

Retrospect 1997



Beyond Measure

photo by Rachel Width

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Retrospect

Retrospect is an anthology of the finest art, photography, poetry, short stories, and personal essays produced by the students of Ellensburg High School.

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UNTITLED

short story by Andy Arnold

As I hang up the phone after talking with my mother in Seattle, I can tell that something is changing, but I can't quite tell what it is. As I doze off to sleep I think about the people close to me. Family, and close friends are at the head of my list.

The next thing I know I am floating up in the air like an angel, two hundred feet off the ground, totally weightless. I don't have any feeling at all. My vision is weird. I can't see very clearly, almost as if I were in a bar with a lot of cigarette smoke everywhere.

Coming down the road is a pickup truck. It is kind of an off-white color; it almost looks like it was once white, but it just got too dirty over the years and it is no longer clean. The truck is a Ford, and has chrome bed rails down the sides, with a black, plastic bed liner. On the driver's side of the vehicle is a white toolbox that almost runs the length of the bed. It too looks like it has been through an awful lot of work.

As the truck approaches, I am able to see the driver, but I am not quite able to recognize him. He looks like someone that is really close to me, but I can't quite put a name to the face. As he gets out of the truck, he picks up some peaches out of the bins at the slab, and playfully throws them at a twelve-to fourteen-year old boy. I hadn't noticed the boy earlier. Looking at him I realize that the kid is me, just a few years younger.

The boy catches one of the peaches and throws it back at the man who drives the old Ford. As quickly as he came, he gives a quick wave, and gets into his pickup and takes off down the road. The boy climbs down out of the tree, and chases him, begging him not to leave, as if he will never see him again. Once he realizes that the man will not stop, he stops running and starts to walk back to the bins.

I feel someone shaking my shoulder, and I wake up. As I roll over, I see my friend's dad standing over me, asking me to come upstairs and get something to eat. I go upstairs thinking about my day's trip to Seattle to see my father in the hospital. As I reach the top of the stairs, a very close family friend is sitting on the couch in a nice suit and tie, and I realize that my father has died. As I think back to the dream I know that the man in the truck was my dad, and I was chasing him because I didn't want him to leave.

A couple days later thinking of that dream again, I might have been floating up in the air trying to get him to stop from leaving me and going to heaven, like I was trying to stop him from leaving me in his truck.

If

poem by Tad Forsythe

*You'll never understand, You never will
Do what You must, do what You will
I'll love You for it, You'll love Me
Then maybe You'll see how
Everyone hates Me as I do
The feeling is mutual so go through*

*I didn't wanna see, I didn't wanna go
But all life is just a show
You're like Them
To leave with no footsteps left behind
Emotions are just a bind
You think You're always right
It's just a game
But don't worry, if I'm gone it'll be exactly the same
if You see*

Untitled

"Hey pal. You okay?"

He opened his eyes. Through the fuzzy image that eyes tend to make when first seeing light of a new day, he saw a face staring at him. As his fuzzy vision cleared up, he observed the face in more detail. It belonged to a young bearded man in his early twenties. He wore a plain white T-shirt, now turned slightly yellow from his dank sweat. The man's light blue jeans were smudged with traces of dirt that matched the color of his hiking shoes.

As the man began to regain consciousness, he sat up and looked around. Surrounding him was a beach that seemed to go on forever, and an ocean that went on to infinity. It was a moist foggy morning, the sunlight only subtly breaking through the thin clouds above. The sound of sea gulls and a calmly rustling water imbued the air. The coast's common odor of saltwater and palm trees infused the nostrils of all who cared to smell.

The man in the white T-shirt spoke again. "I thought you were dead. Lying on the ground, you looked like you were ready for the vultures." The man on the ground started to wonder why the bearded fellow thought this, until he looked down upon himself. His arm was bruised with scratches and large cuts. His shirt and pants were torn and stained with blood. His right knee had a rather large gash in it where a slab of skin seemed to be missing. It seemed odd that with all these penetrations, he wasn't bleeding much anymore. Now the man realized his head was throbbing intensely. Reaching his hand up to it, he felt more cuts.

"So, what's your name? Mine's Roger, but my friends call me Rog." Roger looked down to the bloody pulp of a human, waiting for a response.

The man finally responded to Roger. "I am..., my name?" It wasn't until then that the man came to the realization that he couldn't remember anything about himself, nor could he remember how he had gotten to... wherever it is that he was.

The nameless man lay his head back on the ground, feeling the grainy sand on his neck moving to make room for him to rest. The clouds above him appeared to be breaking wider apart as the early afternoon sun glared at him, causing the man to squint. Then he closed his eyes and listened again to the sounds of the ocean, feeling the slight sea breeze as it hummed past him. He stayed motionless for several minutes, hearing light breathing, thinking the young man might run off. Finally, struggling to sit up again, the man looked at Roger and said, "You know what? I don't remember my name. I don't remember anything!"

short story by Tony Dal Maso

RUSH!

"Go, go, go," shouted the pilot. I pushed the gear pack over the edge and then bailed myself. Below, several red and white chutes descended to the ground. The updrafts were starting to get worse, tossing me around like a rag. I finally glimpsed the ground through the wall of smoke. I approached the trees at a suicidal rate, steering my chute from right to left. I hit the ground running so I could lessen the impact. The others were stuffing their chutes and breaking into the gear. My pack on my back, I grabbed a chainsaw and shovel and started to work.

The fire started creeping its way up to the backside of Henry's Ridge. We were on the other side. The smoke, drifting across the noonday sun created an eerie orange glow that fell upon the ridge. We were working in the clear. Mike and I started digging fire lines. The ground was dry and easy to dig in. Our yellow shirts began to turn a dingy brown from the floating dust. Cathy was ahead of the rest of the team, pulling debris from our path. The going was slow at first, but we soon found our pace. We cleared a trail ten feet wide and thirty feet long. Joe followed me, using a rake to pull the limbs and any material thing from the line. We were the last hope, the last line of defense between safety and disaster.

Overhead, the boom of the bombers drowned out any noise. The low rumble crept up the canyon, signaling us to take cover. The roar passed over and still we waited. Then came the rush. Tons of fire retardant came streaming down upon us and the on-coming fire. Without any cue, the team rose like one person and began working again. This lasted for hours, a repeated start and stop of our efforts.

After five hours of digging we took a break. The fire had apparently given its all, trying to climb that ridge and now was just burning itself out. The team sat and broke out the water. We savored our rest. We earned it. We dug, in the five hours, a trail nearly a mile and a half long.

"This sucks. We get up at three in the morning and fly four hours, to dig a ditch nearly two miles long for nothing. Man, the guys at Billings are going to hear about this," exclaimed Mike.

He got up and walked off, up the hill, mumbling something about how he was going to chew on someone when we got back to the base. No one really listens to Mike anymore. He always talks big, but does little. I lay back and closed my eyes. The hum of the bombers on the other side of the ridge created a sort-of monotonous lullaby. The whole group lay around exhausted from the work and lack of sleep. The sun was relaxing even through the smoke.

Then I heard it. Mike ran screaming into our midst. He was screaming something about the fire, jumping the ridges and burning around us. I stood and looked past the now asthmatic Mike, and saw the rush of flames barreling down the slope, around the box canyon and coming back up.

I ran, trying not to look back. I pushed everyone ahead of me and

screamed at them to run to the small lake below us. Our only safety was the lake, which lay half way between the fire behind us and the fire oncoming.

The roar of the fire enveloped me. Flames charged around me. I could see the flames all around us. My surroundings were a blur. The only thing I really saw was the rock ledge above the lake. There was no time to think. I hit the bluff and jumped, pawing at the air like an animal.

I swam to the surface, gasping for air. Thank God. We were all here. We floated for what seemed to be five minutes, trying to piece together what had happened and what we were going to do. All around us was fire. If we didn't think fast, we would die.

Everything was wrong. We weren't supposed to die like this. My eyes scanned all around, picking apart every and any possible place where we could escape. It all looked hopeless. Trees were falling all over. The fire engulfed everything. Our only chance was to make a run to the rock bluffs where we could radio for help. Everyone followed my lead. We hit the bank and started running. The fire had burned the underbrush and now focused on the larger trees and bushes.

I ran across the black ground, jumping flaming logs and dodging falling trees. The ground was so hot that the soles of our leather boots started to melt. I pulled my soaked handkerchief up over my nose and mouth. My eyes burned from the smoke. I glanced to my left where Cathy had been running and saw only flames. I saw her, lying under a fallen branch. I kicked it off and threw her unconscious body over my shoulder. The cliff was just fifty yards up ahead.

The wind, which had been blowing uphill, changed, directing the fire back down upon us. Joe staggered onto the rock ledge and looked up with a deathly pale face. Blood was streaming from his head. He collapsed to the ground. The radio had been smashed and the fire was bearing down on us fast. Our only hope was to jump. The ledge over-looked the Clearwater River Valley, nearly three-fourths of a mile below. I took Cathy's ring clamp on her belt and attached it to mine.

Mike couldn't hook up Joe, he was too heavy. The only way to get Joe off the mountain was to open his chute and let him descend alone. Joe's chute opened and pulled him away from the cliff, his limp body hanging in tow. I opened my chute and braced for the jerk. The wind caught my chute and tore me away from the cliff. I held Cathy close and prayed that the chute would help us both.

The trees started coming fast. I covered Cathy's head with my arms and closed my eyes and tucked my own head down. The limbs clawed at my body and at Cathy's. Finally we stopped. I cut the nylon cords which held us above the ground. We fell about four feet, but we were safe. The fire crews below took Cathy to the hospital and treated the minor burns and cuts Mike and I had received. Joe was dead before he hit the ground.

THE HOSPITAL and THE SEARCH

short stories by
Ryan Bollinger and Vonchi Pimomo

Johann awakes. Totally unaware of his location, he panics for a moment. Soon, however, he realizes where he is... a hospital room, with a curtain drawn all around his bed.

Very little light peeks through the yellowish curtain. It's not long, though, before Johann's eyes

"Why can't I feel my left leg?"

focus enough so he can see the nurse-call-button laying near his bed.

Grabbing the remote at once, the young man frantically pushes the button.

"Why am I here?" he thought to himself. Slowly it came back to him. That fateful night when he was running for his life, only to be struck down from behind.

A brunette nurse comes in the room, and slips past the curtains. "Oh, you're awake," she says in surprise.

"Why can't I feel my left leg?"

The nurse looks at him grimly as she turns on the light. There was nothing, nothing from the knee down.

Johann could not cope with this bitter shock to his system. He yelled at the nurse to "Get out!" as the tears welled up in his eyes. Soon he had rubbed them dry and, while looking around the room, noticed the nurse still hadn't left. She looked as though she had something to tell him, but couldn't put it in words.

"What is it?" he screamed at her.

"Your mother... Helga Schmidt..."

"What about her... speak dang it!"

"... she's the one that hit you with her car."

"What... well, where is she?"

"She, she had a heart attack when she saw you lying on the pavement. I'm sorry, she didn't survive."

"Good lord, no," he thought. "All this because of some crazy person in a Pinto. I must find out where this sicko is, and why he was chasing me!"

Through determination and sheer willpower, Johann managed to recover from his severe body trauma. After two months of being rehabilitated, Johann was ready. Ready to begin his search for the truth about that night, and possibly the secret he'd kept hidden from himself all these years (why does he black out so often?). As Johann began to hobble out the hospital doors, he thought to himself *I need a taxi.*

Steve found himself in a strange house lying down on a beat-up old couch. He looked around the room and saw pictures of himself with people he did not know and in places he did not recognize. He suddenly realized that he could not feel his left leg. He looked down and saw that it was gone from the knee down. He was shocked. It took him a few minutes to recover from the initial shock, but he was still shaky afterwards. He hobbled around the room for a while and discovered quite a few things about himself that he had never known. He found a driver's license that said his name was Johann Schmidt. Suddenly a revelation hit him: Johann Schmidt must be one of his multiple personalities.

Steve theorized that one of his evil personalities, probably Tony, escaped from the mental institute and another personality must have taken over after that. During that period of time, he must have somehow lost his leg. The first thought that came to his mind was to find out how he lost his leg.

While searching through the rooms of the house, he came across a sheet of paper with a short list. On it, it said, "Number one—mother is dead," "Number two—lost my left leg," "Conclusion: find mud-splashed Pinto that caused all this pain to occupy my head." So Steve set out on a mission to find

that evil, mud-splashed Pinto. Little did he know that this mission would take him on a journey that would uncover deep, dark secrets from the past.

Months later, after chasing false leads and reaching dead ends, Steve finally had a breakthrough. It was quite by accident that this happened. While he was hobbling down the street one late night, he suddenly felt like he had no control over his body anymore. Something in the back of his mind told him that Johann had taken over again. (Or it could have been because he noticed that he acquired a Scandinavian accent quite suddenly?) Then he saw headlights careening towards him. At the last possible second, he dove out of harm's way. When he looked up, he saw that the car, a mud-splashed Pinto, had crashed into a brick wall. Johann went to investigate who was driving and what he saw appalled and stupefied him. Johann saw his own twin brother, Olaf, at the wheel. Johann went closer in order to see if Olaf was still alive. He checked Olaf's pulse and found that it was very, very weak. As he was checking his pulse, Olaf whispered, with the last ounce of strength left in him, "Mom always liked you better," and then Olaf exhaled his last breath.

WHEN A BUCKIN' HORSE DIES

poem by Annie Morrow



What you do when a buckin' horse dies,
You try to keep the tears from your eyes,
As you hurry up, get him out of the pen,
Ease his pain just a little and then,
Watch him go, never to buck again.

What you think when a buckin' horse dies,
"I'll miss that horse," you tell the guys,
And you mean it too, ya ain't foolin' around,
'Cause you hate to see them hit the ground
And you'll never forget that awful sound.

What you feel when a buckin' horse dies,
It's a slow dark ache down deep inside,
He was doin' what you wanted when he died,
But he loved it, too, that's why he tried
He hated to let one cowboy ride.

What you know when a buckin' horse dies,
He's now forever in the skies,
For all eternity havin' his go,
No one can ride him up there, you know,
And you'll always remember, 'cause you loved him so.

It's the luck of the draw, the luck of the deal,
But time will heal the sorrow you feel,
In your cowboy's heart he will always be real,
It'll get better, even though there's goodbyes,
When a buckin' horse dies.



photo by Tyler Dauwalder

Days to Remember

After awakening from my nap on a late summer afternoon, I jumped out of bed and made my way upstairs. Being four years old, I considered this routine perfectly normal. Making my way up the stairs, looking for my mom, I rounded the corner into the living room and stopped dead in my tracks. I saw my mother and my older brother on the couch holding each other with tears in their eyes. I felt a vague sense of both fear and curiosity, wondering why my 12-year-old brother, whom I supposed never cried, sat there in our living room in such a condition. My mother beckoned me to sit next to her with a simple gesture of her hand. Making my way to the other side of the room where she sat, I noticed in her eyes a sad, mournful look beneath all the moisture caused by the tears. Climbing onto the cushion next to my mother, it occurred to me that she had some kind of terrible news to reveal to me.

"Andy," she started, "your sister Tammy has drowned." "She and your sisters went swimming with your aunt, and we don't know exactly what happened, but Tammy is dead." My sisters were staying with my grandparents in Idaho, so it came as no surprise that they had gone swimming, a regular activity while visiting my relatives in Idaho. However, it shocked me to hear that my 11 year old sister, a good swimmer, had drowned.

Despite being only four, my comprehension of death was quite high. I knew that I would never see my sister alive again. To my mother's surprise I stated, "I want to see Tammy again." My mother explained that I could see her before the burial at the funeral. "I don't want to see her body," I said, "I want to see her spirit." My mom began crying harder and I climbed onto her lap and hugged her tightly.

Shortly afterward, my dad arrived home from work. I could see that his eyes were also tear stained. I remember very little of the planning of the funeral and the other arrangements made, but I do remember seeing her lifeless body, placed in a white casket and wearing white dress. I remember my good-bye to her, walking up to the casket and stepping onto my tip-toes, giving her a farewell with a kiss. I recall seeing the world through blurry eyes, and feeling a strange sense of loss deep inside my heart. Yet, I also remember being certain that I would see her again. Such is the faith of a four-year-old.

My sister's death has left a continuing legacy in my life. It is amazing how the loss of a loved one can affect somebody. I remember my sister well, but my fondest memories are of her leading me on expeditions to the backyard during June, out to the apricot trees that still grow there. I remember spending the afternoon with my cheerful sister, laughing in the sunshine and devouring apricots. For a very long time after her death I would not eat apricots at all. Now, I enjoy eating them, but never do I eat an apricot without recalling my sister and those summer days in the sun, eating the orange-yellow fruit and hearing her wonderful laughter.

short story by Andy Despain

Double Pain

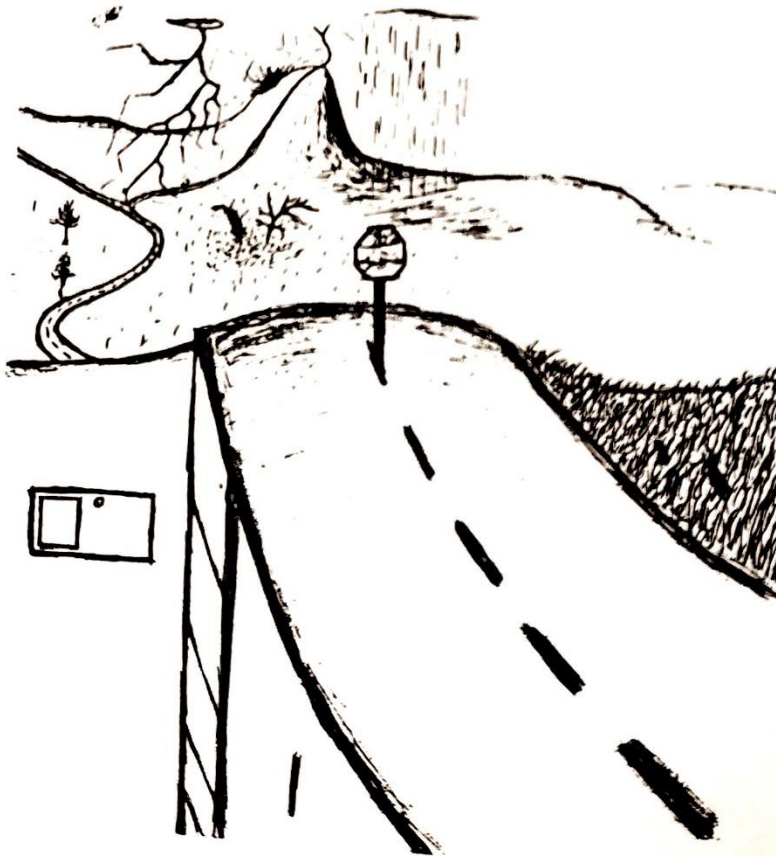
poem by Alison Vaughan

I can feel your pain
You don't know it, but I do.
I see your tears come down like rain
You want to talk, but with who?

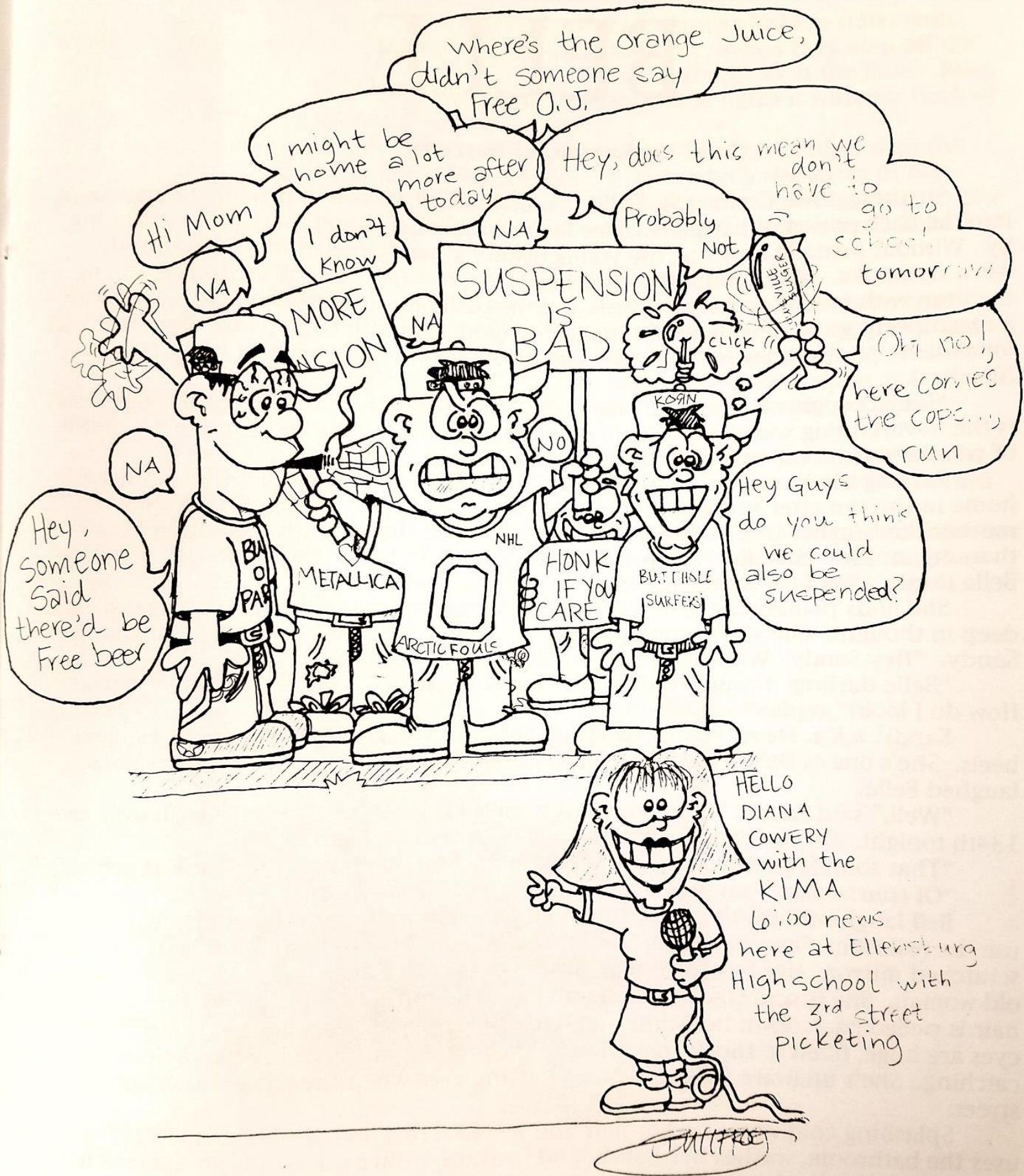
Can't you see that I am here?
Don't you know I want to help?
Don't hide from your fear
Just tell me how it felt.

Your hole is getting much too deep
Soon you won't get out
Our friendship I want to keep
Can't you hear me shout?

Please just take my outstretched hand
Things can only get better now
Take a step on solid land
Start again; I'll show you how.



artwork by Mike Mattocks



where's the orange Juice,
didn't someone say
Free O.J.

I might be
home a lot
more after
today

Hey, does this mean we
don't
have to
go to
school
tomorrow?

Hi Mom

I don't
know

NA

Probably
Not

NA

MORE
SUSPENSION

SUSPENSION
IS
BAD

click

Oh no!
here comes
the cops...
run

NA

Hey,
someone
said
there'd be
Free beer

Hey Guys
do you think
we could
also be
suspended?

HONK
IF YOU
CARE

BUTTHOLE
SURFERS

METALLICA

NHL

ARCTIC FOOLS

HELLO
DIANA
COWERY
with the
KIMA
6:00 news
here at Ellenburg
Highschool with
the 3rd street
picketing

BELLE

short story by Erin Korte

Strutting down Contico St., Belle absent mindedly shoves her small, tanned hands into the back pocket of her pants. One by one, inhabitants and tourists of her city float by. Without actually noticing, the young beauty gingerly makes her way down the worn sidewalks. Why should they pay heed to her? They have their pockets full to the brim with money and credit cards and the such. Even though the sun shines with a magnificent glow, Belle feels her body and mind ache with large pangs of hunger and loneliness. Another day in the trashy and gloomy, yet somehow spectacular city of New York.

Many thoughts churn inside her head, but the one thing that keeps nagging her is the neverending sound of, "Where do I sleep tonight?" Belle knows quite a handful of people but she can only stay someplace for so long.

Passing the homeless beggars on the street is a stressful thing. Belle left her home in Dayton after five grueling years of sexual abuse by her stepfather. Her mother died earlier from suicide. "At least I handled that repulsive situation better than my mother. She didn't do a single thing about it. I hope she's suffering still," Belle thinks. Her face scrunches up with malicious feelings.

She nods politely at the other bums sitting against the buildings looking lost and deep in thought. She spots a recognizable face and yelps as she sees her acquaintance, Sandy. "Hey Sandy! Where you been girl?" grins Belle.

"Belle darling! I rounded up some money to buy the most fabulous new garb. How do I look?" replied Sandy.

Sandy, a.k.a. Steve, is dressed in full drag from false eyelashes down to spiked heels. She's one of Belle's favorite people. "Marvelous, Sandy, you look marvelous," laughed Belle.

"Well," said Sandy, "I just got word from Nikki that there's a huge bash over on 134th tonight. Do you care to accompany me?" questions Sandy.

"That sounds pretty cool. Could I wash my face and hands first?" asked Belle.

"Of course dear," says Sandy. "We'll catch the next city bus."

Belle laughs childishly as she turns her heel and walks into the public market to use the restroom. Once in the bathroom, Belle sheepishly checks out her image in the scratched mirror. Her face is young, but the bags under her eyes make her feel like an old woman. She is scrawny and not at all what she considers appealing. Her brown hair is pulled back down her spine and a few pieces hang along her neck. Her blue eyes are huge, filled to the brim with emotion, and too much loss. Belle definitely is catching. She's unaware that she causes darting eyes when she passes others on the street.

Splashing cold water on her hair and her face revives her energy a little. She uses the bathroom, washes her hands, and brushes off her jeans. She straightens her back and with a quick wink in the mirror, she's out the door to meet her friend.

The bus ride is boring. Sandy babbles about all her new fashion statements. Belle just wants to go to a party to see a few familiar faces. When they step off the bus, Belle bums a cigarette off the first person she sees. She looks at the label. Basic. Not really her choice, she prefers hand-rolling tobacco. She lights it with her book of 7-11 matches and walks a few blocks to the party.

There are quite a few people, and Belle parts from Sandy to mingle with the crowd. She has a few drinks and bums another cigarette which she sticks in her sweatshirt pocket. Belle is always friendly once a few alcoholic beverages set in. She catches the lustful eye of a beautiful man. "Hi," whispers Belle. "My name's Belle."

"Hey, I'm John. How are you?" he replies.

"Not bad, not bad," smiles Belle as she looks around cautiously.

Belle stares into his eyes and knows this will be the one she'll catch tonight. Sometimes the money comes too easily for a call girl. John glances at the party and then back at Belle. She grabs his hand and he knows too. They cruise into an abandoned loft and do the money-making deed which Belle always relies upon as her main source of cash. They fall asleep together, Belle, with seventy-five dollars in her pocket.

Belle awakes to the sun shining on her. She looks at John, who is obviously in a deep sleep, and kisses his cheek. "So long fella." She sighs heavily, and climbs down the loft ladder.

Heading back down the street towards the bus, Belle takes the cigarette from her sweatshirt pocket. Camel. "Yuck." Belle thinks. She lights it with her 7-11 matches and inhales the cancerous stick with pride. Then she blows out the smoke and wonders, "Where am I going to sleep tonight?"



photo by Rachel Width

BOMBS ARE GREAT

short story by Dane Rogers

I don't think I'll encounter any opposition if I state that explosions are great fun. It was those old army propaganda films of the Manhattan Project, you know, "Atomic weapons, our misunderstood friend," that brought me into the world of creative destruction. Now, I'm not a pyro or anything like that, but there is something about seeing every living thing within a two-hundred-meter radius die in a cataclysmic inferno of death and destruction.

My high school chemistry teacher, Mr. Blanchat, was a little, shall we say, disturbed by the fact that I used to carry around potassium nitrate in a little aluminum cylinder. Most boys used to carry around wallets or pictures of their girlfriends, but I always had to be a little more exotic. When I was eighteen, in order to pay my way through college, I apprenticed myself to the demolition's expert at the local construction company. Those were the days I tell ya....

Of course, now a days, I work for the world's largest consumer of instruments of death and annihilation; the U.S. Government. I live on a military base in Colorado, (yes I have been to area 51), and other than the Nixon files, who shot JFK and what really happened to Jimmy Hoffa, there's not much there to interest honest people like you and me. I live in a single bedroom house, alone with no company but cable TV, my cat Nitro and two fish, Salt and Peter.

My colleagues at work are nothing short of extraordinary. There is Wilson, the crazy Scot. No matter how many times I see it, I'll always laugh when he draws that big yellow smiley face on a rocket he just finished putting together. There is Natalie, my secretary, who loves me more than life itself. Not for any romantic reason mind you, but she gets paid ten dollars an hour to sit outside my office and answer my phone every couple of weeks. Now that I think of it, I can't even remember what the inside of my office looks like. There are other assorted maniacs, pyros and legalized mad bombers, but hey, you gotta be crazy to work here.

As I woke up this morning, I fed my cat, fed the fish, fed myself, and prepared to feed the demolitions expert within me. I got dressed in the usual, a white lab coat with the words, "I sold bombs to the Iraqis," on the front and, "Have a nice day" on the back. I got in my car, a cherry red Geo Metro with flames and dismembered body parts painted on the sides, and zoomed off to work.

Just on a whim, I decided to see if my office really existed. As I walked through the door, I noticed that my name was spelled wrong. Your tax dollars at work.

"Good morning Natalie, how's tricks?" I said, trying to look casual.

"Um... Good morning doctor What can I do for you?" It worked, she had been taken completely off guard.

"Nothing really, just wanted to survey my castle. Really a rather drab office isn't it?"

"Yes sir, I can have it painted for you if you like. How 'bout a nice emerald green?"

"The Army'll do that for you?"

"No, but I'm dating a painter and he owes me a few favors."

"Good, see to it. It's more your office than mine anyway."

She was giggling like a school girl when I left. Maybe I should come back more often.

As I rounded the corner, and showed my ID to the two imposing Marines posted at the door to the lab, a hand struck me violently on the shoulder and knocked the wind right out of me.

"David!!" it was Wilson, the Bagpipe Bomber, "It's me birthday, laddie, come on down to the barracks and tilt one back with me! Nothing like a dozen drunken explosives technicians to show the world how to throw a party!"

"Sorry Wilson," I said, removing his burley hand from my shoulder, "But after the last party we threw, the commanding officer made us promise never to get drunk without first hiding behind a lead barrier."

"True laddie, true."

The shock wave nearly knocked my little Geo off the road. It did, however, cause me look in my rear view mirror to see the fireworks. I got out of my car, looked at the shattered remains of my place of business, took off my "I love the Enola Gay" baseball cap, and put it over my heart in honor of the fact that I was about to lose my job.

The next morning, after the smoke had cleared, it was determined that Wilson, my drunken compatriot, had gotten himself sloshed and knocked over a case of chemicals that while separate are harmless, but should never, never be mixed without parental supervision. It started a fire which lead to the death of three Marines, Wilson and the janitor, Murry.

The only people who were really sorry to see the place go up in flames were the base commander, who now had no more chemists to bully and who was feeling very unmanly, and Natalie who had just finished painting the office.

Now, this wasn't a story so much as a "what happened to me last Thursday" reminiscence. But it does have one important moral. Never let a drunken Scotsman near a rack of high powered explosives.

*I gave her my heart with no rental plans or leases.
Then one sad day she threw it back, chopped into a million pieces.*

I'll always remember my first true love.

I felt she was sent to me from above.

I feel that my life is full of nothing but sadness.

And that I'm living in a world full of confusion and madness.

You see me smiling and you think "what a happy guy."

You really don't know me, 'cause at night in the middle of all this pain I cry.

My soul just gave up and is now waiting to die.

I wonder if I should go back to my old playing ways.

You know back, back in them days.

Or should I give love just one more chance.

To find a girl who'll give me love mixed with a little romance

But right now my heart is still painfully aching.

I wanna be happy, but can you tell that I'm faking.

She crushed my world and smashed my pride.

What's the way out, is it suicide?

NO, I can't do that to my loving MOM.

I better relax, think things through and be a little more calm.

She's the only girl I ever loved besides my sister.

We've been broke up for months, but still I miss her.

I fulfilled her every wish, as a command.

Now it's to the point where I don't understand.

So how can love be considered the perfect lane

But yet be responsible for such excruciating pain.

At first our love was perfect and great.

Then it turned into some form of hate.

So if you are the one, the one for me.

Please come out, where I can see.

poem by
The Kandy Mann
Alejandro Mandujano Jr.

CREATION POEM

In the beginning all a bang
 A cosmic boom, nothing the same
 A rock from hell
 A twinkling star
 To earth it fell.

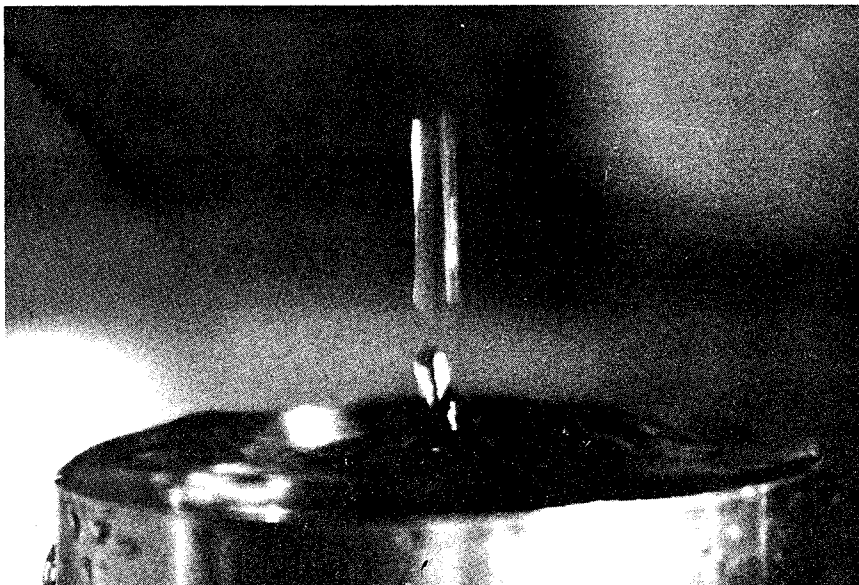
The Gods with came
 And brought the skies
 A passing note
 The first tears, cries
 The laughter by kids
 Thoughts of marriage.

They made it all with words not herds

And so the Gods set down the seas
 The pastoral lands, the rocks, the trees
 With tears they filled the lakes, with words the seas
 Their hands set down on winter lands
 And bring the gentle warming spring

With wonder falls the graying down
 With summer crest the brighten nights
 And in wonder still the nymphs will fawn
 The Gods so bright the break the night.

poem by Liz Herron



Silver Brine

photo by Ken Hailes

ANGELTREAD

short story by Robert Main

It was sixteen paces to Mary's room. No matter how many times the aged man walked the hall, his steps ended at sixteen. He mumbled as he walked, the acrid odor of an unwashed body mixing strangely with the heavy musk of moth balls. Outside, a raven's call sounded shrill, then silenced.

A weathered hand, blood vessels dark against pallid skin, reached for and clutched a small golden crucifix. His shuffle continued. Rounding a corner, he finished his journey. Sixteen. The old man reached, grasped at the doorknob, saliva running over a grizzled growth of beard and down his chin. Flinging the door open, he entered her room.

The effect was radical. No longer did he stand within a gray world of chipped paint and peeled wallpaper. The room he entered was full of life. He gazed lovingly about, his eyes chasing the tiotes of dust glinting in shafts of sunlight. Those eyes glinted also. Deep fires of memory welled up, cascading out in tears of sorrow.

"Hello, Charles," a familiar voice greeted him from bedside the bay window. The old man, Charles, was shocked. Never had this happened before. Never should this happen. No... no... Mary... she's DEAD!

"No!" the word tore itself from somewhere deep in Charles's soul. Twenty years of heart-wrenching despair shattered the old one's reality. The figure at the window walked across the room with feminine grace.

She wore a long gown of deep azure, about her shoulders, an ivory shawl. To say she was beautiful would be an insult. Pale, golden tresses framed a face to inspire ballads. Her skin was the fairest white, accented by lips the color of crushed rose petals. Her almond eyes enveloped the man, and he stood there, lost within their gaze. Then, with a cry, he fell to his knees. He crawled forward until he came to her feet, tears leaving furrows in his grime covered face.

"NO!" he pleaded between sobs.

Her form blurred and wavered. Then she was gone, leaving Charles silent. Alone. Running his hand through greasy locks of hair, he sighed and resumed his mumbling, momentarily forgotten. He turned and walked away, his oversized pant legs brushing against each other. Leaving the room, he once again entered his world of pain, loss and sadness.

Rise

poem by Emily Sotelo

*As the setting of the sun,
Shadows become night
Robbed in the darkness
Hidden faces, unseen fright*

*Through the streets runs
an orphan heart.
An ongoing search for
an unkept part.*

*Pale shades of dawn creep
up drawing near
Bleeding, cold and hungry
As the dew, then drops a tear*

*Silence is broken, bright rays
of love grasp a life, like a thief
The rising of the sun, the blink of an eye...
Let grace be my relief*



artwork by Casey Raab

WALK HOME

poem by Annie Morrow

*Yes, I got the news today
I heard that you had gone away
Gone to be with someone else that loves you*

*I sat and thought about you awhile
I remembered how you used to smile
I remembered all the things that made me love you*

*Walk home,
And know that I miss you*

*Burning with a fire inside
It seemed you'd always turn the tide
Against the rough spots that your life had given you*

*I'm proud to say you were my friend
My love for you will never end
My heart knows I will never be without you*

*Walk home,
And know that I'm with you*

*From this earth now you are gone
But you will never be alone
Heaven waits to wrap its arms around you*

*And I will whisper sad good-byes
But I know where the real truth lies
I know someday that my soul will find you*

*Walk home,
And know that I love you*



photo by Robert Price

short story by Shelby Taylor

Drink, drink, drink. That was all he knew how to do. I swear! He would come home, go to the fridge, grab a cold one, and then chill on couch rotting his brains out. Or he would go to parties with his drinking buddies and come home saying, "Mommy, there were pigs flying past my window!" You know what, they probably talked to him, too. Of course, they weren't pink, they were purple and had horns all that crap.

He was screwed up, my brother was. I wanted to get him help and I didn't know where to go. I confronted him once, something I would never do again. Unfortunately, he was drunk and so were his friends and I was still happy and sober, and planned to stay that way.

"Cam, come on haven't you had enough?" I asked.

"Enough? Enough what? What are you talking about, Lara?"

"You're so drunk, and so are all your friends. I think it's time for this party to end," I went over to the stereo and turned it off. Groans and yells rose up around me, "Party's over, folks, go home and take a cold shower. Enjoy the hangover, too," People started filing out of the house, some of them cursing me by name and others just cursing.

Some of Cam's friends had stayed, which was fine with me. As long as the whole college wasn't here, I was fine. I shut the front door and went into the living room to start cleaning up. Trash was everywhere. Pizza boxes lay open and empty or the pizza was shoved in a glass. The couch had been toppled over, and who knew what had been on it. Basically, to put it simply, the room, no, the house, was a mess. I yelled to Cam in the other room.

"I hope you have your money saved, Cam, 'cause you are going to pay the cleaning bill. Not me," As I picked up an armload of beer cans and turned around to go into the kitchen, I ran face to face with my brother. My brother whom I had known all my life, whom I was closer to than anybody, was now glaring at me. I backed up and side-stepped around him into the kitchen. I deposited my load and went back for another. Cam was in my way with his back to me. His muscles were pulled tight. I laid a hand on his back and spoke softly to him.

"Cam, I'm sorry. But it's late and I at least need to get some sleep. So do you," His muscles relaxed a bit and I gently pushed him aside. He went and grabbed another beer and sat by his friends. I finished cleaning as much as I could of the living room and started on the room where Cam and his friends were. Sitting on chairs, beanbags, the couch, and the floor were Ty, Lee, Jase, and Andrew. Everybody liked them at school, they were the funniest guys around. Especially Andrew when he insisted everyone call him Andrew and not Andy. He hated being called Andy. I liked him, he was cute.

This room wasn't as bad as the rest of the house, only a few pizza boxes and no overturned furniture. As I was throwing away another load of trash, one of them turned the music back up. I could still faintly hear them talking in the other room, every now and then a raised voice. I finished the downstairs and went upstairs. I had locked my bedroom door, so I didn't go in there. My parents and Cam's room had been locked. But as I headed down the hall to my room on the end I could see it ajar. Running, I shoved open the door.

"Oh, no!" I closed my eyes and rubbed them. When I opened them again I took another look around my room. My covers on my bed had been ripped off, my mirror was shattered, the dresser knocked over, and food was everywhere, not to mention beer cans. I studied the door, it had been hardly touched. Our doors could be locked both on the inside and the outside. Someone else must have used a key. Only my brother had one, like I had one to his.

I went to the other locked rooms, they were still locked and when I went in nothing was out of place. Mad at how my room had been destroyed I ran downstairs and into the den. As soon as I entered they stopped talking. Andrew was the only one missing.

"Cam, where's the key you have to my room?"

"Why do you want to know?" He sounded completely sober.

"Because somebody got into my room and trashed it. Did you give someone else the key? Please tell me you didn't, cause I don't want to think you would let them ruin my room. Would you?"

"Yeah, I did. You give me such a hard time about the ways that I like to relax and have fun. I got sick of it."

"How could you?!" I was amazed that he wasn't trying to lie his way out of it.

"Easy, I took the key and put it in the hole. And then—"

"Shut-up! Just shut-up! If you ever do anything like this again," I couldn't take it. I went back up to my room and started cleaning. I had everything pretty well back in place, except what was broken. None of my things had really been hurt, just the furniture. As I was bending down to pick something up I felt a hand on my shoulder. Startled, I turned around to see Andrew.

"Oh, I thought you might be Cam. Sorry."

"You know, I tried to stop him, but once he gets drunk, there's not a whole lot you can do."

"I know. Say, where have you been? When I went down, I didn't see you."

"Uh, I went out to get a smoke."

"You? No way."

"Yep. Bad habit, be happy your brother doesn't."

"It wouldn't be much of a surprise."

"No, it probably wouldn't. If I were you though, I'd get out of here until he sobers up. You could come over to the dorm for the night, he wouldn't be able to yell at you there. And I'm about to leave anyway."

"No, thanks. It's a nice offer, but I have to take care of the house, 'cause he sure won't."

"You sure, cause I really don't want you to stay here with the condition all those guys are in."

"Don't tell me you didn't drink."

"Only one. I'm a bit smarter than some of them. Plus I don't care for the taste much," Andrew went over to my bay window and opened it. I sat down beside him, studying his face. It was nice to just sit there. His black hair caught and reflected the light of the moon. His dark eyes looked off into the distance somewhere. His full lips were in a smug smile. He pulled out a cigarette.

"You mind?"

"No, go ahead. Just leave the window open."

"Of course." We sat there for a little while, until I heard a commotion downstairs. It was loud, something slamming against the wall, I guessed. Andrew smashed his cigarette on the outside of the house and threw it out the window. We ran down the stairs. Looking in the den I saw that Cam had slammed Ty up against the wall and was still holding his throat. Just as we came in I thought I heard him say, "We will, we will do it! And you are going to help us!"

"Cam! Let him go!" I ran over to him and grabbed his arms roughly. He let go of Ty, then turned to me.

"Don't touch me, Lara. Don't," I reached out to him anyway. He grabbed my wrists, pulling them behind my back, and shoved me face first against the wall. I hit hard. The side of my head was cut on a picture frame and my wrist felt as if it were broken. Andrew rushed over and helped me to my feet.

"What the hell did you do that for?!" he yelled.

"She didn't listen. She never does. Go ahead Andy, get her out of here, I might hurt her worse if you don't," I held my head as Andrew helped me out to his car.

"I can't believe he did that," I rubbed at my wrists.

"Believe it. See what I mean about his drinking?"

"I've always known he had a problem. I just didn't take any action," We got to the dorm and Andrew let me lean on him as we went upstairs. Some of his friends called out of their rooms at us and he told them to shove it. I lay on his bed as he went to a friend's room to get some bandages. He came back with a guy I had seen him with around town.

"Lara, this is my brother, Bobby."

"Hi," I said weakly, my voice was hoarse from my quiet crying.

"Hey. He told me what happened. Sorry. I've met your brother. He's a really strong guy."

"Yep."

"Here, let me get that cut fixed," I had blood on my hands from where I had held my head.

"You're lucky, any deeper and you'd have needed stitches."

"Great, lovely, don't I wish."

"You better get some sleep," Andrew said.

"No! I'm not tired."

"That's not what you said earlier."

"I lied, I was sick of Cam's party."

"Okay, then let's go down the hall."

"Actually, I think I should go home."

"Sorry, can't let you do that. You have to have fun tonight, not get hurt." They both grabbed my arms and pulled me up.

"Okay, fine, but get me something for this headache, and let me wash my hands."

Down the hall was a party basically. Well, sort of. A lot of the people had gathered with food and things to watch a movie. I didn't know what it was and didn't much care. I wasn't watching. But when just about every girl in the room screamed and I didn't, Andrew, who was beside me, put his arm on my shoulders and leaned over.

"You're not watching, are you?"

"Oh, how did you ever guess?"

"Come on, we'll go with you back to your house. If it's still standing." So Andrew, Bobby, and I drove back. We could hear the music all the way outside.

"Sure you want to go inside?" Andrew asked.

"Yes. Don't ask again."

"Okay," He held his hands up in defeat. I let us into the house and we went to go up the stairs, when I looked in on my brother. My vision blurred just as I saw my brother lower his head to a small plate with a white powder on it. Andrew and Bobby pulled me up the stairs.

In my bedroom I burst out crying. Andrew hugged me and rocked me back and forth until I quieted down.

"I'm sorry. I don't usually cry like this."

"It's alright, you have every reason," Bobby said, touching my arm lightly. It struck me then how much the brothers looked alike.

"I can't believe he... How could he..." My voice faded. Before either of them could stop me I was on my feet running. When I got in front of my brother, I couldn't help it, I screamed. He was a disaster. I still can't describe how he looked. He was mad, a real mad man.

And it was just as I threw the plate across the room that Andrew and Bobby tried to pull me away.

"Lara! Don't -" Bobby said.

"Lara!!" Andrew screamed at me.
 "How could you!!!! You've betrayed me," I was bursting, "I hate you," I said softly, my lips quivering.
 "How could I? You got a problem with those words? And I hate you, too," His eyelids were drooping, "This much," This time, before I could move, he grabbed me again. But instead of throwing me, he held up a knife. No one but those in the room heard me scream. I still see Andrew and Bobby running for help. I still remember turning around and looking into the faces of Ty, Jase, and Lee. Finally I got to Cam. The others had been smiling. So was my brother. My sweet, innocent, alcoholic brother.
 I had loved him so.
 He raised the knife again and brought it down on my chest. Again and again and again. Repeatedly, I can't remember when the pain went away and all I heard was my brother screaming.
 "I hate you! Hate you! Hate you! You wouldn't let me have any fun! I couldn't live a life with you alive! Happy now! Oh, yes. I am! And I hate you! I HATE YOU!"
 It was black then, and now I'm sitting in the courtroom, no one knowing that I'm there. Like I said, I would never confront my brother again, about any of his habits. He pleaded guilty; he was proud. He was convicted to a life sentence without parole. Ty, Jase, and Lee were convicted of some accomplice to murder thing. I don't remember, I don't really care. They had been in on it. They had agreed with him that he would have to get rid of me, to be happy, although they had tried to stop him when he kept stabbing me after I was long gone. And for hours on end I would sit beside Andrew and watch him. He was sad. Blaming himself. Saying over and over again to Bobby that he shouldn't have let me go. Bobby, of course, was ever so logical and told him he wouldn't have been able to stop my death if Cam was that determined to get rid of me.
 It hurt me to see him cry. It really did. But he was cute, and funny. My parents moved to another town not wanting to have anything to do with Cam. Andrew and his brother moved into our house. I had never known how Andrew had felt and now, more than ever, I wished I was still alive so I could share his love. He'll still sit on the bay window seat and leave room beside, where I sat that night. He smokes his cigarettes and cries silently. It hurts me. I hate to see him cry.

SNOW-COVERED DEATH

It's early winter.
 The trees look like skeletons
 Stripped of the beauty they once possessed.
 Branches, like out-stretched arms
 Reaching to the sky
 That a god who doesn't exist might take pity on them.

I can hear them screaming.
 Shamed and naked
 Frosted with snow and twisted by the insistent wind
 Crying down their last rivers of leafy tears.

They loom over us
 Like haunted half-dead spirits
 Challenging us to finish them off.
 Roots gnarled like happy memories
 Jutting out, exposed, from the dirt.
 Scabs pussing sap, frozen like blood, clinging to their skins.

Giving up against the blows of the harsh world
 Their flailing limbs droop from the sky with discouragement
 The wind sighs
 As she blows through their bare dying branches.

poem by S.M. Wright



COLORS

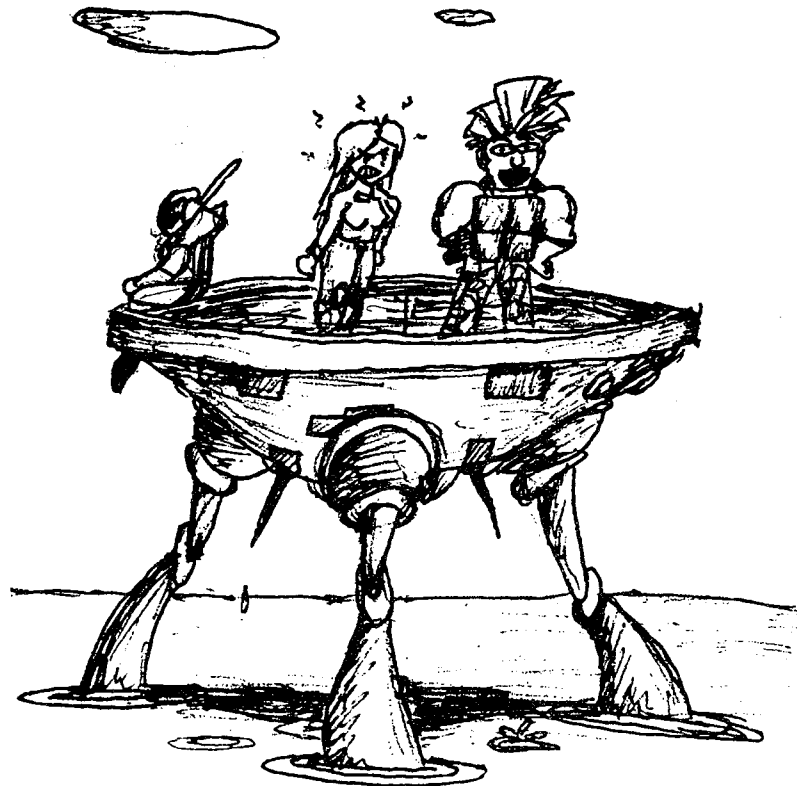
*Love is pink which can fade easily,
Purity is white which can get dirty easily
But friendship has no color which will last forever.*

poem by Jamie Lee

RAGNAROK

They all knew it was coming,
But only Haid knew how,
Man would turn on his brother,
And his evil would be at its height,
The long winter would come,
The sun giving no heat,
This for three dark years,
Fenris wolf then eats the bright sun,
Splattering the heavens with rich blood,
Everything full of fright,
Even the World Tree,
Thor will slay the Midgard Serpent,
Then walks nine paces to his death,
This will happen on Ragnarok.

poem by Terry Hall



artwork by Mike Stearns

THE BIRTHDAY PRESENT

short story by Jasara Wold

Linda brought out the chips and Coke for everyone sitting on the deck. The meat was barbecuing and all the family present. The sun shone, making it a perfect day for a birthday, her birthday. While everyone ate, her husband, Ron, decided to bring out her present. With child-like excitement he retreated to the garage leav-

ever. Her two boys, Matt and Joey, and laughed in anticipation, After a few min-

the garage driving
 “Ron! How possessed you to supposed to do cart?” she cried in ment.

“I bought it You can drive it to get the mail or defensively. Matt, longer, jumped in bering Linda at the last

“Come on Mom! Come for

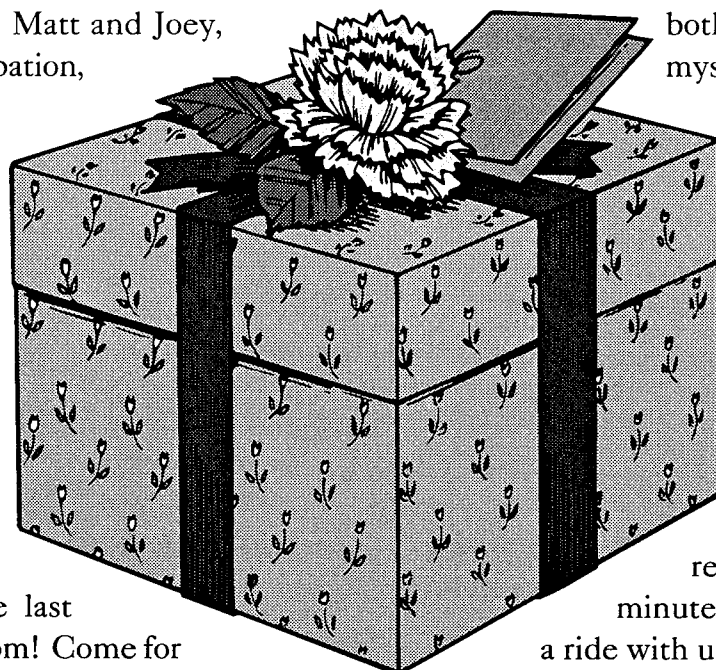
“No, you guys enjoy it. I’ll just watch,” she answered quickly. Before she was even done speaking, Matt started it up and headed down the long driveway with Joey beside him. He didn’t let up on the gas even slightly so that when they came to the small hill before the mail boxes, they were going pretty fast.

Then, without any warning at all, Matt let out a loud yell while pulling the E-brake and cranking the wheel at the same time. The golf cart flipped on its side sending Joey sprawling on the gravel. Matt considered it all a big joke, and for five minutes, all he could do was stand there and laugh at Joey.

Linda never really did use the golf cart. Everyone else found ways to enjoy it, though. After a while, Matt started to use it as a type of initiation for his friends who came over.

“You have to ride in the golf cart before doing anything else. You can do awesome things with it,” he would tell them excitedly. Then, with anywhere up to five people in it at a time, they’d fly down the driveway, and he’d pull the E-brake on his unsuspecting friends.

A few practical uses did come from the golf cart, however. Ron took it every evening into the cow pastures to change the sprinklers. After all, why walk when you don’t have to? I suppose, too, that Linda drove it at least once to get the mail. After a while, no one even remembered that it had been given as a present to her at one time. All their neighbors and friends did know the family by their golf cart, though, especially Matt with his stunts.



ing Linda more curious than both in high school, smiled mystifying her even further. utes, Ron came out of a golf cart. ridiculous! What buy that? What am I with an old, used golf horrified astonish-

for you at a good deal! down to the mail box something,” He said not willing to wait any ready to take off, remem-

minute.

a ride with us!”

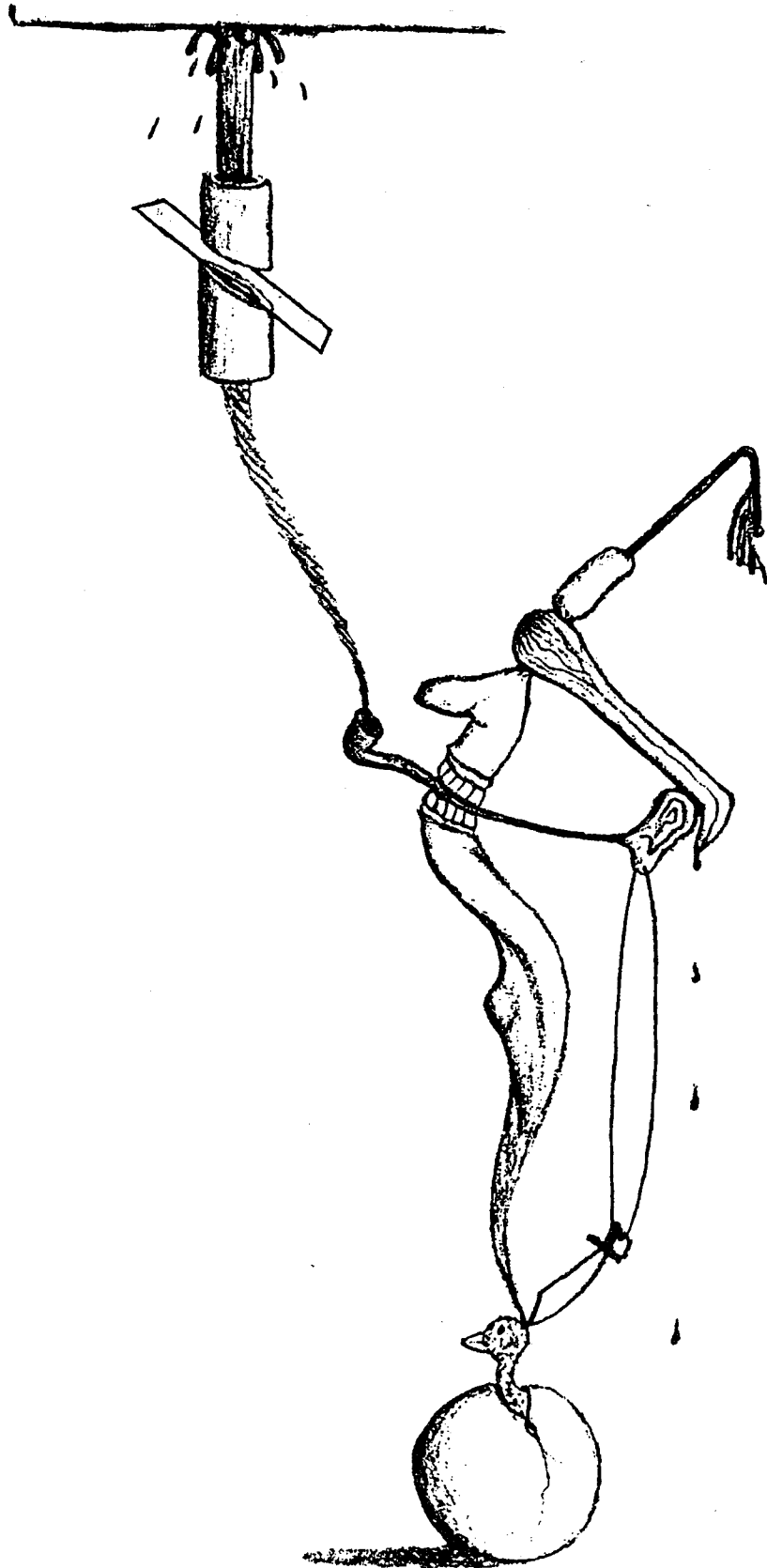
THE STORM

*Fear is a raging storm
stomping through the forest.
Free as a bird in the sky.
Running terror through the eyes of the people.
Dark, then the sky lights up from
the quick lightning flashes.
All is quiet till thunder strikes,
freeing the rain from the clouds.
The lightning is like a fire in the sky
burning everything in its path.
The rain dropping on the mirror of water,
stirring it like a waterfall from a stream.
When the rain stops and the sky is clear
you can smell the sweetness of the
fresh clean air.*

poem by Brent Wilson



photo by Blaine Hunt



THE CLOCK

short story by Craig Toman

Only ten minutes remained on the timer. The children were all safe now after the bomber called to tell of his wicked deeds. Stan was the only one available who could possibly disarm the bomb. He was by no means an ordinance technician, but an electrician. He had worked on timers several times before on microwaves.

He figured the only way he could disarm the bomb would be to cut power to the timer. To do this he had to first find a wire that had power. So he painstakingly checked each wire, which proved to be difficult. The bomber was no idiot, he had hundreds of wires all looking authentic, but only one would prove to be the power supply. So Stan carefully cut each wire without current and laid it aside.

A sudden twitch of the volt-ohm meter nearly sent him through the roof. He finally found a wire with current. he had to move quickly now; only five minutes remained. He bent the wire so he could find it again, and quickly went on to the next. Much to his surprise, it too had current, and the next, and the next. He was puzzled. How could all of these wires have current? Once again he realized the bomber was no idiot. All of these wires were attached to the same circuit. Stan felt confident he had cracked the bomb. He positioned the cutters on a single wire, his hands sweaty and shaking. With a deep breath, he clenched his fist. The timer still ticked with two minutes remaining. He grasped another and cut it. Nothing, so he grabbed three and cut, nothing. He was sure now and he cut the all of the remaining wires except one. Tension mounted. A single drop of sweat fell from his nose. He placed the trembling cutters toward the last wire of that bundle. One minute. Slowly he eased the cutters shut. The timer didn't flinch. Two wires remained. He hadn't a clue which to cut. He had a 50/50 chance and thirty seconds remaining. He picked his wife's favorite color, blue. He again slowly brought the snippers up to the wire, clenched, the wire split and dangled into two separate pieces. The timer suddenly jumped five seconds and Stan felt the feeling of panic running up his spine.

Five.

His mom's arms cradled him softly to sleep... He could feel the soft comforting feeling of his dad's hand pat him on his shoulder... Pain shot up his arm as he fell off his bike and landed on the pavement... The sight of blood on the windshield amidst and intricate web of cracks...

Three.

The pungent smell of gunpowder... The adrenaline rush as he saw his first deer fall... The smell of death in his nostrils... The feeling of warm blood on his hands...

Two.

His wife's hair glowing in an evening sunset... The feeling of her body embracing his... The smell of her perfume... Her warm smile... The cry of their first child... The pain of seeing his child go away...

One.

BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP... The feeling of his hand slamming against the alarm clock...

Moving On

poem by Brady Sprouse

Etched in stone, I saw it
 I took it in jest it was easy
 We made the plans, we ate the meals
 We told war stories of barren hallways
 Where some were marked
 They were all there
 Inside they ran with us
 Outside they ran with us
 We all cried, wondered
 It got the best of me
 It showed me off, auctioned me
 Slipped under the table like a dollar bill
 I waited in the corner for new orders

A Rose

*Grasping the handle,
 I give it a turn
 And much like a candle,
 My face starts to burn,*

*A single red rose
 Meets my eye.
 Drawing the petals to my nose,
 Escapes from my lips a sigh.*

*The scent is sweet,
 And my heart races
 When now our eyes meet
 To reveal shy faces.*

*Though it isn't much,
 Say something I do.
 With a gentle touch,
 I whisper Thank you*

poem by Alison Vaughan

WOODPECKER

A constant pattern can be heard
 as the woodpecker works and yearns
 gripping rotten wood
 with every swift return.

poem by Dan Witkowski

Untitled

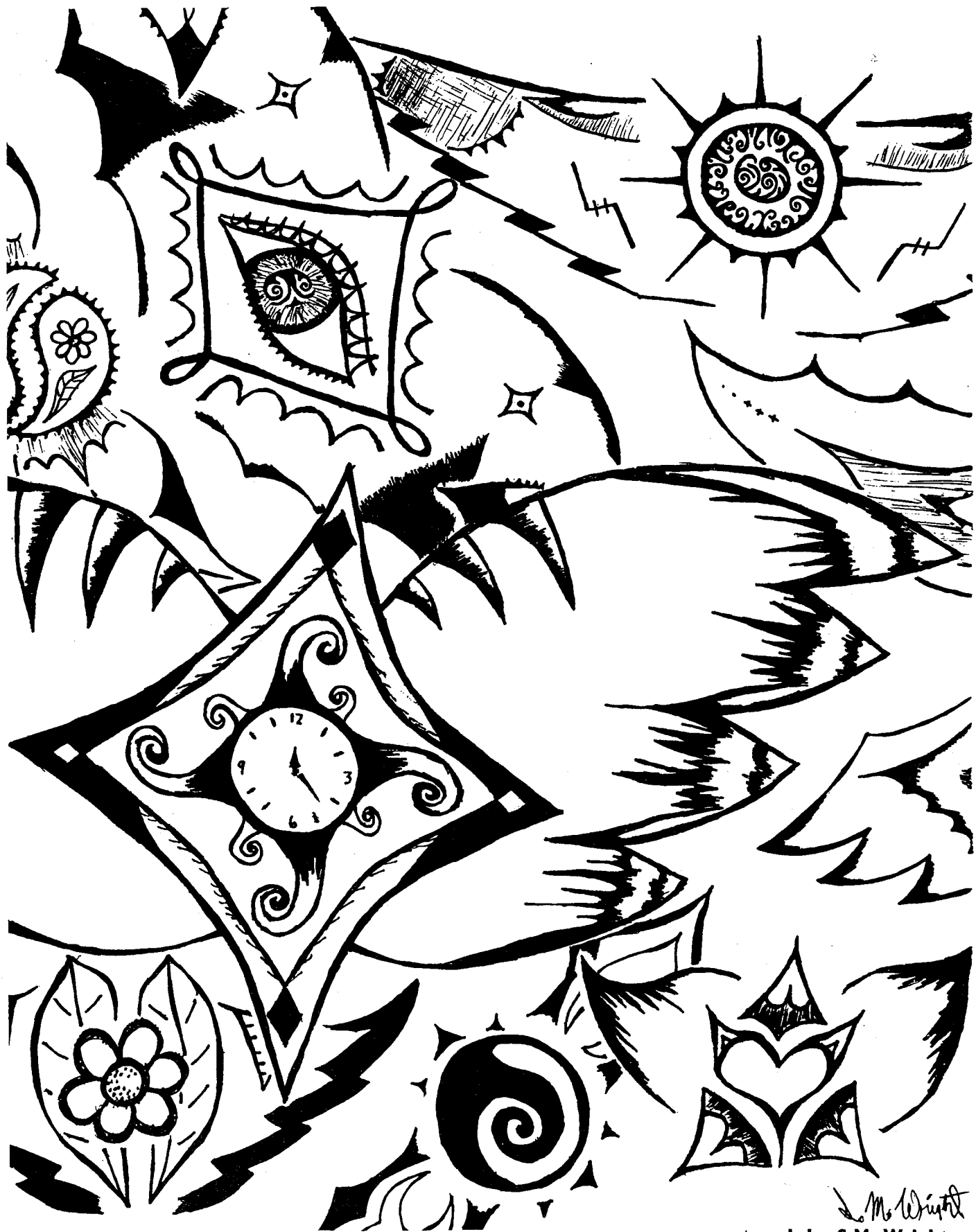
*Walking through the woods,
 hearing the birds chirping,
 watching the trees sway,
 like a boat on a summer's day,
 then hearing a sound like no other,
 breaking through the air,
 like a hammer breaks through ice,
 all of nature coming alive,
 hearing the sound of tires on a dirt road,
 seeing a child ride a bike for the first time,
 watching his face light up,
 like an evening star,
 then capturing the moment forever.*

poem by Denica Snyder

**For all the times we thought the words,
 But could not come to say
 For all the times we had the chance,
 But thrust the thought away
 For all the times we heard the harmony,
 But turned away an ear
 For all the times we listened for a signal,
 But ran in childish fear
 For all the times we savored the sweetness,
 But rejected its soothing savor
 For all the times we drank up the affection,
 But kept our bitter flavor
 For all the times we warmed to the passion,
 But bridled its burning fire
 For all the times we say love's beacon,
 But refused to succumb to its glare
 For we could not see past ourselves,
 And let our love die there**

Senses

poem by Laura Lindenmayer



S.M. Wright
artwork by S.M. Wright

As Alicia and Marcie stepped off the school bus and climbed the stairs to Alicia's house they were both excited about Marcie spending the night. They had been best friends since kindergarten, now they were in eighth grade and cherished their friendship even more.

They walked through the door, there was Alicia's brother, Ben, sitting on the couch eating a piece of pie. Ben was always mean and rude to them. They walked right past him into Alicia's room. They began to look at magazines and listen to music. Alicia went to get something to eat while Marcie continued reading the magazine. Marcie thought she heard Alicia so she looked up, but Ben was standing in the doorway. Marcie told him to leave and then slammed the door in his face.

Ben was gone for a few seconds. When he came back into the room he slammed the door behind him. Marcie looked at him. He had a weird, evil look on his face. She thought he was joking so she just laughed. This made him even more angry. He told her that she would never laugh at him again.

He took some duct-tape from behind his back. Marcie was so frightened, that she couldn't even scream. He then duct-taped her mouth, hands, and legs together, and finally duct-taped a white plastic grocery bag over her head and neck. She tried to scream but nothing came out.

Alicia came into the room, telling Marcie that all she could find to eat were some cookies. When Alicia looked up, she couldn't believe what she saw. She turned around to run but her brother Ben was a lot bigger and stronger than she was.

As Ben duct-taped Alicia in the same manner as Marcie, he was talking to her about how she always laughed at him and she was always mom's favorite. Tears started to drip down her face. She didn't know what possessed him to do such a horrific act, after all, this was Ben, her older brother, and brothers are supposed to protect their younger sisters. But as he slopped the plastic bag over her head, she realized something had gone wrong and he was not the brother she remembered.

Ben walked out of the room. He was proud of himself that he had actually gone through with his plan this time instead of chickening out like he had in the past. He walked down the street and out toward town. He wasn't sure where he was headed or if he was ever coming back.

When Cheryl, Alicia's mom, returned home she hollered for her kids, but no one answered. She thought that was rather odd, so she went into Alicia's room looking for her.

She opened the door and looked down at the two lifeless bodies lying on the floor. She couldn't move. She just stood there in shock and disbelief wondering how someone could do this to these two girls. Cheryl ran to the phone and managed to dial 911. As she waited for the police to arrive she held her only daughter in her arms. With tears running down her cheeks she rocked back and forth.

The police came and looked around, taking fingerprints. Cheryl just sat at the kitchen table, not knowing what to say or do. A policeman who was a friend of the family, came up to her and tried to comfort her, but she didn't even know he was there. Then all of a sudden he mentioned Ben. She heard him say Ben and asked him to repeat what he had just said.

"All of the evidence is pointing to Ben," the officer sadly reported.

Cheryl went to the station and asked Ben if he killed Alicia and Marcie. She needed to hear it out of his own mouth. He admitted that he killed them, but that is all that he would say.

The trial came and went. Cheryl was there everyday, in body, but part of her life was now gone. The only time she really showed any emotion was when the judge sentenced Ben to 63 years in prison. Ben was only 15 years old and would spend the majority of his life behind bars. She was torn emotionally. Should she be happy or sad?

Cheryl went home and cried herself to sleep on her daughter's bed. As she was sleeping, Alicia appeared to her. Alicia told her that everything would be okay. She knew that Alicia would be taken care of.

This story was based on an actual occurrence. One of the girls went to my school and also played on my basketball team.



Emily Monroe

artwork by Emily Monroe

Still

short story by Angie Allred

Laughter rolled from the pool outside, and the warm sun shined on our wet bodies. The air smelled of youth and innocence.

"Hey guys, lunch is ready!" yelled Aunt Sharon.

"Coming," we yelled from the pool.

Dripping wet, with grass shavings on our feet we slid into our chairs at the kitchen table.

"Now guys, I just mopped," Sharon sternly informed us.

"Yeah, three weeks ago," commented Tiffany.

"Hey, don't be giving away any of my cleaning secrets," replied Sharon.

"What's for lunch?" questioned Chad.

"Wet peanut butter and jelly if you kids don't dry off! Now get into the bathroom and get a towel."

While laughing at the little jokes we continued to tell, we all skidded into the bathroom.

"Meow."

"Huh!" I jumped, startled by the sound that awakened me from my happy dreams.

My cat rubbed up against me, demanding to be stroked and not neglected one bit. *Can it really be true*, I thought to myself, *has it been three years?*

"Three years," I said aloud, "three years since they made the diagnosis. Can you believe it, Babe?"

My cat knew more about my feelings than I did sometimes. But who else was I going to bother with them? They had enough of their own problems to sort out. Still sometimes I long for the companionship of humans, not my friendly feline.

On March 22, 1994, Sharon was diagnosed with breast cancer. The family didn't really talk much about it, only in the vicinity of their own, private homes.

I was very young and didn't really know much about his. My life didn't really change all that much. Sure, I would find my mom or dad silently crying to themselves, but it would be okay. Sharon would be just fine. She didn't have a deadly form of cancer, she was just a little under the weather.

Even when she went to the hospital to have her mastectomy, we kids never really thought about it.

Maybe it was because Aunt Sharon had always been there for us. Maybe it was because she had moved to Seattle before she got sick so we did not see her that much. But most of all, I think that we just thought since we prayed and prayed that God would answer our prayers, she would pull out in time.

But instead, God took more happiness and joy away from us and replaced it with sorrow and despair. Sharon was diagnosed with another cancer, this time in her brain.

On May 23, 1995, Sharon passed away.

I went to a viewing of her on the day of the funeral. She looked warm and cozy, surrounded by pictures of friends and relatives and other special items she would take with her. She seemed at peace. The pain was gone, and a look of triumph was on her face. She was finally happy.

I sat there staring at my beloved aunt and thought of all the times I had taken her for granted and all the times I would never have again.

As I walked outside and the warm sun hit my tear drenched face, I heard laughing echoing in the distance and once again the air smelled of youth and innocence.

Lonely

*He stands on a street, his head hung in shame.
Of what importance is a boy with no name?
No one asks the burden he must bear
He's alone in a world where no one cares.*

*His feet are covered with a blue pair of socks;
Made ragged and worn from walking on rocks.
His jeans are faded, tattered and frayed;
They're held by twine cut from a bale of hay.*

*His back is covered by a dark brown coat,
The one found in an abandoned boat,
Dark brown hair frames his dirty face,
A frown often takes a smile's place.
His eyes will lighten and show a small smile,
Whenever the coins in the mug become a pile.*

poem by Christy Ann Terrell

The Broad View

poem by Dan Lasik

**Language-
Clever embodiment of
Thoughts
Ideas
From a culture.
Reflection on life.
A window of opportunity
Which unites all.**

Patrons

Businesses

Circle K
 Clymer Museum
 Computer Central
 Daily Record
 Dairy Queen
 Downtown Pharmacy
 Dr. Cole
 Dr. Siks
 Dr. Weaver
 Four Winds Bookstore
 Green Electric
 Jerrol's
 Kern Company
 McDonald's
 Molly Morrow Photography
 Ovenell Farms
 Palace Cafe
 Payless Drug
 Rodeo Records
 Shoes Unlimited
 Stenciled Goose
 Studio 438
 Sweet Memories
 Taco Time
 Ultimate Travel
 Valley Cycle and Fitness
 Western Art Association

Students

Jennifer Campbell
 Althea Cawley-Murphree
 Tyler Dauwalder
 Jacob Emmons
 Andy Kern
 Jessica Lautz
 Annie Morrow
 Diane Schnebly
 Brent Wilson

Families

Mona Alder
 Signe and Jim Bannister
 Marco and Sarah Bicchieri
 Art and Georgia Bolton
 Steve and Sue Brown
 Linda Busch
 Lowell and Michele Cawley-Murphree
 Jean Countryman
 Dave and Marty Dauwalder
 Tim and Marcia Eckert
 Dave Gaer
 Bobbie Jo and John Gregor
 Linda and Steve Hall
 Maxine Herbert-Hill
 Martha Hunt
 Joy Lessard
 Stan and Lisa Long
 Lisa and Rob Moffat
 Sylvia and Christian Schneider
 Gail and Terry Thayer
 Ralph and Lisa Tiebel
 Ray Westberg

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