.

I remember one time when her Uncle Burl came to visit. He had walked out the door and down the steps in front of her house whistling some ancient tune, paying no mind to me or Luce. We had just drunk our lemonade and Luce had beat me again and then spit her ice cubes out. We were sitting there watching them melt when we heard the screen door slam.

"Hurry, Mitch. Get under here," Luce said.

"Why?" I asked.

"To hide," she replied.

"Why?" I asked again.

"Just get in here!" She grabbed me by the arm and pulled me beneath the juniper bush.

"It stinks under here, Luce," I whined.

"Who cares," she replied. "Just be quiet and spy on Uncle Burl."

We lay there, engulfed in the strong odor of juniper, our sides itching while our eyes intently followed each brisk stride of Luce's uncle.

"I betcha he'll step right on one an' skid all over the sidewalk," Luce whispered. His feet were approaching the half-melted cubes.

"Cross your fingers, Mitch." I crossed them. Uncle Burl was

just about on top of the third and biggest cube.

"Here he goes," I said.

"And there he goes," whimpered Luce, "right over the tops of 'em all."

"He didn't even see them," I cried.

"Nope, but I seen where his foot landed," said Luce, scampering out from under the shrub. "I'll mark it with a piece of chalk and we'll get him next time."

Next time never came. Uncle Burl returned only once after that, and by that time we'd forgotten all about the chalk mark.

Then there was the time when I had gotten my first bicycle. Boy, it was keen! Luce's house was the first place I rode it. Its shiny spokes and baby blue seat, not to mention its chrome fenders, sure impressed her. She came ripping out the front door like she was running a sprint race; and by the time she caught up with me, her face was the color of strawberry pie.

"Wow!" she exclaimed. "Where'd you get it?"

"My grandma and grandpa," I said.

"When?"

"Yesterday."

"Yesterday? Why didn't you come over then?" Luce hit me on the shoulder.

"Cause Grandpa had to take off the training wheels."

"Oh yeah, them things are for sissies."

"Yeah."

"Well," suggested Luce. "How bout taking a spin down to Jack's Goose Farm?"

"Sure," I beamed. "Hop on."

Mr. Jack Ferrel lived at the bottom of Badger Gulch and the road leading there was full of potholes and rocks. Getting

there was like eating peach pie with your fingers, but coming back up was horrible. We'd never ridden twosies on a bicycle before, and it took us a whole twenty minutes to catch on. By the time we reached Mr. Ferrel's we were a giggling duo of mud mummies. Luce looked really funny! Her short blond hair stuck straight up all over, and she was the color

of that Prichard boy who sat in the front desk at school. Luce's smile was still the same, though. Her two front teeth, still bumpy and rough on the ends, stuck out like icicles do on our front porch in the wintertime. I was no better. My best overalls were ripped and one fastener didn't fasten. My knee was oozing, and I had a mixture of weeds and mud in my hair.

"Hi, Jack!" we both chimed.

"We rode down to show you Mitch's new bike," Luce added. Jack started roaring with laughter.

"'New' did you say? Looks more like you got it from the junkyard."

We turned around. There, lying in yet another mud puddle, was my brand new bike. The fenders had pockmarks in them and the chrome didn't sparkle any more. The back tire was flat and the handle bars were crooked. As for the baby blue seat, well, mixed with brown it didn't make too pretty a color.

"Luce!" I cried, "Th th th that's my new bike! What'll Mom say?"

"I don't know," replied Luce, staring steadily back at me.

"Jack," I ventured. "Is there any way you could help my bike?"

"Well..." he began.

"I'll clean out your goose pens for a week and I'll get the eggs and I'll..."

"Whoa, Mitch!" laughed Jack. "Let's be realistic here. I don't know how long it'll take, but while I try fixing it, hows 'bout you and your sidekick hit the pump out back? You're both so filthy I can barely tell you apart."

We headed out back. While the cold water gushed over our dirty bodies we could hear old Jack pounding on what were once my bright and shiny fenders. That evening we took Jack's advice and walked home, taking turns pushing my bike.

When I got to Luce's house, I told her I'd flash the lights in the downstairs bathroom if I got in trouble.

"If I do," I said, "then come come by early and help me with whatever chore I get told to do. OK? OK."

I didn't flash the lights. When

I got home I got another bath, this time with hot water and a hard scrub brush. Mom figured the loss of transportation was enough punishment, otherwise I'd have had to pick apples all day.

My mom was like that though. Luce's mom wasn't. I guess you could say my mom to Cooky, Luce's mom, was like night is to day. Luce was never really loved by her mom— Oh she probably was deep down inside, but Cooky never showed it. Luce could stay out 'til dark and never get in trouble. That never settled right with my mom. Mom thought discipline was the best part of love. She always said things would never turn out right for Luce as long as Cooky did what she did. Mom never told me exactly what Cooky did that would make things turn out so wrong, but she did give me hints. One of them was her clothes.

"I always saw plenty of males paying attention to cooky. If they didn't care about the colors then neither did I."

"Look at the colors sometime, Michelle," she'd say to me. "She ain't never gonna attract any daddy for Lucy-dear as long as she wears colors like them!"

Mom was right, I guess. Sometimes they did hurt my eyes, but I never paid no mind. I always saw plenty of males paying attention to Cooky. If they didn't care about the colors then neither did I.

One time, I remember, I saw Cooky without her colors. Well, really, without her clothes. That was the time me and Luce snuck into the hamper and spied on her while she was taking a bath. Man, I never saw so many bubbles! She looked like she had fallen into a river with that cow foam in it. You know, the stuff that settles on the banks and you try to throw a hole in it with your rock. Well, anyway, Luce and me were hiding in that old hamper when the phone rings. Luce did the godawfulest thing

I ever did see. She yelled, "I'll get it." and jumped right out of the hamper and left me there. Left me there with Cooky's eyes popping out of her face—just staring at me. I guess I looked funny with dirty nighties and them flowered underpanties surrounding me. I peeked out and smiled my bestest smile.

"Hi Cooky! What's new?"

That's all the conversing time I had, cause right away she started tossing water at me and cursing about children.

That was the last real fun excursion me and Luce had together, cause I remember right after that was the big mess on Dewberry Street.

That afternoon was no different. The sky was the color of Mom's apron and the clouds were suspended in the air like sticky cottonballs. The cat down the street at Emily Norton's old house had just given birth to a whole slew of kittens. Mr. Charlesbrook, the landlord, had invited Luce and me down.

I went over to pick her up in my new go-cart. After picking out our kittens we were going to challenge Zackary Higgins to a race. Luce said she'd already seen the kitten she wanted. It had a grey face and a creamy patch over its two forepaws. I was jealous right off.

The sun was beating down on our necks and I was sweating hard as I peddled my legs underneath the painted wooden hood. The wheels made a grating sound over the cement and they'd pop every once and awhile when I'd run over a gravel driveway. Luce was wearing her yellow and red T-shirt and her brother's hand-me-down swimming trunks she always wore as shorts. Her eyes were sparkling like usual and her grin was as wide as the new skating rink going up on Madison Ave. Me, I was happy as a hornet in a tulipbed. Afterall, I was the proud owner of the grandest looking go-cart in the county.

When we got to Mr. Charlesbrook's, I spent awhile looking around for the second best cat, since Luce's was obviously number one. Luce started getting impatient.

"Come on, Mitch," she insisted. "Let's get going. I wanna race Zack down Dewberry Hill and whip the pants off him!"

"OK! OK!" I said. "We'll go just as soon as I find the right kitty. Help me find the one that looks like Fluffy used to look."

"Here," said Luce shoving a calico mix into my face. "Take this one."

"No. He's too fat."

"Well, here," she said again. "How 'bout him?"

"Naw. He looks like Charlie."

Luce was getting antsy now.

"Mitch, take this one will you? We'll never get out of here if you don't." Luce was holding out her grey kitten with the creamy forepaws.

"...dead ahead we saw

the go cart belonging to

Zackary. Luce said it looked

tough to beat. I wasn't worried."

"Oh Luce!" I said hugging her and the kitten at the same time. "You're tops!"

"Come on," she said eagerly.

"Let's race."

We hurriedly thanked Mr. Charlesbrook and bounded out the door. Her carrying Charlie, and me with Fluffy II. We were off to find Zackary Higgins, the ugliest boy in town. We were going to show him who was to be the boss of Dewberry Hill.

Luce drove. I promised her she could since she had given up Fluffy II. I was to be the flagman, the official, and the pitstop crew all rolled into one. We turned the corner of Cordova, and dead ahead we saw the go-cart belonging to Zackary. Luce said it looked tough to beat. I wasn't worried. My dad had built mine with his own hands. It was special. Instead of taking leave to some fancy place with Mom, like usual, he had stayed home with me and built #065. That's the number we called her. Now she was going to beat Zackary's old banana boat and become the

best go-cart ever to race down Dewberry.

"Ya ready?" asked Zackary, wiping his nose on his sleeve as we pulled up next to him.

"Yeah," I said. "Luce is gonna race and I'm gonna judge. Fair deal?"

"Fair deal," agreed Zack.

"We'll go best two outta three," I said. "No cheating and no headstarts."

Luce and Zackary lined up right next to each other at the top of the hill. Looking down it was like looking down at your shoes— straight down. Neither Zack nor Luce seemed scared but I knew the tension was mounting.

"On your marks," I said, holding up an old orange hand towel. "Get set," hold two seconds I thought to myself... "Go!" I whipped the flag down around my ankles and Zackary and Luce sped forward.

Zack led the way. Halfway down, I heard Luce holler a note of joy. She was losing all right, but she was having the time of her life. Her hair was pushed back by the wind, and as she whizzed past Mrs. Tuckett's house I could see her smile shining back at me. She crossed the finish line about two lengths behind Zack. He got out, wiped his forehead on the same sleeve he had wiped his nose with and, without a glance at Luce, pulled out his tow rope and started lugging his ugly yellow box across the intersection back up the hill. I ran down to meet Luce.

"Not bad for the first run," I said.

"Yeah," puffed Luce. "But I shoulda had him."

"Tell you what," I said. "I'll stay down here this time and you give me a sign as to when I should drop my flag. That way you won't have such a slow start."

"OK," agreed Luce. "I'll scratch my nose real big so you can see when I'm ready."

With that she turned and trudged up the steep hill, pulling #065 behind her. She looked awkwardly small against the size of Dewberry. Above her, Zackary struggled with his soapbox to the peak, turned around, and climbed

in. I could see the smirk on his face all the way from where I was standing. Luce finally reached the top. She stood waiting to catch her breath, and then she too climbed in. I waited for her signal. Up went my flag— she scratched.

"Go!" I yelled at the top of my lungs. My flag swept the pavement.

It was a different sight to see them hurtle toward me instead of before, when I had watched them getting smaller. This time I stood across MacIntosh Street and felt the thrill of the competition as they neared the intersection, the finish line.

Luce was ahead this time. Her smile was again the biggest feature on her face. Zack looked worried. He knew he was beat. Luce was hollering and laughing so hard that I could've sparked a light bulb from all her energy.

Then everything happened at once.

"I couldn't look away. The glistening metal shot through Luce like a spear."

I'd been paying so much attention to Luce's sure-fire victory that I hadn't noticed the speeding car barreling down MacIntosh.

I froze.

The nerve piercing screech came first. Then I heard it: the sound of #065 splintering into a million pieces, followed by the blood-curdling scream exploding from my best friend's lips. I couldn't look away. The glistening metal shot through Luce like a spear. Her body twisted beneath the rotating tires and came to rest, wedged between the yellow curb and the car's crimson splattered hubcap. The driver's door clattered onto the sidewalk as a boy with striped pants tumbled out. They both lay there. Neither one moved.

Zackary had steered into some nearby hedges to avoid the crash. I watched him out the side of my eye as he ran up the steps to Mr. Gilly's house. I watched, but

all my attention was still focused on Luce's motionless figure. My feet were frozen yet my body was on fire. I wanted to scream but couldn't produce any sound. I could feel my knees shaking and felt as if I might vomit. Sitting down in a daze, I felt the earth start spinning under me. I lay there for what seemed to be seconds, and then the red flashing lights and shrill sirens shook me into consciousness again.

I watched as the men in white lifted the boy onto the small narrow bed. Next was Lucy's turn. A man with a stethoscope turned her mangled face toward the sky and ripped her shirt off. He began pressing her chest up and down, like when mom makes dough. Then he stopped. Reaching into his bag, he pulled out a piece of white chalk. I watched as he drew an outline of Luce on the black pavement. Two other men then lifted her onto a plastic sheet. It had a zipper on it. Why hadn't they put her on a clean white bed with wheels like they had done with that boy? They stuck her arms inside the folds and then zipped up the zipper.

My stomach left me. I don't remember much more. Next time I awoke, I was in my room and my mom was sitting next to me.

"Michelle?" she said. I didn't respond. Turning over, I

stared at the pink and yellow flowers on my wall.

"She's gone, isn't she?" I mumbled.

"Yes, Michelle, she is."

"Why'd they stick her in a bag?" I asked.

"That's just the way they do it."

"Oh."

Mom sensed that I wanted to be alone. She shut the door quietly as she left. I never cried. I couldn't. Luce always said that only sissies cry. And I figured now she'd be able to see my tears as plain as I could. So I didn't.

Three years have passed. Twillit Barringer moved here four months ago. She's my best friend now. But she doesn't know it yet.

"A man with a stethoscope turned her mangled face toward the sky. He began pressing her chest up and down. Then he stopped. I watched as he drew an outline of Luce on the black pavement."



Diane DeBusschere

Cold Facts

by Mona Caesar



Written alone, the word cold appears to be a general term describing a weather condition. Cold, however, refers to much more than a lack of heat. It is a condition that demands endurance, common sense, mental strength, and a knowledge of how extreme cold is capable of affecting one's body and mind.

In the course of the nine month winters that exist in Central Alaska's "Cold Triangle", there are several days when the temperature drops so low that the mercury explodes through the glass encasements of thermometers. The windows and doors of every house become sealed shut by dense layers of ice. Constant gusts of frigid wind whip around the buildings, whine through trees, and push cold deeper and deeper into the thoughts and homes of all people.

Every living creature realizes his vulnerability and senses the urgency of the situation: the need for protection and the struggle that must take place for survival. In a world where cold rules, no one can escape the penalty for being unprepared, although the sentence can vary from frostbite to death.

A traveler in this weather must take special precautions to remain warm and dry, for even a drop of moisture will freeze instantly creating an impenetrable barrier against warmth. Clothing is an important item for protection that requires a certain amount of knowledge for complete effectiveness. Polyester and plastic, for example, are useless because the cold causes these materials to shatter.

Even a very short excursion can be extremely exhausting and dangerous as the cold invades one's body and saps one's strength. First, it takes sharp, stinging stabs at one's fingers and toes. Next, it frosts the hair, eyelashes, and the tiny bristles inside the nose. Finally, the cold takes hostile bites out of the thighs and dips into the lungs, successfully robbing the body of precious heat.

These conditions can often cause a person to lose his capacity to think clearly. People have been known to become hysterical, remove protective clothing, take deadly naps, and become totally disorientated under similar circumstances.

Cold cannot be taken lightly. It is a state that requires total awareness of its dangers, for ignorance is a crime punishable by death.



Grandma, Teach Me

Grandma,
with hands feeble,
frail,
teach me to work
the needles and yarn.
Show me how
you produce
such wonders.
Aid me
with my impatience.
My world is one
of frustration,
and strain.
Yours is peaceful,
positive.
Help me.
Give me your talent.
Not so much
the knitting
as the
stable,
controlled
peace of mind.

Staci Hubbard

The etching

The seagull flies with
wings outstretched,
Against the darkening sky
is its profile etched,
It flies over the tide
with graceful ease,
Out of the harbor beyond to
the seas,
With each sweep of its wings
it moves farther away,
To a place that's unknown but
to return one day.

Sarah Hurt

A walk of release

I was walking in the warm, delicate, night rain, disturbed by inner, bitter pain.

The rain seemed to awake the inner, bitter pain, so disturbing. As though to say, Come out! Come out! As I do from the sky!

Come out in the rain and perish as a flower does, and blows away! Then after releasing a deep, honest cry, a breeze passed by. Though to say, it has been done! It has been!

Then walking in a suddenly, calm silence, I felt not a trace more of inner bitter violence, that was for so long hidden in a dark alley of a heart so deep, but not so deep to not cry!

Kearcy Watkins

I got off the bus after school today laughing. Todd, my friend from fifth grade, had a whole bag full of water balloons, and he was a good shot. The best one was when he hit that high school guy. Todd better be more careful, though. That guy was pretty mad.

Anyway, I walked a block or two to my house. I didn't see the car; I guessed Mom was still at work. Then I remembered she had to work late tonight.

Well, anyway, I was kicking a rock in our driveway, and I noticed something. At first I thought it was water; then I thought it was paint that somebody spilled. I bent over and took a better look, and then I knew it was blood. Blood? I thought. Where did blood come from? Then I saw a paw print in the blood. I thought Rusty might be hurt. Some more red prints went off toward the house, so I ran after them.

After a little ways the paw prints faded out, but I could tell he was headed for his dog house.

What happened to him? is what I was thinking. When I got to his house I could see the blankets were really soaked with blood. I got on my hands and knees and looked inside. I could see Rusty looking out at me, and I could hear his breath rattling.

I said, "Rusty? Come her, Russ," and slapped my leg.

He got up real slow and walked out of his house. I looked at him close and he had a zillion punched holes on one side. Some were leaking a little clotted blood. His short, red fur was wet where he must have licked himself.

Then he made an awful noise and jerked, and blood came pouring out of his mouth.

I stepped up to him and made him sit. Then he coughed some more blood, and it hit the side of my tennis shoe.

I ran for the house to call Mom. When I looked back, Rusty was following me really super slow. Some of those holes were really bleeding now.

"Stay, Russ! Stay!" I shouted, and ran into the house.

Retrospect 10

I dialed Mom at work, and her phone was busy. I tried again, and it was busy again. Finally, it wasn't, and she answered. I told her Rusty was hurt bad and he was barfing blood.

Then I finally figured out he'd been shot.

Mom said she'd hurry, but I knew it was a half hour from town to our house.

I hung up and ran back to where Rusty was. He was lying down, and there was a lot of blood on the grass.

I looked and thought for a minute and counted sixteen holes on his neck and leg. Somebody must have shot him with a shotgun at not very close range.

When I patted him, his tail thumped the grass a few times. I tried to lift him out of his own puddle of blood, but he was too big.

I started crying, and he lifted his head to look at me. One of his eyes was squinted shut, and some blood was trickling down his cheek like a tear.

Helpless Love

by Mathew Cleman

I started thinking about who might have shot him. It didn't take very long to guess at that scuz kid who lived down the road. He was high school, but mostly he just stayed home and practiced with a gun, a shotgun.

I could see his house from where Russ and I were, so I stood up and yelled, "You murderer! I hate you! I hate you!" but my voice sounded squeaky, like a girl's, so I didn't yell any more. I laid down on the grass, facing my dog, and cried. I cried and cried, because I was so mad and helpless.

"Why?" I said over and over. "Why?"

Rusty moved his paw and scratched my arm. He looked at me with one ruined eye and one good eye.

"Oh, Rusty," I whispered, and put my hand on his neck.

He took a deep breath and gave a huge sigh. And he died.

A Sonnet

Let My Eyes Not Deceive You

Brimming tears that hide but show such loving,
Searching for a response of sympathy,
Not wanting to discover apathy,
My eyes sting from straining to find caring.
They droop glossily from endless blinking
That drowns out the sense of living freely,
Bound to the betrayer who stealthily
Moves on, delivering painful waiting.

My eyes obtain a look, dull blunt splendor,
When exposed to the sight of the,cherished,
But cuts with the cold transferred in the glance.
Gentleman unknown, four years a stranger
Bothers no more to show the love so wished.
Hurt, dark browns strive to show no hope or chance.

Staci Hubbard



Ellen Akker

Reminiscing

Together we laughed, and together we cried,
the moments together, the days passing by.
I'll treasure the good times, forget the bad,
remembering the moments makes me lonely and
sad.

A sisterly bond that will hold us together ,
I pray that it might go on forever and ever.
Some days I feel lost without you, my friend,
I get loneliness and sadness coming from within.
We shared all our secrets, hopes, and fears.
I sit and remember and think over the years.
The countless hours spent on the phone,
spending nights in each other's homes,
the games and the dances we just couldn't miss,
the thrill and excitement when we got our first
kiss!

Special friends may come and go,
but you're one in a million, I want you to know.
So when you are down, and feel kind of grim,
stick out your chin and put on a grin!
Follow a rainbow, reach for a star,
I have faith in you and I know you'll go far.
Always stay true to your hopes and your dreams.
One day they'll be cherished and fill all your
needs.
If ever you start to feel lonely or blue,
remember us all back at home love you.

Cherene Clark

dove's feathers
bat's wings
iron shackle
diamond ring
Toad's croak
bell's ring
no difference
same thing

Kristi Green

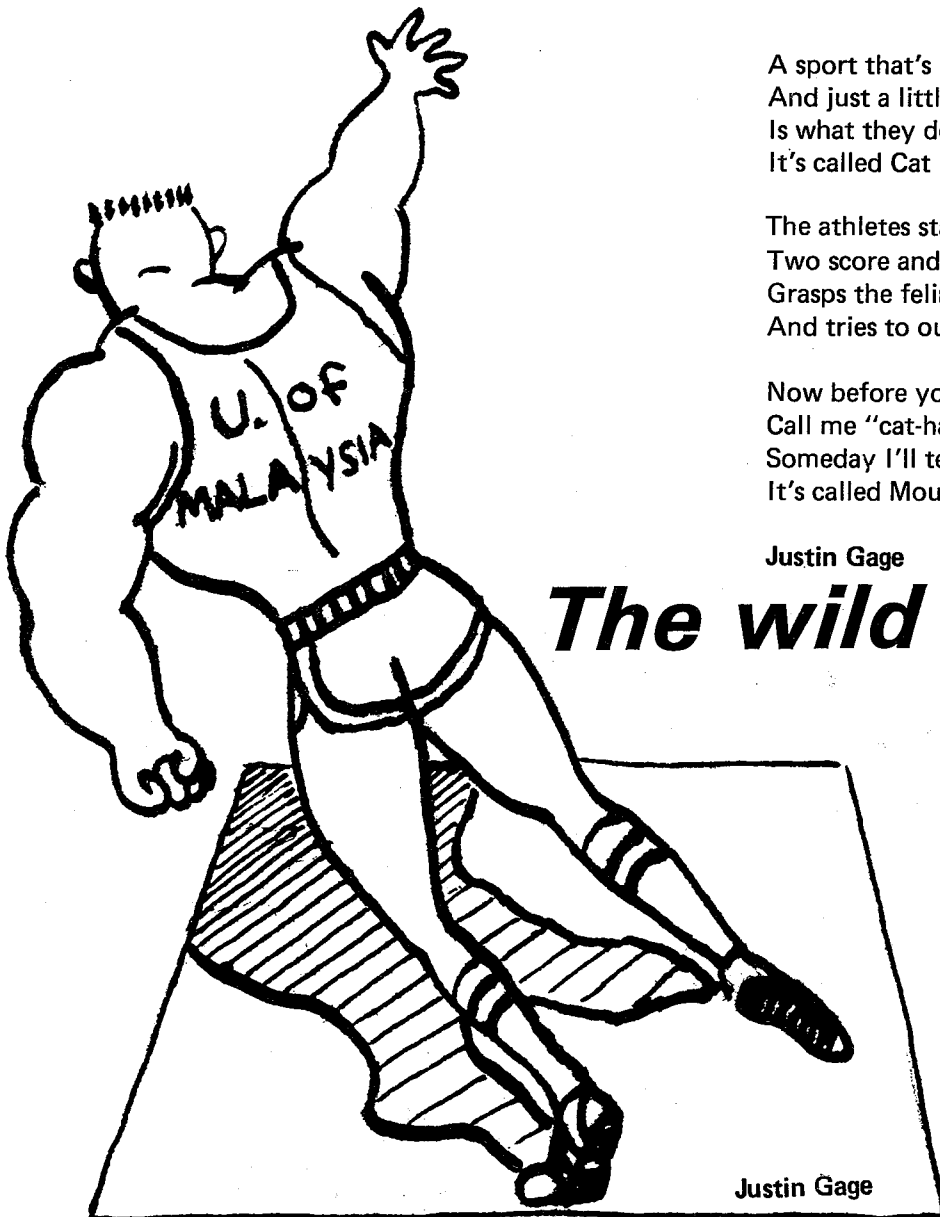


Kristi Green

Descent

Rising above silver clouds
the moon
a copper penny
drops
into the slot between hills
covered with
gumball bushes

Drue Robinson



A sport that's rather obscure,
And just a little brow curling,
Is what they do in Kuala Lumpur,
It's called Cat Hurling.

The athletes stand in a square,
Two score and ten from another,
Grasps the feline by the hair,
And tries to out-hurl his brother.

Now before you scream and shout,
Call me "cat-hater" and set to hunting,
Someday I'll tell you what another sport is about.
It's called Mouse Punting.

Justin Gage

The wild world of sports

Lazily sitting on Black Sands Beach on the big island of Hawaii, I feel extremely relaxed and completely content just looking at the interesting sights. The special characteristic of this beach is the unique black coloring of the sand, caused by ancient volcanic eruptions.

As the warm sun reflects off the ocean onto my tanned face, I watch a wave gently form far out on the horizon, building itself higher and higher. Now the roar of the ocean becomes stronger as the wave crashes down into the smooth sand, picks up small pieces of bro-

ken shells, swirls them about, and tosses them back down onto the beach, revealing a breathtaking display of power. As the wave rolls up the beach, I feel the cool water lapping at my toes and splashing spray across my face, leaving a salty flavor as it flies into my open mouth. Wrapping its lukewarm fingers around me, the wave washes away the sand from beneath me, leaving me sitting in an indentation in the otherwise smooth-sloping beach. Soon the wave diminishes, leaving its damp mark upon the quickly drying sand as the next wave challenges the mark, obliterating it in one place while leaving it in another.

A golden-tanned surfer with blond streaked hair walks into the waves near me, carrying his short red surf board. Yelling to his friends in the slang of the island inhabitants, pidgin English, he pushes the board out and swims after it. As he dives into the water, he leaves the familiar scent of coconut tanning oil as it washes off his body.

Listening carefully I hear the cry of a seagull. Moments later it drops towards the water, diving for a fish. It seems to become swallowed up by the ocean, yet I soon see it pop up with a small silver fish in its orange beak.

Suddenly, out of the ocean rises a fascinating sight, a man wearing all the paraphernalia for skin diving. Not only does he have the usual flippers, mask, and snorkel, but he carries a long silver Hawaiian sling. On the end of the three pronged spear rests a large blowfish with its special, but in this case useless, adaptation for defense, spines up to two inches long surrounding its otherwise vulnerable body.

Resting in one of the most beautiful places in the world, this paradise of the islands, I enjoy observing everything happening around me. Knowing this scene will remain engraved in my mind for future reference, I bask in the sensation of the moment.

“Suddenly, out of the ocean
rises A facinating sight...”

by Gretchen Thelen



Frank Combs

The Leader

by John LeCompte

She had been an odd one; she was more clever than the rest. Nevertheless, she was stupid. She had stowed away on my vessel while I was out inspecting the prisoners, the defeated. They were lined up side by side, the forty-seven remaining, in front of their smoldering, devastated colony.

"Let them go," I said with a demoniacal grin. My mechanical first lieutenant acknowledged the coded command, and I boarded my personal craft, purposely not starting the engines. After closing the shiny metal door, I went to the cockpit and sat back in my chair, relaxed, anticipating.

When the first staccato laser blasts came, immediately followed by frenzied screaming, my eyes shot open. I seethed, breathing heavily through my teeth. With wild eyes I peered through the cockpit windows, seeing panic everywhere. Slowly, methodically, my invulnerable metal warriors dispatched each person with short bursts of their merciful weapons. Salivating savagely, I counted the ones who could and were still running: seven, then four, then none. It was beautiful: chaos brought under control, serenity.

I had then departed, not caring whether anyone had survived. If any had, they would be detected and exterminated unceremoniously. A wave of calm rushed over me as I sped through space on my predetermined course. Peace was all about me.

When I was well away from the planet, I was awakened from my semi-conscious state by her voice. It was cold, determined.

"Turn around, you heartless animal!"

Slowly, I did so, and I saw her

holding my pistol with both hands. Silently I cursed myself for my lapse in awareness. Standing seven feet from me with her finger on the trigger, she was too far away for me to attack safely. Only then did I notice that she had dark hair and a slim, petite body; she was not unattractive. I admired her for her courage. She had no chance to live.

"You just murdered a peaceful colony of four thousand people!"

How petty, I thought. "They were weak, not worthy of life. The strong make the rules. I am strong," I replied coolly.

"Strong!" She screamed, "Senseless slaughter doesn't prove strength!" In her rage, her hands began to tremble on the gun. "It's the mark of a coward and..."

She never finished. Seeing the opportunity, I had leaped at her, grabbed the gun, tore it from her, and with it, crushed in the side of her head.

"You just murdered a peaceful colony of four thousand people!"

So stupid, I thought, as I loaded her body into the jettison port. Her emotions had weakened her. Pushing the unlabeled green button above the cylindrical compartment, I watched her float freely away.

While I cleaned the blood from the handle of my gun, I thought about the absurdity of her words. First of all, I am no animal. I had, through years of combat training and tactical development, been appointed to the post of Commander of All

Assault Forces. With the position, I was given ninety thousand armed attack robots, each able to resist and conquer a hundred armed humans, and faithful to me alone.

Second, the strong of any species have always, throughout the span of time, proven themselves superior by doing away with the weaker. Such an obvious fact, and yet some refuse to take up a weapon to defend themselves. So foolish, they deserve death.

As I holstered my gun, though, the memory of her

words troubled me. As it was time to dock, I resumed manual control of my ship and reported in. After the voice analysis, the docking bay doors swung inward to allow my armada to enter.

Later, while I rested, preparing for my next siege, her voice kept ringing and echoing through my mind, infiltrating my thoughts. Finally, after taking a few sleeping capsules, I slept. My night was one vast painting, a living mural of my past, showing each battle in detail, every one a victory. And all through it, each body, living or dead, endlessly chanted, "Slaughter is the mark of a coward, a coward..."

For a half dozen sleeping periods, this persisted. No medication of any type would

eliminate my haunting dreams.

When I awoke at the time of departure, I amassed my entire force and sent them to their fighters. With a tranquility I had never experienced before, I launched first, as usual, and they followed. When we were in action, we shot off at top speed. I set the automatic controls on the coordinates of the center of our sun, activated them, and then began my first truly victorious journey. And they followed.

Firelight stuttered through darkness
throwing tattered glimpses of nightfallen
sky past our faces.

This a night to remember.

Goodbyes never came
But drifting excitement lulled
the pinescented canyon.

We were all together: the intellects,
the comics— still charming us, the class
jocks, the cheerleaders, and dope smokers
alike, all united.

High intensity rang
throughout. A clap on the back
from eyes seldom seen. 'How are
you's' echoed from each hollow glen.

Oh Yes! A night to remember.

The terrain, rugged and harsh, but
we had it conquered. That hole in the path
was no match against the invincible

This, a night to remember.

Adulthood upon us,
free to the world — wild on the imagination.
Unlimited possibilities soared in us
and we knew we'd soon make it.

Childhood to our backs
for us to dip into only occasionally.

Adult
Adult
The word itself induces a sense
of accomplishment;
of hacking it;
of beating the odds.

Our dreams captured us
On this, a night to remember.

Fancyfree delirium held us on a cloud
The cold magic in our styrofoam cups
levitated each of us onto a high
pedestal.

We carried on
Beneath the mountain stars
Oblivious to the rules of the city.

An idea, a compulsion, a dip into
that childhood so long forgotten.

A night to remember

Eyes, as young, as old, as ours
Blazed to play an adult game
consequences untried,
On this, a night to remember.

One last cup
The engine blared
Wheels slapped the pale dust into a frenzy:
Three adults in childhood concealment
—off to beat the odds.

Then, on this, the night we remember,
the mood from yellow
turned black.

Pedestals crumpled and
Dreams crashed to the forest floor.
two adults who had failed
to conquer their little world
had returned,
but left one
behind.

This, a night to remember.

Harsh reality then gripped at our
senses.
Cooled engines sparked.
Tires tore at the silent dust.
We filed by—

Dared by curiosity to look
yet, shamed by emotion,
our eyes remained glued to the
train of red taillights.

A night to remember

Thinking the unthinkable
Wishing,
Praying
Hoping the impossible
We cried
We sat—silent, glazed
Child.....Adult

We lost— on this,
a night to remember.
Drue Robinson

"Late again! That new inner ear micro clock works like the devil! It hasn't gotten me up on time yet. Good thing I put a suit in the change-me-quick last night." Hopping in the entrance side, I prepare myself for those steely tentacles to dress and clean me. "Ooo-hoo-hoo! That's one sensation I'll never get over. Oh, easy does it with the shoes. Nice. Nice. Great. Ready to go."

Late Again!

by Pedro Bicchieri

On the way out, I grab a flum of Vita-Juice, Prota-capsules, my micro-file, and an energy cell for my jacket.

The energy flow of the door cuts off automatically from the inside with pressure from the floor mat. However, from the outside a voice analyzer is used.

As I float down the Vacutube to street level, I am stunned by a familiar buzz which sounds convincingly like an angry electronic bumble bee. "Oh Jesus, it can't be." It certainly is, the micro clock implanted in my left ear is attempting to wake me up. Of all the lousy things to spend my money on, I pay to have a defective miniature alarm clock put in my ear. "Well, it should stop right...about...now."

As I come to rest on the low speed Move-walk, I pop the Prota-capsule in my mouth and chase them with a swallow of Vita-juice. "YUK! Must be vita-3. I could have sworn that I deprogrammed the vita-3 from the processor. Well, I had better move to the high speed Move-walk and try to make up some time.

"Damn, I know how the boss hates it when I'm late. The last time he almost fired me.

"Brrr, I knew it'd be chilly today. I'm glad that I decided to bring an energy cell for my jacket. I've just got to pop this little bugga in...O.K. Now the energy converter attached to my left sleeve should be warming up my...Ah, there we go. My jacket's tingling already.

"I really should stop at a

Video-tube and call ahead, but there's no need to get chewed out twice. Tough! That's what I'll tell him, big deal! So I'm late. Can I be on time every day? You think I'm perfect or something? Are you perfect? Of course not, just 'cause you've never been late in twenty-four years. I've only been late one, two, three...five times in the past ..year.. Maybe I'd better stick with the lost puppy dog look.

"That's what I'll tell him. Big deal! So I'm late. Can I be on time every day?"

"I've got to review those cases from yesterday. Hmm, I'll just put the micro-file in my mini-cassette and out comes the data. Presto! What? Nooo. Damn! Well this is obviously not my day. I had a premonition of something wrong today when my Micro-clock failed to wake me on time, and now I've got a Micro-file of "Bonnie-3 and the Bambuzzels".

Well, finally, there she is, the Flishter, Pinkham and Walden Law Firm, Inc. The fourth tallest building in San Clemente."

As I walk up the steps I realize that something is most definitely wrong but am unable to place it.

"What! It...I mean...how could it be locked?

"Oh, shoot! It can't be! Damn it, it's Sunday!

Death is a mystery, but much of life is not. Allowing something that a person knows nothing about to destroy the enjoyment of life is a sad waste. I realized this one summer ten years ago when the fear of death almost took the experience of life away from me.

"You're too young to worry about that. Go to bed and get some sleep. You're just tired." My mother's words were meant to comfort me. They did not. The words were hollow. They held no answers. Far worse yet, what she said was not true. I was not too young to worry. I was worried. I was not tired. How could I be tired when I was afraid of dying? Sleep is nothing but a small death anyhow. I didn't want to sleep. I didn't want to die.

I went to my room. Why argue about it? Did anything I did make any difference? In less than a hundred years I wouldn't even exist. As I got into bed, I tried to imagine not existing. It was impossible. No matter how hard I tried to hear nothing, see nothing, feel nothing, and, most difficult of all, think nothing, I could not become unaware. What I could imagine was an endless, empty, uncaring blackness. It was terrifying, but I was aware of it even as I tried to become part of it. I existed. "I won't be able to know how I will spend eternity until I'm there. Once I'm there, I won't care what I am not because I won't exist." This paradox seemed as unfair that night as it had a thousand times before. I tried to find who was to blame for the human tragedy of tasting life for a fleeting instant, then despairing and knowing no more. Was God to blame? There wasn't a God. If there was, I wouldn't feel this constant terror. I cursed God anyhow. Maybe nature was to blame. Man was a freak who had evolved too far and become aware. I cursed nature. My list of creatures and concepts to blame had grown long by that

summer night of my eighth year.

My terror had begun early in the summer of 1972. One listless day in June, while I was kicking up dust with my bare feet, I said goodbye to God. I didn't have any particular reason to do so. It just seemed foolish to worship a God who had created suffering, fear, ugliness, and excessively boring days in June. I was rude and

A Matter of Life and Death

by Todd Mildon

inappreciative in phrasing my farewell, like a son who tells his aging father to get out of his house and never come back. After saying goodbye, I walked to our open front door and into the kitchen. It was as boring inside as outside. "What's wrong Todd?" asked my mom. "You look like you feel sick."

"No, I feel fine," I lied. Actually, it was a physical as well as mental shock to tell God to get lost after a life of unquestioning belief.

Later in the same day, it occurred to me that death was the end of existence. The more I thought about it, the more it bothered me. This anxious anger caused me to stop enjoying what I didn't want to lose—life. The sky soon seemed heavy and blackened. The air wasn't worth breathing. Trees were wilting and decaying in the noisome summer heat. They were dying or dead like everything else. My outlook darkened to the point where nothing was worth doing. I didn't want to talk to anyone. I didn't want to think. "Do you want to tell me about something, Todd?" My dad thought that something was wrong.

"No, I'm fine," I answered.

Why did it matter to him what I was thinking about, anyhow?

"If you find out you do, just tell me," concluded my dad as I walked away from him. His attempt at reassurance angered me. It was ridiculous that he should think that he could help me. There was no help in the universe for mankind. Mankind shouldn't even be. "Man lives for a while and dies. Why does he get only a few years of life to enjoy? I might as well quit right now." With this thought I went to my room and fell asleep.

I woke up a few hours later. It was the time of evening when shadows lie coolly over sun warmed ground. Something was different than it had been when I went to sleep. I couldn't quite grasp the change. Was the air sweeter? Maybe the sound of the night-time birds was clearer than usual tonight. Suddenly I realized the difference. I was enjoying the air and the sounds of the evening. My despair was not gone, but it was going. I was beginning to see the irony of my feelings before falling asleep. I hadn't wanted to die because I would stop experiencing the events of life. But the fear and anger resulting from this fact had made me hate what I didn't want to lose. No force of will from myself was causing my change of composure. My anger was fading as though by itself.

I jumped out of bed. A wisp of the evening breeze flowed through my open window. It carried the scents of summer. Grass, leaves, water, and warm earth were all outside, waiting for me. I walked through the kitchen in the final golden glow of the setting sun. As I stepped through the front doorway, my mother's voice quietly followed me into the cool evening air. "How are you feeling, Todd?"

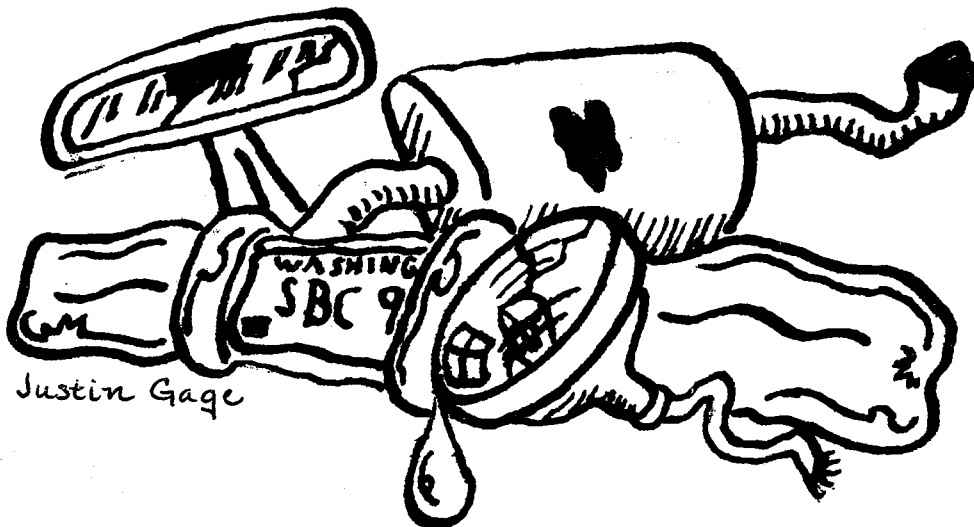
"Fine," I answered after a deep breath. With that, I walked off into the approaching night to get acquainted with the summer.

Lament for a '69 Galaxy

Oh, what a car you were.
Your V-8 shiny and humming,
Your whitewalls rolling and thrumming
In those halycon days of yore.

But time rolls on, though terrible,
And with your rust-spotted, chipping paint,
The coughing, choking sounds you make,
Someday you must make way— for a Camaro!

Justin Gage



Tessie

My sister,
the cow
at lunch.
Her brown cud
of chocolate
in gnashing bicuspid.
MOOOOO, she's done.
Cloven hooves
carry her to
A greener pasture.

Lauren Smith

The alarm
Buzzes me awake
I dart for the shower—
A signal
In my mind
“What day is today?”
I chuckle aloud;
My electric blanket
Still warm as I
Crawl back into bed
And dream of sweet things—
It's Saturday!

Donna Meyer

Routine

Get up, it's 6:15, you're late!
Hurry! Too late, no breakfast, have a beer.
Drive, drive, drive. Hurry!
Drive, drive, drive. Hurry!
Drive drive. Hurry up! Click.
...three car pile-up on fifth, stall on....
Drive drive.
Drive,drive,drive,drive,drive.
8:36, you're late, plane's ready, look terrible, grab a beer.
Wake up, we're there, missed lunch, have a beer.
Sweat, sweat. "Yes sir." Sweat. Sweat. "No sir."
Sweat, sweat. "Thank you sir." Need a beer.
Hungry, dinner, congratulations, drink, drink.
Meal, drink, drink, drink, 10:00, drink.
Hi Howard! Been years! Let's have a beer.
Have a beer, have a beer, have a beer, have a beard, have a bread.
One for the toad, er, road.
Road? Where? Ohhhh!
Drive, drive,drive,drive,drive,drive,drivedrivedrivedrive.
Flash, flash, flash.
Gum, quick! Gum, chew, chew.
Scribble, scribble, scribble. \$80.00.
Drive, drive.
2:00 a.m., late, come to bed, drink.
Tired, tired.
Sleep, sleep.
Get up, it's 6:15, you're late!

Brad Funk

The dipsomniac

Phil Klucking



Loyalty

by Mathew Cleman

Scot awoke to the rooster's crowing. Sliding out from between rough wool blankets, he slid a hand under his bed and captured his leather boots.

Several minutes later, Scot was ready: plaid cotton work shirt, old jeans, and his tightly-laced boots.

When he opened the door to his small farm house, sunlight streamed into the sparsely furnished room, illuminating the framed photograph of a forested river. The warmth on the young man's face and hands was invigorating.

Walking around the house and whistling, Scot thumped his knuckles on the wall in time with the rhythm of "Three Blind Mice." He reached the little pen where he kept Lucy and Linus, his two pigs. They grunted happily as he scratched their heads, but they were more pleased by the wonderful concoction he splashed into their trough.

His work there completed, Scot went on to what he'd wanted to do ever since coming home from the hospital. He sauntered across the uneven ground, stumbling once on a clod of half-frozen earth, to the stable.

The close smell of horse wafted out as he undid the latch and pulled the wide door open. After entering, he closed it behind himself.

It had been a long time, but Scot remembered where the saddle was, hung over a sawhorse in the corner. He carried it over to Francis' stall and settled it automatically on the horse's broad back.

"Come on, France. Ready for that ride?" Scot asked aloud.

Leading the horse into the larger area of the stable, Scot cinched up the straps and, patting Francis on the neck, walked him to the door.

Reaching out with his foot, Scot kicked open the door, just for the pleasure of making it slam against the outer wall.

Scot swung up on Francis' back and gently kicked his heels inward.

The horse knows the way, he thought to himself. Francis' hoof-falls changed from the dull thud they had had on loose ground to the more familiar clip-clop of a well-used trail. Scot smiled. Francis knew where he was going.

A cool breeze arose, moving among the pines like a lonely sigh. Somewhere ahead, a bird sang in long, trilled notes.

For an hour Scot rode, thrilling to the sounds and smells of the forest. He half wished that the ride could continue, but when he heard the low giggle of Jarvik's Careek, he changed his mind.

Francis came to a halt, and Scot slowly dismounted. He felt both joyful and sorrowful about coming.

Jarvik's Creek was wide enough to be called a river, thirty or forty feet across, but shallow. Scot stood on a gentle slope carpeted with grass right down to the creek. Across the creek the ground rose steeply, carrying the forest up to a ridge and beyond. The gurgle of the rocky river seemed crystalline, filling the little valley with cheerful laughter.

Thoughts of Katherine welled up inside him. Squeezing his eyes shut, Scot stumbled toward the creek until his hands found an old willow standing near the water's edge. Brokenly, he fell to his knees and touched the smooth stone cross that marked his wife's grave.

Tears fell onto his hands, and his shoulders shook violently.

"Kathy! Oh, God, Kathy!" he gasped. Furiously, he threw himself away from the grave and stood facing back toward his horse. He'd thought he was done with all his sadness. After all, it had been over a year since her accident. . .

They had been so happy for the four months of their marriage,

growing some of their own food to help stretch the income from Scot's photography business.

Every Sunday, Scot and Kathy rode out to Jarvik's Creek for a picnic. Sometimes they waded the creek hand in hand, just for the pleasure of being together.

Then came the day she drove to town for groceries, and never came back. Crossing a street, she had been hit by a young girl in a pickup and killed.

Scot buried her himself at their favorite place. He often had visited the spot afterwards, refusing to move out of their isolated house in spite of, and because of, the memories it held.

Tiredly, he climbed into the saddle and let Francis walk home.

It was already cold when he got back to the house. After putting his horse in and finishing the other jobs that needed to be done, went back into his house.

Taking a piece of wood in one hand, he opened the wood stove. As always, his body cringed slightly.

"You should move to town, rent an apartment. Be where someone can check on you," the counselor had said.

But he wanted to be near Katherine, he had answered.

"Be realistic. Frankly, I don't know how you managed as long as you did after her death. And now, after your accident, running even such a small place as yours just isn't possible."

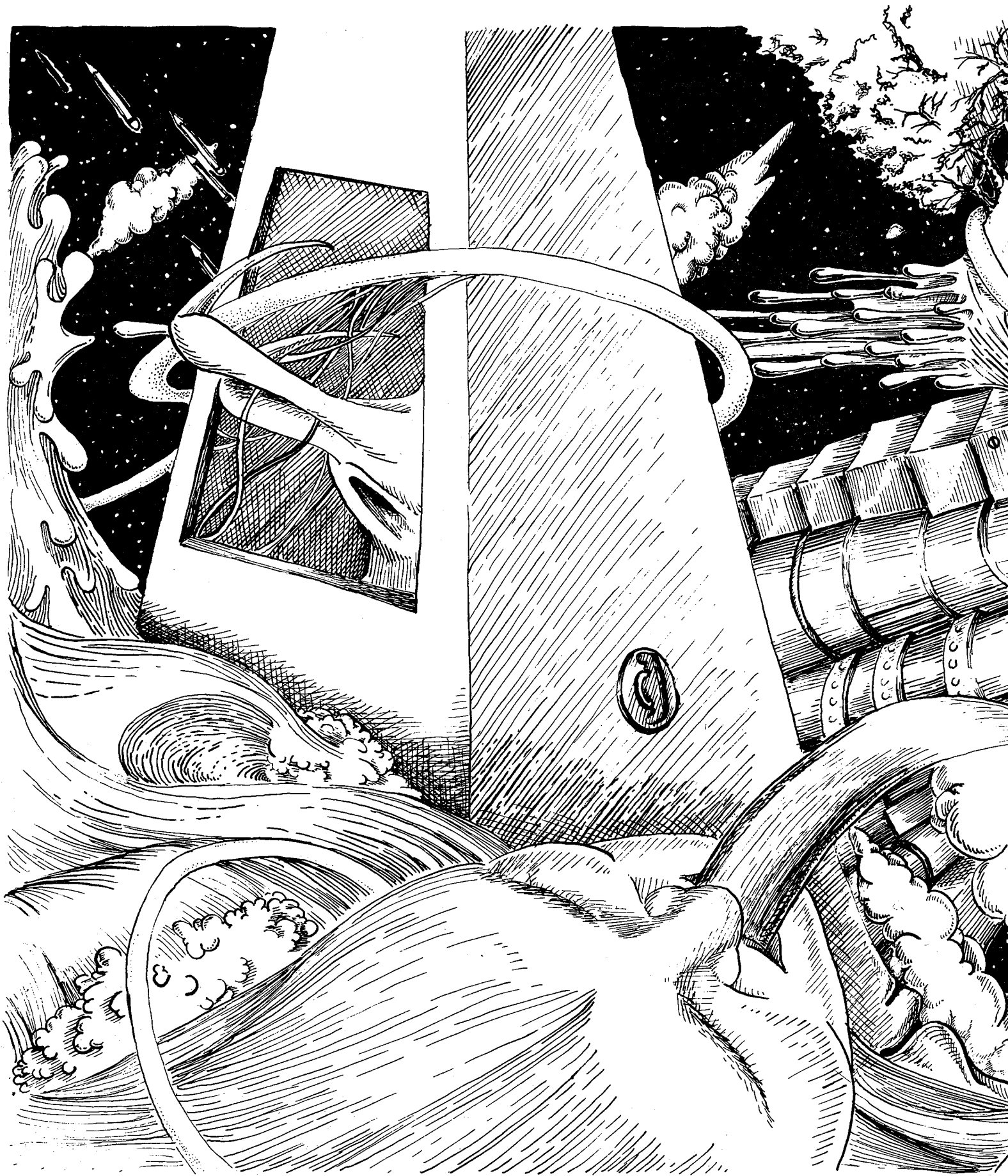
But he'd made it possible. It had been hard for awhile, but he'd made it. He hadn't deserted Kathy.

Dropping the wood into the stove, for a moment Scot remembered the blast of fire, the searing light, the smell of his cooked flesh, and the pain--oh, the pain!--from the night he'd opened the stove too quickly, and the flames had lashed his face.

From the shelves on the opposite wall, Scot selected a book and sat down to read.

Yeah, I showed them. I wouldn't leave Kathy, he thought.

He pushed the black glasses up his nose, and his fingers began to skim the raised dots in his book.





The dream realized

I'm sitting by a large picture window. I think maybe I'm drawing something. And all of a sudden, I see a flash out of the corner of my eye. There's not any noise, I think maybe I read that somewhere in a book.

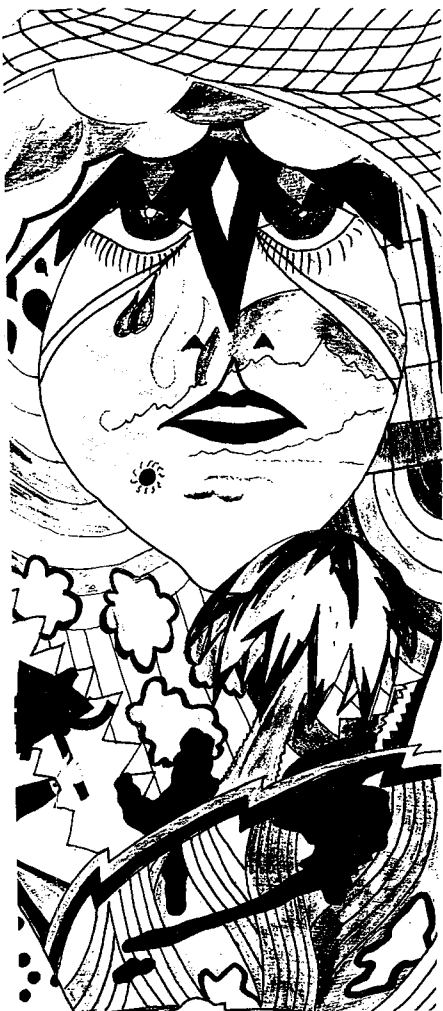
It's just so fast, I can't even compare the speed to anything, and I'm thrown on the floor, against the far wall. It's hotter than anything I know either. I feel like all my bones are broken, and every muscle torn apart. The pain is just awful.

Maybe I black out or something, but the light is over. I feel dead, but I know I'm alive because I hurt all over. Maybe I'm wishing for death. I can't see anything moving, it's all dark. The ground is dark and hot, and the air is hot too.

This isn't the strategic center for anything, I think, so why did it happen here? And then I think: maybe that was the last one of all; maybe I'm the last one alive. That's ridiculous, there were peace talks being planned just yesterday. There was a proposal for a freeze on Nuclear Weapons production somewhere in the House or Senate, this can't have happened.

This is utterly insane. I'll just lie here until I stop hurting and wake up.

Allison Radke



Mark Pickerell

I don't know if I'll stand the heat,
This crippling, cruel and sudden wave.
Exhaust and noise rise from the street.

Electric fans are such a treat,
But it's a simpler wind I crave.
I don't know if I'll stand the heat.

Sleeping naked 'neath one sheet,
A sweaty, restless nighttime slave.
Exhaust and noise rise from the street.

Bare legs stick to the hot car seat,
I may prefer an early grave.
I don't know if I'll stand the heat.

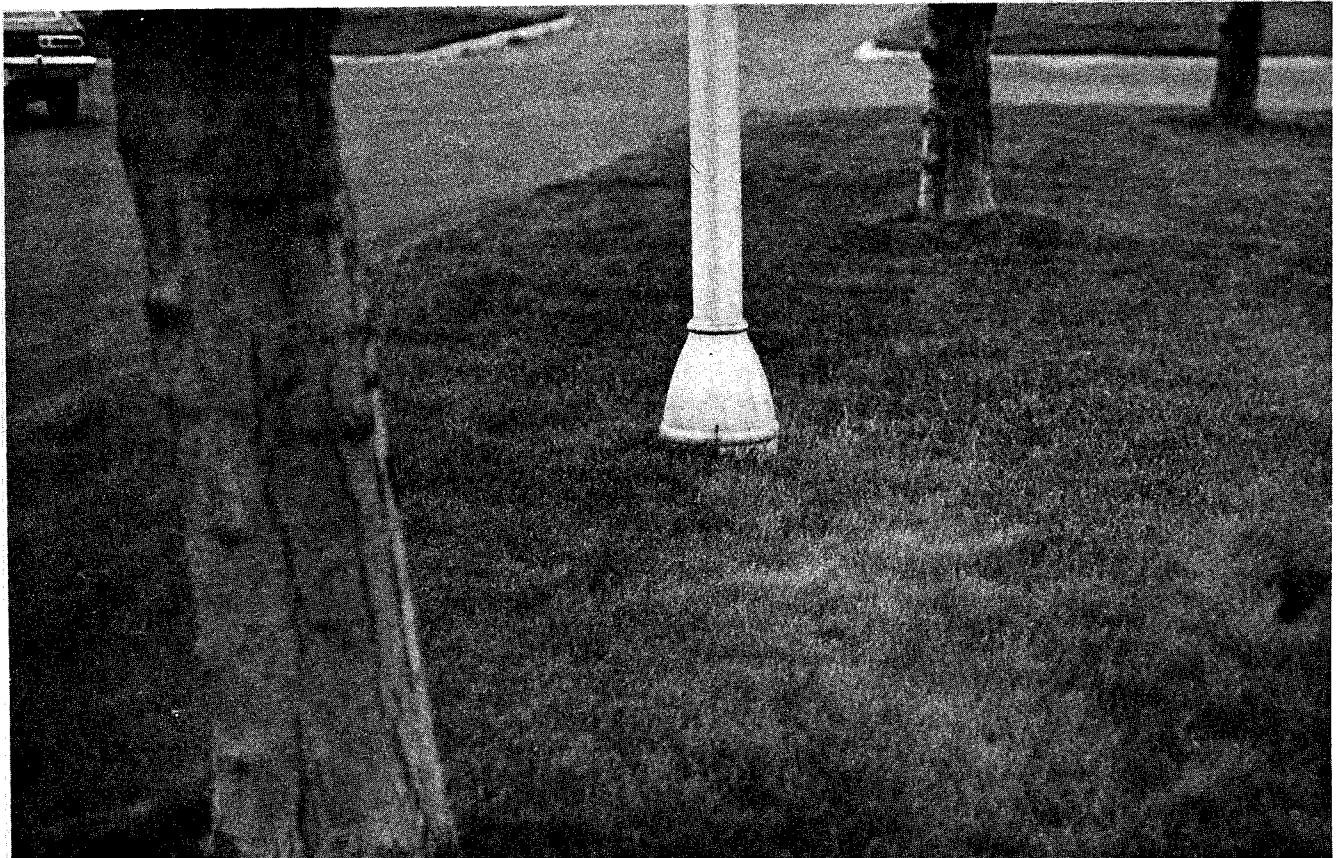
Beware of spoilage, milk and meat,
And other foodstuffs you may save.
Exhaust and noise rise from the street.

I can't go on, I must retreat,
A cooler path up north I'll pave.
Exhaust and noise rise from the street,
I don't know if I'll stand the heat.

Lauren Smith

Heat wave

Michael Fern



I had gone over to the KOA because Will and I had a health paper to write. When I got there, though, we decided it was too nice a day to spend working on school work, so we donned our swim trunks and walked over to the pond across the road. As we walked along the path that skirted the lake, he told me about a rope swing over on the far side.

"No, it's not too bad. I'll go first, but you can't back out after I've gone."

I waited until we got to the swing to commit myself. It did not seem too bad, so I agreed to his terms. He climbed up the tree and I swung him the rope.

seemed rather pleased about my fiasco. He just smiled and told me to climb up higher on the tree and grab higher on the rope next time. On Will's next try, his feet hit the water, so we were again on the same level.

After swinging on the rope for about half an hour and having tried about all the variations we could think of, the rope got a bit tame. We gazed up to where the rope was attached. Thirty to forty feet above the lake, the rope was tied to an overhanging limb.

"You want to jump from there?" I asked, feeling like I had the upper hand this time.

The Tree

by Jim Miller

"When you jump," he advised me, "make sure you climb up high enough so that you don't hit the water on your outswing."

Out he sailed, then at the apex of the rope's path, he released his grip. He continued to soar up and out for an instant, then began his descent towards the calm, unbroken surface of the lake. He hit the water, disappeared for a few seconds, then surfaced.

"How's the temp?" I questioned.

"A bit cold, but not too bad."

He swam to the shore with the rope.

"Your turn," he said with a grin.

"Just hand me the rope," I answered, with a false air of confidence. I climbed the tree and Will tossed me the rope. It looked a lot higher from my new perspective. I tightened my grip and jumped. I fell freely for about three feet, then was abruptly jerked when the slack in the rope came to its end. My feet hit the water, slowing me to a very unrespectable speed. The crest of my course was far less dramatic than that of Will's. I swung back towards the tree, and dropped from a rope that was almost at a standstill. I meekly swam back to the shore. Will

"Sure, if you go first."

We decided that if one of us jumped, the other would have to follow or forfeit five dollars. We figured that this was enough of a penalty to ensure that if one of us jumped, both would. I started up the tree, to see just how bad it was.

A few feet past our swinging point, the trunk began to narrow considerably. A breeze came up, causing the tree to sway. This was enough to make me throw my arms and legs around the trunk. I inched my way to the limb, and climbed out on it.

I was fairly secure sitting there on the branch with my back against the trunk, and the view was good, so I just sat there for awhile. Will seemed a bit worried that I was going to go through with the jump, so he started calling up to me that I didn't have to jump, and that it would be okay if I climbed back down. I wasn't about to climb down after making it this far. I inched my way along the branch to a good jumping spot. I closed my eyes and counted to three. I opened my eye and was still crouched on the branch. Something had obviously gone wrong. I tried this procedure a few more times, and finally it worked.

At first there was only a strange feeling of nothing being

under my feet, but as I accelerated, my stomach shot up through my throat and hit the top of my mouth. Hitting the water at this speed made the soles of my feet sting, but this was a minor price to pay to end that horrid feeling of weightlessness.

I swam to the shore, hearing Will cuss me out, but I was smiling; it was now his turn. The anticipation of his upcoming jump had Will pretty nervous, but there was no backing down now. He would have not only lost face had he not jumped, but also five bucks.

He started the ascent, but did not make it to the top the first time. Some people were swinging on the rope, and that made the tree shake. He climbed back

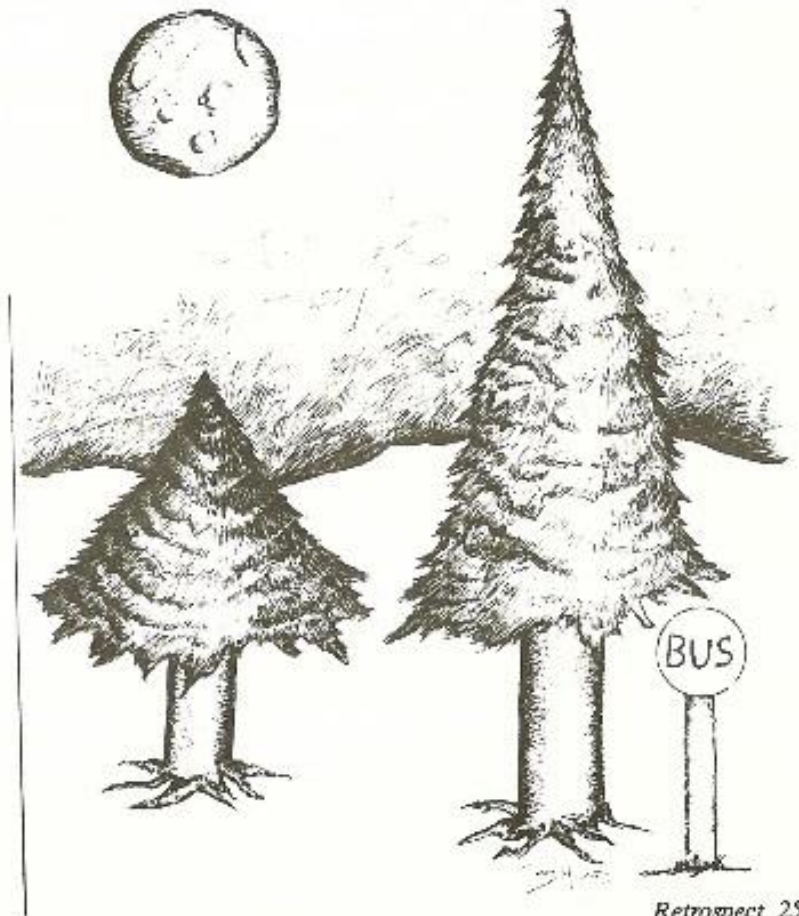
“After a few minutes of getting up his nerve, he jumped. One expressive word was yelled throughout his fall. But, it was not suitable for print.”

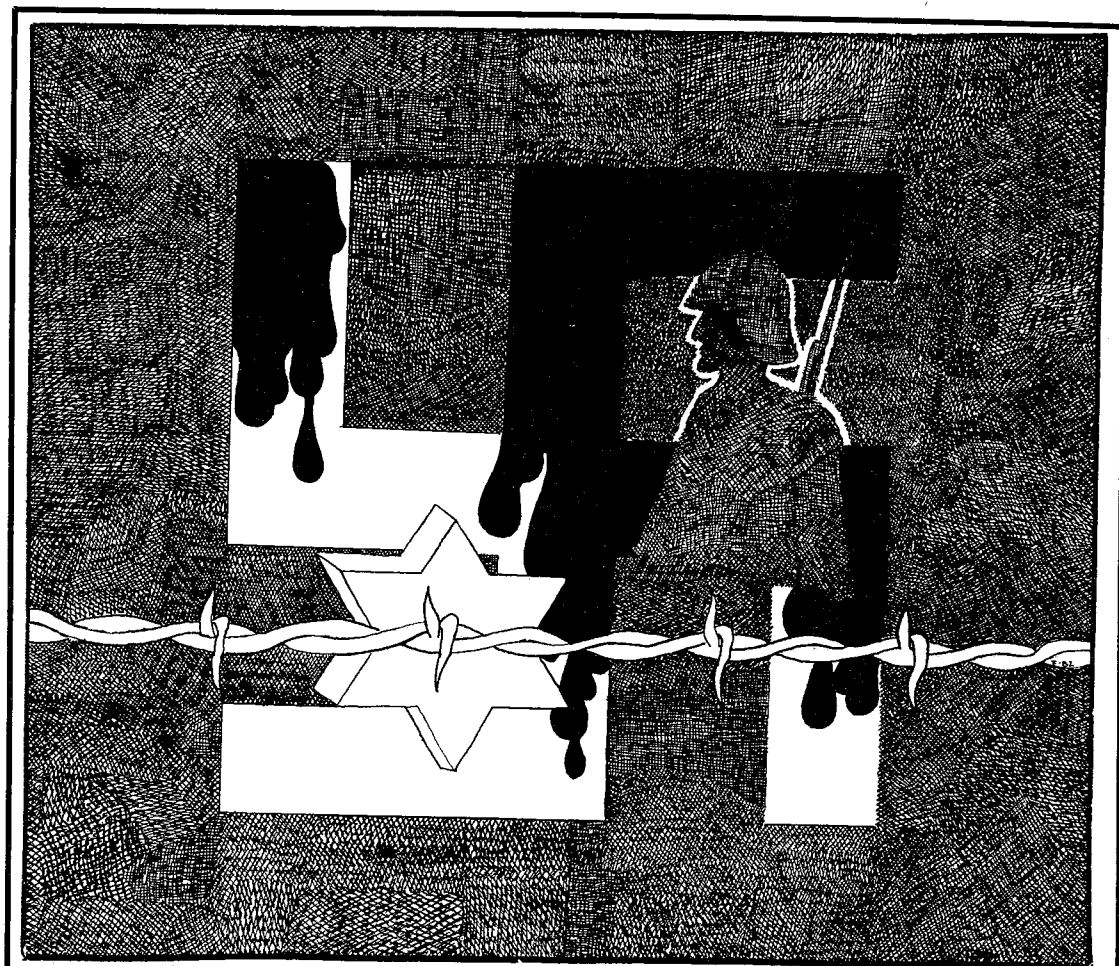
down and waited until the swing was not in use. Again he started his perilous journey.

He made it to the limb and climbed out. After a few minutes of getting up his nerve, he jumped. One expressive word was yelled throughout his entire fall, but it was not suitable for print.

We both realized, only after we had already jumped, how very closely our escapade had paralleled an episode in the book we were reading for Junior Lit. This book was *A Separate Peace*. Fortunately the similarity stopped here; neither of us ended up breaking a leg.

The wind was starting to blow and it was beginning to get dark, so we decided we'd get started on our health assignment. We were both pretty pleased with ourselves and each other. We had conquered the tree. It no longer seemed so tall and ominous. Now we had another task at hand: to see if we could handle our health paper with the same proficiency.





To the Memory of
The Six Million, the Survivors, and Those who
Fought Back

Toni Fairchild

War games

In the background is a picture,
he sits staring at her litter.
She says to face it with courage,
he remembers the surge.
The tanks and guns and bombs are
the removal of every human's despair.
This is no magnificent stage,
this is warring rage.

Gary Smith

Reflections

by Dewey Mee

I went into my room today and noticed that the warm September sun was shining brightly through the window. I sat down in a heavy oak chair and let my thoughts drift back to a warm September day almost exactly like this one but nearly twenty-three years earlier. The last vestiges of summer were trying to cling to something as many students, including me, were filing into the school to begin our last year of formal education. It was also the year that I finally decided to be nice to Philip Harker.

Philip Harker was a boy that I'd been going to school with since kindergarten but for some reason I had never been very nice to him. Now, either out of guilt or want, I was going to begin to make a conscious effort to win Philip over and become his friend. Actually, I think it was more out of guilt, because my horrid treatment of Philip had been on my mind heavily the past summer and bothered me a lot. But all my attempts failed. It wasn't my fault. It was just too late and we were both too old. Philip had developed other friends and interests that were way beyond me since I had last conversed with him in any intelligent manner. Still, I tingled inside greatly whenever he would so much as say a few words to me. I loved to watch him from a distance. And whenever I did, I would always cry inside myself.

"Philip," I would say to myself, "I see you now from my limited frame of reference. Looking at you is like staring inside a blurry goldfish bowl. I see all that you have, and it looks pretty good. I'm just sorry that I was never your friend. You seem to have your life in perfect order. But I wonder if you are suffering from the same pain as I am."

I wonder why I strived for the things I did then. I have no love, respect or loyalty for the school, and I despised the social pecking order of the place. Why did society place so much importance on school. I wonder how the people with a 4.0 grade point average or the girl who seemed to be every

boy's date to the prom are fairing today. They are probably nowhere. So why did I want so much to be a part of it? My lack of popularity may have had something to do with it. Everything I saw came in pairs. Even the underwear I bought in department stores came in a package of two. I was also frustrated by my inability to sexually attract a young girl of, perhaps, say, seventeen. I think what it all boils down to is acceptance. I never had it then, and I've never had it in all the forty years that I've been living on this earth. That's why, as far as Philip Harker was concerned, whenever I saw him in an isolated incident with his friends, such as eating an apple or performing some other trivial exercise I would start to lament.

You fill my thoughts day and night, now Philip. I become despondent when I think of all the chances I had to become your friend. I wasted all of them. What a wasted life!

"God! Oh God," I cry.

I think about Him a lot too. His existence is the universal question. I wonder what would happen if he were proven to be a hoax. What would all the people who believed in Him do? What if they were right and I was wrong? How frightened I would be! My mother always said that the most important thing to have in life was salvation.

My mother thought she knew everything about me but she didn't. She was very far from the truth. In fact, Mother didn't know anything about me at all. It is strange how a woman who took such excellent care of me, the mother that I both hated and loved, could be so totally alien to her son's inner being. She always tried to second guess me too. I abhorred that! I hate anybody who tries to second guess me. A couple of guys did that to me at school all the time. They all thought that I was so deliriously funny. So I let them believe that. I wonder what they would say if they knew that I came home from school every day, locked myself in my room, and cried until my eyes got sore.

Whatever happened to all my heroes? I have come to the sad realization that they are dead now. My mother said that they would all go the route of booze, sex, or drugs someday and she was right. Were all those people on the movie screens acting out of my life up there? Was I acting out theirs? Or was my life merely an extension of their own? It was hard to discern anymore.

Back in the present a trick of light made it appear as if some of my old friends from high school were sitting on the floor of my room. It was one of those weekend parties that I was infrequently invited to. We were playing a game of spin the bottle. My mind shifts back to the present and all my friends disappear like butter dripping off pancakes. Where are all of you now that I need you. I sit on the bed and silky tears start to fall.

I try to make it to the door to escape. I cannot find the knob. My head hits the wall and I slide down it almost lifelessly. I drift into unconsciousness for an unknown number of hours.

When I awaken, I discover a huge gash at the back of my head. There is also blood on my bedroom door. How could it have gotten there? Then I remember an old hymn that I used to sing in church when I was a little boy.

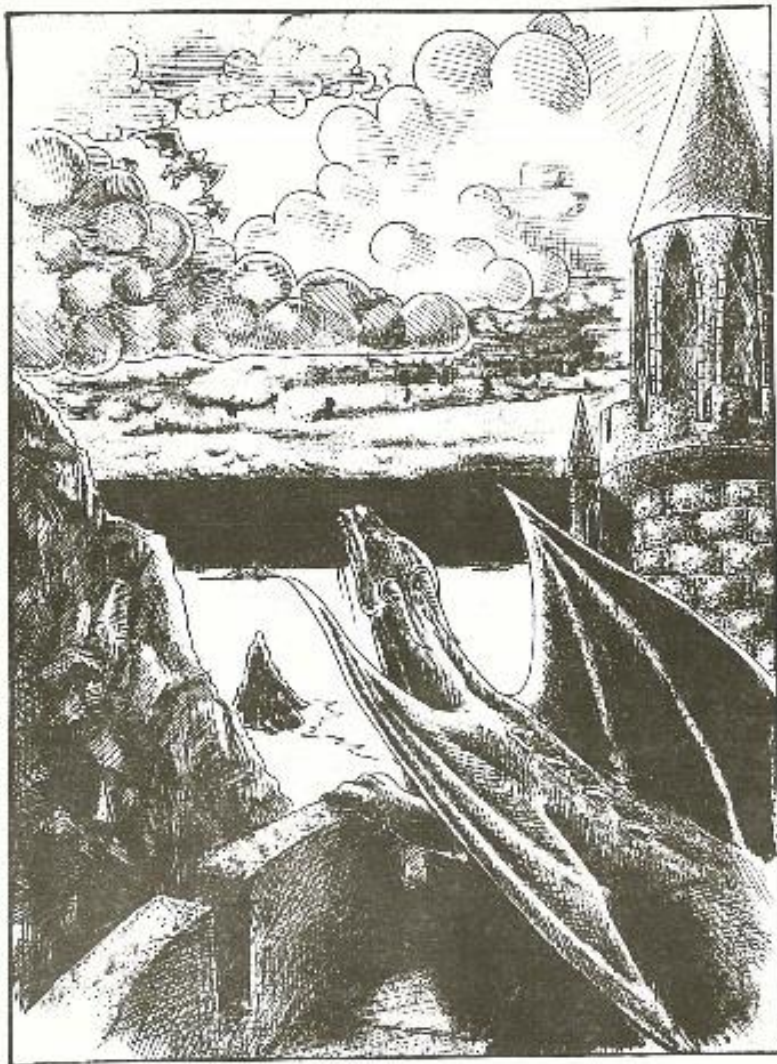
"Are you washed in the blood?
In the soul cleansing blood of
the lamb?
Are your garments spotless?
Are they white as snow?
Are you washed in the blood of
the lamb?"

That was it! My mother was right! Here I had found my salvation! I washed my hands in it. I wanted everything in the room to be saved, so I started to spread the blood all over the walls. Suddenly I stopped and fell on the floor. My right leg began having a spasm. I wanted to stop it but I couldn't. I started screaming inarticulate language. After the spasm subsided naturally I returned to my perch by the bedroom door.

Momentarily, I heard the screen door to my house being opened. Some old lady began shouting rather loudly. Through the heavy thick door, I guessed that the voice belonged to my next door neighbor, Mrs. Mallington. I'd only seen her once or twice, but we had never been on very good terms. She was screaming all manner of dirty words, undoubtedly intended for my hearing them. Then the old witch picked up my phone and I heard her dialing some number. I wanted to knock the receiver from her hand and rip the telephone out of the wall, but I was powerless to stop her. I heard Mrs. Mallington saying, "He's saying all sorts of weird things and disturbing the peace to boot . . ."

In what seemed like a matter of minutes, a group of men burst into my bedroom, invading my beautiful edifice, my private domicile. They were all rather young looking with blond hair and muscular bodies. They put a funny looking jacket on me and I couldn't move my arms or legs. I fought, and kicked, and screamed, but the men kept saying that they were going to take me to somewhere very nice.

I've redecorated my room now. The walls are very soft to touch. They're almost like clouds. I kept the jacket the men gave me, and I wear it all the time. I spend my days curled up in a little corner by the wall with my knees sitting on my chin because it feels like being back inside my mother's womb. The walls are so soft! I find great comfort in knowing that I did all this for my good old non-existent friend, Philip Harker. I'm waiting for him to come and visit me today. Or will Philip become a permanent resident in my new room also?



Kristi Green

In the fading blackness
Before the morning light,
The power of our madness
Reveals a newer sight.....
For living creates power,
Expressed in all we do,
Orange rage and purple calm
I now relate to you.....
I've seen all types of strangeness,
That live within this world,
The angers we feel for others
Against ourselves are hurled.....
Yet for the love of others,
We all know this is true,
"Love and pain go hand in hand,"
It often makes us blue.....
Delusions, laughter, madness,
The joys of the insane,
They laugh as they deal terror,
because they feel such pain.....
Enigmas surround everyone,
They hide from prying eyes,
The people say they understand,
But give out only lies.....
Yet hope there is for all who live,
And grow by living on,
To understand the earth is like
Watching the dawning dawn.....

Scott Howie

Retrospect 29

Shadows

in the Rain

by Fawn Martin

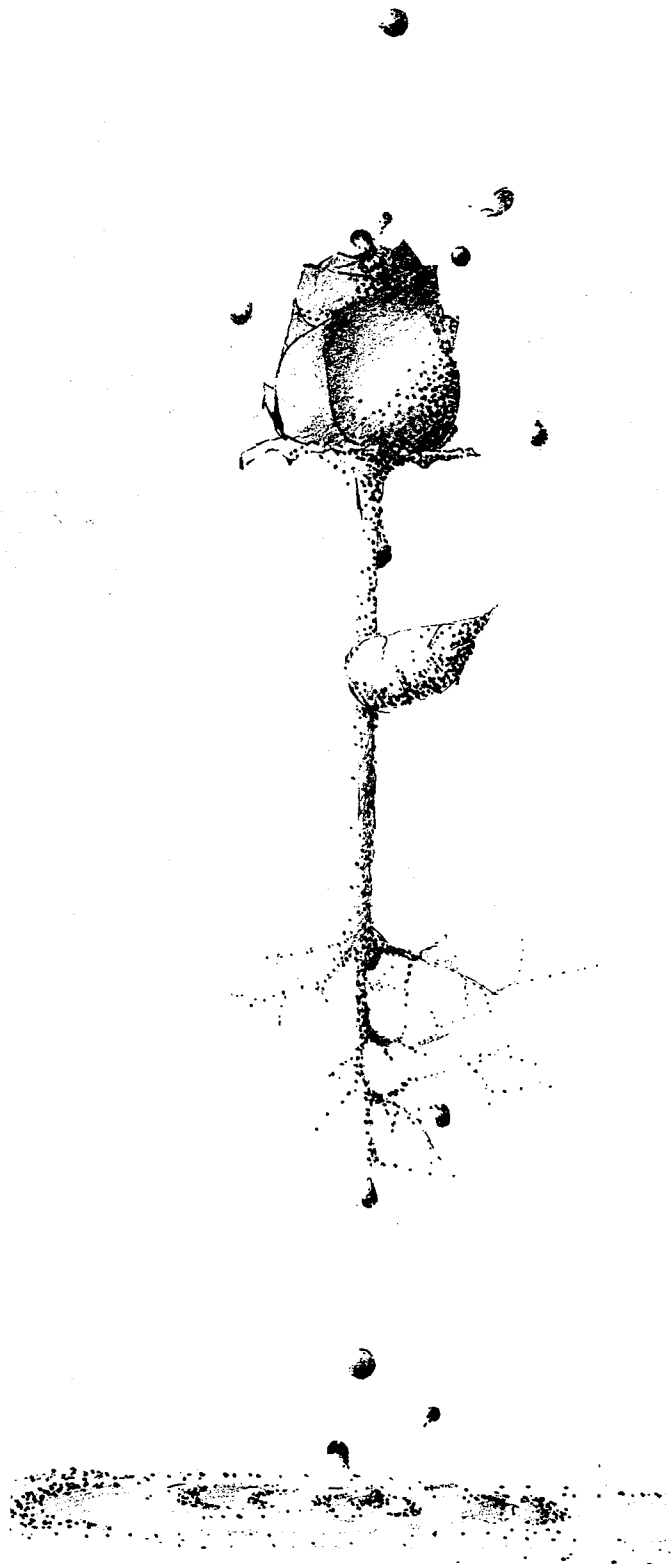
Hollow drumming sings the house to sleep. The rain beats upon my window pane as I lie in the darkness without light. With the icy, wet glass. Her voice, as soft as the pattering drops of liquid crystal and the gentle moan of the wind, sings me softly to slumber.

Here I am safe, hiding behind my facade of glass and stone, hidden only from sight from the shadows in the rain.

Along the darkly glistening streets, under a faded streetlight, they will gather together, with no sound but the rapping fingers of Lady Rain. Quickly they dissolve in the brisk, midnight air, and float up and down my street. They call in silence, knowing that one day I too will emerge from my quiet castle and become only a wet whisper and a dark and emotionless shadow in the rain.

Together we will dance an invisible waltz to the Lady's beautiful symphony, flying slowly through the heavy air and calling to those behind false-fronted homes to join our lonely parade.

But I am not yet what I know I soon shall be. For now I will lie quietly and listen to the crazy drumming on my ceiling, and dream of floating spirits, dancing rainbows in yellow lamplight, and shadows in the rain.



KH

Kim Hollister

I wonder

I wonder
When I see some things—
Like butterflies with painted wings,
Opossums hanging upside down
A turtle crawling on the ground.
A tall giraffe that's in the zoo
A bouncing hopping kangaroo,
A firefly showing off its light
When everything is dark at night.
Or a busy little honey bee....
I wonder...Do they wonder,
When they see me?

Donna Meyer

Verde es el color de la celosidad,
él nos hace enojar.
Rojo es el color de la rabia,
él nos hace triste.
Azul es el color de la tristeza,
él nos da esperanza.
La vida es como los colores
del arco iris - hay muchos colores,
y cada tiene sentido para usted.

Erin Spannagel

Colores de la Vida

The Actor

His overcoat is tattered and quite old.
The hat upon his head has seen its day.
His life is acting out the final play,
To which no tickets have been bought or sold.

The theatre reflects upon his youth:
Those golden hours performing on the stage.
Yet, past his prime, he now must turn the page—
The script entitled: "Broadways Solemn Truth".

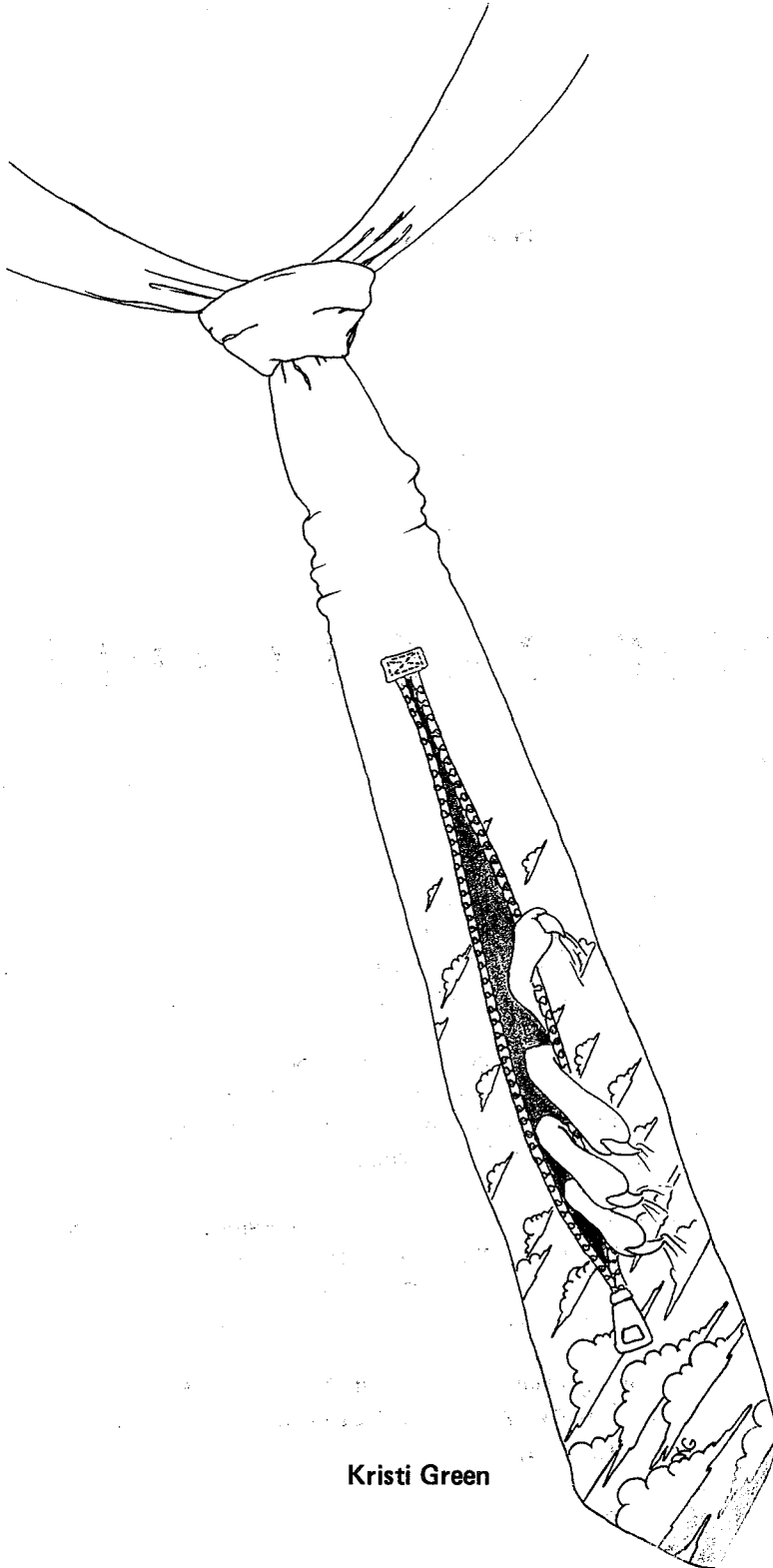
Bright footlights for his scene have since grown dark.
No lines are memorized, no props are set.
To each director he has paid his debt.
"That guy was great!" young talents now remark.

His long career has passed its brilliant peak—
Now Broadway's solemn truth runs down his cheek.

Drue Robinson

A Short Story

by Kristi Green



Kristi Green

Snarl stood on the radiator and wiped the window, creating a small hole to view the clamor of the street below. The large, quiet, empty dance studio stood in aging contrast with the sleek metal monsters, which ran like wolves around a crumbling castle.

It was already past ten, and the overcast sky glowed from the electrified metropolis. As Snarl moved to the windowsill, each of his sounds echoed in the depths of the room. Looking up, he noticed a light two stories up in the opposite building. It flashed, and then disappeared. He pulled open the ancient latch, his fingers turning orange from the flaking rust.

Jerking the window down, the cold air, noise and smog rushed into the room, flooding the placid emptiness with churning confusion. A dirty breeze slapped into Snarl's upturned face, and still he watched and waited.

In a moment, he saw the flicker reappear in the window opposite his. It was a candle, set upon the window's ledge. It seemed slender and white next to the heavy red bricks that framed it.

Snarl's eyes narrowed to slits to see the stinging city air. He cursed himself for not being quick enough to see the lighter of the candle. It burned away, a little defiant of the modern jungle it overlooked. The hours ticked by until the candle drowned itself in its own wax. He stared at the black hole of the window, feeling a cheated loss for reasons he could not understand. Anger boiled inside of him, because the candle had burned well, yet it committed suicide. Robbed of its light, Snarl stood on the ledge and flung an object from his pocket at the dirty pane a street's width away. It shot quickly through the air, and exploded into the glass.

The crash of the breaking window brought Snarl back inside. He cut off the city sounds, and locked the latch into place. The groaning floorboards carried him slowly to the door. He left without looking back.

On this day, April 22

Young as well as old come,
Noisy at first,
As they enter through the old, rickety gate.
With the changing of the atmosphere
They are silenced, without word or command.
They listlessly glance about
As they are obsessed with a feeling of sadness.

Each chooses a path for themselves,
Bravely venturing without the help of another.
Curious yet painfully hesitant,
One stealthily approaches my eight by four
Home in the ground.
I feel his eyes strain as words
Thunder in my ears, deafening.
"John Marshall Knoll"
"July 2, 1809--April 21, 1825"
He disregards the other written message.
My eyes sting, as do his,
And I struggle to see who it is.
I do not see, but as he passes over me,
I get a vision.
James Marshall,
Brought into this cruel world
Just one minute after me,
Saved, unlike me,
Just one minute before I left.

He was noisy at first,
But then silenced.
And he will forever be obsessed with a feeling?
Sadness, guilt, and guilt again.

Staci Hubbard

Bars and Stripes Forever

I am alone
In a room full of gloom
In a room of my own
A gloom of much room

Sleep is so rare
In this great house of Hell
Have not a care
There is nothing but smell

How we hate steel
Oh it hurts like the fire
It binds on my heel
Why must I pay the Liar?

Work in the mines
Our desire is to flee
Gets to our minds
We suffer and plea

Steve McGehee

by Mona Caesar

Whether it be the tropical greenery of a Florida spring, a sensational California summer, or the golden Rocky Mountains in autumn, nothing can compare with the awesome beauty of an Alaskan winter.

During this magical time, snow tumbles from a pure blue sky in large, sparkling flakes that quickly blanket a frozen lake and its surroundings. Apart from the muffled sounds of skates gliding, people laughing, and a fire crackling, the air is still and peaceful. It is here that the special qualities of tranquility and true magnificence are brought together.

A few feet away from the lake's frosty surface, a family has set up camp around a huge vigorously roaring bonfire. As snow falls into the glowing, spirited orange flames, the fire angrily spits, sizzles, and sparks, releasing a clean, crisp fragrance. The blaze continues to flash boldly while devouring the darkness, melting insecurities, and igniting a zealous sense of freedom and livelihood. Nearby, concealed by dense brush, a mother moose nuzzles beside her calf and noiselessly watches the visitors enjoy the breathtaking scenery.

Majestic, white capped mountains, lining the east side of the lake, stand tall and proud against an ebony background. The north end of the lake is cut short by a steep incline covered by lean black spruce and thick underbrush. Enveloping the entire area of the lake's circumference are towering snow drifts. Above, a dazzling aurora borealis displays a luminescent light show that radiates across the heavens. Spectacularly, the northern lights shine brightly in the dark sky as glowing waves of vividly intense lavender, azure, and pearly pink reflect off the clean, sparkling snow. Nowhere else on Earth is there a more beautiful example of unblemished purity and freedom.

FROZEN TIME

The night sun searches,
Ghostly illuminating
An owl perched alone.

My midnight owl

Jeff Moisan

Sonnet

Winter's Warm Cabin

Brown grass bend, bowing to the winter wind.
Loosing leaves, stay green trees, sing cold stars, dance.
Clear away, set my ore in silent trance.
Moonbeams sweep the dust, cobwebs of my mind.

Arrive silent time, yes my soul to find.
Fall white down, but no, my world to enhance.
Sernity, howl not tonight, sweet manna prance.
The past, warm remembrance, make me not blind.

Cold wind, from where are born the walls that keep.
Be still white dream, set not my mind to rage.
Cha from an empty cup, it's full, look deep.
Learning me patience which comes before age.
In my minds eye thro' colours bright I leap.
Rise light in May, set free from my warm cage.

DA DeBesschere

Someone whose face I've known—
But in his eyes,
—I'm lost....

Like a pool of cold blue water
—where ice is often formed—
It breaks me—
piercing my heart....

I've searched his face for answers,
But nothing is ever found—
Just a coldness that makes me shiver;
In a place where I used to be so warm....

Charlotte Riley

Haiku

Names are etched in desks;
Masterpieces of those who
Live for the others.

Staci Hubbard

He lived.

In the days of his youth
Man was innocent,
As was the world.
Like a blossom closed for
The night.
Man was sheltered.

He Lived

As the world entered the age of
Adolescence,
Man became curious.
He began to desire
Knowledge.
So began the fall.

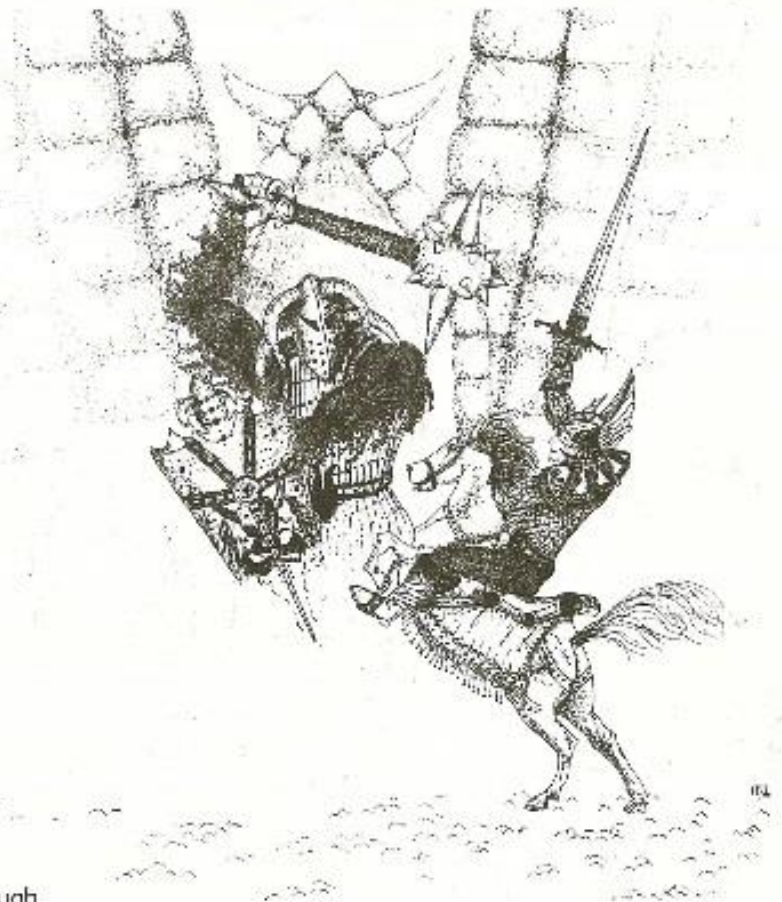
Some could see Him,
Some knew Him,
They loved Him.
He loved everyone.
I was one of them.
I knew Him, yet I did not
Begin to understand.
Faith.

Man's knowledge increased.
There was no end, it seemed.
I saw.
Man was swollen with modernism,
Like an over fed goldfish,
Ready to burst into nothingness
At any unknown moment.

Man was joyful yet
Pessimistic simultaneously.
A state of shock.
I knew.
I lived in great anticipation.
My heart filled with expectation.
I knew the end was nigh.
Hope.

Like the slamming of a good book
With a disappointing conclusion,
It was over.

They died.



David Lapan

Take arms It is time to battle
For our swift and mighty Lord
We've been in training long enough
Now we've learned to use his sword
Our numbers are not many
But our power is truly great
His love has made us conquerors
To deal the devil his fate

Now in the heat of fighting
Satan feels his doom
The twelve archfiends are cowering
Perdition starts to loom
The battles' almost over
We've the victory we fought
With hearts of fire we taught them
all
Diabolos knows what's hot

It's time to hang up our armour
Our battle rage grows cold
Our mansions have been prepared
Along streets of solid gold
We'll never again hear the call
Of the thundrous battle cry sound
The world's eternally peaceful now
Because we won the final round
Rick Hutchins

Armageddon

Quest for the Unicorn

by Phil Cutlip

I always dreamed of flying. Haven't we all? To feel the wind whip your face and body, to soar and plummet, and feel a laughing joy like none other: that is my dream of flight. I suppose I have flown, but speeding thousands of feet above the earth encased and protected in a metal shell is not in any way FLYING. To fly, one must sever bonds, not make more and more of them. One must leave the safety of the ground knowing that the only forces holding you suspended are the light canvas glider above you and the air itself. I would prefer it to be the wind only, but we mortals must still rely on devices for many things.

My yearning for flight first appeared to me during a seminar with a few of my students. I'm a professor of psychology at Western Colorado University, and I'm told I'm a pretty good teacher. We were discussing ambitions and their effects on a person, and when my turn to share came I unthinkingly blurted out, "To fly." Most of them understood my meaning, knowing of my obsession with hang-gliders. Needless to say, the reactions were varied. Some laughed, some stared, and some turned away. I could imagine their thoughts: "He's sixty-three years old. How could he think of doing that?"... "With that heart of his, he's lucky just to be alive." I had to agree with these imagined thoughts. Two years to go and I would be at retirement age, and only six months ago the fat sluggish muscle in my chest quite nearly killed me. After nearly a half a day of surgery, the doctors said I would never lead an active life again. Walking the block from house to classroom frequently left me breathless. But after the seminar one of the students, a young girl who hadn't spoken much, lingered and asked to have a word with me.

Her name was Marisa Poynt, and the things she said to me brought a new sunburst of light into my self-

pitying life. She looked disturbingly deep into my eyes and said, "I watched your face after you shared your dream with us. I saw the pain it caused you to think that it could never come about." I believed her, for there were tears in her eyes. "But Professor Linde, if you truly want this thing, you must remember that even though it may never come about, you must never lose hope." These words, heard so often, took a new meaning for me. She held my hands for a moment, then silently left the room.

And I cried for the first time in years. In years! That young girl had given some of her youth to me, and it brought tears of joy to my eyes. After a time, I realized I was holding a slip of paper. She must have left it there. Unfolding it, I read:

**Every man has a unicorn
he is predestined to hunt.
It is not necessary that he
actually find and slay this
beast, merely that he diligently
pursue the Quest.**

That was seven years ago. Since then, I've retired from teaching, but that day is still fresh in my mind. I've had a chance to do some writing and some thinking, and over the last few years my wife Ellen has become more and more the center of my thoughts. My memories of her have become more vivid, it seems, than before, if that is possible. The doctors say I have at least five more years, if I rest most of the time. But I must fly.

The clerk at the sporting goods store couldn't believe it when I told

him I wanted a hang glider with full body harness. "Look, up, Sir," he told me, "You're just too old for that. Why don't you try golf or something?" After much debating, he finally consented, and I had him help my secure it to my car. Then I began the short trip to Lanston Bluff, a tall cliff-sided monolith stretching seven hundred vertical feet. My car bumped and rumbled its way along the access road and I soon found myself overlooking a broad, sunlit green valley with with a backdrop of white-topped mountains. After enjoying a last glass of wine, I set about assembling my craft. Though I had never done it before, I had read through the procedure until it was a natural thing to do. Then I carefully buckled my self in near the knife-edge of the cliff, took a deep breath, and launched.

Now, here I am, looking down on the majesty of God's earth, with the wind roaring and whipping my face. My heart is roaring also, and I know that it won't hold up much longer, but I don't care. I've found my unicorn. I am flying.

*****The Unicorn poem used in this paper is from "The basic precept of the Unicorn Hunters." (Lake Superior State College).

Life

Heavy clouds and drowsy feelings
Come from yesterday's storm
There isn't anything appealing
In my life so without form
The Torrent of emotions
Flooding through my head
Reviews of my past notions
Of things I'd done and said
I see life through a stained glass window
A picture dark and bleak
Something inside has ceased to flow
It left me sad and weak.

It's time to stop refill the cup
I've let drain far down
I'm not quittin' I won't give up
I'm going to finish the round
Now I'll abandon this life forlorn
Depart my cold, dark tomb
I want to patch up pieces torn
Escape the formidable doom
I'm beginning over at the start
Time to be born again
I'm giving the lord my life my heart
New victories I will win

The window is dark no longer
The dreariness is gone
The picture is brighter and stronger
Of the death of a devil's pawn.
Yesterday's storm has lost it's power
To the rainbow of today
Dark clouds are now a beaming tower
Giving light to guide my way
I've broken out of death eternal
My future no longer dim
No fear of Flaming Inferno
Because I've given my life to Him.

Rick Hutchins

Edna Yeh



Tami Haberland

The great wall

A sand dune so high, a child so small,
Yet, that child's dream was to scale the
great wall.
She dug and she worked and she inched
her way up.
Struggling, struggling to reach the top.
She found at the end of her climb through
the sand,
a small grey rock whose warmth touch-
ed her hand,
but atop the rock, the same color of grey
lay a snake, coiled,
relaxed for the day.
She jumped out of fright and went
tumbling down
that great hill of sand, not causing a
sound.
Tears came to her eyes when she soon
understood that what was once conquered
now still stood,
like a second great wall to be climbed
again.

Chris Walker

Solitude glared in my mind.
Water lamps and moss shoes covered the lake.
I looked at the brick trees with the wet
Birds and followed the reed streets.
My canoe was an upside down umbrella
Floating between buildings of mist.
Wheels came with the dawn and left like
Night ducks.
Quiet cars with shiny chirps and bright
Quacks drove over the frog apartments with
Green televisions.
Glass bugs clinked in the metal grass like
Cold lightbulbs.
The pavement was clear and my paddle
Made stairs in the water.
It began raining bushes and insects got
Dressed.
Walls of mud sprang up and the concrete sun
Turned them into poles of fog.
Windless books were carried in ocean bags.
Fish bought glasses in alligator shops.

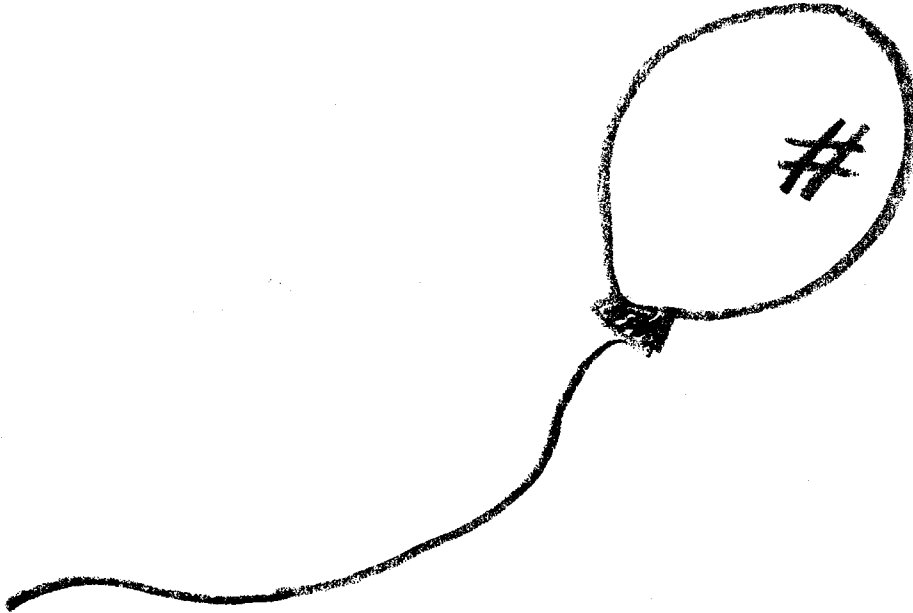
Jeff Moisan

The lake in my mind

Midnight imaginings

The darkened room,
down at the end of the hall,
is filled
with knights bold and
dragons daring.
With tender damsels,
their lives
for sparing.
And Vikings
strong with tempers
in a brawl.
I listen
through plaster now worn thin
and peek
when keys are absent
from keyholes.
When moonbeams shine
through laced curtains
all sounds
cease.
For then
is the time to determine
whether or not
that "klink" just heard
was the passing of silver sword
through fiery scale
or
ice thawing
in basement pipes.

Drue Robinson



Sadness

I have known the sadness of empty
chocolate ice cream cartons,
of the first spring mud on storewindow-
white tennis shoes,
of a cotton-candy blue helium
balloon rising on the wind.
I have known the sadness of rain
on Memorial Day.

Tammy Mildon

